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Abstract

Central to any nonprofit is a mission; a defining purpose and set of values that provide its exempt purpose, differentiate it and motivate action by the organization and others on its behalf. Even the most formal and established mission is subject to redefinition, interpretation and different ideas over achieving it. This dissertation addresses the question of what role these interpretations of mission play in the processes by which nonprofits change, not just mission but also leadership, strategy and structure.

Two distinct theoretical models are examined for fit with empirical results: (1) change processes as a response to external pressure moderated by organizational characteristics, from organization theory and nonprofit management research, and (2) change processes as internal contests over ideas, adapted from global and national level advocacy and policy process theories. Mixed methods are used to address this research question and evaluate the two models. Logistic regression of panel data on 152 internationally active nonprofits over 14 years is used to identify factors correlated with various changes. Through process tracing, narratives of change for a series of four case studies on similar nonprofits are developed. Comparisons within cases, across the four, between the qualitative and quantitative elements, and with theory are used to explore the fit between results and the two models of change.

This dissertation proposes and finds evidence of two new concepts: (1) personal mission conceptions, the different interpretations of mission held by individuals or groups within a nonprofit; and (2) dominant mission conceptions, the consensus interpretation at a particular time. Evidence from both forms of analysis provide little support for the organization theory model of change, while the case studies establish support for a potential model of internal

politics wherein coalitions form around common mission conceptions, compete with the status quo or other coalitions, and push for particular changes.

TAKING NONPROFITS AT THEIR WORD:
THE ROLE OF CONFLICT OVER MISSION IN ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE
AND RESPONSE TO ENVIRONMENTAL PRESSURES

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration
in the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs of Syracuse University

June 2013

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Acknowledgements

This dissertation would not have been possible without the assistance of many helpful individuals and groups. In particular, my advisors John McPeak and Jeremy Shiffman, and dissertation committee members Tina Nabatchi, Hans Peter Schmitz, and David Van Slyke, provided me the examples and guidance for conducting research, while finding the ideal balance between leaving me room for explore and pushing back with challenges.

Friends and colleagues provided essential feedback and support. Members of the TNGO Initiative created the samples and interviews incorporated in my analysis, with Hans and Tosca Bruno-van Vijfeijken going above and beyond to welcome and help a latecomer engage with the group. Tosca also facilitated introductions to two of the case studies and provided feedback on drafts. Many other people helped with each of the case studies by participating in interviews, helping plan logistics and identify sources of information, and providing comments on draft case studies; those contributions that do not remain confidential are recognized in those chapters. The Campbell Public Affairs Institute provided a grant covering transcription costs. The Department of Public Administration and International Affairs provided a grant covering the travel costs for conducting case study site visits. Guidestar for Education (guidestar.org) provided free access to its premium content, including the archived form 990s for all nonprofits studied. The assistance of Jessica Guyder for interview transcription and Chelsea Huitink for form 990 coding sped up the dissertation greatly.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the support of my family. My wife Minyi provided patience, support, and made sure I kept an eye on being relevant to practice, our extended family kept us going, and our son E.B. gave all the patience a toddler can possibly provide for an unpredictable and busy schedule.

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Chapter One: Introduction

A nonprofit created a new leadership position heading up its programs. Within a year, it went from undertaking scattered one-time projects to established long-term presences in specific communities. The language of its mission statement remained unchanged and it did not make a big show of releasing a new strategic plan. Yet in some fundamental way, both mission and strategy changed. New criteria guided strategic and operational decisions, and a different interpretation of the mission held sway.

This dissertation seeks to address just such changes, asking, “What role do different interpretations of missions play in the processes by which nonprofits change?” In answering this research question, this dissertation also aims to: (1) establish an understanding of mission that is open to interpretation and change is necessary, (2) identify theoretical models of change processes, (3) draw on empirical evidence of nonprofit changes, and (4) identify lessons relevant to practice and scholarship.

In-depth exploration of nonprofit mission change, interpretation, and influence fills a key niche. Missions establish the unique public purpose and reason for nonprofits to exist. The presence of competing interpretations of these missions, or changes in them, fundamentally alter the goals and public value of these organizations. Studying the processes by which these changes occur is thus essential for understanding the most basic purposes and impacts of nonprofits. Concerns with nonprofit accountability, performance measurement, and responses to the economic downturn all directly relate to mission interpretations, shifts, and influence on other changes.

This dissertation limits its focus to established, internationally-active nonprofits, a group amenable for investigating the role of mission interpretations in change. This group of nonprofits share two critical elements that permit exploration of this topic: (1) a shared element of organizational complexity in their international operations that establishes room for internal variation, and (2) long enough periods of activity to make multiple changes possible. Further, this group of organizations is subject to critical examination calling into question the purposes which they pursue, which makes this research topical.

A mixed methods research design addresses this research question. Quantitative analysis of a larger set of organizations over time identifies broad patterns and tests existing theories of organizational change. A series of in-depth case studies examines specific instances of change, providing room for alternative explanations, the identification of causal mechanisms, and inductive exploration of relevant factors. By combining these two forms of data and analysis with theoretical frameworks and review of prior literature, the fit between different forms of empirical evidence and models of change can be judged, with emergent cross-cutting findings informing future research and scholarship.

The remainder of this chapter further introduces the dissertation project as a whole. The next section draws on a literature review of nonprofit missions, interpretations, and change to portray existing knowledge and identify a critical gap: an understanding of mission that is dynamic and open to interpretation. To fill this gap, the dissertation introduces and tests for the presence of two new concepts – personal and dominant mission conceptions – that are defined in this chapter. This chapter closes by identifying this study's expected contributions, objectives, and organization.

Nonprofit missions

Nonprofit missions serve essential roles for organizations in the sector, in establishing public purpose, differentiating them from others, motivating involvement, and guiding activity. It “occupies the same holy place for nonprofit and governmental organizations that the maximization of shareholder wealth occupies for commercial enterprises” (Moore, 2000, p. 190). The importance of mission does not preclude other concerns taking the lead within individual organizations, but the multitude of purposes it serves and its fundamental importance argue for their study in the nonprofit sector.

Although for-profit missions also serve important roles in guiding organizations, including providing a focus and vision, unifying element and culture, and guidance for strategy (Raynor, 1998; Stone, 1996), nonprofit missions serve additional roles. This variety of roles results from greater specificity in nonprofit missions, which lack the unifying pursuit of profits and/or shareholder value found in for-profit missions (Moore, 2000). The creation of nonprofits centers around the mission pursued, especially “a perceived need or a specific interest or passion” (Carman & Nesbit, 2012, p. 14). Among the many roles, nonprofits use missions to identify the public purpose or public value being served (Bryson, 2005; Minkoff & Powell, 2006; Moore, 2000), justify tax-exempt status (Jeavons, 2005), establish legitimacy (Atack, 1999), and reduce internal conflict (Bryson, 2005). Missions serve motivational roles by attracting staff (Brown & Yoshioka, 2003; Watson & Abzug, 2005) and executives (Wilensky & Hansen, 2001), appealing to donors (Brown & Yoshioka, 2003; Moore, 2000), intrinsically motivating stakeholders (Bryson, 2005), and inspiring staff, donors, and volunteers (Brown &

Yoshioka, 2003; Tuckman & Chang, 2006; Watson & Abzug, 2005; Wilensky & Hansen, 2001). They can factor into the performance of nonprofit representational roles as intermediaries between citizens and government (Guo & Musso, 2007). Missions can be used as rhetorical or symbolic means of differentiation (Barman, 2012). For nonprofits, their mission, or “the expressive character of nonprofit activity – the way nonprofits allow people to demonstrate commitment to social ends and values – is what significantly differentiates one nonprofit from another and what separates the nonprofit sector from other social sectors” (Frumkin & Andre-Clark, 2000, p. 142). Nonprofits also directly use missions in guiding their actions, including in marketing (Tuckman & Chang, 2006), performance measurement (Moore, 2000), and establishing boundaries for action or strategies (Bryson, 2005; Stone, 1996).

In the NGO literature, mission most frequently appears in reference to accountability. Although a minority view (Brown & Moore, 2001), some views of accountability emphasize fidelity to mission, cause, or values. This view of accountability to mission is also found as one amongst many NGO accountabilities (Ebrahim, 2003a). More perceptions of accountability emphasize its relational nature (Brown & Moore, 2001) and either conflate mission with downward accountability to clients or restrict its import to only specific types of missions. A widespread meme in the literature is the threat upward accountability to providers of resources presents to an NGO’s mission or the interests of clients/beneficiaries (Brown & Moore, 2001; Edwards & Hulme, 1996; Kilby, 2006; O’Dwyer & Unerman, 2008; Tandon, 2002). This disjunction may occur due to lack of incentive mechanisms to encourage downward accountability, which Kilby (2006) suggests may be created through internal NGO accountability to values of participation and empowerment. Such concepts could originate in missions, but

such a restrictive view of mission's role appears to arbitrarily rule out other elements of missions that could similar alter power dynamics.

Given the wide range of roles potentially served by nonprofit/NGO missions, studying them requires attention to their complexity. Interpretation of missions may differ, leading to different approaches to achieving them. The language of individual missions may directly identify roles served within individual organizations, or may lack such specificity. This variety of roles also bears consideration when mission changes, and supports the need for further research on mission changes.

Interpretation of Mission

Nonprofit missions are open to interpretation, which can alter the meaning and guidance derived from these statements. Prior research recognizes the potential variation around interpreting missions, and the ability of different mission formulations to be more or less open to varying interpretations. Absent standard approaches to developing these statements, degrees of specificity, areas covered, and purposes sought by individual organizational missions can differ widely. Limited agreement or certainty exists even around the basic terms of 'mission' and 'vision' (Raynor, 1998), providing little guidance for devising mission and vision statements and leaving them open for a wide range of different elements.

Specificity of mission statements is the first area in which they can differ. Where organizations provide details, they restrict possibilities of action, but more clearly differentiate themselves from other organizations. In some sub-sectors, norms can lead to mission statements indistinguishable from one another, such as in hospitals, where even for-profit and

non-profit organization's mission are all but indistinguishable (Bolon, 2005). This specificity of mission can be a conscious choice, with nonprofits trading off clarity for flexibility (Moore, 2000). When excessively broad and vague, nonprofit missions can provide little guidance for the organization, and even fail their basic purpose. "These statements, when written in broad, unfocused, and sometimes all-encompassing terms, make it difficult to tell when the activities of a nonprofit are drifting from its intended purpose" (Tuckman & Chang, 2006, p. 633). In such a case, interpretation of the mission becomes even more powerful, potentially taking up the roles not served by the formal mission statement.

Even where missions have sufficient specificity to clarify purposes and limit action, interpretation can fulfill important roles, further clarifying goals or serving as an alternative to changing the mission statement. When nonprofit missions are presumed to be static, they limit the range of potential strategies, but are open to interpretation (Brown & Iverson, 2004). With a more dynamic understanding of nonprofit missions, interpretation still alters the implementation of missions:

"The leaders of a nonprofit organization can and do change their minds about the mission of the organization. They do so by raising the level of abstraction of the mission and finding in the new level of abstraction a justification for a new activity they wanted to carry on anyway. Alternatively, they say that the mission has not really changed and that only the particular way in which the broader mission is being pursued has changed" (Moore, 2000, p. 191-192).

Though mission interpretation can serve as a tool for leaders to exert control over nonprofits, as Moore suggests, it also can fulfill other organizational purposes, especially resolving differences of opinions within the organization. In addressing the basic values pursued by an organization, mission statements can lead to divergent takes on how to interpret them and what values should underlie the organization. This disagreement need not be

problematic, as “value conflicts may be regarded as natural, normal, and even healthy in any organization” (Padaki, 2000, p. 194). These values may originate from leaders, other individuals within the organization, professional norms, issues pursued, or the larger culture (Padaki, 2000). The act of interpreting mission statements can serve to resolve values conflicts within organizations. Padaki (2000) provides guidance on how such a task may be undertaken: “The task of assessing organisational values therefore requires the following steps: identifying the predominant belief clusters among a critical mass of people in the organization; assessing the extent of consensus among them; if necessary, identifying the forces or mechanisms by which prevalent value systems are maintained or may be altered” (p. 193). Reaching consensus on interpreting the organization’s mission could be performed similarly, or even in the course of this same process, identifying the underlying values and establishing enough of a consensus view on how they factor into the mission and guide organizational strategy.

The potential role of interpretation of mission adds complexity to understanding nonprofit missions. It can serve as an alternative to mission changes, but does not necessarily forestall such changes. Understanding how nonprofits change their missions and under what circumstances thus remains important, though the act of interpretation could be considered simultaneously with potential processes of mission change.

Mission Change

Nonprofit and NGO management literature dedicates attention to mission changes, primarily in the context of responses to external actors or forces. A range of different mission change variants are introduced, along with general critiques of organizational behaviors around

mission. Widespread scholarship introduces the dynamics of tension between fidelity to mission and financial pressures from commercialization, competition with the private sector, government contracts, and private donors. Other environmental changes, such as changes in the issue being pursued can also lead to mission changes. Some of this scholarship also introduces a variety of organizational characteristics that enable organizations to resist these influences. A small group of scholars explore more complex processes of mission change that allow for greater internal agency.

Contradictory advice abounds around missions. For every argument criticizing excessive vagueness and lack of specificity (Froelich, 1999; Moore, 2000; Rangan, 2004), a call for increased simplification (Raynor, 1998; Starr, 2012) or modernization (Gill, 2011) arises. Attention to achieving mission is also subject to criticism for leading to amateurism, excessively narrow issue or target group focus, and fragmentation of the sector (Brown & Kalegaonkar, 2002), while failure to attend to mission in pursuit of financial resources is the most common concern raised about missions in both the domestic nonprofit and international NGO communities. Guidance on crafting mission statements pays some attention to underlying unifying elements but primarily focus on the pieces of language necessary for a 'complete' statement (Stone, 1996). Nonprofits changing their mission too readily are criticized for 'drifting', 'stretching', or 'creeping' from their mission, while those failing to shift for mission 'stickiness' (Minkoff & Powell, 2006; Moore, 2000; Rangan, 2004). 'Creaming', the process of shifting goals (or mission) to attract donors, especially amongst social services organizations (Froelich, 1999), is another label applied to criticize mission changes. Minkoff and Powell (2006) identify a wider range of different forms of mission change to include: accommodation,

mission displacement, proactive change, reorientation, and resistance to change. These variants of change make one common assumption, that external pressure is being placed on the organizations to alter their mission, an assumption held widely in nonprofit scholarship.

To scholars and practitioners concerned with missions changing in response to financial pressures, they begin with the assumption that “mission is about something other than earning revenues” (Moore, 2000, p. 194). In pursuing revenues, it becomes possible that nonprofits will abandon elements of their public purpose or change their mission in ways perceived as harmful to the value they are seeking to achieve. This tension can even become a moral challenge to nonprofits. “The ultimate test of accountability for a nonprofit organization is whether its leadership can responsibly interpret, and honestly and energetically promote, the organization’s mission, even when environmental, stakeholder, and governance pressures make other paths more comfortable and secure” (Young, 2002, p. 3).

As noted by Young, scholars find these financial pressures emerging from a wide variety of sources. Private donors – whether corporations, foundations, or individuals – have purposes in making their contributions and may place pressure on organizations to more closely align with their personal goals (Brody, 2002; Brown & Moore, 2001; Edwards, 1999; Edwards, 2008; Frumkin & Andre-Clark, 2000; Tandon, 2002). Different groups of donors may compete over the values being pursued (Brody, 2002), creating dilemmas for nonprofits. The pursuit of ‘newer’ funding sources such as cause-related marketing can cost a nonprofit objectivity, values, or its mission (Young & Salamon, 2002). Governments place similar pressures on nonprofits through both contracts (Guo, 2007; Mosley, 2012) and grants (AbouAssi, 2012; Najam, 2000). This can take the form of intentional direct pressures or the organization

undertaking changes – such as specific forms of advocacy efforts (Mosley, 2012) – that enable them to continue or strengthen their access to these funding streams.

Trends of increasing commercialization and privatization within the sector are also viewed as posing a risk to nonprofit missions (James, 2003; Salamon, 2005). Increased competition between for-profit and nonprofit service providers creates one such threat, as nonprofit missions hinder competition on efficiency grounds (Frumkin & Andre-Clark, 2000). Although competition dynamics that emphasize alternative criteria may result in nonprofits gaining advantages from their mission (Frumkin & Andre-Clark, 2000), such as by providing greater access for disadvantaged groups, there remains the “distinct possibility that the pressures of the market will entice the nonprofit sector to lose its way and surrender precisely those values that make it so vital” (Young & Salamon, 2002, p. 441). Increased competition can even impact ‘charity’ revenues, as seen in the case of United Way losing its monopoly position (Barman, 2002).

Organizational characteristics or decisions can either mitigate pressures to change from outside or lead to mission changes in their own right. Expansion of the activities and programs of a nonprofit, even though originally defined by the mission, can push it outside of the mission (Rangan, 2004). Collaboration, achieved by aligning values with those of partner organizations, both extends a nonprofit’s ability to achieve its purposes while putting a strain on its own values or mission (Voss, Cable & Voss, 2000). Mission changes, such as ‘re-missioning’ of associations (Rugh, 1997), can occur from deliberate process engaging key stakeholders. Normative values, professionalism, and subcultures within nonprofits can limit shifts of mission in response to competitive forces (Frumkin & Andre-Clark, 2000). Funding sources better

aligned with missions, or 'mission-supportive', exert less pressure for change and can be deliberately targeted (Froelich, 1999). Despite placing greater emphasis on internal elements in mission change, these gradual or moderated changes still place a central role on responding to the external environment, and may overlook purely or mostly internally-originated changes.

Other scholars describe a process of nonprofit mission change that occurs through internal contests over values and mission content. Hopgood (2006) and O'Dwyer and Unerman (2008) explicitly note internal discussions and conflicts over mission at Amnesty International. Hopgood describes a process of competition between the 'keepers of the flame' and a newer guard within Amnesty International over the organization's future direction, while O'Dwyer and Unerman examined the origins of the Ireland chapter beginning in-country advocacy against racism. Padaki (2000) notes such values conflicts within organizations as being normal. The definition of 'value' as requiring "evidence of a relatively enduring behavior pattern" (Padaki, 2000, p. 191) overlaps closely with missions, suggesting that contestation of missions internally may be a frequent reality. Rather than presume either externally or internally originating changing to predominate, this dissertation considers and tests them both, along with interpretation of missions and inter-relations with other changes.

Mission Conceptions

An alternative approach to examining nonprofit missions is to consider their interpretation and change as part of a unified process. This approach starts with individuals within nonprofit organizations holding interpretations, understandings, and desired approaches to achieving missions, which I label **personal mission conceptions**. I use conception because

the term's various non-biological definitions focus on the creation of ideas (understandings, interpretations, preferred approaches, values, etc.), rather than a physical product (the mission statement's text). In order for the organization to pursue a course of action, some agreement on how the mission is interpreted and achieved is necessary. I call consensus around mission in place at a particular point in time the **dominant mission conception**. As with the literature of nonprofit mission change, the dominant mission conception can change over time in response to both external and internal desires, may be abrupt or gradual, and may be part of a conscious debate or an unintended side-effect of other organizational changes.

The dominant mission conception also differs noticeably from the **formal mission statement** – the language on founding documents and other sources that explains the nonprofit's exempt purpose – by potentially including further information making the mission more specific and actionable. The dominant mission conception contains less specific details than either a strategic plan or the operational plans to accomplish them, but includes enough information to differentiate it from other organizations that share similar formal mission statements and to identify critical elements motivating its efforts.

In addition to the basic **issue** the nonprofit focuses upon, the dominant mission conception may include the **values** motivating its purpose, the **target population, community,** or **geographic location** it aims to serve, and the basic **activities** the nonprofit focuses its efforts upon.

The dominant mission conception occupies a middle ground between the formal mission statement and strategic plans (see figure 1), more immediate and detailed than the formal mission statement but broader and longer-term than an individual strategy plan.

Theoretically, if not always in practice, a nonprofit starts with a formal mission statement establishing its public purpose. This statement is then interpreted and a consensus built on how to approach it, which leads to the emergence of a dominant mission conception. Taking guidance from this conception, a strategic plan is put in place for a specific period of time, accompanied by even more immediate operational plans for achieving the strategy's goals.

Figure 1: Basic nonprofit organizing ideas, from least to greatest specificity



With these new ways of examining nonprofit missions, the original research question pursued in this dissertation shifts ‘Why and how do nonprofits change their missions?’ to ‘What role do different conceptions of mission play in the processes by which nonprofits change?’. In part this change is due to the distinctly different potential causal roles that personal and dominant mission conceptions occupy. The dominant mission conception is the result of a process that leads to some form of consensus and thus serves ideally as a dependent variable for analysis, though changes in it may causally impact other forms of organizational change. Personal mission conceptions by definition factor into the dominant mission conception, placing them clearly in the role of independent variables. Where personal conceptions change over time, their alternation requires examination at a minute, individual level that is incompatible with study of the larger organization. With this different focus, examination of nonprofit management literature on other forms of change – leadership, strategy, and

structure – also becomes necessary, as they potentially become other key factors in addressing this research question.

Expected contributions

An exercise in cross-disciplinary research, this dissertation is intended to make contributions to the academic fields and professional practice of public administration, nonprofit management, international NGOs, and organization theory.

The first expected contribution of this dissertation is to introduce an understanding of mission as dynamic and open to interpretation. This will be achieved through the development and testing of the ideas of dominant and personal mission conceptions, introduced in the previous section. Returning attention to missions while expanding nuance and flexibility of these ideas is expected to contribute to both practice and scholarship, where nonprofit/NGO missions too often are overlooked or considered narrowly.

In fitting within existing literature, this dissertation has three further expected contributions. Findings from this dissertation are intended to bridge the distinct domestic nonprofit and international NGO literatures that share common concerns with how nonprofits respond to external pressures, decide to whom they must account, and interpret, alter, pursue, and achieve their missions. This dissertation will test existing organization theory explanations for change, in particular those of institutionalism and resource dependence. In addition, it will translate global and national level advocacy and policy process theories, from political science, sociology, and international relations, within the context of individual organizations, which would apply to public, nonprofit, and private organizations alike.

Finally, by on these advocacy and policy process theories, this dissertation will introduce an internal politics model of change wherein internal coalitions form around a shared conception of mission, compete with other coalitions or the status quo, extract additional internal and external support, and seek to drive processes of change. Not limited just to the context of internal nonprofits, this internal politics model could translate to other forms of organizations that share similarities with those studied in this dissertation. From the cases studied and this new model of change, this dissertation will identify lessons for pursuing or conducting change that can inform nonprofit management practice, and possibly other sectors as well.

Study objectives

In order to achieve these expected contributions, this study pursues a set of eight objectives that inform conduct of the research:

1. Answer the primary research question of: What role do different interpretations of mission play in the process by which nonprofits change?
2. Explicate the forms these interpretation take through the creation and testing of new terms: personal and dominant mission conceptions.
3. Derive potential models of change from theory.
4. Test the organization theory model of change using statistical analysis that tests predicted causal variables for correlations with mission changes
5. Map out narratives of change processes within a series of cases
6. Identify common processes of change and influential factors

7. Examine these cases for the presence of personal and dominant mission conceptions
8. Bring together various forms of evidence to answer research question and identify extent of fit with different models of change

Dissertation chapters

This opening chapter began by establishing the motivation for this study and introduced the primary research question of “What role do different interpretations of mission play in the processes by which nonprofits change?” To define the clause “different interpretations of mission”, it examined the prior scholarship on nonprofit mission and introduced new terminology – personal and dominant mission conceptions – that considers nonprofit missions to be both dynamic and open to interpretation. This chapter also lays out the dissertation’s expected contributions, study objectives, and the organization of the following chapters.

Chapter Two lays out two distinct models of organizational change deriving from distinct bodies of theory. The organization theory model of change, drawn primarily from institutionalism and resource dependence, views change as a response to environmental pressures, and moderated by organizational characteristics and decisions. The internal politics model of change, translated from global and national level advocacy and policy process theories, views change as the end result of internal competition around key ideas.

Chapter Three describes the approach to answering this dissertation’s research question, and testing the two models of change. It provides further detail on the specific population studied in this dissertation, lays out the mixed-methods approach of this

dissertation in more detail, and identifies the standard case study approach used for chapters five through eight.

Chapter Four tests the organization theory model of change via logistic regression of panel data. This panel data is a custom dataset drawing on leader interviews and annual IRS filings to cover 152 internationally active and established nonprofits over a period of 14 years. Mission change is tested as a factor of financial, organizational, board, sector, and year variables. Multinomial and ordered logits test mission changes in conjunction with other forms of change, such as leadership and strategy. This analysis finds that mission has a distinctive character differing from other forms of change and limited support for the organization theory model of change. It also identifies a limited role for boards in mission change and renewed attention to descriptions of mission following changes in IRS forms.

Chapter Five is the case study of Water For People (WFP), a water, sanitation, and hygiene nonprofit based in Denver, CO. The source of the opening anecdote for this dissertation, WFP underwent the most revenue growth of the cases during the period of study. In other regards, WFP is the standard case in this dissertation, and establishes initial support for the findings emerging from it, such as the importance of mission conceptions and role of internal coalitions in driving changes, which are confirmed by the other cases. The case is distinctive in providing an example of CEO's whose personal mission conception evolved in a direction that did not become part of the dominant mission conception, without causing a leadership change or significant internal conflict.

Chapter Six is the case study of ProLiteracy (PL), an adult basic literacy nonprofit based in Syracuse, NY. Similar in many respects to WFP – including size, presence of multiple changes,

a strong external constituency, and the presence of a leader viewed as a change agent – PL stands out for moving away from its international programs and stagnated financial performance. An early change at PL starts with an internal coalition sharing common mission conceptions that turns into a negotiating process conducted by other leaders, leading to a merger that with hindsight involved too little change. Later shifts reveal the role of internal coalitions in breaking down structural barriers to change.

Chapter Seven is the case study of ActionAid International (AAI), the Johannesburg, South Africa based international secretariat for a federation of NGOs focused on human rights based approaches to development. Larger and more complex than the other cases, AAI also includes a formalized change process organized around five to seven year strategy cycles accompanied by leadership and structure changes. Results from this case most clearly demonstrate two different forms of internal coalition driven change: transformative changes driven by small groups quickly and more consultative processes that seek to build consensus earlier to institutionalize change more gradually.

Chapter Eight is the case study of the Marshall Legacy Institute (MLI), a landmine eradication nonprofit based in Arlington, VA. Unlike the other three cases, MLI's leadership and primary program have remained constant for more than a decade, and is intended to test whether findings from the other cases hold when applied to contexts with less transformational change. MLI's processes of change echoed that observed in the other cases, with coalitions sharing a mission conception forming to enact strategy changes.

Chapter Nine brings the different forms of evidence and underlying theory together to identify cross-cutting results from this dissertation. Overall, evidence is found supporting the

presence of and changes in personal and dominant mission conceptions. The organization theory model of change provides only limited predictive and explanatory power, while the internal politics model is present in all four cases. These results raise the possibility of internal coalition driven changes serving as alternative explanations, causal mechanisms for implementing the organization theory model, and/or guiding the management of change. This chapter closes by identifying potential implications of these findings for scholarship and practice.

Chapter Two: Theory

Two distinct models of change potentially explain mission change and the role of mission interpretation in other processes of change. First, organization theories, primarily institutionalism and resource dependence, describe a process of change wherein organizations react to external pressures to change. This model addresses the concern present in nonprofit and NGO literatures of pressures from donors, governments, and competition, but fails to identify changes in the absence of significant external pressures. An internal politics model of change, wherein those within the organization compete over how to interpret and achieve key ideas, provides a potential alternative explanation and/or causal mechanism for the organization theory model of change. This internal politics model is a translation of global and national level advocacy and policy process theories within individual organizations, drawing from international relations, political science, and sociology.

This chapter introduces both models of change. First it explores the organization theory model by describing the rationale for theories included and excluded, a brief introduction to key elements from institutionalism and resource dependence, the resulting model, and its predictions for mission and related changes. Similarly, the internal politics model introduces its inclusion rationale and three relevant bodies of literature/theory – agenda setting and policy processes, social movements and problems, and transnational advocacy networks – before introducing the model and its predicted processes. Finally, the chapter closes by addressing the contexts most relevant to the application of this model, which includes this dissertation’s study of internationally active nonprofits.

Organization theory and behavior

As discussed in chapter one of this dissertation, prior scholarship on nonprofit/NGO mission change focuses substantial attention on pressures to change from outside the organizations. Organization theory, often cited in these works, places a similar emphasis on external actors and forces, while also attending to organizational characteristics and decisions that limit the environment's impact. Most frequently cited in the nonprofit scholarship related to mission are institutionalism (Barman, 2012; Guo, 2007; Guo & Acar, 2005; Lister, 2003; Minkoff & Powell, 2006; Mosley, 2012; Stone, 1989) and resource dependence (Barman, 2012; Froelich, 1999; Guo, 2007; Guo & Acar, 2005; Miller-Millesen, 2003; Mosley, 2012). Both theories align well with nonprofit contexts by including a wide range of potential external influences and a role for organizations to moderate these outside influences. They focus on different forms of external pressure and different characteristics or decisions mitigating these pressures, but when combined create a coherent model of change.

Other organization theories, though bearing some similarities to institutionalism and resource dependence, fit the context of nonprofit change poorly. Models of community ecology (Astley, 1985), population ecology (Hannan & Freeman, 1984), and organizational survival (Singh, et al., 1986) presume a selection process by which organizations unsuited to their environments fail. Thus these theories fail to apply easily to the study of individual organizations that change substantially yet continue to exist and possibly thrive. With their assumption that major changes are infrequent (Young, 1988), they align poorly with a study focused on understanding such changes. Basic assumptions of economic theories of change also fail to match the context of this dissertation. Rational choice (Miller & Moe, 1983), public

choice (Ostrom & Ostrom, 1971), and transaction cost economics (Williamson, 1981) narrow decision-making processes to evaluations of preferences (in economic terms), utility, and costs of alternatives, all of which would fail to explain the role of mission in nonprofits. Principal-agent theory (Eisenhardt, 1989; Moe, 1984) also narrows the focus for change by centering on specific forms of relationships that are difficult to identify and separate in the nonprofit context (Brown & Moore, 2001). Bounded rationality (Simon, 1984; 1976) and the garbage can model of organized anarchies (Cohen, et al., 1972) that challenge the assumptions of economic theories of organizations better align with the contexts of nonprofits, and factor into the two models of change by influencing institutionalism, resource dependence, agenda-setting, and policy process theories.

Other work in organization theory and organizational behavior also fails to fit the context of this study and/or address change. Scholarship on managerial networks (Brass, et al., 2004; Jones, et al., 1997; O'Toole & Meier, 2004) and organizational culture (Curran, 2005; Mahler, 1997; Smircich, 1983) both address characteristics and structures of organizations that could fit into a model of change drawn from institutionalism and resource dependence, but neither theory explicitly addresses change. Organizational politics (Allen, et al., 1979; Cavanaugh, et al., 1981; Cropanzano, et al., 1997) initially seems to provide an alternative explanation for change by describing internal conflicts. This literature makes assumptions about the basic nature of this competition, viewing actions in the organization's best interest as legitimate and sanctioned, while those benefitting individuals or subgroups are political and unsanctioned (Burns, 1961; Mayes & Allen, 1977). This distinction is both arbitrary and false, favoring the winners of political conflicts rather than identifying a true difference between two

sets of behaviors. It also focuses on relatively narrow stakes, such as the control of resources, rather than the shaping of organizational goals. These two limitations make this body of literature unsuited for explaining legitimate differences of opinion between members of organizations and unable to address transformative changes.

Given the limited role of other theories to address mission or other transformative change in the context of nonprofits, this dissertation develops an organization theory model of change from institutionalism and resource dependence. Prior nonprofit scholarship also contributes to this model of change, and the individual propositions drawn from the theories are relevant for consideration.

Institutionalism

Institutionalism identifies the roles of formal and informal pressures that lead organizations to emulate one another, but are mitigated by organizational characteristics. Structures and relationships matter in this theory, but so do the ideas shaping institutions. With its use in prior nonprofit management scholarship, the theory deserves particular consideration for helping to devise a model of organizational change.

Institutionalism labels the forces from outside organizations leading to similarities amongst them as coercive, mimetic, and normative isomorphic pressures (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Coercive pressures are not only the formal mechanisms utilized by powerful actors, such as sources of funding or regulatory agencies, but also the informal pressures these entities apply (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Mimetic pressures occur when organizations seek to emulate peers, and are driven by competition (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Normative pressures derive

from the backgrounds of organizational leaders, with professions, sectors, educational backgrounds, and cultures potentially serving as sources (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Environmental and organizational characteristics can increase or decrease the impact of these pressures on individual organizations. Dependence on other organizations increases isomorphic pressures (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), especially coercive pressures when resources are involved (Guler, Guillen & Macpherson, 2002). Centrality of these resources increases the pressures (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), a pattern echoed in resource dependence theory. Involvement in cohesive networks increases mimetic isomorphism (Guler, Guillen & Macpherson, 2002). Professionalization is predicted to drive normative isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), though some prior research fails to establish this finding (Guler, Guillen & Macpherson, 2002). Age decreases the impact of all of three pressures, because “in the long run, organizational actors making rational decisions construct around themselves an environment that constrains their ability to change further in later years” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 148).

Institutionalism also recognizes the importance of legitimacy, myths, and symbolism in forming character, rules, and structures of organizations (March & Olsen, 1984; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Selznick, 1996), which create the foundation both for isomorphic pressures to be accepted by organizations or individuals sharing similar ideas and for organizational characteristics to restrict the impact of these pressures.

Finally, institutionalism also gives rise to the “garbage can model” that applied to entities defined as organized anarchies, within which choices, participant energy, problems, and solutions converge and lead to changes (Cohen, March & Olsen, 1972). The garbage can model

informed other advocacy and policy process theories, and is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

Through the isomorphic pressures and the moderating role of organizational and environmental characteristics, institutionalism makes clear, if sometimes difficult to operationalize, propositions for changes leading to similarity between organizations. Less useful for explaining changes leading to further divergence between organizations, this theory is still useful in devising a model of change and for potential testing on its own grounds.

Resource dependence

Despite its name, resource dependence theory does not presume that organizations are reflexively dependent on other entities providing them critical resources. It accepts as natural that organizations draw on external actors for resources, but see dependence occurring under three conditions: concentration of potential resource sources, unpredictability of access, and organizational inability to moderate pressures.

Resource dependence theory views organizational boundaries as permeable, with external actors who provide resources as potentially seeking to shape behaviors (Pfeffer, 1978). In addition to direct involvement, actors may use indirect relationships with a third party to influence pressures (Gargiulo, 1993). When resources essential to an organization's operations are scarce, unpredictable, or concentrated amongst relatively few external actors, the organization becomes dependent on them, and can be influenced or controlled (Pfeffer, 1978). Controls take the form of access, use, limits on use, and rule-making processes over these resources (Pfeffer, 1978). These pressures, and the decisions made in their wake, continue to

exert influence over time, as “many constraints on organizational actions are the results of prior decision making or the resolution of various conflicts among competing interest groups” (Pfeffer, 1978, 18).

Organizations vary in their reactions to this pressure and control, with some able to better cope in an environment of resource instability and centralization. The process by which organizations selectively react to environmental changes and proactively seek other methods to avoid external control is labeled loose-coupling (Pfeffer, 1978). Variations in knowledge about the environment, the extent of goal congruence in an organization, ability to make legitimacy claims, and development of alternative sources all can influence the extent of loose-coupling (Pfeffer, 1978). The power relationships of resource dependence can also be applied to department or subunits within an organization, with similar processes (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1974).

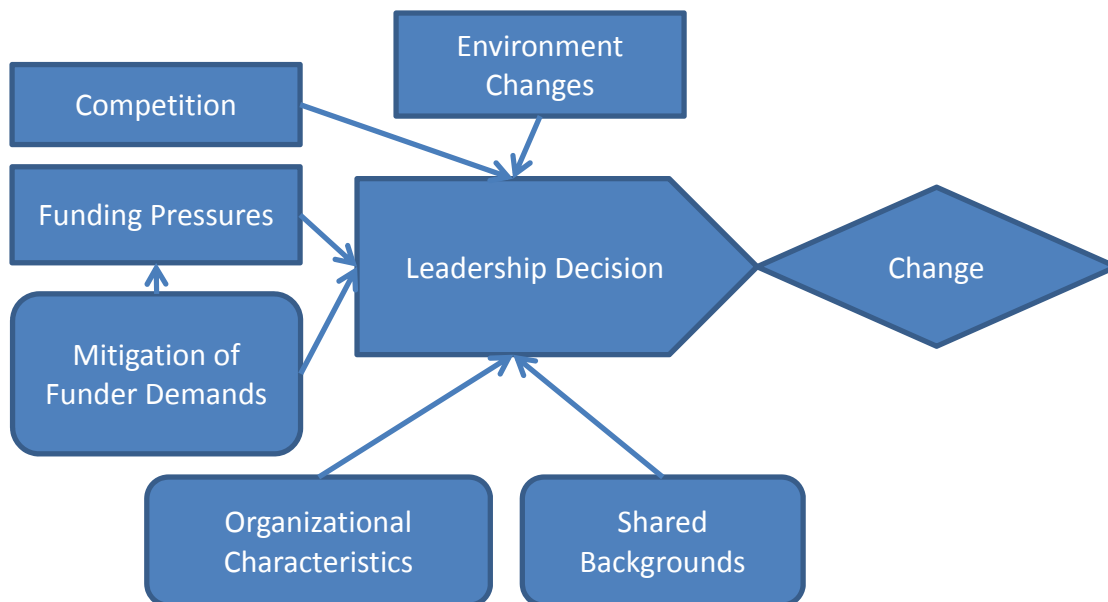
Resource dependence thus directly addresses change, considers roles for both external and internal actors, identifies sources of variance influencing the likelihood of change, and is readily applicable to multiple contexts. As a result, it bears particular attention in developing an organization theory model of change, and examination in its own right during research on processes of change.

Resulting model of change

These organization theories, particularly institutionalism and resource dependence, predict a model of change wherein organizations make decisions under the influence and in response to external pressures (see figure 2). Forces resulting from competition, direct and

indirect funder pressures, and changes in the operating environment push toward particular forms of change (angular boxes indicate external forces). Internal characteristics (rounded boxes) can limit these pressures or exacerbate them, such as mitigation of funder demands through the various mechanisms identified by resource dependence, organization characteristics like age, and shared backgrounds of those in leadership positions. The decision is generally perceived as a centralized, leader driven process that then leads to a particular change (or not change at all).

Figure 2: Organization theory model of change



This model and the theories underlying it also establish a set of potentially testable propositions relevant to nonprofit changes. Resource dependence (Pfeffer, 1978; Froelich, 1999; Ebrahim, 2003; Ebrahim, 2005) predicts that:

P1: Nonprofits facing with greater uncertainty or under greater financial pressure are more likely to shift toward donor purposes,

Similarly, resource dependence (Pfeffer, 1978; Froelich, 1999; Ebrahim, 2003; Ebrahim, 2005) and prior nonprofit scholarship (Frumkin & Andre-Clark, 2000; Guo, 2007; James, 2003; Tuckman & Chang, 2006; Young & Salamon, 2002) predict that:

P2: Nonprofits with greater levels of government or corporate funding will be more likely to shift toward donor purposes.

Resource dependence (Pfeffer, 1978; Froelich, 1999; Ebrahim, 2003; Ebrahim, 2005) also predicts that:

P3: Nonprofits better able to make claims of legitimacy will better resist donor pressures, though targeting mission aligned funding or pushing back against donors, due to donor dependence on the nonprofit to establish their own legitimacy.

Just as institutionalism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Selznick, 1996) predicts that:

P4: Older nonprofits will be less likely to shift in response to donor pressures.

While institutionalism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Selznick, 1996) and nonprofit scholarship (Frumkin & Andre-Clark, 2000) predict that:

P5: Nonprofits sharing more professional, normative, or subcultural values will be less likely to shift in response to donor pressures.

Finally, institutionalism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Selznick, 1996), network theory (O'Toole & Meier, 2004), and nonprofit scholarship (Guo, 2007; Salamon, 2002) all predict that:

P6: Nonprofits with more network ties to government or other donors will be more likely to shift.

Limitations and the need for alternatives

Examining change through the lens of existing organization theories fails when the context of individual organizations differs from the basic assumptions underlying these various theories. Where they include goal divergence, the focus is on conflicting self-interests, and not divergence on the organization's primary purpose. They also require that outside actors seek to intentionally exert influence and/or the organization seek to make changes to align with external preferences. Decisions are perceived as centrally made by leadership, with power dynamics involving resistance to those decisions rather than active engagement by others in the organization in the decision-making process. Variation within the organization is limited, in part an artifact of leader driven decision-making and perceiving the organization as a singular, rather than collective, entity. Where any of these assumptions fail, alternative theories are needed, and are unavailable in organization theory. Other theories from international relations, political science, and sociology focused on global and national level advocacy and policy processes provide such alternatives, individually or jointly.

Global and national level advocacy and policy processes

Three distinct bodies of theory examine advocacy and policy processes, at either national or global levels: agenda-setting and domestic policy making from political science, social movements and problems from sociology, and norm emergence and transnational advocacy networks from international relations constructivism. These works use vastly different terminology, examine different contexts and entities, and rarely speak to one another, yet describe similar processes and elements. When the similarities across these bodies of

theory are identified, drawn together, and translated within organizations, a model of change processes emerges involving idea centrality, contestation, group formation, and power dynamics.

Agenda-setting and policy process models

The agenda setting and policy process literature began with roots in organization theory, shifted to a purely domestic American policy, broadened into some global contexts, and saw development of a framework intended for widespread use. Cohen, March, and Olsen's (1972) "A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice" they examine "organized anarchies", entities characterized by uncertainty around preferences, technology, participation, and as a result, organizational boundaries. This model sees decisions as resulting from four distinct streams coming together: choice opportunities, participants, problems, and solutions. The authors also identify three additional key characteristics of organizations under this model: access, decision-making structure, and exit opportunities. Derived primarily from study of university decision-making, Cohen, March and Olsen view the organized anarchy form as being partially or occasionally present in all organizations, and suggest their garbage can model for whenever decision-making contexts reflect the three necessary forms of uncertainty.

Kingdon (1984) took their advice and applied the model to agenda-setting within American policy, creating a modified version with only three streams: problems, policies, and politics. The problem stream focuses on the emergence or reemergence of issues that compete with those currently receiving attention and can be altered by changes related to the individual issues. The policy stream is described as a process of natural selection in which competing

proposals are developed through changes in technology, knowledge, and their framing and selected on a range of criteria. The politics stream is the current context, to include timing, variation in processes and changes in the composition of participants. The interaction between these streams leads to selection of subjects receiving attention at a given point in time, with the problem and politics streams opening policy windows for the policy stream to fill.

Kingdon's model of multiple streams also requires ambiguity to function, which persists in the face of additional information (Zahariadis, 1999).

Baumgartner and Jones (1993, 2005) expanded upon this work, analyzing domestic policy and arriving at new elements. Of note is their examination of issue emergence processes as alternating between static and dynamic periods, with lengthy periods of equilibrium subject to sudden punctuation, making short term observations unreliable. With another colleague, they also identified communities of experts – labeled as 'iron triangles', 'issue networks', and 'policy subsystems' at various times – and their ability to create 'policy monopolies' that close off access to decision-making processes during periods of equilibrium (True, Jones & Baumgartner, 1999). Then sudden, major changes will occur as these equilibriums are punctured by successful mobilization of the issue communities and those whose attention they are able to attract, causing the collapse of these policy monopolies.

Sabatier (1988; 1991; 1999) continued on in this vein of theory development, identifying an Advocacy Coalitions Framework (ACF). The ACF distinguishes external or system elements – both stable factors and dynamic events that influence the issue environment – from the 'policy subsystem' – wherein competing advocacy coalitions seek to influence strategies, policies, and outcomes (Sabatier, 1988; 1991; 1999). Stability of membership within these advocacy

coalitions varies, both over time and dependent upon the centrality of disagreements (Sabatier, 1988; 1999; True, Jones & Baumgartner, 1999).

Agenda-setting theories have been applied globally as well, especially in health (Shiffman & Smith, 2007), drawing on these same underlying works but applying them outside domestic U.S. policy. They have also been applied in the British and German domestic contexts (Zahariadis & Allen, 2005) and to U.S. foreign aid (Travis & Zahariadis, 2002). The application of these theories beyond their initial intent suggests potential for further shifts, such as within organizations.

Social movements and social problems

Similarly, sociological work on social movements and problems, though focused on inter-organizational efforts and diffused groups, offer potential models for individual organizations. Language and meaning figure prominently in these theories, serving to mobilize involvement, gain resources, and attract attention (Benford & Snow, 2000; Davis, et al., 2005; Hilgartner & Bosk, 1988; Snow, et al., 1986; Tarrow, 1989, 1998; Whittier, 2002). Hilgartner and Bosk (1988) examine social problems, where much like in agenda-setting, groups compete for constrained attention. In their model, this attention comes from a wide range of different arenas, each with different limits and preferences, though influencing one another through linkages. Framing, or the way that ideas are intentional or unintentionally shaped to better serve purposes of groups supporting them, becomes especially important for social movements, which are groups with dynamic memberships that are actively contesting ideas for political purposes (Tarrow, 1998; Whittier, 2002). Benford and Snow (2000) identify multiple

forms of framing, with common collective action frames shared across a social movement that are constructed of diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational sub-frames. Diagnostic frames, like Kingdon's problem stream, identify and define problems (Benford & Snow, 2000). Prognostic frames create language around how to approach solving a problem (Benford & Snow, 2000), similar to Kingdon's policy stream. Motivational frames involve the ideas justifying engagement in the movement and mobilization for action (Benford & Snow, 2000), the latter of which could partially overlap with Kingdon's politics stream. Attention in the context of framing comes in the form of resonance, wherein credibility of arguments, evidence, and proponents, along with characteristics of the audience, culture, and environment, determine the effectiveness of them (Benford & Snow, 2000).

Scholars from both social movement and organization theory have conducted work unifying the two bodies of literature (Davis, et al., 2005), but with a focus on applying organization theories within social movements, rather than the converse. Application of the converse may also be applicable, allowing for individual organizations to be viewed as if they were social movements.

Transnational advocacy networks

International relations constructivism studying the creation and spread of international norms, along with the transnational advocacy networks championing them, examines similar processes as the other bodies of theory (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001). Even more expansive in scope, this theory covers larger entities or groups than the individual social movements, incorporating multiple national governments along with a range of nongovernmental actors. At

its roots is the acceptance of a role of nongovernmental organizations (Boli & Thomas, 1999; Keohane & Nye, 1971; Risse, 2001) and activists (Wapner, 1995) as actors with a role in influencing states. This influence occurs through a process of norm creation, wherein states are socialized to change preferences (Finnemore, 1996; Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998; Risse-Kappen, 1995; Risse, 2001).

Norm emergence is described by Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) as a non-deterministic cycle. In it, norm entrepreneurs bring attention to new issue and develop new norms, through framing. These new norms come into competition with existing norms and other perspectives, emerging after gaining a critical level of acceptance, leading to a “norm cascade” where the norm becomes widespread. Organizations are necessary for championing these norms, and not just their founding entrepreneurs. Eventually these norms become internalized, through professional standards and habitual behavior, leading to a cessation of public debate.

Keck and Sikkink (1998) focus more on the organizations that champion new norms and identify the strategies used by transnational advocacy networks to achieve support for norms favored by these groups. To circumvent governments hostile to new norms, NGOs within these networks use a ‘boomerang’ model, wherein they draw on other NGOs, foreign governments, and international organizations to apply pressure upon the target state. Strategies such as exchanging information within and outside the network, leveraging linkages to other issues, monitoring state accountability to existing agreements, and symbolic messaging are used to encourage this pressure and achieve changes in acceptance of particular norms.

Scholarship on specific sectors examines the roles of norm emergence and transnational advocacy networks in changing global values, both by identifying successful examples and

delving into reasons for failed examples. The example of landmines (Price, 1998) identifying the importance of linking new norms to those already in existence, while gender violence and reproductive rights examples (Joachim, 2003) notes the importance of framing, opportunities, and ability to mobilize. The context of wartime child rape (Carpenter, 2007) is seen as an issue overlooked due to lack of a dedicated network. Transnational advocacy networks focused on human rights are criticized for the ethics of their behavior, including for political opportunism (Ron, Ramos & Rodgers, 2005) and the use of misinformation (Bob, 2002). Elsewhere, the pursuit of war criminals is criticized for ignoring political realities (Snyder & Vinjamuri, 2004) and success on stigmatizing conflict diamonds is seen as having side effects harming the poor (Le Billion, 2008).

In addition to transnational advocacy networks, this theory also has been applied within individual international organizations (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999). Although contextual different from other forms of organization, in that they involved elements both of individual organizations and of broader networks or movements, the application of this theory in those contexts establishes the possibility of applying them into other contexts as well.

Common elements and their equivalents within individual organizations

Each body of theory includes five common elements: differing ideas, internal actors, external forces, forms of attention desired, and processes. Though each uses different language to describe these elements, there are strong similarities between them. These elements help shape a common model for change, when translated within the context of individual organizations.

Central to each theory are sets of ideas that differ, which can appear in three different forms: the macro-level focus for attention, the mezzo-level strategy to securing attention, and the micro-level language used to pursue attention. For agenda-setting and policy process literature, the macro-level focus is the issue for which attention or policies are being pursued; for social movements, this focus is referred to as either an issue or a problem; IR constructivism refers to it as the regime. When applied within organizations, these different levels of ideas may differ according to the sector. The macro-level focus for attention in the private sector could be the industry or sector, the company's value proposition, or its mission. Amongst the public sector, it is most likely the organization's mandate. Within nonprofits, the mission, establishing the organization's tax-exempt public purpose, is the most likely macro-level focus, though sub-elements of the mission or other ideas, such as the population being served or primary issue, could also take this role. Regardless of the sector, the mezzo-level ideas being pursued would primarily take the form of strategy, while the micro-level would be the language used to achieve strategy, whether referred to as marketing, messaging, or other terminology.

Each body of theory uses different terminology for its internal actors, though these groups appear very similar. Policy communities, advocacy coalitions, social movements, and transnational advocacy networks are all groups who share a set of unifying ideas, join together voluntarily, and exercise available influence to further their common ideas. Within an individual organization, internal coalitions pursuing a particular macro-level idea, if present, would occupy a similar role. The potential groups who could eventually join a coalition, community, movement, or network is relatively fluid and open in global and national level theories, but would be constrained by more established boundaries, when applied within an

individual organization. Still, there is remaining blurring on the boundaries when considering which stakeholder groups could be considered inside an organization. Management and staff, in all sectors, would naturally be considered part of a potential internal coalition. Shareholders, board members, volunteers, donors, consultants, suppliers, politicians, and other groups may or may not be considered 'internal' to a given organization, and this distinction is likely more specific to the individual organization than common across a given sector.

All three theories also leave room for external actors and forces. Agenda-setting and related theories include various environmental and political changes that introduce windows of opportunity for changes to occur. Actors not part of the focal group also factor into these theories as potential competitors, influencers, or sources of desired resources. Social movements also involve both external actors and broader environmental trends, with which the movements interact. External actors, particularly governments, figure prominently into international relations constructivism, with the transnational advocacy networks seeking to engage and influence them. Other external factors, such as unrelated norms, also figure into this theory. In the context of individual organizations, these groups become clearer than in the national and international contexts, in part due to clearer boundaries between actors. Competitors, governments, culture, communities, providers of resources, and environmental changes can be found as relative external actors or forces amongst public, private, and nonprofit organizations alike.

Desired outcomes in each theory center on forms of attention being sought, with substantial overlap between the three. These are not the end outcomes pursued for a particular issue, but are instead the essential inputs, primarily from external sources, that can

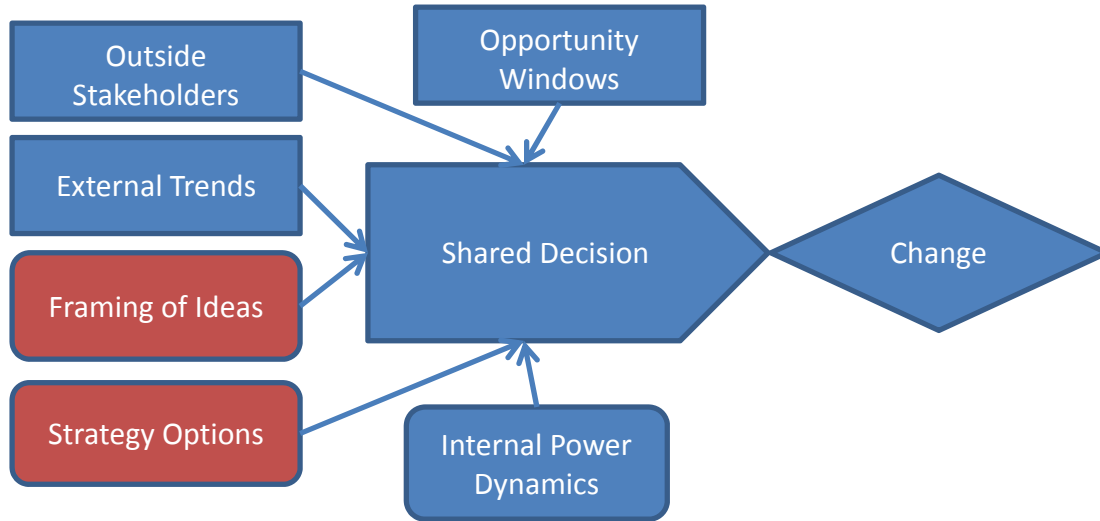
lead to effective outcomes. Focused on domestic policy, the agenda-setting and policy process literature is most concerned with legislative attention to issues, funding allocations, and the passage of relevant laws. When applied globally to health, funding and policies remain central measures of attention, though media and international organization attention also become relevant. Social movements pursue a wide range of attention, also including funding, policies, media coverage, and policy-maker attention, but also show a greater concern for grassroots attention to the issue, growth of the movement, and changes in the language or values by which issues are discussed and considered. Transnational advocacy networks focus on the behavior of nation-states and the global regimes around particular issues, using the terminology of norms emerging and becoming internalized. Measures of relevant attention include national policies, international treaties, ratifications, international organizations dedicating resources, and pressure on non-compliant states. Comparing the three theories in more basic terms, IR constructivism is most concerned with shifts in ideas, policy process with shifts in actions, and social movements with both. When translated to the within-organization context, forms of attention desired narrow. Corporations could measure attention in terms of revenues or profits, but also could consider market share, reputation, or innovation. Government agencies may pursue greater funding or policies aligned with their purposes, but may also consider attention outcomes to include achievement of mandates and purposes. Nonprofits also would consider funding an effective measure of attention, but could also focus on a broad range of other ways in which they can better achieve their public purpose, such as volunteers, media attention, partnerships, thought leadership in the sector, or changes in the behavior of beneficiaries.

Each body of theory lays out a process within which the other elements interact. These processes tend to involve periods of both relative stability and abrupt change, depending upon how the various elements align at a given point in time. These processes demonstrate some variations, such as the boomerang model of circumventing opposition used by transnational advocacy networks, but all provide a venue that brings the other four elements together and lead to potential changes. Though such processes would occur on a different scale for individual organizations, they would apply in contexts where there is some sharing of decision-making power that would similarly allow the different elements to interact.

Resulting model of change

As with the organization theory model of change, the commonalities between these three bodies of literature describe a model of change with external (angular boxes in figure 3) and internal influences (rounded boxes). Changes in the organization's operating environment such as external trends or opportunity windows arising can create either pressures for change or opportunities to achieve desired changes. Outside stakeholders may attempt to influence decisions, as do internal stakeholders through the existing power dynamics. Ideas come into play (such as mission conceptions, as introduced in chapter one) through the development of strategy options and the framing of these and other ideas. The decision-making process also differs from the organization theory model, being share rather than purely leadership driven.

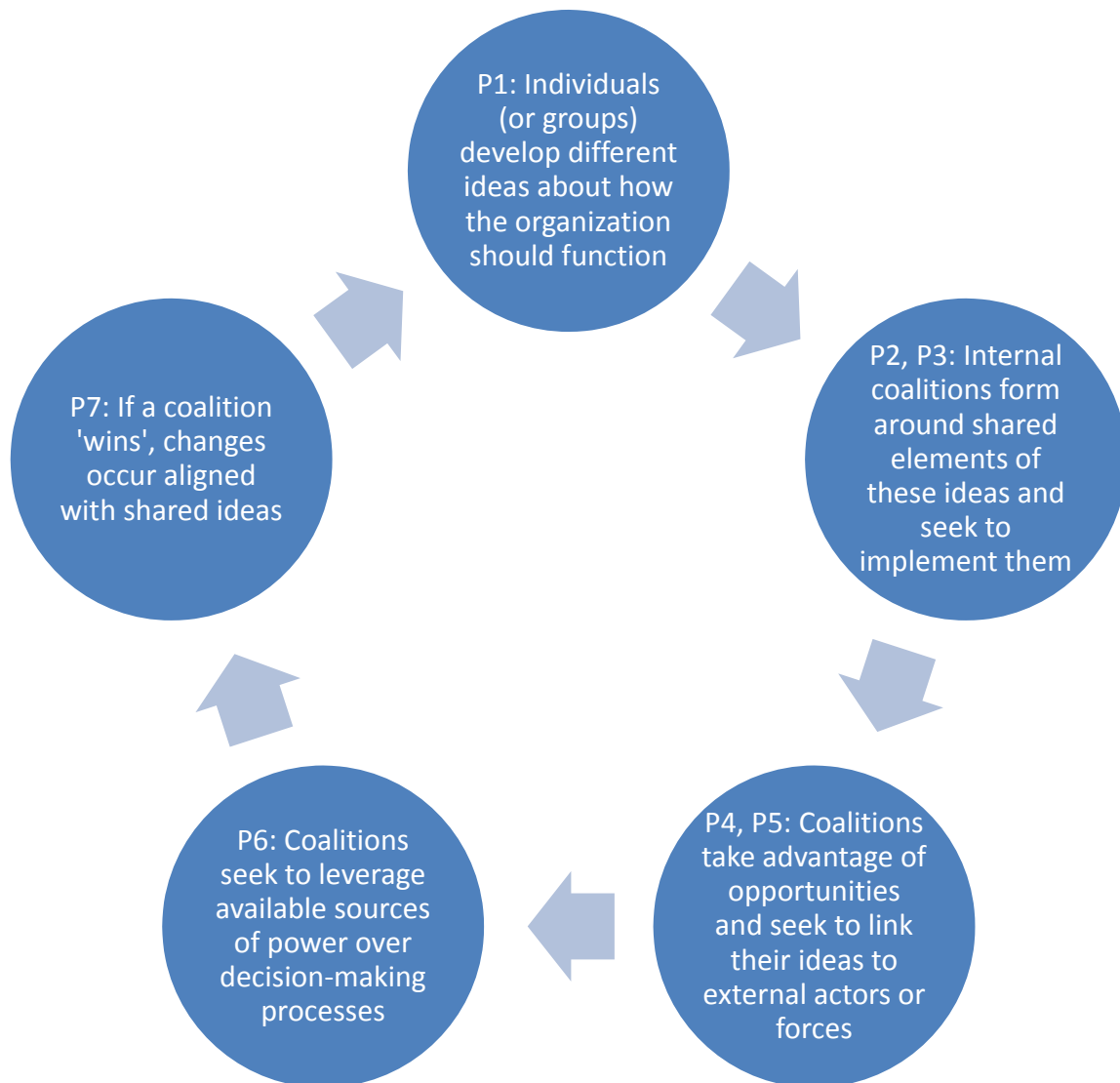
Figure 3: Advocacy and policy process model of change



Translating these theories to within organization level propositions

In examining the commonalities between the three bodies of theory around this shared decision-making process, a set of basic propositions that could function within individual organizations emerges (see figure 4). These propositions fall into a cycle, but one that is non-deterministic, where steps could repeat or happen out of order.

Figure 4: Change process cycle and propositions



The cycle would typically begin, albeit sometimes far in advance of any movement toward change, when individuals or groups within an organization hold or develop different central ideas. These ideas could be macro, mezzo, or micro levels ideas, as described earlier in the paper, depending upon how major of a change the individuals or groups wish to see, the

room for debate around central ideas present in the organization, and forms of new information that could help lead to these ideas. This leads to the first proposition:

P1: Individuals (or groups) develop different ideas about how the organization should function

At some point, individuals who hold different ideas strongly enough and see potential ways to change the organization to achieve them will seek to mobilize internally. Groups sharing similar ideas would have common purposes to pursue and have the incentive to work together, forming internal coalitions to pursue their ideas. These internal coalitions are not operating in a vacuum, but are opposing other internal coalitions and/or the status quo, which leads us to the second and third propositions:

P2: Internal coalitions form around shared elements of ideas

P3: Competition occurs between coalitions or with the status quo over which ideas to implement (or not)

Then the coalitions would seek to broaden support, expanding their internal membership, recruiting external supporters, or grafting onto environmental trends and/or outside resources. Alignment between particular ideas and supportive windows of opportunity, whether internal or external, make forming and expanding coalitions easier, and support efforts to 'win' a competition over ideas. Linking the ideas to external resources, actors, or other forces can also further efforts to 'win'. As a result, we would expect the coalitions to pursue both internal and external opportunities and linkages, leading to propositions four and five:

P4: Individuals or groups will take advantages of opportunities aligned with their ideas to help form coalitions, attract internal or external support, and implement their ideas easier

P5: Coalitions would link their favored ideas to external forces or actors

The internal competition over competing ideas, or against the status-quo, would require that members of coalitions, both individually and jointly, exercise any power they have or can gain over decision-making processes. This could take a variety of forms and need not be formal hierarchical authority, but leads to the sixth proposition:

P6: Coalitions would exert power in decision-making processes in support of ideas

If and when a set of ideas 'wins' the internal contest, organizational changes would then occur. Such changes can take a wide range of forms, including leadership, mission, strategy, structure, amongst other changes. These changes would align the organization closer to the 'winning' set of ideas, though the ideas need not be fully implemented or accepted. This leads to the final proposition:

P7: When a coalition 'wins' the competition over ideas, changes occur to align the organization closer to the winning coalition's favored ideas

Applicable contexts

For these theories to be applicable within a given organization, three elements must be present. First, there needs to be sufficient potential disagreement around guiding ideas. Second, there must be some sharing of decision-making power within the organization. Finally, there must be sufficient flexibility permitting the organization to change its guiding ideas.

These criteria are necessary, but by no means sufficient, criteria for these theories to hold.

Application of these theories would be even more plausible within organizations where these criteria are present more strongly, and there may be other elements of organizational context influencing the fit. Research testing this model must thus involve organizations illustrating these three characteristics, at least for periods of time studied, if not consistently.

Chapter Three: Methodology

As identified in chapter one, this dissertation addresses the question of what role do different interpretations of mission play in the processes by which nonprofits change? Two distinct models of these changes processes are identified by theory and are examined for fit with empirical results in the remainder of this dissertation, with some additional attention to particular individual theories. Organization theories describe a model of change wherein external pressures to change may be moderated by organizational characteristics before leaders decide whether and how to change. Widely used in prior nonprofit management scholarship, the isomorphic forces of institutionalism leading to similarity across organizations and loose-coupling of resource dependence that potentially ameliorate funder pressures, are also examined in their own right. An alternative model of change, adapted from global and national level theories of advocacy and policy processes, is of internal politics wherein coalitions form around shared mission conceptions, compete, and seek to shape change.

This dissertation takes a mixed-methods approach to the question. The quantitative portion examines panel data on 152 internationally active nonprofits over a period of up to 14 years. Through multiple logistic regressions, variables identified in theory are tested for correlation with the various forms of changes in organizations. The qualitative portion narrows in the focus to examine processes of change within individual nonprofits coming from the same basic population. This portion includes three case studies of nonprofits with recent histories of transformational change, and a fourth control case with greater stability. A process tracing methodology developed narratives of change within each organization. Analysis combining both the case studies and quantitative results is used to identify the processes by which

nonprofits change (not just mission but also leadership, strategy and structure), the role of mission conceptions, and fit between theory and empirical results.

The mixed methods approach enables different forms of data to examine the same research question, for triangulation between forms of evidence to strengthen or question findings, and to identify both correlated factors and potential causal mechanisms. The quantitative analysis, in examining a larger sample of organizations, can test for the presence of correlated factors predicted by the organization theory model of change. The case studies then un-package and examine the processes of change within individual organizations, allowing for the exploration of alternative explanations, such as the internal politics model of change or unexpected factors, and mechanisms by which specific changes occur. The general population of organizations and time periods studied mostly overlap, with case studies extending analysis of change a couple of years on either side of the panel data (with earlier changes just outlined as the organization's basic history rather than subject to detailed analysis) and including organizations that could arguably have potentially been sampled.

Methodological Lessons from Prior Literature

In assessing the relevant literature on nonprofit organizational change, guidance for conducting this dissertation appears. This guidance can take two forms: identifying underused forms of data or research methodologies and highlighting elements of exemplar work using common methodologies.

Three methodologies predominate prior scholarship in this area – (1) purely theoretical papers, (2) survey research, and (2) case studies – with a sprinkling of other methodologies

throughout. This predominance of a limited set of methodologies suggests a potential role for mixed methods research that combines the advantage of both larger sample sizes establishing patterns or testing theories with in-depth analyses or specific cases to further understanding of mechanisms and processes of change.

Theoretical papers that rely on literature reviews, logical constructions, and development of frameworks abound, with some examples (such as Brown & Moore, 2001; Edwards, 1999; Froelich, 1999; James, 2003; Moore, 2000; Tuckman, 1998) providing potential models for crafting theoretical aspects of this dissertation, such as the concept of mission conceptions from this chapter or the application of advocacy and policy process theories within organizations from theory chapter.

The widespread use of survey research in the nonprofit sector (Bart & Hupfer, 2004; Block & Rosenberg, 2002; Brown & Guo, 2010; Brown & Iverson, 2004; Brown & Yoshioka, 2003; Guo, 2007; Guo & Acar, 2005; Oster, 1996; Voss, Cable & Voss, 2000) is of limited applicability for the exploratory research on mission and other organizational change processes of this dissertation, though the types of variables used could inform quantitative analysis. In particular, Guo (2007) incorporates variables on organizational dependence of volunteers, age, size, industry/sector, and board composition and size to explain governance differences, suggesting factors potentially relevant for organizational changes.

Papers based on case studies include those covering a single organization over time (Barman, 2002; Chen, 2012; Hopgood, 2006; Jaeger & Beyes, 2010; O'Dwyer & Unerman, 2008), a small set (2-5) of cases at a single point in time (Guo & Musso, 2007; Padaki, 2000; Rugh, 1997; Young 2002), a small set over time (Abou Assi, 2012; Heyse, 2006), or a larger set (5-10)

at a single point in time (Brown & Iverson, 2004; Carman & Nesbit, 2012; Kearns, et al., 2012; Krug & Weinberg, 2004; Mosley, 2012). Exemplar articles amongst these cover the organizations studied in depth with well-written and informative narratives, explore topics with substantial nuance, and/or combine theoretical and empirical evidence in drawing conclusions, but rarely achieve all three. From these examples, this dissertation needs to be grounded in theory from the start, but open to alternative explanations or challenges to theories, covering a small enough set of organizations in sufficient detail to build compelling narratives and establish case-specific understandings, and have a nuanced approach to concepts such as mission or change that allow empirical results, rather than authorial priors, to guide conclusions.

The other methodologies in this prior literature also provide guidance, either for this dissertation or for follow-up work. Bolon (2005) uses content analysis on mission statements, establishing common patterns, which can be partially integrated into case studies to identify personal and dominant mission conceptions. Kaplan (2001) uses a variation on participant-observation, which he dubs 'action research', by consulting with organizations in the process of changing. This method holds too many problems for exploratory research such as this dissertation, but could be appropriate for testing findings that emerge, especially in the context of applying them to practice. Stone (1989) combines interview and organizational data to analyze nonprofit planning processes, and in the process identifies potential explanatory variables for the quantitative portion of this dissertation: age, size, region, and type/sector. Ostrower and Stone (2010) also use organizational data, in combination with survey data, to explore nonprofit governance, and include a range of potentially useful variables in their

analysis: the standard age, size and sector variables, but also percentages of funding from different sources, board composition characteristics, and whether the organization is undergoing a period of change.

Population of Interest

This dissertation is limited to a subset of the larger nonprofit or nongovernmental sector. Both identifying terms distinguish these groups by asserting what the organizations are not, but they are unified by existing to pursue particular collective or public purposes. Nonprofit is a U.S. distinction originating from federal and state laws, including a wide range of different organizational forms (Brody, 2006). Nongovernmental organization (NGO) is a term that originated with the UN charter (Martens, 2002), includes organizations that are neither governmental nor profit-seeking, and is primarily used in an international context. Unlike the domestic nonprofit context, NGO generally only refers to national or international scale organizations (Martens, 2002), with those focused in subnational units more often referred to as community-based organizations (CBOs) (Lindenberg & Bryant, 2001) or civil society organizations (CSOs) (Kaul, 2001), though these may also be referred to as community based NGOs or civil society NGOs (Vakil, 1997). At their core, both sets of organizations share a focus on pursuing a particular public (Brody, 2006; Lindenberg & Bryant, 2001; Minkoff & Powell, 2006) or collective (Martens, 2002) purpose.

For consistency, this dissertation uses the term nonprofit when referring to the organizations studied, though NGO would also be an accurate term (and is used in chapter 7's ActionAid International case study). The nonprofits studied are restricted to include only

charitable organizations (in the U.S. defined by the IRS as 501(c)3 organizations) that operate internationally. In addition, only larger, more established organizations are considered, further narrowing this group to those that generally have over half a million in annual revenues, have existed for around a decade or more, and have some formal presence in the U.S.

Identifying the extent of this population studied is problematic, with some variation in how these organizations can be categorized and inconsistent reporting. As of 2009, the National Center for Charitable Statistics estimated there to be over 1.5 million nonprofits, of which over 1 million fell into the IRS 501(c)3 category for charitable, educational, religious or scientific nonprofits (<http://nccsdataweb.urban.org/PubApps/profile1.php?state=US>). As of August 2012, over 19,000 total nonprofits were labeled as 'international' by their National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities, with over 16,000 falling into IRS code 501(c)3, of which over 13,000 filed annual reports to the IRS (mandatory for organizations with revenues over \$25,000), (<http://nccsdataweb.urban.org>). These organizations had mean revenues of \$2.4 million and assets of \$2.5 million (<http://nccsdataweb.urban.org>).

This larger population shrinks substantially under other estimates that look at more established nonprofits or NGOs that operate internationally. A 2006 study estimated 5,600 U.S. based international nonprofits with mean revenues of \$3.1 million (Kerlin & Thanasombat, 2006). Even in this smaller subset of organizations, only a quarter of the organizations had revenues exceeding half a million dollars. Charity Navigator, a ratings organization for nonprofits that examines only larger, more established organizations, included 547 organizations in its international category during 2012 (charitynavigator.org). Internationally, 3,500 NGOs had consultative status with the United Nations in 2012 (csonet.org), usually

indicative of being relatively large, established, and internationally active, though this includes organizations with legal presences in the U.S. The total population relevant to this dissertation then is somewhere between 500 and 3,500 organizations, most likely in the neighborhood of 1,500 to 2,000 nonprofits, if Kerlin and Thanasombat's estimate is taken and expanded to account for the sector's growth since 2006 (as seen in the Urban Institute's findings of the nonprofit sector's continual expansion and growth during the economic downturn <http://www.urban.org/publications/901542.html>). Still, the population studied in this dissertation is relatively small and shares distinctive characteristics, which would require any findings from it to be tested in other contexts to evaluate whether they hold elsewhere in the nonprofit sector, or amongst other forms of organizations.

By examining this specific subset of nonprofits – those with international activities, a formal American presence, relatively lengthy periods of existence, and relatively large budgets – causes implications for developing and generalizing from findings. This dissertation began with the intention to study nonprofits with a shared element of complexity, which are necessary for the existence and examination of processes of change. The other characteristics result from the use of an existing sample of organizations, conducted by the TNGO Initiative (http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/Moynihan_TNGO.asp) at the Moynihan Institute of Syracuse University's Maxwell School. The consequences of these research design choices will be examined in greater length elsewhere in this dissertation, but attention to the characteristics of the population being studied is important. Narrowing the population studied also raises potential challenges to the import of this research, albeit far less than an initial glance might suggest. This narrowed focus identifies a clear group of organizations for study, large

international nonprofits or transnational NGOs, generally Western or Northern based organizations with substantial funding, staff, and programs. Generalizing to other contexts likely requires future research, but this constituency plays important roles in international development and other cross-national concerns (Lindenberg, 1998; Brown & Moore, 2001).

Quantitative Portion

The quantitative portion of this dissertation uses logistic regression to analyze panel data on organizational changes. It starts with a sample of 152 transnational NGO that was created by the TNGO Initiative (Hermann, et al., 2010) and incorporates the quantitative coding of interviews conducted with senior leaders of these organizations. In addition, annual filings with the IRS (known as form 990s) for each nonprofit were accessed via guidestar.org and were used to manually create a panel dataset covering the period of 1997 through 2010. The TNGO Initiative data established a set of time-invariant organizational characteristics identified as potentially relevant by organization theories and prior nonprofit management scholarship. The annual filings provided measures of changes in leadership, mission, strategy, and structure along with theoretically predicted time variant organizational characteristics. A variety of models were then used to correlations between these characteristics and the different forms of change, including multinomial logits examining joint changes. Chapter 4 provides further detail on the selection, coding process, variables, and models, in addition to the findings from this analysis.

Qualitative Portion

Critical case (Yin, 2003) and extreme case (Seawright & Gerring, 2008) selection logics were used to identify potential cases, with final inclusion in the dissertation drawing from convenience in the form of facilitated introductions. Critical cases are those organizations most or least likely to exhibit the outcome being studied (Yin, 2003), while extreme case are those exhibiting the maximum variation in key independent variables (Seawright & Gerring, 2008). These techniques both provide leverage for exploratory research because the substantial variations lead to both positive and negative outcomes being of potential significance in building theory and gaining understanding, and provide the ability to explore potential causal mechanisms (Seawright, 2011).

Only nonprofits with international activities and a legal presence in the United States (not necessarily their primary headquarters) were considered for recruitment into this study, to align with the TNGO Initiative's sample. As this project examines four distinct forms of change – leadership, mission, strategy, and structure – that alternatively serve as both dependent and independent variables, the maximum variation of independent variables logic used to select three of the cases took mission change as the dependent variable.

The three cases selected according to this logic underwent substantial changes in leadership, strategy, and structure during the past decade, and were recruited without pre-existing awareness of the presence or absence of mission change. Two of these organizations used ad hoc change processes, the third a formalized process for changing leadership, strategy, and structure. The fourth critical case was recruited as a control case, absent substantial leadership or structure changes during the same period, with only minor strategic changes, and

uncertainty about the presence of mission change. Each case was selected from a different sub-sector or field of focus, to ensure that issue specific environmental changes would not bias the results of this project. Two of the cases could be considered 'medium-sized' nonprofits, with current budgets between \$10 million and \$15 million and around 50 staff each; the other cases fall to either side, with the control case being smaller on both criteria and the case with a formalized change process being larger by both measures.

Each case recruited for study in this project was approached after passing the basic inclusion criteria, and with facilitated introductions to the organization from colleagues. Two organizations – intentionally from different sub-sectors than the included cases – were approached for potential recruitment without such introductions, but elected not to participate. No organizations approached with a facilitated introduction refused participation in the case. Internal Review Board exemption status was received for this project prior to recruitment of cases. Each case recruited was made aware – via a senior manager – of the extent of planned data collection, means of protecting individual interviewees, and plans for mutual feedback, prior to commencement of interviews.

Data collection began with document review, of public reports, websites, and publications related to the individual cases. Potential interviewees were identified through examination of public documents and initial planning conversations with members of the organizations. Although primarily a non-random elite interviewing strategy, due to its benefit in identifying causal processes for individual cases (Tansey, 2007), individuals outside the organizations and from lower levels were also targeted. These groups included CEOs, board chairs, senior managers, board members, middle or junior level staff, former staff or board

members, and key outsiders such as individuals affiliated with funders or peer organizations. For three of the four organizations, site visits were conducted to their headquarters, and were accompanied by numerous interviews. The fourth was not visited due to its international headquarters and geographically dispersed leadership. For each nonprofit, at least 10 interviews will have been conducted before final analysis.

Each semi-structured interview began from a general protocol with 10 basic questions, as seen in table 1, below. None of the interviews actually followed the exact protocol, as individual conversations were altered as appropriate for the flow of specific discussions, to pick up on crucial pieces of evidence or perspectives held by specific individuals, to fit time availability, and to engage in follow-up questioning. Every single respondent was asked to give their ‘elevator speech’ – the very brief introduction to the nonprofit that would generally be given to those unfamiliar with the organization in 30 seconds to one minute – or the closest approximation, for outside stakeholders. Interviews lasted between half an hour and two hours, and were conducted in-person, over the phone, and via Skype. All individual interviews are confidential, and material from them is not directly attributed by name.

Table 1: Standard Interview Protocol

1. What first led you to get involved with <organization>? What element of the mission resonates most clearly with you?
2. When speaking with outsiders, how do you briefly describe the purpose of <organization>? –or– What is the elevator speech you tend to deliver?
3. What do you wish <organization> either did or did more?
4. What do you believe <organization> should stop doing or do less?
5. To what extent do you feel that the public descriptions of <organization> – ‘about us’ on webpage, introductory materials in mailings and annual reports, formal mission statement, etc. – reflects actual priorities and activities?
6. If you were editing <organization>’s mission statement, in response to any of the last three questions, what would you change? Why?

7. From your perspective, what has been the most important recent change at <organization>? What other recent changes do you feel have been important? Have you observed any recent opportunities for change that were not taken?
8. From your perspective, from where did <change> originate? What was necessary for it to happen?
9. Were there any disagreements about the change? What alternatives were suggested? How was the final change alternative selected?
10. Who was involved in the process of change? What form did their involvement take?
11. How did <change> happen? Did <change> force any resulting changes to follow?
12. Have these recent changes been taken into account in public statements about the organization?

Interviewees and others affiliated with the cases will be engaged in a process of feedback that provides another round of data collection and improvement of analysis. Full individual case narratives will be provided to mutually agreed-upon individuals within each organization, and to individual interviewees who request the opportunity to comment. This feedback can alter findings only through the provision of new evidence; individuals may request that direct quotes from them be excluded, but cannot make any other edits, though they are free to provide additional comments, opinions, and supporting documents that will challenge, support, and/or improve initial findings.

Variations in this methodology amongst the cases are minimal. The forms of documents available for each case differed, depending upon the availability of public reports, extent of outside or academic reporting on the organizations, and types of private documents shared. Each interview had its own character, and varied substantially in length and content, though within the general guidelines and design of the interviews. The nature of interviewees differed somewhat between cases, but only in the extent to which interviews with junior/mid-level staff, outsiders, and former members of the organization were conducted, as seen in table 8, below.

Table 2: Case study interviewees roles and document types					
Interviewees	AAI	MLI	PL	WFP	ALL
Senior Management	3	2	5	6	16
Mid-level/Junior Management or Staff	4	3	2	3	12
Board Members	0	0	6	3	9
External Stakeholders	0	1	0	2	3
Former Staff or Board Members	3	2	1	1	7
Total	10	8	14	15	47
Documents					
Annual reports/filings	27	14	25	21	87
Other internal documents	32	6	19	20	77
Books and booklength manuscripts	6		8		14
Journal articles (academic or trade)	14	6	6	7	33
News articles and press releases	3	1	11		15
Total	82	27	69	48	226
Other					
Draft comments	1	2	2	3	8

Timing, such as order of interviews and length of time between interviews differed, but all were conducted within a one year time period. Otherwise, there was substantial consistency between conduct of the cases.

Coding of all documents and transcripts uses a combination of manual and software coding. Initial identification of key passages and evidence is first identified manually, with only relevant material from printed documents captured for detailed coding. This manual coding provided the primary source of narrative development for individual cases. Then all electronic documents, transcripts, and key passages and evidence from print documents were imported into QSR's NVivo 9, for detailed coding. Codes include the range of critical variables considered, along with individual changes, events, or strategies unique to each nonprofit.

A process tracing methodology was used to develop narratives of change within each nonprofit. Process tracing requires identification of "diagnostic pieces of evidence" (Bennett,

2010, p. 208), triangulation from multiple sources to confirm a causal story (George & Bennett, 2005), and the development of a causal chain linking sequenced events together (Bennett, 2010; Checkell, 2008). Statements from individual interviewees and passages or pieces of data from internal and external documents provided the diagnostic pieces of evidence on how changes occurred, what factors influenced them, and how various changes fit together. The multiple changes observed in each provide within case variation and fit together in the broader narratives. Factors influencing these changes, both unique and common, were identified and discussed separately in each case.

Comparative analysis across cases and methods

Comparisons within cases (Gerring, 2004), between cases, with the quantitative analysis, and with theory (George & Bennett, 2005) were used to establish cross-cutting findings. The quantitative analysis can only examine the organization theory model of change, but can test for correlations between potential independent variables and the different forms of change. Separate models analyzing the changes, independently and jointly, also can identify variations between the forms of change, in particular identifying whether mission changes diverge from leadership, strategy and structure changes. The cases then examine both models, examining whether any potential fit identified in the quantitative analysis is replicated in individual changes and organizations, and to identify the mechanisms by which changes occur, which could help guide future research seeking to make causal claims. Bringing these forms of evidence together cannot serve to reject either model, but may either which model, or which specific theories, best fit the data and would be recommended for future testing.

As exploratory theory-building research using a sample of convenience, albeit one meeting a specific selection logic and set of shared characteristics, these findings are not intended to explicitly test establish theories or make causal claims. Instead, these findings are intended to explore potential models of change, inform future research, and identify lessons from particular cases that may inform practice.

The Cases

The four cases consist of ActionAid International (AAI), The Marshall Legacy Institute (MLI), ProLiteracy Worldwide (PLW), and Water For People (WFP). PLW and WFP are the two most similar organizations, on grounds of relative size and formality of change processes. AAI stands out as being larger and more formalized. The control case, MLI, is the smallest of the four, and underwent far less change during the period studied.

AAI is the Johannesburg, South Africa based international secretariat of a federation of national organizations. ActionAid began as a UK based child sponsorship agency that became a coalition with other European organizations. During the 2000s and 2010s, it underwent substantial change, becoming the first nonprofit to relocate to a developing country, radically shifting power internally, and refocusing on a human rights based approach to development. Three different strategic plans, CEOs, and governance structures have held sway during this period, including a 2012 complete reorganization of staff.

MLI is an Arlington, Virginia based nonprofit focused on post-conflict reconstruction. It began with work in a couple related sub-sectors but quickly narrowed its focus to landmine eradication, primarily through establishing national landmine detection dog capacity in affected

countries. During the 2000s and 2010s, a single CEO has led the organization, along with only three different board chairs, each of whom remains on the board today. Unlike the other cases, it has not undergone transformational change during this period, with only moderate strategy changes and occasional staff turnover. The MLI case required some additional methodological considerations; in addition to being the control case, it previously employed me. As a result, the case needed to be approached with greater reflexivity. Prior to beginning interviews, I conducted a self-reflection along the lines of the standard interview protocol. This information was used to identify potential biases and guide lines of inquiry for other interviews; I did not use personal knowledge as a form of data for constructing the case narrative, requiring confirmation of preexisting views from interviewees or documents.

PLW is a Syracuse, New York based literacy organization. It began with a merger between two leading organizations, Laubach Literacy International and Literacy Volunteers of America. In addition the 2002 merger establishing the new organization, PLW underwent several other transformational changes, including the hiring of a new CEO in 2008 and a move from its long-time headquarters in 2012. Over the years, PLW has deemphasized its international programs, originally the primary focus of Laubach Literacy International, and taken on a greater advocacy role within the sector.

WFP is a Denver, Colorado based water and sanitation organization. It was established by members of the American Waste Water Association as a charity for establishing clean water in developing countries. During the 2000s and 2010s, the organization made transformational changes to its programmatic approach, shifting from individual projects to locally based

programs to comprehensive, long-term impacts. In addition, the organization changes CEOs three times, completely reorganized its board structure, and grew rapidly.

An argument exists for how or when each case could have been part of the population sampled in the quantitative analysis. Both WFP and AA's US entity were eligible for selection when the sample was being constructed. PLW would not have been categorized as 'international', but one of its predecessor organizations, Laubach Literacy International would have been. MLI may or may not have been in the population sampled; in 2005 it only had four prior years with over \$500k in public support and may have just missed the cut-off for inclusion. If resampled at any point from 2006 to today, it would have fallen into the population sampled. As a result, all four organizations can be considered similar enough to the quantitative sample to be drawn from the same theoretic population.

Human Subject Protection

This dissertation took several measures to protect human subjects, and involve their feedback in the research. A 4 year IRB exemption was authorized on March 26, 2012 from Syracuse University's Office of Research Integrity and Protections. The terms of that exemption (see appendix 1) were used as a starting point for these measures. Permission was obtained from senior leaders of cases prior to commencing any interviews. Individual interviews could elect whether or not to participate, when to end the interview, whether to answer particular questions, and whether the interview was recorded. Their comments were treated confidentially, with recordings and transcripts available only to the researcher and a transcriber. Full drafts of the case studies were shared with members of the organizations

studied prior to them being shared externally, to ensure accuracy and garner additional feedback and information. On a case by case basis, material from this research will be made available to the studied organizations in a manner that makes it useful to them.

Chapter Four: Quantitative Analysis

A nonprofit's original mission, setting forth its specific public purpose, is a historical artifact of the individuals and broader context in place at its founding. Creation of this mission may derive from desires to fill a need unmet by the public and commercial sectors (Hansmann, 1987; Steinberg, 2006), represent a specific constituency or concern (Clemens, 2006), fulfill an entrepreneur's vision (Block & Rosenberg, 2003), or pursue a distinct set of values (Padaki, 2000). Over time, the individuals and context present at the nonprofit's founding will change, and decisions will be made whether or not to change the mission in response. In complementing the rest of this dissertation, the following chapter examines factors correlated with nonprofit mission change.

As previously discussed in chapter two, the organization theory model of change describes a process in which external forces exert pressures on nonprofits to alter their mission, while characteristics of the organization alter its susceptibility to these forces. Theories of institutionalism introduces isomorphic forces that lead organizations to emulate others, but also processes of institutionalization that make organizations less susceptible to such forces (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Characteristics of the organization, its board, and its management both influence the creation of such institutions and establish linkages through which the isomorphic forces can exert pressures. Resource dependence theory focuses on the pressures resulting from outside organizations having control over potential resources, and the loose-coupling between an organizations and these sources that enable resistance to pressures to change (Pfeffer, 1978). From this theory and prior nonprofit management scholarship using it (Froelich, 1999; Guo, 2007; Miller-Millesen, 2003; amongst others), funding from governments,

corporations, and institutional donors is seen as exerting the most pressure on organizations, while diversification of revenues and other sources limiting such influences. The financial situation of an organizations and nature of its work can also influence its susceptibility to these pressures. Testing these two theories, and their common model of change, is thus the primary focus of this chapter, with the models and variables used deriving from them.

This chapter analyzes panel data covering 152 nonprofits over a period of 14 years. The dataset began with a sample and corresponding interviews conducted by the Transnational NGO Initiative at Syracuse University. Quantitative codes of these interviews established time invariant or slow moving characteristics of the organizations, including their boards, informed by institutionalism. Annual filings with the IRS (form 990s) provided variation over time and introduced variables for financial characteristics, informed by resource dependence. The combination of these two forms of data established a custom panel data set that addresses mission changes over time.

Logistic regression of this data identifies factors correlated with mission change. This model tests for year and sector specific environmental pressures, differing financial contexts of individual nonprofits, and the effects of organizational and board characteristics. In addition to this basic model, this analysis includes variations using a more restrictive measure of mission change, incorporating organization fixed effects, and examining other changes in conjunction with mission.

The results of this analysis find little support for the organization theory model of change. For mission change, marginally greater support exists for resource dependence propositions, while other forms of change exhibit strongly roles for institutionalism's predicted

variables. Evidence from this analysis thus sets mission apart as distinctive, finds institutionalism and resource dependence to have little predictive power for mission change, and identifies causal complexity from multiple forms of change. Rather than rejecting the organization theory model of change, this analysis challenges its assumptions of overt pressure while keeping open alternative explanations that modify these theories, identify causal mechanisms, or address less tangible influences of environmental pressures and organizational characteristics.

Methodology and data

The sample of organizations used in this chapter is the set selected by the Transnational Nongovernmental Organization (TNGO) Initiative at Syracuse University. Housed in the Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, the TNGO Initiative (http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan_tngo.aspx) conducted a series of interviews with leaders at 152 internationally active NGOs (or nonprofits). This group of organizations was selected through stratified random sampling that sought to capture a representative sample of nonprofits (from the population studied) according to size of budget (small <\$1m per year; medium \$1m<\$10m; large >\$10m), sector (conflict resolution, environment, human rights, humanitarian relief, and sustainable development), and financial health (Hermann, et al., 2010). A total of 334 organizations were eligible for inclusion, meeting criteria of: Charity Navigator evaluated as of 2005, listed as 'International', an IRS code 501(c)(3) organization, at least four years of annual IRS form 990 filings, over \$500,000 in public support, and not be foundations, hospitals, media venues, or universities (Hermann, et al.,

2010). Then 152 such organizations were drawn through the stratified sampling, with replacement, and their leaders were interviewed during the project between 2006 and 2008 (Hermann, et al., 2010), with questions covering a variety of topics including accountability, collaboration, communication, effectiveness, governance, and leadership (<http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/tngo/Research/>).

To develop a panel data set using this sample, annual IRS 990 forms were captured for each organization, covering all years with available on GuideStar.org's webpage and archive of nonprofit annual reports and filings¹. GuideStar.org provided the author educational access to the documents and various research tools available from the website, enabling the capture of this information. As a result, the panel data is drawn from almost 2000 annual filings, covering the period of 1997 through 2010. The form 990 underwent a revision in 2008, with both interactions containing the same variables captured in this panel data, though in different locations. Some of the organizations have missing reports, or a set of reports starting at a later date, though over two thirds of them have 13 or 14 years of reports, as shown in table 1 below.

# of years	# of nonprofits	# of 990s
14	50	700
13	65	845
12	24	288
11	10	110
10	1	10
9	1	9
8	1	8
Total	152	1970

¹ Due to confidentiality concerns, this full dataset cannot be shared publicly, as individual organizations could be identified from the data. I plan to share the data with the TNGO Initiative after completion of the dissertation to which this paper is an element; further dissemination or sharing of the data would be constrained by the project's conditions (IRB restrictions and promises to respondents).

From the 990 forms, two coders (the author and a colleague) captured a range of organizational data, covering a range of time variant organizational characteristics. The TNGO Initiative interviews provided a set of time invariant organizational characteristics, and a set of sub-sectors to capture some environmental changes. The year of each filing were used to create year fixed effects, to represent additional environmental changes. In 2008, the IRS made several changes to the form 990, which created the opportunity to capture board, employee, and volunteer numbers in the most recent years, which were not possible in previous years; due to lack of variation over the entire timeframe, these variables are not being used in this analysis. The full set of variables captured through this coding is presented in tables two through six, below.

The dependent variable examined in this chapter, mission change, is drawn from the brief description of each nonprofit's purpose included in the annual 990s. No other content in the 990s is as clearly tied to mission, and other documents, such as annual reports, are not released annually and publicly by many organizations, nor are they consistently archived and available. Through comparisons between current and prior years, two forms of mission change were recorded: (1) **language changes** in the statements that include the addition, subtraction, or substitution of key language about the values, purposes, targets, or activities pursued by the organization, and (2) the subset of these changes deemed **substantive** due to identifiable changes in the limitations around which activities the organization can pursue. Both of these measures pick up far more changes than would examination of formal mission statements, but still might miss some changes or capture language changes with limited impact on the interpretation or achievement of the nonprofit's mission, though this latter is less likely with

the substantive measure. As a result, the substantive measure of change is closer to capturing actual changes in the dominant mission conception, and not just changes in how somebody in the organization describes it while filling out the reports, but relies on more judgment calls in the coding process. Thus, this chapter incorporates analysis of both measures to look for patterns of similarities and divergence.

Group	Variable	Details	Source
Mission	Language Change	Substantial language change in description of purpose	Form 990s
Mission	Substantive Change	Language change alters the range of activities permitted by the mission	Form 990s

Three other forms of organizational change were also captured, and used in multinomial and ordered logistic regressions to examine patterns with other forms of change accompanying mission changes. Strategy changes are captured from the listing of programs and related funding in the forms, with four resulting measures. If any of the three or four programs listed change, and is a new description or title than previously used by the organization, this was coded as a **new program**. If the program receiving the most funding shifts between years, this is coded as a **new priority**. The least restrictive model of strategy change is if either occurs, while the most restrictive is for both to occur in the same year. This measure only covers program changes and not other strategic shifts, may pick up shifts in how the organization describes its programs rather than its actual focus, and may miss strategy shifts that occur within rather broad programmatic descriptions. Two forms of leadership change are also captured, **executive** where the chief executive office, executive director, or president shifts, and **board chair** changes.

Group	Variable	Details	Source
Strategy	New Program	New program created	Form 990s
Strategy	New Priority	New program receiving most funding	Form 990s
Structure	Fiscal Year Change	Name or address changes	Form 990s
Structure	Name Change	Organization goes by a different name	Form 990s
Structure	City Change	Headquarters moves to another city	Form 990s
Structure	State Change	Headquarters moves to another state	Form 990s
Leader	Executive Change	CEO/ED/President changes	Form 990s
Leader	Board Chair Change	Board chair changes	Form 990s

Finally, four structural changes are captured: **fiscal year**, **name**, **city**, and **state**. Fiscal year changes are captured in the first year differing from prior years, which can be during a partial year report closing the gap between prior and new fiscal years. This change represents a likely substantive overhaul of financial and accounting systems for the organization. Name changes are captured when the organization shifts its name or adopts a ‘doing business as’ second name, but does not consider minor changes such as adding or dropping words like ‘the’ or ‘incorporated’. These changes could be considered strategic rather than structural changes, due to likely overhauls to branding and fundraising efforts, but the extent to which these changes can impact much of the organization and reflect other system changes, they are closer to fiscal year changes or physical moves. City moves are recorded whenever an organizations moves its physical address to another city, while the more restricted version captures between state moves that are not part of a within metropolitan region move (i.e. moves between Northern Virginia, DC, and the Maryland suburbs are considered city and not state moves). All of these changes are recorded in the year in which evidence of them is first available; in some cases organizations do not report some of these pieces of information for some years and when the gap ends, new leaders, programs, or mission language are reported. The frequency of

these gaps is very low, with only a handful of such cases, except for board chair changes, where there are 39 such changes (just over 10% of these changes) with an average two year gap. For consistency, change is assumed to occur in the latest year, rather than some point in-between.

Table 4: Time Variant Organizational Characteristics		
Variable	Details	Source
Government funding	Percentage of revenues from government grants	Form 990s
Earned/investment income	Percentage of revenues from non-donation/grant sources	Form 990s
Largest funding source	Percentage of revenues from a single subcategory of funding	Form 990s
Revenues	Total revenues during current year, in millions	Form 990s
Net assets	Total net assets during current year, in millions	Form 990s
Net assets to expenses	Ratio of net assets balance to current year total expenses	Form 990s
Largest program expenses	Percentage of expenses dedicated to largest program	Form 990s
Deficit	Negative revenues less expenses for prior year	Form 990s

A range of time variant characteristics cover a range of financial variables predicted by organization theories and prior nonprofit management scholarship (see table 4). To examine funding streams, the percentages of funding from government and from other non-public sources are included as separate variables, with the percentage dedicated to public sources as the comparison variable and excluded from the models. Government funding is generally predicted to lead to changes and earned and investment income to isolate organizations from pressures to change. A measure of funding concentration is also included, in the form of the percentage of revenues from a single subcategory of funding. Seven subcategories of funding were captured in the form 990 coding: direct public, indirect public, events (all 'public' funding), government grants and contracts (the only government sources), programs service, member dues, and all other (earned and investment income).

Some models used in this chapter include organizational fixed effects. Others intentionally did not, to explore a range of time invariant organizational characteristics (see

table 5). Generally predicted by organizational theories (primarily institutionalism) or prior nonprofit scholarship, these included age, the types of activities, key stakeholder types involved in the organization, and characteristics of the board (which are presented in their own category in results).

Variable	Details	Source
Age	Years since founding	Guidestar.org
Advocacy	Conducted advocacy efforts, independent from service	TNGO Interviews
Service	Provides direct service, independent from advocacy	TNGO Interviews
Faith	Organization is faith-based	TNGO Interviews
Members	Organization has a formal membership	TNGO Interviews
Volunteers central	Organization self-reports volunteers as central	TNGO Interviews
Staff on board	Staff representatives on board	TNGO Interviews
Founder on board	Founder on board	TNGO Interviews
Connected board	Board members connected to government/politics	TNGO Interviews
Formal board	Formal board of directors	TNGO Interviews
Active board	Board is self-reported as active	TNGO Interviews

Finally, the model used in this chapter includes two sets of proxies for environmental changes. First, those without organization fixed effects includes sub-sector variables, with variables for the environmental, human rights, humanitarian, sustainable development, and conflict resolution sub-sectors. Second, year fixed-effects are included to account for changes in the general funding and operating environment facing nonprofits, beginning with 1999 (with 1998 as the base year).

Variable	Details	Source
Y1999-Y2010	Year fixed effects	Form 990s
Environmental	Environmental sub-sector	TNGO Interviews
Human rights	Human Rights sub-sector	TNGO Interviews
Humanitarian relief	Humanitarian Relief sub-sector	TNGO Interviews
Sustainable development	Sustainable Development sub-sector	TNGO Interviews
Conflict resolution	Conflict Resolution sub-sector	TNGO Interviews

The basic model tested thus takes the form of:

$$\text{Mission Change} = \text{Other Changes} + \text{Time Variant Organizational Characteristics} + \text{Time Invariant Organizational Characteristics} + \text{Sub-sector} + \text{Year}$$

Logistic regression is used to analyze this data using different variations of this model, such as replacing time invariant characteristics with organization fixed effects or multinomial and ordered logits incorporating other forms of change. Incomplete data, in the form of no financial data, led to only three additional observations being discarded from the sample. Missing data from single variables (such as lack of information about the current CEO) was treated as no evidence of change, rather than being excluded. Changes in financial measures were evaluated from the previous complete observation for the three discarded observations, while any reports from a partial year (due to shifts in the accounting period) were annualized to calculate the total budget variable.

The panel data used in this chapter covers a variable range of years, as reflected in table 7. 2000 through 2009 each include at least 90% of the organizations, 1998 and 2010 cover over 75%, and 1997 just under 60%. Variations are due to newer organizations, differences in filing periods and/or accounting periods (especially for 1999 and 2010 years), changes in accounting periods (which explains 2004 having more observations than nonprofits in the panel), some years with no public copies of form 990s available, and a small number (3) removed from the sample for lacking financial data. On average, almost 13 years of data were available for each nonprofit, including the initial two years that established baselines and prior period changes.

Year	Observations
1997	90
1998	126
1999	142
2000	147
2001	151
2002	150
2003	148
2004	153
2005	145
2006	147
2007	150
2008	151
2009	151
2010	116
Total	1967
Average	12.9

Frequency of Changes	Total Changes
Mission Language	266
Mission Substantive	131
Any Program	431
New Program	318
New Priority	271
Both Programs	158
Any Leader	492
Executive	175
Board Chair	375
Both Leaders	117
Any Structure	93
Fiscal Year	32
Name	18
City	46
State	14
Two Structures	3

The forms of changes examined in this chapter differed in their frequency and are reflected in table 8. Changes in leadership occurred most frequently, and were recorded for both executive (CEO/ED/President) and board chair positions. Strategy changes, in the forms of different programs being listed or receiving the most funding, were second most common. Mission language changes also occurred relatively frequently, with substantive changes – a subset of the language changes that implied changes to the organization’s activities – about half as frequent. Various structural changes, including shifts in the fiscal year, organizational name, and address changes – with between state moves being a more intensive subset of city moves – were far less common. In only three instances did multiple strategy changes occur within the same organization in a single year. The comparative frequency of these forms of change could also suggest the relative extent to which these changes alter organizations, which would place mission changes as more transformative than

strategy or leadership changes, but less impactful than the structural changes captured in this data.

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics				
Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Government funding	0%	88%	9%	18%
Earned/Investment Income	-217%	212%	8%	18%
Public funding	-112%	317%	83%	24%
Largest funding source	-112%	317%	85.0%	19%
Revenues (millions)	-1	1508	42	137
Net assets (millions)	-112	488	3	27
Net assets to expenses	-573%	1736%	9%	65%
Largest program expenses	0%	105%	63%	25%
Age	-1	78	24	15

Examination of the financial variables (table 9) reveals patterns amongst the organizations in this sample. Most depend primarily upon public funding, with high concentrations of a single funding category. Government and earned/investment income have relatively similar mean values, but the latter includes wider extremes, due to the role of financial adjustments and investment losses that can alter individual years. Compared to the entire population of nonprofits (see chapter three), these organizations are relatively older and larger. Net assets for these organizations are on average small, indicating that most do not have an appreciable endowment. The average organization concentrates almost two thirds of its spending upon a single program, and receive 85% of their funding from a single category.

Time invariant or slowly varying characteristics (table 10) are reported by number of organizations (out of the 152 total), and show high frequency of involvement in advocacy and service activities with the latter more frequent. Some organizations included both activities. Faith-based and membership organizations fall just under a third of the sample, while just over

a third consider volunteers central. Most of the boards are formal and/or active, while far fewer include staff, founders, or politically connected members.

Table 10: Frequencies	
Characteristic	# Orgs
Advocacy	82
Service	118
Faith	42
Members	47
Volunteers central	62
Staff on board	27
Founder on board	21
Connected board	11
Formal board	102
Active board	87
Environmental	22
Human rights	21
Humanitarian relief	32
Sustainable development	64
Conflict resolution	13

The data from this sample includes implications for analysis, interpretation of the results, and generalization. The large potential swings in the financial variables will tend to result in very small parameters, but are not easily converted to other formats. The changes and concentrations take the form of percentages, already contracting the range of potential variation. To make estimated coefficients more comparable to other variables, size measures have been converted to millions of dollars, rather than natural logs. Since the sample excluded organizations with lower annual budgets, using the natural log of these values would eliminate substantial variation, especially for revenues, which outweighed potential benefits of this conversion. The relatively small number of organizations with politically connected board members and in the conflict resolution sector would raise potential concerns about predictive power, were this panel data not covering a period of up to 14 years, expanding the number of

observations including these variables. For generalization, the size and age of these nonprofits stands out from the sector as a whole, leading this analysis to cover larger, more established organizations, which must be considered when drawing lessons from it.

Results

Three distinct sets of results from this analysis provide insights, individually and jointly. First, logistic regressions of mission change examine it in isolation. Then multinomial logistic regressions pairing mission with leadership and strategy change examines joint and individual changes. Finally, ordered logits examine the number of total changes, with mission as just one of several potential forms. This section of the chapter briefly addresses the results of each model individually, and then follows with more extensive interpretation of results that considers all of the models together.

The basic model of mission change tested in this chapter uses the broader measure of mission language changes for its dependent variables, testing groups of financial, organization, board, sector, and year variables (see table 11). An alternative version of this model uses organizational dummy variables as fixed effects, which eliminates the organization, board, and sector variables due to their time invariance. These two models are also run for the stricter measure of mission change, those coded as substantive (see table 12).

Table 11: Mission Language Change

	Variables	Model One			Model Two		
		B	SE		B	SE	
Financial	Largest Funding Source, %	-0.013	0.007	*	-0.001	0.009	
	Government Funding, %	-0.006	0.006		-0.006	0.011	
	Earned/Investment Income, %	-0.010	0.006	*	-0.010	0.008	
	Revenue, Millions	0.000	0.001		-0.002	0.002	
	Net Assets, Millions	-0.006	0.006		-0.002	0.008	
	Net Assets to Expenses	0.000	0.001		0.000	0.001	
	Largest Program Expenses, %	-0.004	0.003		-0.007	0.005	
	Prior Year Deficit	0.052	0.154		0.047	0.175	
Organization	Advocacy	-0.078	0.175				
	Service	-0.273	0.231				
	Faith Based	-0.059	0.174				
	Membership	-0.434	0.178	**			
	Volunteers Central	-0.009	0.156				
	Age	-0.004	0.006				
Board	Staff on board	-0.163	0.204				
	Founder on board	0.066	0.212				
	Connected board	0.256	0.270				
	Formal board	0.220	0.164				
	Active board	0.114	0.158				
Sector	Environmental	0.075	0.768				
	Human Rights	0.026	0.784				
	Humanitarian Relief	0.150	0.801				
	Sustainable Development	0.145	0.781				
	Conflict Resolution	-0.051	0.791				
Year	1999	-0.584	0.411		-0.587	0.435	
	2000	-0.167	0.381		-0.122	0.407	
	2001	-0.408	0.390		-0.421	0.417	
	2002	-0.597	0.405		-0.654	0.431	
	2003	-0.450	0.396		-0.447	0.423	
	2004	-0.411	0.391		-0.424	0.418	
	2005	-0.534	0.406		-0.523	0.435	
	2006	-0.411	0.396		-0.402	0.426	
	2007	-0.552	0.407		-0.561	0.436	
	2008	1.502	0.345	***	1.720	0.382	***
	2009	-0.071	0.378		-0.091	0.409	
2010	-0.735	0.449		-0.799	0.479	*	
Organization Fixed Effects	No			Yes			
Observations	1664			1664			
Cox & Snell R Square	0.462			0.502			

Table 12: Mission Substantive Change

	Variables	Model One			Model Two		
		B	SE		B	SE	
Financial	Largest Funding Source, %	-0.009	0.009		-0.001	0.014	
	Government Funding, %	-0.005	0.008		-0.006	0.016	
	Earned/Investment Income, %	-0.008	0.008		-0.009	0.013	
	Revenue, Millions	-0.001	0.001		-0.003	0.002	
	Net Assets, Millions	-0.002	0.008		0.004	0.011	
	Net Assets to Expenses	0.000	0.001		0.001	0.001	
	Largest Program Expenses, %	-0.007	0.004	*	-0.018	0.008	**
	Prior Year Deficit	-0.147	0.211		-0.121	0.247	
Organization	Advocacy	0.045	0.238				
	Service	-0.465	0.314				
	Faith Based	-0.15	0.236				
	Membership	-0.359	0.242				
	Volunteers Central	0.071	0.209				
	Age	-0.009	0.008				
Board	Staff on board	-0.328	0.288				
	Founder on board	0.209	0.280				
	Connected board	-0.086	0.393				
	Formal board	0.331	0.226				
	Active board	0.231	0.217				
Sector	Environmental	-1.351	1.061				
	Human Rights	-1.123	1.073				
	Humanitarian Relief	-0.772	1.105				
	Sustainable Development	-0.847	1.073				
	Conflict Resolution	-1.540	1.094				
Year	1999	0.141	0.534		0.318	0.561	
	2000	-0.110	0.551		0.084	0.579	
	2001	-0.287	0.563		-0.098	0.593	
	2002	-0.095	0.552		0.099	0.585	
	2003	-0.509	0.601		-0.252	0.630	
	2004	0.002	0.542		0.208	0.574	
	2005	-0.474	0.601		-0.302	0.636	
	2006	0.054	0.543		0.292	0.577	
	2007	-0.657	0.630		-0.497	0.660	
	2008	1.639	0.477	***	2.094	0.522	***
	2009	-0.046	0.558		0.041	0.590	
2010	-0.383	0.633		-0.325	0.664		
Organization Fixed Effects	No			Yes			
Observations	1664			1664			
Cox & Snell R Square	0.598			0.632			

For mission language changes, the year 2008 is positively correlated with changes, while the percentage of funding from the largest single source, percentage of funding from earned or investment sources, and presence of a formal membership. When organization fixed effects are included, membership by nature is not analyzed, 2008 is unchanged, and both financial variables no longer have statistically significant correlations. In this model, 2010 demonstrates a statistically significant negative correlation with mission changes.

Substantive mission changes show different patterns of correlated variables, though 2008 remains positively correlated, both with and without organization fixed effects. The percentage of expenses dedicated to the largest program is negatively correlated with substantive changes, with the coefficient and significance strengthening when organization fixed effects are included.

Despite including fewer statistically significant independent variables, the model of mission substance changes includes a higher estimated R Square than that of mission language change (0.462 vs. 0.598), with the addition of organization fixed effects unsurprisingly raising each (to 0.502 and 0.632, respectively). The differences in these model's ability to predict change is more likely an indicator of less noise – coded changes having no true impact – in the substantive measure than the language measure of mission change.

Examination of the variable groups provides additional information, and suggests that stronger evidence exists for resource dependence than institutionalism (see table 13). In a multi-step logistic regression of mission language changes, only the year and financial variable groups demonstrate statistically significant chi-squares when added to the model, though organization characteristics fall just outside a 90% confidence interval. The year variables and

financial variables contribute the most explanatory power to the models (.031 and .014 to R square, respectively), with board and sector variables providing almost no explanatory power (.001 to R square) and organization characteristics (.003 to R square) only minimal contributions. A model with just the year and financial variables would provide most of the explanatory value of the full model, at least for mission language change, and suggests that little support emerges from the groups of variables for institutionalism.

Table 13: Contribution of variable groups

	Chi-square	df	Sig.	Cox & Snell R Square
Years only	1065.40	12	0.000	0.444
Add financial variables	45.98	8	0.000	0.458
Add organization characteristics	9.99	6	0.125	0.461
Add board characteristics	4.99	5	0.417	0.462
Add sectors	0.42	5	0.995	0.462
Full model	1126.78	36	0.000	0.462

	Chi-square	df	Sig.	Cox & Snell R Square
Financial variables only	1008.21	8	0.000	0.426
Add organization characteristics	10.23	6	0.115	0.429
Add board characteristics	3.68	5	0.597	0.430
Add sectors	1.19	5	0.946	0.431
Add years	103.47	12	0.000	0.462
Full model	1126.78	36	0.000	0.462

Multinomial logits that combine mission with leader (table 14) and strategy (table 15) changes extend the analysis of mission change by examining its interactions with these other forms of change. For each, the standard model is used, including financial, organization, board, sector, and year variables to estimate each type of change, with the comparison group being organization years with neither form of change.

Mission changes in both multinomial models show some similarities to results for analysis of mission language or substance changes, but also some key differences. In the leadership and mission change model, only mission changes are negatively correlated with formal membership and positively correlated with 2008, emulating mission language change results, except for the lack of statistically significant financial variables. Joint mission and leadership change picks up one earlier result, with a negative correlation to 2010, and finds two new statistically significant variables, with a positive correlation to a deficit and negative correlation to 2002. From the model testing strategy and mission changes, results for both changes again pick up negative correlations with the percentage of expenses to the largest program and a formal membership, along with a positive correlation to 2008. They also add a negative correlation with service activities. In this model, mission changes without accompanying strategy changes, which are more likely to be purely language changes that do not significantly alter the organization's activities, have a counterintuitive relationship with 2008, finding a negative correlation, while also finding negative correlations to 1999 and 2010.

The two multinomial models have similar or greater explanatory power (estimated R squares) than the mission substantive change model (0.593 for leader and mission and 0.673 for strategy and mission vs. 0.598). As with the difference between language and substantive mission changes, some of this greater explanatory power is caused by differentiating between the extent of changes, with both changes likely being more impactful than solo changes. These models also benefit from more statistically significant independent variables, especially for the leadership and strategy, though not mission, changes.

The other forms of change in each model, when occurring absent mission changes, demonstrate far more statistically significant explanatory variables. Leadership only changes are positively correlated with earned/investment income, largest program, age, active boards, and the sustainable development sector and negatively correlated with total revenues. Strategy only changes have the same positive correlations and are also positively correlated with government funding. These changes are negatively correlated with service activities, the environmental sector, 2004, 2010, and all board characteristics except for having a founder on the board. The results for leader and strategy only changes suggest that the organization theory model of change may fit those models better than for mission change.

The final model of change is ordered regression for the number of changes (see table 17). For this dependent variables, all forms of change are added together, including the various structure changes. Mission language and substantive changes are each counted separately, so organizations making substantive mission changes would start with two changes in the measure. Very few organization years include five or more changes (see table 16), so a separate model collapses higher numbers of changes into a category of four plus.

Table 16: Number of changes

All values			Max of 4		
#	Obs	Pctg	#	Obs	Pctg
0	858	47.2%	0	858	47.2%
1	542	29.8%	1	542	29.8%
2	245	13.5%	2	245	13.5%
3	99	5.5%	3	99	5.5%
4	52	2.9%	4+	72	4.0%
5	15	0.8%			
6	2	0.1%			
7	2	0.1%			
8	1	0.1%			

Table 17: Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for Number of Changes

	Variables	All changes			Max 4 changes		
		B	SE		B	SE	
Threshold	0 Changes	1.135	2.443		1.103	2.443	
	1 Change	2.539	2.444		2.507	2.444	
	2 Changes	3.634	2.444		3.602	2.445	
	3 Changes	4.584	2.446	*	4.552	2.446	*
	4 Changes	5.912	2.453	**			
	5 Changes	7.311	2.483	***			
	6 Changes	7.823	2.510	***			
	7 Changes	8.923	2.639	***			
Financial	Largest Funding Source, %	0.002	0.004		0.002	0.004	
	Government Funding, %	-0.001	0.004		-0.001	0.004	
	Earned/Investment Income, %	0.000	0.004		0.000	0.004	
	Revenue, Millions	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	
	Net Assets, Millions	0.001	0.002		0.001	0.002	
	Net Assets to Expenses	0.000	0.001		0.000	0.001	
	Largest Program Expenses, %	-0.014	0.002	***	-0.014	0.002	***
	Prior Year Deficit	0.114	0.097		0.114	0.097	
Organization	Advocacy	0.024	0.112		0.024	0.112	
	Service	-0.545	0.148	***	-0.545	0.148	***
	Faith Based	-0.094	0.110		-0.093	0.110	
	Membership	0.036	0.108		0.037	0.108	
	Volunteers Central	0.030	0.100		0.031	0.100	
	Age	-0.001	0.003		-0.001	0.003	
Board	Staff on board	-0.097	0.128		-0.097	0.128	
	Founder on board	0.096	0.137		0.098	0.137	
	Connected board	0.171	0.182		0.172	0.182	
	Formal board	0.050	0.102		0.049	0.102	
	Active board	-0.037	0.101		-0.037	0.101	
Sector	Environmental	-0.572	0.168	***	-0.572	0.168	***
	Human Rights	-0.488	0.172	***	-0.488	0.172	***
	Humanitarian Relief	0.000	0.125		0.000	0.125	
	Sustainable Development						
	Conflict Resolution	-0.601	0.210	***	-0.600	0.210	***
Year	1999	0.018	0.263		0.021	0.263	
	2000	-0.075	0.261		-0.075	0.261	
	2001	-0.099	0.258		-0.097	0.258	
	2002	-0.274	0.261		-0.273	0.261	
	2003	-0.273	0.261		-0.270	0.261	
	2004	-0.345	0.260		-0.343	0.260	
	2005	-0.272	0.262		-0.269	0.262	
	2006	-0.001	0.259		0.002	0.259	
	2007	-0.103	0.260		-0.099	0.260	
	2008	0.989	0.256	***	0.996	0.256	***
	2009	0.113	0.260		0.116	0.260	
2010	-0.396	0.277		-0.395	0.277		
Cox & Snell R Square		0.075			0.075		

The two ordered logit variations barely differ, arriving at almost identical coefficients for independent variables, which is to be expected given only 20 organization years (out of 1664) that include five or more changes. These models echo results from the other rounds of analysis, with negative correlations for service activities and largest program expenses and a positive correlation for 2008. These models also find negative correlations between number of changes and the environmental, human rights, and conflict resolution sectors.

Interpreting the results from these analyses becomes clearer when viewed across all models. The financial characteristics, especially the negative correlations between change and the percentage of expenses dedicated to the single largest program, provide partial support for resource dependence theory, but are also notable for no mission-related findings related to government funding. Organizational and board characteristics find some limited support for institutionalism, though for mission are most noteworthy for the lack of findings. Sector and year variables provide evidence relevant to external pressures, and include the strongest mission-specific finding, the spike in changes accompanying 2008.

Financial characteristics

The results provide modest support for the impact of financial characteristics on the likelihood of nonprofit mission changes, though with some predicted variables not having statistically significant results or with results having the opposite influence than expected. The percent of expenses dedicated to a single program is negatively correlated with mission change in both models of mission substantive change and simultaneous shifts in mission and strategy. These two measures of mission change – that coded as substantive or accompanied by strategy

change – constitute more substantial changes than language changes absent a clear impact on allowable activities or not accompanied by other changes. The negative correlation between this variable and more changes, from the ordered logit, also confirms this pattern, with the expectation that more transformative changes involve multiple changes in a single year. These results would thus lead to an interpretation that organizations focused heavily on a single program would be less likely to make major mission changes but may make minor alterations in mission language at rates similar to other nonprofits. Similarly, a deficit in the previous year is positively correlated with both mission and leadership change, providing evidence of this factor leading to major but not minor changes.

In one model, the variables for the percent of funding from earned/investment sources and from the single largest funding source were negatively correlated with mission language change. The first result aligns with resource dependence theory expectations, as organizations with earned and/or investment income sources are expected to better resist pressures from funders to change. The other result goes against this theory, which would expect organizations with concentrated, as opposed to diversified, funding sources to be more easily influenced by funder pressures. In the multinomial logit models, earned/investment income was positively correlated with changes in just leadership or just strategy, but not with mission only or joint results. Instead of challenging the applicability of resource dependence theory, this latter finding may indicate an indirect role for isomorphic pressures from institutionalism, where greater dependence on earned and investment income sources may lead to management and/or boards drawing more from corporate backgrounds. Individuals from these backgrounds

may have norms of more frequent leadership and strategy changes, especially in the pursuit of short-term financial performance.

Other financial variables either do not have any statistically significant findings, or are relevant only to non-mission forms of change. Despite widespread concern with government funding and its impact on nonprofit missions, it is positively correlated only with strategy only changes. This result suggests that pressure from government appears in starting up and/or prioritizing of different programs, and not in mission. Revenue is negatively correlated for leader only changes, but for no other measures of change, which could be interpreted as supporting institutionalism's prediction about larger organizations being more unlikely to change.

Organizational characteristics

Just two organizational characteristics, and no board characteristics, show statistically significant correlations with mission changes, though many more show correlations with leader or strategy changes. A formal membership is negatively correlated with mission language, mission but not leadership, and both mission and strategy changes. Approval from a formal membership may be necessary for mission changes, or member pushback may be avoided by sticking to boilerplate language, either of which would lead to fewer language changes, even if the organization changes how its mission is interpreted and achieved. Service activities are negatively correlated with mission and strategy change, along with both leader only, strategy only, and multiple changes. Service delivery activities tend to involve greater infrastructure than advocacy and other activities, which could make organizations undertaking these activities

less nimble in making changes. Though a major focus of institutionalism for building institutions that resist isomorphic pressures, age is statistically significant just for leader only and strategy only changes, and not mission. Moreover, it is positively correlated with change, despite the proposition that it would reduce the likelihood of change. This is a complicated variable to interpret, as the sample studied explicitly excludes newer organizations, and this counter-intuitive result cannot be assumed to apply to start-up organizations.

No board characteristics are relevant for mission, but all except for founder on board are negatively correlated with strategy only changes, while an active board is positively correlated with leader changes. One interpretation of these differing results is that nonprofit boards pay greater attention to or have greater impact on leadership and strategies than mission changes.

Other environmental pressures

Sector specific environmental characteristics do not appear to influence the frequency of mission changes, though some sectors show statistically significant correlations for other forms of change. The sustainable development sector is positively correlated with leadership only changes, while the environmental sector is negatively correlated with strategy only changes, in their respective multinomial logits. The environmental, human rights, and conflict resolution sectors are all negatively correlated with multiple changes.

The leadership only change could reflect norms or pressures in the sustainable development sector that would lead organizations to change their CEOs or board chairs while not also changing their mission. Term limits of executive or board chairs, if more predominant

in the sector than others, would lead to such a pattern. Interpretation of the negative correlations for the other sectors is less clear, but demonstrates either contextual or normative climates that discourage strategy or other changes.

Environmental influences related to specific years, with the notable exception of 2008, are not heavily supported in the results. The year 2008 is positively correlated with mission change in all models, except for both changes in the mission and leadership multinomial logit, where it is not significant, and mission change only in the mission and strategy multinomial logit, where it is negatively correlated. The year 2010 is negatively correlated with mission change in three models, while 1999 and 2002 are negatively correlated in a model each. The years 2004 and 2010 are also negatively correlated with only strategy changes in that multinomial logit.

For 2008, there are two potential explanations for this result: responding to the economic downturn or a reaction to form 990 changes. If the economic downturn primarily drove this result, we would expect to see increases in 2009 and 2010 while also finding similar patterns amongst other forms of change. Instead, we see positive correlations only in 2008, and only for missions, leading to the conclusion that the new 990 is the prevailing cause of alterations to the language used in describing nonprofit missions.

The new version of the form 990s does not alter the information requested related to nonprofit missions, but places it more prominently. The increased rate of changes accompanying the 2008 advent of this new form suggests greater attention being placed on the accuracy of statements on the organization's exempt purpose and mission. A limitation of the measure used in this study is that it captures only the language used to describe a nonprofit's

mission, with the alignment between this language and the dominant mission conception in place at a given point in time dependent on other factors such as the attention individuals completing the reports pay to the language around mission – instead of just cutting and pasting previous language – and desires for how to portray the organization publicly. Changes to how the mission is interpreted or pursued, or even to the mission itself, may thus not be picked up in annual filings. As a result, the changes observed in 2008 may actually have occurred in prior years, with the language used in the annual filings only then being corrected. The negative result for mission alone in the mission and strategy multinomial regression would not reject this conclusion, instead suggesting that in organizations altering their mission language, attention is also being paid to programs to ensure their accuracy as well.

The negative correlations between 2010 and both mission and strategy changes may also be further evidence of this reporting change. Those organizations that caught up to prior changes by adjusting their language in 2008 would be less likely in the years immediately following to have language shift as a result of new employees taking over the reporting duties. Since some organizations may have delayed adopting the new forms until 2009, the competing impacts of delayed use of the new forms and lessened need for altering the language could have led to neutral or not statistically significant findings. But for 2010, far fewer organizations would be using the new form for the first time, leaving with just the potential for reduced frequency of change.

Discussion

Findings from this analysis, despite some limitations, provide new information about nonprofit changes, and make suggestions for future research exploring this topic. Most notably amongst the chapter's findings is the relative ineffectiveness of organization theories and prior nonprofit management scholarship in explaining mission change, with greater support available for these theories amongst leadership and strategy changes. The divergence between mission and other forms of change, and worse fit between the organization theory model of change and mission, provide evidence of its distinctiveness. Two final implications also emerge that are less explicitly tied to the dissertation's research question: that boards may exercise limited mission oversight and that changes to the IRS's form 990 improve mission-related reporting by nonprofits. Three limitations restrict this research: (1) measurement challenges, especially for mission change, (2) potential causal complexity from inter-connected changes, and (3) generalizability from the sample to larger populations of organizations. Drawing on these findings and the limitations alike, direction for further research, such as that conducted in the remainder of this dissertation, emerges.

Implications of key results

From this chapter's results, mission changes appears distinctive and less readily predicted than other forms of change. Very few financial or organizational characteristics show statistically significance correlations with mission change, yet in the multinomial model both leader and strategy changes have many potential predictors. Shifting to a narrower measure of mission that ignores some purely language changes does not make change more predictable,

suggesting that other processes or variables are at play. The distinctiveness of nonprofit mission change observed in this chapter challenges binomial measures of it, and argues for the value of more nuanced understandings of mission, such as the dominant and personal mission conceptions introduced in chapter one.

For mission change, there is limited support for the organization theory model of change, with mildly stronger evidence supporting resource dependence. Widespread concern with government funding shifting nonprofit behavior is not supported. This lack of evidence cannot be considered a repudiation of this concern, and may be an artifact of the sample. Much of the domestic nonprofit literature draws from social services nonprofits, which are highly dependent on government funding. Nonetheless, similar concerns are expressed in the international NGO literature, as discussed in chapter one, and are not supported by these results. The results do show potential resistance to change emanating from earned or investment income sources and from heavier focus on a single lead program.

Institutionalism is more readily apparent in the results related to leader and strategy changes, though also is only partially supported. Given the sources of data used in this research, characteristics of management that would vary susceptibility to isomorphic pressures could not be included in the models, leaving a potential outlet for this theory untested. These forces could also impact organizations more indirectly, which would make them even less readily measurable in such models. Other forms of research, such as the case studies in later chapters, could investigate these potential outlets for institutionalism.

On the whole, then, organizational theories demonstrate little predictive power for mission change and more for other forms of change. This result indicates that a unique

character to missions that might be better addressed with other theoretical lenses. Given the importance of other changes, it also requires that further study delve into potentially complicated causal relationships of overlapping changes.

The complete absence of statistically significant relationships between board characteristics and mission changes when these same variables have some relationships with other forms of change is notable. Despite the perception that mission oversight resides with boards (Axelrod, 2005; Miller-Millesen, 2003), this lack of result suggests that boards play less of a role in changing missions than would be predicted, perhaps due to unawareness of their role (Young, 2003) or management ending up exercising greater authority (Miller-Millesen, 2003; Ostrower & Stone, 2006). For this dissertation, this would suggest that management conceptions of mission factor far more heavily in processes of change than the board's, even with active boards, the presence of founders, or other characteristics expected to influence nonprofits.

The consistent positive correlation between 2008 and nonprofit mission changes strongly suggests that the new IRS form 990 led to those completing the documents paying closer attention to how they describe their exempt purpose, mission, and key programmatic activities. This does not necessarily mean that revised language more accurately captured the dominant mission conception in place, as the language changes may have served more of a marketing purpose, especially with more widespread availability and use of these forms by organizations such as Charity Navigator and GuideStar. Nonetheless, the frequency of these language changes in the year the revised form was introduced suggests greater attention to mission, at least by those completing the forms. For potential donors and others outside of

nonprofits reviewing the forms, mission related content has become easier to find, and is more likely to be up-to-date following organizational changes. This attention to mission did not necessarily originate with the IRS plans to redesign the form, but emerged from public comment. “Commentators consistently asked that the organization be allowed to “tell its story” up front and throughout the form” (IRS, 2008, p. 2). Regardless, it places greater visibility on mission and influenced the reporting behavior of nonprofits.

Limitations

Measurement of variables in this project, especially mission change, leaves room for criticism. All of the forms of data are self-reported, either through interviews or form 990 filings. Most of the variables from the 990s are relatively clean measures of finances or obvious changes; mission change is not. Ideally, a more informative and consistent statement of mission and purpose would enable for greater accuracy in identifying changes. Nonetheless, the basic description of purpose deemed significant enough to include in the annual filing is a significant piece of information; changes in it are significant, if not necessarily always of the same significance. Intentional creation of two separate variables for mission change – one reliant on greater coded judgment than the other – attempts to address this problem by culling out as a change those shifts in language that changes the types of activity permitted by the exempt purpose language used in the 990. The lack of time variation amongst the variables from the interviews, and the employee, board, and volunteer counts, makes those characteristics less useful for analysis, as some or all of them would have varied over time for individual organizations and thus afforded greater precision. These variables cannot be

systematically captured from the form 990s, making it impossible to use both a fixed effects model and address many key organizational characteristics. If anything, other annual reports would introduce greater variation in frequency and accuracy of such information due to the rarity by which these reports are publicly available and the wide disparities in the information reported in them; this precludes their use to address these measurement challenges.

The greater predictive power of the multinomial models suggests the potential for causal complexity between various forms of change. The multinomial models capture concurrent changes, but changes in prior periods could influence later mission and other forms of change, with potential diversity for directions of causality between the different changes or delays in their implementation or reporting. Though this causal complexity rules out the ability to comfortably make causal inferences, it does not rule out the value of statistically significant correlations observed in the results.

Five characteristics stand out from the sample used in this analysis that could potentially impact generalizations: age, focus, legal status, nationality, and size. Each of the organizations included was at least five years old at the time of selection, generally received over \$500,000 in public support per year, was considered an international nonprofit, had IRS 501(c)3 status, and headquarters in the U.S. (though some were affiliates of federations located in other countries). Applying these findings to organizations that differ from these criteria may be limited by the extent of these differences. Much younger or smaller organizations may show different patterns of change, especially if life-cycle views of organizations hold true. The contexts of nonprofits in other legal categories, or of other organizational forms, differ substantially from those covered by 501(c)3 status, and thus may have different processes of change and

potentially influential factors. Even within this category, organizations fitting into other subcategories than international can be expected to have different environments, such as social service nonprofits where government plays a far larger role in financing their activities. Finally, the environment of organizations located in other countries may alter processes of change, too. As a result, the analysis in this chapter could be used in future research to test samples covering different populations of organizations, but cannot be assumed to directly translate.

Future research

Future analysis with the data could extend this research in three ways. First, more complex multinomial regression models or models with changes lagged over longer periods of time could be developed from individual case observations of change orders, testing these relationships. Second, analysis of the impact of these changes upon financial performance could address a research question not included in this dissertation, but relevant to concerns about nonprofit change: effectiveness of these shifts. Finally, an alternative form of analysis may be attempted that takes a logical, rather than probabilistic, approach to identifying factors influential in organizational change. Such an approach, likely in the form of fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (Ragin, 2008), does not provide the same reliability for potential causal inference as a logistic regression, but can identify patterns of necessary and sufficient conditions for groups of similar organization years that undergo, or not, changes.

Of more immediate relevance is how this analysis ties into the broader dissertation's mixed-methods examination of the processes by which nonprofits change. The limited support for organizational theories' role in mission change requires testing of alternative theories, while

the greater support for these theories in other changes raises the possibility of seeking to identify directions of causality and causal mechanisms within individual cases. With these predicted variables providing limited explanatory value, openness to alternative explanations and factors is a requirement for additional elements of this dissertation. The inter-relation of changes supports the dissertation's focus shifting from purely examination of mission change to a broader range of organizational changes. Mission's divergent character also supports broadening the understanding of this term, considering its potential roles as both outcome and causal factor, and makes the case for continued research.

Chapter Five: Water For People Case Study

Water For People (WFP) is nonprofit in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector with programs in Central America, South America, Sub-Saharan Africa and India. Founded in 1991 by leaders of the domestic water industry, WFP spent its first decade undertaking individual water and sanitation construction projects throughout the world, often at the impetus of donors or volunteers. In the past decade, WFP has changed dramatically, first shifting to long-term programs in specific communities within a smaller number of countries, then testing several innovative approaches, and most recently making their approach focused on reaching all members of the communities served indefinitely, with a tagline of 'Everyone, Forever'.

WFP's substantial changes in strategy and interpretation of their basic mission have been accompanied by a range of other major changes, including leadership, structure, and revenue base. From its 1991 founding until 2003, WFP functioned as a relatively small organization with revenues of less than \$2 million. During the period of 2003-2007, these revenues saw a sudden spike and then plateauing, with revenues ranging between \$3 and \$5 million. Since 2007, revenues have grown by rates of 20% to 50% each year, exceeding \$13 million in 2011. CEO changes in 2002, 2007, and 2008 have been followed by a complete overhaul of board governance structures and membership in 2009. Other personnel, structural, and strategic changes have occurred throughout the decade as well. In light of the transformational changes in the organization over the past decade, WFP makes an excellent case study for examining how nonprofits change.

Methods

In keeping with the basic case selection methodology of this project, WFP was selected due to the substantial level of organizational change during the past decade. Changes observable just from annual form 990s included multiple CEO and board chair changes, substantial board member turnover, and rapid growth; from annual reports, substantial changes in strategy and a complete overhaul of the board are also readily apparent. As part of the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector, WFP faced a different sector-specific environment than other cases in this dissertation. Finally, a facilitated introduction was available to the organization, helping secure access.

Permission to study WFP was provided by the current CEO, Ned Breslin, after brief e-mail conversations; an initial phone conversation helped sketch out logistics for the study. Ned recommended a set of initial interviewees, including heads of each department, a range of other staff, board members, and outsiders with a helpful perspective. He also sent out introductory e-mails to board members and outsiders, most of whom positively responded and agreed to participate in interviews. Participation, by staff, board members, and outsiders alike, was completely at the option of individual interviewees, their comments were kept confidential, and they could choose which questions to answer or to end the interview at any time. Around half of the interviews were conducted during a site visit to the Denver, CO headquarters, including some via Skype or phone. The remaining interviews were conducted remotely over Skype and phone. Interviews were conducted according to the standard project protocol. In all, 9 staff, 4 board members, and 2 outsiders participated in interviews.

Document review, primarily completed before the interviews, included 30 annual and quarterly reports, 9 other internal documents, and 7 scholarly articles.

The narrative and findings developed from this case study drew from analysis standard to this dissertation, through a process tracing methodology. Though interview transcripts and documents were entered into NVivo and a coding system developed, the narrative from this case study was developed iteratively through examination of entire transcripts and documents rather than selected codes. The timeline developed for the narrative's core was created prior to initial interviews, used to prompt questions about major changes and timing, updated after completion of the interviews, and further refined following examination of transcripts. This current draft is being shared with interviewees at WFP and other select members of the organization for feedback. Following completion of this feedback process, further information will be provided about how this information was incorporated into the final narrative and findings.

Narrative

Water For People (WFP) began as the charitable outlet for members of the American Water Works Association (AWWA), the main association for the water industry in the U.S. Three key leaders in the association – Ken Miller, Wayne Weiss, and John B. Mannion – wanted to move the industry toward guaranteeing safe water for all, and thus sought to create an internationally-oriented nonprofit that would draw on the expertise and financial support of those in the North American water sector (WFP website). After several years of planning by AWWA's International Affairs committee, including a feasibility study by John Kalbermatten and

an ad hoc planning group started in 1989, WFP was founded in 1991 (WFP website). A sister organization, Water For People – Canada, was founded in 1995 (WFP website) as a fundraising arm. Much like WaterAid, a United Kingdom based nonprofit that began with strong ties to industry (http://www.wateraid.org/uk/about_us/history/default.asp; [Water for People Interview 1 \[W1, W3, W6\]](#)), WFP relied heavily on AWWA and its various member organizations. Local chapters raised money for individual water and sanitation projects, often selecting the sites for the work, and often contributed volunteer labor and expertise (W7). WFP occupied offices in the AWWA building continuously from its founding (W7), but are moving to a new location in April of 2013 (W5). For about the first decade of WFP's existence, its staff was on AWWA's payroll (W6, W7), and until 2010, its board was almost entirely comprised of individuals affiliated with AWWA and other water industry organizations (W6).

A Decade of Change

In 2002, WFP hired a new executive director, Steve Werner, who took over from Paul Sobiech. Two years later, the organization set a new record high in revenues generated, almost tripling their funding from \$1.7 million in 2003 to \$4.5 million in 2004. In addition to building a net assets cushion for the organization, this fundraising breakthrough allowed WFP to expand its programs, replace substantial turnover amongst the senior leadership (W3), and hire a first ever director for international programs. A committee within WFP, which included members of the program staff who would report to the new director, sorted through applications, and could not find the ideal candidate (W3, W5). Then a resume arrived from a WaterAid country director that matched up well with the expertise and background sought for the position (W3, W5).

Interviews confirmed the mutual fit for the position (W6), leading to a hiring decision late in 2005.

In January of 2006 Ned Breslin joined WFP as the first international programs director (W5) with an agenda: to transform WFP from an externally driven project based organization to a community responsive program model of service (W6). Working with the other headquarters program staff and in-country staff who shared this common vision, Ned Breslin convinced the senior leadership and board to support this change. Program staff, in particular, were concerned about the limited long-term impact of the individual project model (W5), a concern shared more broadly in the international water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector (W6, W14). The scattered approach of the project model prevented effective monitoring (W13). WFP's reputation was of being far more reactive than strategic, undertaking individual projects at the request of board members or other supporters with limited advance planning (W3). Field staff in the five eventual core countries – Bolivia, Guatemala, Honduras, India, and Malawi – became key members of the coalition, providing both local knowledge and connections along with energy and passion for longer-term, more comprehensive efforts (W6). This strategic change ended up with WFP shifting from claiming efforts in 44 (W6) or even over 100 countries (W15), often one time well or sanitation construction projects, to five country programs focused in specific communities underserved by other water and sanitation NGOs (W13). Headquarters program staff also reorganized, shifting from overseeing types of projects to geographic regions (W3). By 2007, this programmatic focus clarified, centering on serving individual districts (W8).

A major concern in this transition was maintaining the support of AWWA (W13), its local chapters, and other members of the water industry, the key financial and volunteer supporters of WFP. Previously, individual projects often originated with individual board members, local chapters, or other groups of supporters who had specific geographic interests and a desire to contribute funding and skilled labor. “People would fundraise for a particular community, and people wanted their money spent on that community” (W13). Under the program model, unrestricted funding became more important (W5), as tying donations to specific projects would no longer be workable. WFP needed to keep its prior supporters while getting them to shift the manner in which they contributed, both financially and with labor. The organization kept its critical supporters informed of the change, and at Ned’s instigation, established the World Water Corps to involve volunteers and supporters in its second major change, extensive monitoring and evaluation of programs.

Ned Breslin and his team instilled an emphasis on monitoring and evaluation into their programs, seeking to track programs long after initial construction work was completed, making it “a core investment of the organization” (W6). “We’re going to go out into the field every year, at a time when water is under greatest stress, so at the height of the driest season, before the rains. And let’s see what we’re doing, what we are doing well, what we’re not doing well” (W6). “The question is not do you have problems, the question is can you fix them? And can you fix them fast enough that people don’t need to revert to alternative sources?” (W6). “Nobody monitors. Everyone says they monitor but they really don’t. Very few organizations monitor long term impact” (W6). “We’d better know what works and what doesn’t work” (W6). Supporters from the domestic water industry wanted to be involved, and not just as

donors (W6). “Monitoring is a pain in the ass. I mean it’s not easy to do and everyone complains about it” (W6). WFP was able to kill two birds with one stone by tying this expert volunteer labor into the intensive process of monitoring its programs. A small group of staff established the World Water Corps, with program staff Kate Fogelberg and Wende Valentine heading up individual aspects of the planning and implementation (W5). The logic of this approach was questioned, both inside and outside the organization, due to the risks inherent in providing funders direct access to information about performance, unfiltered by the organization (W6). Nonetheless, significant support led to the program starting, and over time the contention evaporated completely. Initial evaluations found some promising results, including that 97% of WFP’s post 1998 projects in Honduras were still functioning in 2007 (Fogelberg, et al., 2008).

Changes to the strategic planning process also accompanied the programmatic changes. Prior to 2006, five year strategic plans were created at headquarters, and then operational plans were created to align field level efforts with the strategies (W5). The new process shifted to creation of strategic and operational plans concurrently, bringing together field staff, headquarters program staff, and partners more closely (W5). Over time, even this strategic planning process would fall short, once “the staff had really gotten ahead of the board and a head of the strategic plan to a large extent”, especially in the field (W9). Later strategic plans would focus more on making the central aims align with the advances already being made in the field (W9). “In the past four and a half years, we have really streamlined our strategy” (W13).

Substantial change continued in the following years. Steve Werner announced his plans to resign, leading to a national search for a new CEO. The search for a new CEO led to a brief appointment that lasted less than a year, before WFP's board of directors decided to make another change (W7). Either the board approached Ned Breslin (W6) or he approached them (W7), about taking over leadership of the organization. He was appointed as Acting Executive Director in 2008, and then CEO in 2009.

Meanwhile, the board of directors decided to expand the number of country programs. Fundraising success and increased staff capacity led the board to desire a larger footprint (W7). Rather than the random growth under the project model (W6), careful planning was used to identify how WFP would expand its efforts. Twelve (W7) or fourteen (W6) potential countries were identified to add to the previous core group. Program staff conducted desk reviews on each country, and a series of fact-finding missions followed. WFP's staff provided their recommendations to the board, following a strategy of building upon existing regional expertise (W6). The board mostly concurred, adding programs in the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Rwanda, and Uganda, with only the Dominican Republic program falling outside the staff recommendations, and today receives little or no funding (W15). "Somebody [on the board] was pushing for Vietnam, it was like 'you can't do that, you don't have relationships there'" (W13). The larger footprint of 10 countries is subject to some criticism, including that "it feels like the work is overly spread out," with room for a lot more work in existing countries and even communities (W10). Despite growth prior to the expansion, sufficient funding was not yet in place to bring efforts in the new countries up to a similar level as existing countries (W8).

Already deeply involved in the organization, Ned Breslin hit the ground running, albeit with some bumps in the road while adjusting to more of an executive rather than program management role. Since 2007, WFP set new records for fundraising each year, quickly growing from \$3 million to \$5 million in annual revenues between 2004 and 2007 to \$6.5 million in 2008, \$8.9 million in 2009, \$11.3 million in 2010, and now over \$15 million a year (form 990s, W7). Substantial employee turnover accompanied this period of change, as WFP shifted into an aggressive pattern of growth, testing alternative approaches to achieving its fundamental purpose and taking on a thought leadership role in the sector. This growth was intended to be disciplined, with a focus on identifying and securing long-term, less restricted, and larger individual funding sources (W9).

In 2009, Elisa Speranza took over as board president from Frederick Elwell, planning to confront structural board issues. Large and primarily appointed through formal agreements with various water industry groups, WFP board membership failed to include the range of backgrounds that Elisa Speranza felt were necessary to support Ned Breslin moving forward. Prior to this reform, the board was composed of 31 seats filled by affiliation with various water industry organizations and only three at large seats (W6, W7, W9) and meeting at AWWA's annual conference (W7). The board governance structure was copied from AWWA's, and was more appropriate for an association than a charitable nonprofit (W9). Nomination to serve on the WFP board was often a reward for service to AWWA and other organizations, and became almost ceremonial, with potentially half never donating to WFP (W9). A multitude of committees drew on board and non-board volunteers alike, demanding significant time from staff (W9).

Advised by governance consultants, a committee of board members designed completely new board structures and systems (W9). Instead of a gradual approach, board members uninvolved in the planning recommended an immediate and comprehensive restructuring (W9), with all of the board members except officers resigning in 2010 (W7, W9). “I think that was a bit fearless by the board themselves ... saying, ‘I think it’s time, and I know that, if it means I’m not a part of this anymore’” (W14). Some reapplied for membership on the now smaller board capped at 15 members, while individuals from a range of non-water industry backgrounds were selectively recruited (W7, W9). There was some discussion over how big to make the board, and one seat has remained vacant ever since the reorganization, keeping the board even smaller than permitted under the new bylaws (W9). Board responsibilities were also overhauled, with a shift from direct involvement in projects and minor fundraising events to a greater focus on traditional oversight and other nonprofit board responsibilities (W7, W9). These changes accompanied the gradual professionalization of the staff, with board leadership wanting staff to handle more of the key work and decision-making in areas such as fundraising (W7, W9). New expectations were developed for board membership, including universal donations, and covering own expenses for board membership related travel, including once a year meetings in a program country (W7, W9).

Careful dialogue with supporters was a key focus during the governance overhaul, to prevent alienating the various associations, corporations, and individuals from the water industry contributing to WFP (W6). The sector is still viewed as the “core foundational rock” (W6) for WFP, even after substantial increases in the variety of funding sources, with a handful of board members still drawn from the industry (W7).

The first year following the board reorganization left the board focused primarily upon coming to grips with their new governance structure, and disengaged from fundraising (W12). A committee for communications and fundraising recently formed, seeking to reengage the new board in these activities (W10), albeit in a different form than earlier board fundraising efforts. Governance overhaul created an internal window of opportunity. The new ideas present on the board established the potential for trying out and expanding projects that would follow, and a subsequent rebranding.

New Initiatives

Throughout this period of change, WFP began exploring a variety of activities that fell outside of the traditional approach to water and sanitation work. WFP set out to create an environment that embraced uncertainty and admitted the need to test different solutions (W6). With a Gates Foundation grant, WFP undertook a “sanitation as a business” program to explore the possible roles of local enterprise development to create sustainable access to sanitation. “Sanitation as a business” began with the realization that local masons considered nonprofits, and not members of the communities, their customers, making long-term sustainability problematic (W6). “It started as one thing, has grown into something totally different” (W13), including identifying ways that communities members can generate income from waste (Fogelberg, et al., 2010). WFP intentionally took gradual approaches to this and other programs, using careful planning in the “first year, which is really a critical year to develop these projects” (W1), including hiring individuals with business, rather than nonprofit, backgrounds. Negotiations and outreach to establish local financing and sustainment of water

and sanitation facilities took on an increased importance, with the goal of making programs not just maintainable, but also replaceable, by communities. WFP is also studying private sector alternatives for water, in addition to sanitation, particularly in rural contexts (Foster, 2012). WFP used a fellowship program and partnerships with universities that enable in-depth examinations of individual issues that might not be possible under the time constraints of typical employment, such as studies of integrated water resource management and impact in Rwanda (Ogden, 2011) and sanitation service demand in Peru (Shimabuku, 2012). WFP's vision of meeting district and community needs went beyond households, to include health clinics, and with another new program, SWASH+ (School Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion plus Community Impact), schools (WFP, n.d., Initiatives).

The focus on monitoring and evaluation expanded with the development of Field Level Operations Watch (FLOW), a smart-phone app that allowed for real-time reporting of performance at individual water access points, and publicly sharing of data. One of several other smartphone, web, or SMS based systems being tested in the WASH sector, FLOW is differentiated by its focus on mapping, real-time web-based access to information, and low cost for other users (Hutchings, et al., 2012). Though the technological requirements of FLOW, especially supporting other nonprofits using the software, lay far outside WFP's expertise, its purpose fell completely in line with ongoing emphasis on monitoring. "Few organizations will actually commit what it takes to make it [FLOW] happen in house" (W15).

In part, FLOW emerged as a response to WFP decisions to track results for ten years or more (W6), requiring an even less costly monitoring system than the volunteer supported World Water Corps. Widespread availability of smartphones led to the decision to develop an

app (W6). Some debate over publicizing the data occurred, but senior leadership's backing led to online, real-time availability of the information (W6). "So many orgs are so fearful that if they share that information with their donors they won't get the money anymore", but "that may be one of the largest factors [why] WFP has done very well in the fundraising aspect" (W14). Some uncertain also remains over how best to use the data from FLOW (W6), along with concern that "it's being used in some places, but no others", such as India (W10). Some members of the board and staff even saw FLOW as potentially the most impactful element of WFP's work, and pushed for an even greater focus upon it (W14). Instead, WFP decided that maintaining the system lay too far outside its areas of competency, and was created too much of a burden upon the organization providing support for other users of the software (W14). WFP then partially transferred the system to Dutch technology foundation Akvo, through an open partnership (W14).

Everyone, Forever

WFP released a five year strategic plan covering 2010-2014 that reflected the various changes to the organization, including its programmatic focus, emphasis on partnerships, willingness to test out different project, dedicated attention to monitoring, and being centered within local communities. This plan categorized the countries into three different phases, grouping separately the mature programs – Bolivia, Guatemala, Honduras, India, and Malawi – intermediate programs – Nicaragua and Rwanda – and nascent programs – the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Peru, and Uganda – and envisioning different forms of activity within each (WFP, 2010, Strategic Plan). This strategy laid out WFP's vision going forward, especially the

emphasis on meeting district and community needs fully, local ownership, and sustainability, but had yet to devise an elegant and simple accompanying message, which followed shortly.

Later in 2010, WFP launched 'Everyone, Forever', a message about their approach intended not just to guide their own efforts, but to be freely adopted by others within the sector, though this language did not begin reaching all of the country programs until 2011 (W4). It took five years to discover the terminology, with the organization moving toward this focus since 2006, but only latching upon this language following a speech in Rwanda subject to overwhelmingly positive community feedback (W6). 'Everyone' appeared a year earlier in annual reports than 'Forever' – 2010 and 2011, respectively. Rebranding and a new logo accompanied the language changes. In particular, the previous logo was despised by field and program staff, viewed as falling into an outdated mentality of development assistance, with "two white hands through which water was flowing" (W9). More a succinct way of describing changes already underway in the organization, the tagline of 'Everyone, Forever' is generally well received throughout the organization and intrigues those outside, though difficult challenges remain to defining and achieving either goal.

Outside the organization, the concept is also viewed favorably. Described variously as "really elegant" (W6), "the only thing worth getting out of bed for in the morning" (W11), "the most exciting idea in the sector" (W11), and "only coherent plan ... that makes anyone believe that ending water poverty is even possible" (W4), "an aspirational [and] visionary thing" (W10), feedback within the sector is supporting the idea, even if widespread adoption has yet to follow (W11). The idea benefits both from being noncontroversial, in that "it's very difficult to disagree with the model" of 'Everyone, Forever' (W7), and from being intended to benefit not

just WFP, but also the sector as whole. In fact, 'Everyone, Forever' is intentionally unbranded (W4, W6, W14), though not without mild internal dissension (W2).

Inside the organization, acceptance of the idea varied. "It took a little while, especially for the people who have been here a while, to understand the 'Everyone, Forever', because initially the language wasn't quite crystallized, so the concept was there but [not] the language around it" (W13). Internal changes have sped this process, especially "the shift at the board level has been a huge change that has helped ... Everyone, Forever idea gain traction" (W12). Many field staff are heavily supportive of the concept, "in part just because pragmatically it makes a lot of sense around the world", and are often the leading edge in defining the terms in greater specificity (W3). Underlying tensions remain over how to define and measure the concepts, especially between field, data analysis, and marketing staff (W3), but are generally viewed as beneficial, starting discusses that help WFP better understand and achieve this purpose (W3). "Throughout the organization, everyone talks about 'Everyone, Forever'...from the programming side, from the marketing side, from the finance side. It's become our mantra" (W2), and the "heart and soul of how we speak about the organization" (W2). The "Everyone, Forever concept has taken hold, and that's really in the last 12 months, and it's starting to become the language, the thinking, starting to become engrained in the culture of the organization. How we talk about it and how we think about what we do and how we talk to donors" (W12).

WFP is getting clearer and clearer about how they define everyone and forever (W2), and the very ambiguity around the terms is perceived as an advantage that creates excitement (W2). At its core, the concept is viewed as one of "making promises to communities" (W15),

with long-term commitments on both sides, and then keeping those promises through “long-term solutions” (W15).

The ‘Everyone’ element reflects a natural end goal of the shift to regionally located programs, wherein WFP settled on a commitment not to leave a particular district until all members of it have access to safe water and sanitation (W5), both at home and at schools and clinics (W3). This focus requires a shift from community level coverage monitoring to district level monitoring across many communities (W3; W6). Disagreement exists over exactly how to define ‘Everyone’, with significant resulting impacts on feasibility. Some members of WFP define Everyone with the view that if “there’s one person living outside of the town and they’re not participating in this program, you know then we haven’t reached everyone” (W10). Under such a definition, substantial investments in infrastructure reaching a relatively small number of community members could easily be for naught, if remote households end up moving away (W10). Within the organization, there is concern that definitional and measurement challenges are being overlooked; that “everyone at this point is kind of taking for granted that we’re going to achieve the ‘Everyone’” (W4), and are instead focusing just on challenge of ‘Forever’.

The ‘Forever’ element includes a commitment to monitor sites a minimum of ten years (W6), along with development of local capacity to repair and rebuild as necessary beyond this time frame. WFP moved away from using ‘sustainability’ due to a perception that it is an overused term that has lost all meaning (W5, W6). Central to establishing long-term viability are partnerships and local co-financing. Essential to WFP’s programs, especially achieving ‘Everyone, Forever’, are “partnership[s] with the permanent institutions in-country that are actually responsible for providing [water and sanitation] services” (W4). Co-financing is the

other critical element of WFP's model for achieving 'Forever', and is showing some success, with around 35% of total 2010 project funding coming from local sources (WFP, 2010, Annual Report). In part, WFP benefits from pursuing local financing long before 'Everyone, Forever'. "We have never gone in saying we can fully fund" (W13). WFP's emphasis on monitoring provides the basis for evaluating 'Forever', though many challenges remain for defining and implementing it. To the staff, "Forever...will be a huge challenge for us" (W3).

Progress toward these goals varies greatly according to the program, and even individual districts. Early on, communities in Rwanda and Latin America were identified as prospectively reaching this target, though there was less clarity around whether the programs in India and Malawi could or would similarly shift to this approach (W8). In part this transition benefits from the ease of spreading the concept. Local leaders in Rwanda could easily see ownership of the idea due its origination in the country. Staff focused on Latin America feel that 'Everyone, Forever' translates easily and elegantly into Spanish (W3, W4), making it an easier sell. Individual communities in other countries have since become more invested in the concept, and are beginning to show progress. Chinda, Honduras (WFP, n.d., Chinda; WFP, 2011, Annual Report) and Nkolokoti-Kachere, Malawi (WFP, 2011, AR) achieved this goal, while Cuchumuela, Bolivia (WFP, 2011, AR; WFP, 2010, AR) and part of South 24 Parganas in West Bengal, India (WFP, 2011, AR) are getting close, and the program in Rulinda, Rwanda is dedicating significant efforts and resources toward following suit (WFP, 2011, AR; WFP, 2010, AR). Other areas remain further behind, and even where 'Everyone' is within sight, 'Forever' cannot be measured for another ten years.

Future of the organization

Two unresolved debates continue at WFP, and will factor prominently into the organization's future trajectory. First, WFP is still trying to establish a balance between its role as a thought leader in the WASH sector and achieving its primary programmatic goals.

Although the two activities have some potentially beneficial overlap, they require dedication of limited time and resources that eventually could hamper the other. Second, managing growth remains a continual challenge, both in determining how aggressively to seek further expansion and in which areas to further develop organizational capacity.

Thought Leadership

In his paper "Rethinking Hydrophilanthropy", Ned Breslin (2010) lays out the argument for where the sector is failing and the types of solutions necessary for long-term impact. He claims that "data is emerging to support the view that all is not right in the field" (Breslin, 2010, pg. 65), due to failures of pumps, wells, and other previously installed water sources. Breslin argues that the poor already pay for water, indicating their ability to cover maintenance and replacement of water sources under a different model of provision. He views the existing model as creating dependency, with charities fully funding construction and then expecting that maintenance will somehow be kept up locally without the establishment of monitoring or other systems. The solution he argues for is to have 10 years or longer monitoring of projects for accountability, and a broader set of indicators than just the population of 'beneficiaries' with initial access to water following construction.

WFP's thought leadership activities take these basic ideas and run with them. As one interviewee put it, WFP is "putting out a real alternative to traditional water and sanitation work and fundraising" (W6). To another, WFP "wants to leave behind capacity, not holes in the ground" (W11). Though some may see that at WFP, "our ambition is boundless" (W12), others define its approach more narrowly. "We're trying to be a medium-sized NGO that models new ways of looking at this [WASH] problem" (W6). In doing so, WFP needs to "balance between proving what we're doing, being really creative, and in talking about it" (W6).

WFP is also seeking to become part of a movement around monitoring (W6). "We're trying to build a movement and/or new markets for success, or at least the sharing of results. And that's a campaign for anyone" (W14). WFP's own goals in this are conflict, as they want to "have an unbranded movement going forward, but also be strongly associated with being the innovator for that group" (W2). To another interviewee, WFP's thought leadership is "the real growth for change in the water sector. It's not just about their work, but it's also potentially inspiring or enabling others to do the same" (W14).

The thought-leadership activities, along with the range of projects outside of the core programs, are subject to some criticism for partially reversing the altered internal power dynamics. With the shift from a project model to programs, the field became the driver, but headquarters has increasingly taken back some of this leadership role recently (W13). This shift is also criticized for detracting attention from WFP's primary activities. According to one member of the organization, "we have leadership that kind of is pushing the vision a little bit bigger and exaggerating from the things that we have ... some things have been said and it's like, 'whoa, we're not there yet'" (W13). Others raise similar views:

“We take on the challenges of this sector more than most organizations do. So although I understand the importance of advocacy and getting people wrapped around our ideas and Everyone, Forever, I think if we spend all of our resources on doing the best job that we can ... that’s going to speak for itself and we could spend less of people’s time and WFP’s so precious limited resources on telling people that because, again, I think it will speak for itself” (W15).

And, “I wish we would ... sharpen our focus on achieving the Everyone and Forever objectives”, rather than other activities (W12), such as thought leadership in the sector. A sizeable contingent feels that “we can probably build it a whole lot faster if we had all of our resources marshaled into that as opposed to trying to move 3 or 4 balls forward at the same time” (W12). Others, including Ned Breslin, would disagree, seeing advocacy and programs as firmly entangled. From this perspective, “No NGO can operate in a bubble, and what Water For People is trying to model is a fundamentally different way of working where NGOs know their place, know their role and catalyze change that becomes bigger than they are. You absolutely can't do that without an advocacy and outreach strategy” (W6).

Other criticisms address the manner in which WFP challenges the sector. “The water sector tends to be fairly staid as a sector” (W1). By playing an instigator role WFP “potentially hurt people about partnering. They get nervous or they feel ... their feathers ruffled, but then they’re probably not the right partner” (W14). Criticism of the sector’s conventional wisdom and approaches, despite being intended as constructive (W6), can be “a double-edge sword that has to be very carefully managed, because others in the NGO sector can hurt you if you don’t manage that right, because we’re all sort of circling around the same funders” (W10). WFP can control its own message, but not how others interpret it. Individuals at other organizations, instead of reexamining their own actions and presuppositions, may instead take offense. Even the most formal and thought out critiques can generate potentially negative

responses. “Ned’s hydro-philanthropist paper got a lot of attention, some for the wrong reasons, most for the right” (W11). WFP challenges, to the field and themselves, is thus accompanied by an element of risk, depending upon how others respond.

Despite potentially stepping on toes, WFP’s thought leadership activities provide reputational benefits, push the organization to ambitious targets, and receive substantial senior internal support. WFP’s thought leadership in the sector and Ned Breslin’s personal advocacy led to him being recognized as a Skoll Foundation Social Entrepreneur, attracting further attention from outside the WASH sector. The Skoll award “hasn’t resulted in huge grants or anything yet, but from a visibility, publicity, acknowledgement, recognition standpoint, that was huge” (W12), and is bringing visibility and access to new partners (W13). Some of the funding from the Case Foundation is in support of WFP’s thought leadership (W11).

Support from some camps within and outside the organization for the thought-leadership activities are very strong. Some even see the thought leadership role as WFP’s biggest contribution to the sector (W11). “We’ve been a voice in the sector, championing the importance of monitoring post construction” (W3). “Much of the work done by WFP is as much about a kind of evangelizing and championing others work in smart areas” (W14). WFP’s approach to thought-leadership and coalition building, though sometimes offending others, also is seen as relatively self-less and dedicated. WFP viewed as having “no excuses, and no exceptions” by others in the sector (W11) and as “one of the most egoless organizations in the water sector right now” that is “willing to partner and share credit and share ideas” (W1).

In addition to deciding upon the extent to which WFP should continue its thought-leadership activities, it may need to broaden its capacity, achieve greater transparency, and

continue to push itself beyond the field. WFP is already trying to broaden visibility and speaking engagements beyond primary focus on Ned, especially drawing on programmatic staff (W2). They also recognize that transparency is the goal, “but sometimes our actions and the values are not quite aligned ... it’s a goal but it hasn’t been achieved yet” (W13). Finally, although WFP is “on balance probably more transparent in communications than most ... people are catching up” (W10), and they “are less unique than they might have been two years ago” (W10).

Growth and Capacity

To achieve its multiple purposes, WFP needs to manage its growth and continue developing internal capacity. A general consensus is in place on WFP’s ambition for growth and positioning – as a medium-sized nonprofit appealing to a more technical audience. Moving forward with an approach that “we are the model for innovative water and sanitation approaches that lead to lasting change and transform the sector” (W15), interviewees broadly recognize specific capacity development needs, though disagree to some extent on current capacity. Finally, more detailed plans are being developed that would tap this capacity and enable the organization to make further progress toward ‘Everyone, Forever’.

Despite WFP’s rapid growth over the past five years, interviewees viewed continued acceleration of growth as unsustainable, and even undesirable. As one board member responded, “I do think that the pace which they’re growing and running and trying new things is not necessarily sustainable” (W10). If growth continued unabated, it could even be a threat to the organization’s identity, such that “WFP will stop being WFP if it makes \$100 million” (W8).

Instead the ambition is set to a more achievable level, with an eventual aim to about double in size. “To become a 25-30 million dollar organization, our funding’s going to be different, so the challenge is to make sure we have capacity around some of these larger more complex institutional funders” (W15). In addition to developing this specific capacity, WFP is examining its value proposition through its Reimaging Reporting group (W8), and continue its appeal to a ‘sophisticated’ audience.

Many at WFP recognize that its audience is narrow, internationally focused and technologically informed (W6), and not able to make the broader appeal. WFP knows its “sweet spot” and isn’t looking to go far outside it (W6), but its messages are often not accessible to people outside of international development or water sectors (W5). This provides WFP credibility with water industry, corporations, foundations, but not with the general public (W2). Though some wish for a successful broad appeal (W12), the current logic is that “we’re after a more sophisticated buyer” (W2).

Building the necessary capacity for continued growth, and even just managing the existing size, requires first identifying internal needs. Minor disagreement over current management and staffing capacity exists, though there is a general recognition that the organization has become more professional over time (W9). Early on, WFP’s staff was very small with lots of, sometimes problematic, overlap in individual activities (W13). During the past 10 years, many staff left the organization, uncomfortable with the constant change (W3), and the total staff grew in response to revenue and programmatic growth. In fact, only three headquarters staff members remain who have been with the organization for six years or more (W6). As a result, the organization has a very young staff (W3), sometimes lacking some

desired technical expertise (W12) or experience in the field (W3). Concerns are present amongst others about overall staff depth and quality (W10). Others dispute this perception, seeing the staff, especially in the field, “as technically very sound”, though with some gaps in their expertise (W6). To compensate, WFP’s management is stretching existing staff by engaging them in new activities (W2). In addition, “the management team is starting to solidify” (W12), and internal dynamics are shifting. According to one interviewee, the natural tension between program and finance staff is shifting to more cooperative resolution, and a similar relationship between program and communication staff is changing more gradually, in part because WFP is just now establishing a communications strategy, under a relatively new department head (W3).

Local capacity, both of WFP and the communities served, also needs further development. Individual countries and communities are at different stages, planning for achieving ‘Everyone, Forever’ is still in progress, directors may need more support in-country, and questions remain about achieving local buy-in and funding. According to one interviewee, “we’ve got four countries that are really moving quickly now: Bolivia, Honduras, India, Rwanda; and there are another tier of countries that are sort of getting to the points where, and that’ll be another couple years, where they will be ready for some major investment” (W12). WFP is conducting business plans for each municipality served by the country programs to reach “Everyone, Forever” (W4). These draw basic information from country programs, which often have very different levels of details or forms of information available, and developed as reports that bridge programs and fundraising (W2). In addition, interviewees see a need for more support at country-level, directors are often asked to do too much, including advocacy and

networking that takes them outside of their primary programmatic roles (W4). Locally, WFP is well-known where it operates, but not always nationally or regionally (W4), driving a need for in-country advocacy to develop the political capital and support necessary to achieve 'Everyone, Forever'. There are still ongoing questions about long-term financial viability for programs, and where internal subsidies or outside support would be necessary (W1), and even some push back on local funding commitments in Central America, along with resistance from local organizations in India who rely on NGO funded construction (W8). Balancing the build-up of organizational (generally headquarters) capacity and in-country capacity, much like the trade-off between thought-leadership and programs, requires substantial decisions by the organization, prior to achieving targeted improvements.

Findings

Examining the factors at play in changes at WFP, leadership and mission stand out as influencing other changes. In addition, WFP's case indicates the presence of dynamic conceptions of mission differing between individuals and over time, a willingness to take risk outside the current organizational focus, strategic approaches to current and potential funders minimizing external control over the organization, windows of opportunity aligning with preexisting efforts to launch transformational changes, and the formation of internal coalitions to design and implement changes.

The role of leadership

The case of WFP provides an interesting dilemma: how to isolate leadership as an influence? Ned Breslin is praised for his leadership, both inside and outside the organization. He has a reputation as a change agent and played central roles in several of WFP's transformational shifts (W3), especially of strategy and mission. Yet the essential roles of others in formulating and achieving changes are clear, and interviewees widely noted both Ned's strengths and limitations as a leader and manager. Praise for bringing credibility (W3), being a visionary (W5), or challenging the field shows the personal traits he brings to the organization, but have indirect or uncertain linkages to the success of change efforts. Two specific leadership approaches, decisions rather than traits, demonstrate clearer impacts on the changes: the culture of leadership he brought into his first days as CEO, and hiring senior management with expertise sometimes exceeding his own.

A visit to WFP's headquarters provides symbolic evidence of Ned's leadership style. A number of private offices take up much of WFP's upper level, with the lower level having a couple of additional offices and a large room filled with cubicles. Ned's desk is just another of the cubicles, in the middle of the room, while the other senior managers have their own rooms. The informality and symbolic sharing of power demonstrated by his desk selection was expressed in other ways from the beginning of his term as CEO. He loosened up a restrictive dress code (W6), identified unmet needs such as maternity leave and set them up (W5), and took lay-offs completely off the table as options during his first couple of months (W6). While simultaneously asking WFP's staff to embrace and undertake change, he also removed other potential concerns, allowing for a greater focus on end goals.

The second major action was to surround himself with other managers whose expertise complements his own, and whom less confident CEOs might perceive as internal threats to their own position. International Programs Director Nick Burn previously was Ned's supervisor at WaterAid, CFO Sue Dorsey previously was a long-time CEO of another Denver based international nonprofit, and Dan Klingsmith previously headed marketing departments with larger budgets than the entirety of WFP (W2, W3, W6, W8, W12, W15). In part, these hires were due to the widespread recognition that programmatic experience, vision, and leadership are his strengths, and not management (W5, W6, W9, W15). He drew on feedback and his own observations to build up the managerial capacity of the organization. Positively responding to such critical feedback is also perceived as a key strength, with one interviewee calling him "one of the best people I've worked with at taking feedback and not being defensive" (W9). His approach to management allows for sharing of power and tapping into the expertise of not only these senior managers, but also other staff. As another interviewee stated, "Ned is not really a boss" in that he both gives freedom to others and requires that they take on management roles (W8). This philosophy on hiring and management allows for greater distribution of power and building of internal capacity, necessary elements for the way changes occurred at WFP.

These leadership strategies are context specific; as is Ned Breslin's personal type of leadership. Board members and senior managers alike mentioned that long-term there will come a point when Ned's skill-set will no longer be the appropriate one for leading the organization, and will need a CEO focused more on management than thought leadership and testing alternatives (W6, W9), which he himself views as both eventual and healthy. In the meantime, he is widely viewed as exerting a positive influence on the organization.

Role of mission change

During the past decade, WFP undertook two major changes substantially altering the organization's mission. First was the shift from projects to programs that accompanied the hiring of an international programs director. Second was the more gradual shift toward a more universal standard of reaching members of a district and longer term access to clean water, which culminated linguistically with the 'Everyone, Forever' language.

WFP began the 2000s with a general mission very similar to other water sector nonprofits, "Helping people improve their quality of life by supporting sustainable drink water, sanitation and hygiene project" (WFP, 2005, Annual Report). It altered this mission slightly in 2006, as it began the switch from a project model of service provision to a program model, to state "Water for People helps people in developing countries improve their quality of life by supporting the development of locally sustainable drinking water resources, sanitation facilities, and health and hygiene education programs" (WFP, 2006, Annual Report). Most notable is the introduction of 'locally' into the language, reflecting the new focus on being grounded in particular communities and having local ownership of programs. Yet if examined only on grounds of mission statement language, "[WFP] takes sort of a very basic mission and turns it on its head a little bit ... Everyone's been project based for decades, and it hasn't worked and we need to look at differently ... Everyone sort of feels like, 'Oh, I've got to grow and expand and be in 100 countries around the world', let's be in 10 to 15 and really do it well" (W15).

In 2008, WFP made further marginal changes to its mission statement, dropping 'health' from the prior version (WFP, 2008, Annual Report), though some documents would continue using the earlier language (WFP, Spring 2009, Connections; WFP, Summer 2009, Connections).

A year later, WFP changed its mission more substantively, to “We work with people and partners to develop innovative and long-lasting solutions to the water, sanitation, and hygiene problems in the developing world. We strive to continually improve, to experiment with promising new ideas, and to leverage resources to multiply our impact” (WFP, 2009, Annual Report). This latest change was part of a very conscious effort to revise the mission statement so as to reflect the importance of partners (W13). In its next two annual reports, WFP no longer included its mission statement, instead introducing first, ‘Everyone’ in 2010, and then ‘Everyone, Forever’, along with different summary language about the organization in 2011: “Water For People brings together local entrepreneurs, civil society, governments and communities to establish creative collaborative solutions that allow people to build and maintain their own reliable improved water systems. Empowering everyone transforms people’s lives by improving health and economic productivity to end the cycle of poverty” (WFP, 2011, Annual Report). This last change specified the types of partners engaged by WFP and tied water and sanitation improvements to economic and health outcomes.

These changes in WFP’s formal mission statement reflect only some of the major shifts in the organization, and if examined in isolation would not provide a perspective on the extent to which it altered its programmatic approach. Truly understanding the link between changes and WFP’s public purpose thus requires examination of something more than its formal mission statement, mission conceptions – the interpretations of and approach to achieving the organization’s mission that are held by individuals or groups.

Presence of and changes in mission conceptions

Nonprofits in the WASH sector generally have similar basic missions or public purposes (W2; W5; W6; W8), providing access to safe water and improved sanitation to people in developing countries. As demonstrated in the previous section, WFP's own formal mission statement begins with this basic purpose, adding some additional clarification that has shifted over time. These formal statements are just the tip of the iceberg for the changes in how WFP has pursued its public purpose over time, and the range of different interpretations held individually and collectively on achieving its mission. A significant level of variation exists amongst the individual mission conceptions held by staff and board members, without a readily apparent pattern of shared ideas according to roles or functions. In addition the dominant mission conception – the consensus at a given point in time on how to interpret and approach the mission – shifted substantially over time at the organization.

Water For People began with a mission statement that is almost universal across the water and sanitation field, providing continuous access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation to those without. (W5). Initial conceptions of how to interpret this mission and of WFP's approach to achieving it – the first dominant mission conception – were oriented around water and sanitation construction projects in scattered locations around the world (W5), an approach common to other organizations in the sector (W5; W6; W8). Then in 2006, WFP shifted dominant mission conceptions, switching from individual projects to programs located in specific communities in a narrower set of countries (W5; W6). Though this conception emphasized serving a particular district and the communities in it, local buy-in, monitoring, and longer term sustainability, it was not yet focused on universal and permanent access. Over

time, the dominant mission conception gradually shifted to an acknowledgement of such an approach, eventually being branded as “Everyone, Forever”. Currently, helping ensure water and sanitation access in local communities that reach everyone and can be maintained and continued indefinitely without external assistance is the dominant mission conception, with a focus on WFP’s 10 countries and monitoring of programs for at least 10 years (WFP, 2011, Annual Report). Though not reflected in statements about its mission, WFP identified with the U.S. wastewater industry to such an extent that this relationship could be considered part of the dominant mission conception, at least until the 2008 board reorganization. Over the course of the past five years, this evolving dominant mission conception has gradually been introduced into WFP’s marketing and communications, through rebranding, a new logo, and the new tagline (W5).

W2	“We are not a charity, we just don’t give away money”, catalytic investment, shared investment, don’t work on hardware
W3	Break cycle of failed processes and unsustainable water systems, multi-year partnerships, cost sharing
W4	Partnerships with local governments, local ownership, co-financing
W5	Partnerships, solutions, empowerment
W6	Relationship with North American water and wastewater community
W7	Not traditional charity, entire region, every person home and clinic, fully sustainable
W8	Long term, creating ecosystem/environment for local organizations to grow, catalyst
W9	Building capacity, keeping promises, partnerships with civil society and government, sustainable and locally funded, long-term evaluation and monitoring
W10	Handful of countries, available to all, establish maintenance and infrastructure
W12	Model for designing and implementing programs, long-term goal/view, turning things over at local level, local ownership, local governments, not an outsider
W13	“We don’t do the work”, build capacity of people, don’t fund 100 percent, stake shared risk and voice, sustainability, community
W14	Sustainable solution, funding model, community ownership, leveraging technology
W15	Women’s issue, development of a whole family, catalyst in countries

Individual conceptions within the organization still differ on other aspects of WFP's mission, including whether monitoring technology should be of greater emphasis, and the extent to which thought leadership within the sector should be a priority. Table 18 below includes the unique language individual staff or board members included when asked for the 'elevator speech' they give about WFP, excluding language related to the standard WASH sector mission statement.

From these statements, we can observe individual mission conceptions, and the extent to which they differ. Responses to other questions add further information, particularly on potential future directions for the organization, such as desires to expand FLOW. Most common in these individual conceptions is the idea of sustainability/capacity/long-term time frames, followed by emphasis on partnerships and local programs, all of which are clearly part of the dominant mission conception. Sufficient consensus also appears to be in place that WFP's dominant mission conception includes an identity as distinctive from other charitable nonprofits and/or the WASH sector. Statements such as, "the uniqueness of WFP is really its drive to not be a typical nonprofit organization" (W15) and "we are not a charity, we just don't give away money" (W2) show a shared identity around doing things differently, which is tied into both core elements of 'Everyone, Forever' and more tangential projects such as Sanitation as a Business. Other elements of individual mission conceptions such as leveraging technology, water as a women's issue/family issue, WFP's relationship with the wastewater industry, and serving as a model for the rest of the sector are not yet (or no longer) clearly elements of the dominant mission conception, and could be grounds for future changes in the organization.

Risk taking and activities outside dominant mission conception

Throughout its existence, WFP has periodically undertaken programs or projects that could be construed as either falling outside of the current dominant mission conception or as originating outside the organization. Prior to 2006, during which WFP was engaged primarily in individual projects, members of the organization viewed it as operating opportunistically rather than strategically (W3; W5). WFP started just with water projects, gradually added sanitation, then more and more of it, adding some health promotion, such as hand-washing (W7). Expansion from water to WASH falls in line with WFP's general mission statement, but each change may have fallen outside the dominant mission conceptions in place prior to the expansions of focus. Many projects occurred at the behest of donors, board members, or other supporters, rather than originating from field or headquarters staff. These individual projects generally aligned with the dominant mission conception, but could be interpreted as occurring in response to outside pressure. Following the switch to a program model, these donor-originated but mission consistent projects ended. Instead, a culture of testing different approaches to program implementation and monitoring emerged.

Under the program model, and even more so under 'Everyone, Forever', identification of countries and communities in which to work requires consideration of capacity, expertise, and relationships. As one interviewee stated it, "our model really requires that there be some government stability in the countries where we work" (W12). For one of its countries, WFP branched out beyond its regional ties and expertise, and struggled establishing the necessary local support:

"The Dominican Republic asked us to come in and do a base line study in a particular region that had low water coverage, so we did and we got it funded.

We went in and spent two years doing a detailed baseline study, put together the plans, went to the government and said 'We're going to put in 35-40%, you need to put in the balance'. The government said 'No, you're a charity, you're supposed to do [it]'. We said, 'well, sorry, that's not the way it works'." (W12).

Selection of countries for programs rests with the board, and WFP has been disinclined to expand even when prompted with opportunities. The Dominican Republic program was established during WFP's expansion from 5 to 10 countries, and no other country programs have followed, even when opportunities arose. On the other hand, WFP willingly tests initiatives that build capacity or test alternative approaches to programs.

Initiatives such as World Water Corps, Sanitation as a Business, Field Level Operations Watch, and Reimagining Reporting place greater emphases respectively on volunteers, the private sector, technology, and thought leadership than the dominant mission conception in place. These efforts originated within the organization and were followed with selective recruitment of volunteers, donors, and/or partners, rather than in response to external pressures. One expansion of WFP's programs falls a bit outside this internally originated model, occurring partially in response to outside forces. WFP agreed to take on Play Pumps International's leftover inventory and intellectual property after the organization closed (W10, W14), in a process facilitated by a major donor. The Case Foundation was shifting from a solution based model for water to systems and programs, which aligned with WFP, but also had preexisting solution that needed a home; WFP was willing to make them part of its portfolio of solutions (W14).

Generally, WFP staff and board members view these programs favorably as efforts to test alternative approaches and part of an innovative culture, though both the culture and programs themselves can be occasionally problematic. They view WFP as "innovative...always

pushing the edges and fringes” (W2), and “very entrepreneurial by nature” (W12), though also an environment of constant change (W3) that isn’t comfortable to everybody (W6). This culture of change does not just exceed individual comfort with change; it can have real impacts on the organization, leading to perceptions of overly fast change or insufficient strategic planning. Interviews reflected on the downside of this culture, saying, “I think the Water For People approach has been a little bit more, I don’t want to say reckless, because that’s the wrong word, but a little bit dangerous and on the edge” (W1), and “when we’re making strategic investment decisions or program decisions, I’m not sure that we always put them up against the context of our mission to determine whether or not it’s really the right thing to be doing ... We get blinded by the opportunity often times” (W12). Further, the programs themselves can lead to occasional problems, such as both World Water Corps and FLOW creating some brand confusion for WFP (W2). Nonetheless, WFP’s risk taking culture is broadly seen as beneficial, both inside and outside the organization, especially given the praise for WFP and Ned Breslin as thought leaders for the sector.

WFP’s risk-taking derives not just from its culture of change, but also from having the capacity to test alternatives. As one interviewee asserted, “there’s no one else out there that I think really has the unrestricted funding and flexibility on the programmatic side to be able to experiment with things” (W2). This availability of flexible, unrestricted funding is not solely good fortune, but a consequence of a deliberate approach to soliciting support.

Moderated interaction with funders

When operating strategically, WFP, and not its donors, made decisions about its efforts. While undertaking individual projects, it often responded directly to donor wishes, but only within the narrow contexts of its mission focus, without drifting outside of the water, sanitation, and hygiene field. When expanding into more entrepreneurial pursuits, through Sanitation as a Business, or technological efforts, like FLOW, WFP staff and/or board members originated the ideas and then selectively recruited supportive potential funders. Some negotiation around specifics may have occurred, but WFP clearly led the agenda for these efforts.

In addition, during periods of change, WFP worked to keep its core funders on board, while also diversifying their revenue streams. Volunteers and donors from the waste water community were engaged throughout the substantial changes in the relationship between WFP and AWWA, especially the move to a program model and board overhaul. Although some donors were lost with each change, support from the sector remained a consistent major source of revenue throughout WFP's history.

Under the project model, donors frequently identified target communities, but not in the form of activities far enough outside WFP's core focus to fit within the general criticism of 'mission drift'. This support involved labor and cost intensive fundraising activities, especially small events, but WFP actively moved away from that model following its shift to programs (W7, W9). Committees at various industry associations that support WFP continue to undertake such activities and provide the funds generated to WFP, but no longer with WFP direct involvement (W7). Instead of identifying communities and restricting funds, donors from

the water sector were engaged in the World Water Corps to monitor programs, and select donors were brought on visits to the field, not always to the benefit of field staff. “There’s a lot of emphasis on getting people to the field to see the work, as the selling point”, but “People in the field who find that as totally distracting” (W13). Recently, for an entire month, Rwanda’s field office all but shut down due to a series of visits from volunteers, donors, board members, and headquarters staff “that kept them away from the work” (W13). Nonetheless, WFP managed its relationship with its original core funding constituency in such a way that these donors could not dictate WFP’s activities or locations yet remained core supporters.

In switching to the program model, and eventually to longer and longer time horizons and more universal coverage, WFP also sought out both to intentionally solicit sources of funding aligned with these purposes and to convert existing donors to longer-term and unrestricted funding. WFP never had a major history of seeking or receiving restricted grants, which has helped the organization to successfully bring existing institutional donors along with changes (W8). WFP’s long-term focus “makes us very intentional around where the money’s coming from, and making sure we can use it in a way we want to use it” (W15). To achieve this purpose, WFP sought greater financial commitments from national and local governments (W2) and reached out for more corporate and foundation donors (W2), sometimes spending multiple years pursuing grants from the largest foundations (W15). For one major funder, it took three separate approaches from WFP before they were considered for a grant (W1). As WFP grew, it succeeded in securing more unrestricted funding (W5), but is still working to make funding commitments longer-term (W12).

New relationships with major funders began at WFP's instigation, even for activities that appear to lie outside its typical approach. New funders were deliberately recruited for programs such as Sanitation as a Business and FLOW. On one such grant, WFP came into the application with a clear idea and drove much of the grant content, though smaller details were subject to significant negotiation through a lengthy process (W1). To gain funding from technology oriented groups, FLOW served as a key idea that eventually attracted both grants and eventual board members (W14). WFP's sustainable funding model for programs and flexible approach to water and sanitation solutions helped it compete for substantial new funding (W14). Further, WFP's transparency and openness helped achieve these goals, with current and potential funders finding WFP more willing to share information than many other nonprofits (W1).

When approached by potential funders with different ideas, WFP maintains fidelity to its dominant mission conception. Its regional focus leads WFP to say no to some potential donors, sometimes frustrating the organization's fundraising staff (W3). For example, a major corporation expressed interest in funding WFP, but was interested in Kenya (W13). Even some regional field staff thought they could develop the expertise, but WFP stuck to its geographic priorities and strategy, turning down the opportunity (W13). But when the Case Foundation offered up its remaining stock of PlayPumps, WFP's willingness to use any technology enabled them to take advantage of the opportunity (WFP, n.d., PlayPumps, <http://www.waterforpeople.org/extras/playpumps/update-on-playpumps.html>). Contrary to a widespread perspective (discussed elsewhere in the dissertation) that donors often drive

nonprofit activity, shifts within WFP originate internally, in part due to intentional and strategic attention to who, what, and how donors are giving.

Windows of opportunity enabled change

Several changes in the external environment created windows of opportunity for WFP to achieve its purposes, either through accessing new or increased resources, recruiting new stakeholders, or using new technologies. The single most impactful window of opportunity was, surprisingly, the tough funding environment for nonprofits following the housing bubble collapse and global financial crisis. WFP only took advantage of opportunities that aligned with changes that had already occurred in the organization. It did not change in pursuit of new opportunities, and instead leveraged those fitting with the direction in which it was already going.

Prior to the crisis, WFP placed a great emphasis on measurement and long-term monitoring, building up a track-record and information about performance, including self-critiques. Donors, especially institutional funders, who began placing a greater emphasis on being able to demonstrate results could find in WFP's emphasis on monitoring a strong case for funding. Monitoring and evaluation is "where the nonprofit sector is moving" (W15). One of WFP's major grants happened because there were similarities between their already in place approach and the new favored approach for the funder (W1). "We've actually grown rather dramatically through all of this" sector-wide financial crisis (W12). Multiple members of the organization reported WFP becoming more attractive to foundations as a result (W3; W12; W15), which is supported by the rapid growth in the organization's revenues and its diversifying

support base. As a result, WFP pursued aggressive goals for growth in spite of and throughout the recession (W15).

Within the WASH sector, growing dissatisfaction with 'traditional' approaches of drilling individual wells also created a window of opportunity for WFP's longer term and community housed approach (W6). This sector-wide grumbling helped initiate WFP's changes, but as it accelerated, allowed WFP to play a greater role as thought-leader, risk-taker, and sometime irritant. "The timing for Ned to be that kind of leader in this sector was just right", one who served as a voice for change, but may not be the case in ten years (W3).

A major technological window of opportunity enabled FLOW. Absent the widespread availability of smartphones, growing wireless infrastructure in developing countries, and the ease of developing applications, WFP could not have developed their real-time monitoring system. The development and then possession of this system also helped WFP recruit new donors, board members, and partners, while also serving as an essential tool for the monitoring and evaluation necessary to achieve 'Everyone, Forever' (W8). Nonetheless, the dedication, of time and resources, to monitoring and evaluation was in place before the technology permitting creation of FLOW.

Timing is essential in taking advantage of these windows of opportunity. At WFP, successful pursuit of these opportunities actually began before the opportunities emerged. Prior emphasis, attention, and resources dedicated to monitoring and evaluation set the stage both for recruiting new measurement focused donors and for taking advantage of new technologies. As a result, WFP was able to be on the leading edge for changes in the field, rather than seeking to catch up.

Internal coalitions formed to enact change

During at least five different periods, internal coalitions were formed at WFP to pursue and enact change. These groups formed around shared elements of individual mission conceptions that agreed upon the direction in which to move the organization. Coalition members then sought to gain the support of others within and outside the organization, and exercised personal power in decision-making processes to enact their preferred changes.

To shift WFP from a project to a program model of service delivery, a core group of four staff and management members planned the details of the change, sharing a similar view of where to go. Some field staff, especially in those five countries later designated as core, supported this perception and were part of the change process, while others were not. Senior management and board members did not substantially engage in this process, outside of new (at that point) international programs director Ned Breslin, who used his leverage joining the organization to help drive the change (W6). Despite the extent of change involved in this shift, little internal resistance arose, as there was a more general desire for creative change within the organization (W6).

The creation of greater monitoring capacity and the World Water Corps followed a similar pattern. Although the general ideas, especially substantial dedication to long-term measurement of performance, originated with pressure from Ned Breslin, an internal coalition formed to plan and enact the change. Several of the same staff involved in the programmatic shift also participated in developing the World Water Corps, sharing a common dissatisfaction with prior inability to adequately evaluate project performance.

The process leading to WFP expanding its number of country programs involved two separate internal coalitions, centered around different elements of common personal mission conceptions, that eventually reached a shared vision that reconciled the two views. First, board members who wanted WFP to have a greater footprint pushed for expansion, setting forth a large number of potential countries. Coming so shortly after WFP narrowed its focus to only a couple of countries, this may well have been a delayed response emerging from disagreement over WFP's new dominant mission conception, though interviewees did not raise this possibility. WFP management and staff, focused on building up local and regional ties and capacity, clearly held preferences for limited expansion or geographically appropriate expansion that allowed for building upon existing capacity. The board generally followed staff recommendations, demonstrating a consensus between the two coalitions, and expanded to countries neighboring existing programs, with one exception.

Upon taking over as Board Chair, Elisa Speranza formed a coalition in which to drastically reshape board composition and governance. She recruited the CEO, other board leaders, and even potential critics into this coalition, all agreeing on the need for a leaner board drawing from a broader range of backgrounds and more actively governing the nonprofit. This group worked with a consultant to plan best governance practices and board composition, while also keeping other key outside stakeholders informed. Prior to the board reorganization, board members were primarily appointed by various wastewater organizations that supported WFP, especially AWWA. This internal coalition met with other board members and convinced them of the need for change, surprising themselves by finding support for immediate rather than prolonged action. As a result, all non-executive board members resigned en masse, with

some being selectively invited to reapply for membership on a smaller board that also included new members from outside the water sector.

Internal coalitions formed at two separate periods to initiate and then expand FLOW. A first coalition started exploring the idea of open source and public information around monitoring, and upon realizing the need for more outside support and expertise, sought out and recruited new funders, partners, and even board members. A second coalition formed after the initial success of FLOW, pushing for the possibility of WFP dedicated even more attention the tool. This coalition was unable to recruit enough support internally, representing too substantial a change for the organization, which led to FLOW being spun off to a new partner organization.

In forming each of these coalitions, there were several common elements. First, there was a shared set of ideas amongst members of the coalition, both the initial creators of it and those who later came to share the same view; these ideas can be considered shared elements of personal mission conceptions. Second, these coalitions arose due to dissatisfaction with the status quo or internal changes, rather than in response to external pressures. Finally, these coalitions only succeeded when they could attract sufficient internal support in order to effect change.

Chapter Six: ProLiteracy Case Study

ProLiteracy (PL) is a leading adult literacy nonprofit with a now primarily American focus, though it maintains some international programs. The product of a merger between two long-running literacy organizations, Laubach Literacy International (LLI) and Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA), PL has undergone a series of substantial changes in the decade since its creation. After an initial period of few leadership, strategy, or structure changes following the merger, the organization has changed drastically over the past five years. A new CEO led the organization from 2008 until 2012, with a search for a new director expected in 2013. During this CEO's tenure, PL overhauled its internal structure, breaking down divides between divisions dating to its predecessor organizations. It also shifted further away from the international roots of LLI, drastically increased advocacy efforts, reexamined how it serves members, began to establish a local presence, and moved from its long-time facility. The merger and more recent period of rapid change provide an opportunity to examine in significant depth the processes by which transformational organizational change occurs.

Methods

In keeping with the basic case selection methodology of this project, PL was selected due to the substantial level of organizational change during the past decade. Most notable, and easily observed just from annual form 990s, are the 2002 merger creating PL, and the 2008 change in CEO. As part of education sector, PL faced a different sector-specific environment than other cases in this dissertation. A facilitated introduction from PL board member Tosca Bruno-van Vijfeijken and close proximity helped secure access.

Permission to study PL was provided by then CEO, David Harvey, and communications director, Amy Schmitz, after e-mail and phone conversations. Through these initial conversations and from organization charts and a list of board members, an initial set of potential interviewees was agreed upon; two other interviews were conducted with individuals not on this original list, including an interview of convenience with a staff member, and an interview with a former board member involved in the merger process to gather additional specific information. Kara Thoreck, assistant secretary to the board of directors, sent along introductory e-mails to select board members, the majority of whom agreed to participate in interviews. Permission was granted to directly contact staff and schedule interviews, again with most contacted staff agreeing to participate in interviews. Participation, by staff and board members was completely at the option of individual interviewees, their comments were kept confidential, and they could choose which questions to answer or to end the interview at any time. Ten of the interviews were conducted in person, either at the PL headquarters or at individuals' homes or offices, while the remainder were conducted over the phone. Interviews were conducted according to the standard project protocol. In all, 7 staff, 5 board members, and 1 former board member participated in interviews; since the interviews at least one of these staff members has left the organization. In addition, one interviewee met me a second time for a tour of the new facility, shortly after the move. Document review, primarily completed before the interviews, included 8 books – including memoirs from founders of both predecessor organizations – 29 annual reports, 8 other internal documents, and 6 scholarly or practitioner oriented journal articles.

The narrative and findings developed from this case study drew from analysis standard to this dissertation, through a process tracing methodology. Though interview transcripts and documents were entered into NVivo and a coding system developed, the narrative from this case study was developed iteratively through examination of entire transcripts and documents rather than selected codes. The timeline developed for the narrative's core was created prior to initial interviews, used to prompt questions about major changes and timing, updated after completion of the interviews, and further refined following examination of transcripts. One staff member and one member of the board shared extensive comments on a full draft of the case study. New information provided in the accompanying conversations was treated as additional, albeit brief, interviews, and incorporated in the revised draft to correct inaccuracies and further expand on some points.

Narrative

ProLiteracy (PL) began in 2002 with the merger of two long-running adult basic literacy organizations: Laubach Literacy International (LLI) and Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA). Early leaders in both domestic and international adult literacy efforts, the two Syracuse based nonprofits formally joined together after years of intermittent discussions about the possibility. Structurally, the post-merger PL generally resembled LLI, with strong, relatively independent departments focused on different functions related to adult literacy; its mission and strategy reflected a blending of the two predecessor organizations. Later changes would shake up all of these elements, including attempted expansion into K-12 materials, a new CEO from 2008 through 2012, shifts away from international programs toward advocacy and local efforts, and

the sale of PL's (and previously LLI's) long-run facility. This period of substantial change offers an opportunity to examine, at several different points in time, the processes by which such a nonprofit changes.

History of Laubach Literacy International

In 1955, Dr. Frank C. Laubach founded Laubach Literacy International (LLI) – initially called Laubach Literacy and Mission Fund – in Washington, DC (Laubach, 2003). A minister who pioneered combining literacy efforts and proselyting, Dr. Frank Laubach set out to continue his work despite reaching mandatory retirement age (P11). In its initial years, LLI funded both international literacy efforts and religious missions abroad, abandoning the religious missions and modifying its name shortly thereafter (P11). The religious missions were too costly, and generally well-served by the various denominations (P11). Its board began with several ministers on it, continuing that tradition for a long time, as well as starting each meeting with a prayer (P11). Over time, LLI “moved from a sort of religious mission organization to an entirely secular organization”, without ministers on the board or opening prayers (P11).

Meanwhile, Dr. Frank Laubach's son, Dr. Bob Laubach began what would become New Readers Press (NRP) while studying and teaching at Syracuse University (Laubach, 2003; P11). In 1962, LLI moved its headquarters to lower-cost Syracuse and purchased NRP from Dr. Bob at cost (the \$5,000 Dr. Bob had invested in the enterprise out of his own pocket) to publish materials for literacy training, starting with “News For You”, a new readers magazine that continues today (Laubach, 2003; P11). While in DC, LLI had provided Spanish language training to Peace Corps volunteers, as part of a government contract, and unsuccessfully pursued USAID

grants (P11). After the move, it intentionally abandoned pursuit of government funding (P11), focusing its attention on individual donations, member service, and publishing.

LLI would continue to grow and change during its second decade. Beginning to build a national presence, LLI worked to establish the National Affiliation for Literacy Advance (NALA), which held its first conference in 1970, shortly after Dr. Frank Laubach's death (Laubach, 2003; P11). This conference, held in Baghdad, KY, built on a meeting a year earlier in St. Louis amongst literacy experts (P11). At the first NALA conference, real evidence of adult literacy's impact was presented and the meeting really launched LLI's domestic presence (P11).

Dr. Bob took over as president of LLI following his father's passing, and at his father's request (P11). A board member since 1956, Dr. Bob had periodically debated the other members, pushing the organization to emphasize publishing and domestic literacy efforts, both of which became priorities under his leadership (P11). Early on, NRP had competition from MacMillan press, which eventually abandoned the small niche of adult literacy materials, with NRP taking on self-publication of books (P11). NRP's publications proved more fruitful than anybody could have predicted, with the division generating enough funding that in 1969 through 1971 LLI could buy property from Syracuse University and build a facility that became its press, warehouse, and offices (P11).

NALA was a loose confederation of members, with regional support for local programs (P8). Over time, much of its activities were drawn into LLI, with an eventually reorganization at LLI actively taking up this domestic focus (P8). In 1980, LLI created Laubach Literacy Action (LLA) to expand this domestic focus (Laubach, 2003), hiring Peter Waite to lead the division in 1982 (P8). Waite drew together the various domestic program efforts that had been growing

over time, shaping into a third very distinct division, in addition to the international programs and publishing (P8).

The recession of the early 1980s was difficult for LLI, and led to substantial change. A tumultuous 1982 altered the organization substantially, especially during its board meeting. Three different proposals for surviving the recession were considered by the management and board. First, Dr. Bob suggested 20% pay cuts for all employees, which would enable them to stay with the organization and for LLI to weather the downturn, but the other managers rejected the proposal (P11). Then Dr. Bob and the other managers presented competing proposals for future management of LLI, each requiring layoffs (P11). The board sided with the other managers, shifting Dr. Bob from the presidency into the board chairman's position (P11).

Throughout the rest of the 1980s and into the 1990s, LLI would continue moving along, primarily supported by its publishing revenues. During this period, most of the organization's funding came from sales of its books and other materials, at times up to 75% of revenues (P11). It also rode a "big wave of attention and resources and expansion of funding in the mid to late '80's" that resulted in part from Barbara Bush's attention to the issue while Second and then First Lady (P8). These trends "allowed the organization to grow both in terms of resources and awareness and it propelled us then into the early '90s with a much more visible role in terms of adult literacy" (P8).

The division between domestic programs, international programs, and publishing widened, to the extent that NRP and LLA were almost separate organizations, though sharing facilities and resources (P11). In 1998, the then head of NRP convinced the board and other managers to back an expansion into materials for K-12 students, resulting in an investment of

up to \$3 million borrowed against the endowment (P3; P11). Recognition of the changing financial environment for literacy, and limited initial returns from this attempt to branch out, would put LLI in a position where further changes, including merger, became desirable.

History of Literacy Volunteers of America

Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) began about a decade after LLI. Ruth Colvin, a Syracuse native, founded LVA's precursor organization, Literacy Volunteers, Inc. (LVI) after reading literacy statistics from the census (Colvin, 1992; 2005). Mrs. Colvin met with LLI, which at the time was almost entirely internationally-focused and self-admittedly not much help (P8; P11), and left desiring an organization with a more domestic focus and different approach to instruction (P8; P13). LVI informally began in 1962 and was formally chartered as a nonprofit in 1967 (Colvin, 1992; 2005). Five years later, it split, into nationally focused LVA and independent local affiliate Literacy Volunteers of Greater Syracuse (LVGS) (Colvin, 1992; 2005).

Mrs. Colvin served as president of LVA for only two years, intentionally setting a pattern of passing along leadership, though she consistently contributed her efforts to LVA and then PL ever since (P13). With the assistance of literacy experts from Syracuse University, especially Jane Root, her coauthor on the first six iterations of Tutor, LVA's training guide, she developed materials and guidance for adult literacy instruction based on a whole language philosophy (P13). Dr. Root also eventually served as president of LVA (P13).

LVA saw successes in advocacy, fundraising, and coalition-building late in the 1970s, throughout the 1980s, and early in the 1990s. Wally Amos of Famous Amos Chocolate Chip Cookies became the national spokesperson for LVA in 1979, the cartoons Garfield and Babar

promoted the organization and literacy more generally, and other corporations and entertainers supported LVA throughout this period (Colvin, 1992; 2005). LVA was a founding member of the Coalition for Literacy, begun in 1981, and began international efforts in 1988 (Colvin, 1992; 2005). Most significant perhaps, were LVA's ties to literacy's most prominent supporter. Barbara Bush made literacy her focal issue, while Second Lady and First Lady, hosting Mrs. Colvin for coffee, recognizing Mrs. Colvin's work and becoming the Honorary Chair of LVA's National Advisory Council in 1985 (Colvin, 1992; 2005; P13). In 1991, President Bush signed the National Literacy Act, which expanded the definition of literacy (Colvin, 1992; 2005). LVA benefitted from this attention to literacy and expanded its efforts during the period; when this environment changed, the organization began to consider future changes.

The merger to create ProLiteracy

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, national attention to literacy waned, and created a difficult fundraising environment for both organizations. "There'd been a tremendous regression in the field. Literacy programs that had previously been funded by Congress in such agencies as HUD and other agencies had ceased to exist and there had been no advocacy response to prevent those funding streams from going away" (P3).

Financial necessities led to greater interactions between the two organizations. Between 1988 and 1997, LLI and LVA undertook a series of joint projects, sometimes at the urging of donors (Colvin, 2005; P6). These included: a 1988 Gannet Foundation funded project; a 1990 Coors Brewing Company funded project that also included the Advertising Council, American Library Association, and the National Coalition for Literacy; and a 1997 National

Institute for Literacy funded project (Colvin, 2005). The two organizations also jointly participated on the National Council for Literacy to build the sector nationally (P6).

Internal pressure for a potential merger predated donor involvement and pressure. Shortly after joining LLI in 1982, Peter Waite openly questioned the separation between the two organizations and suggested cooperating and even exploring a merger (P6; P8). In pushing for increased ties between the organizations, Waite failed to understand the dynamics at place then, when he:

“misjudged the embedded resistance on the part of the two organizations to do that [merge]. There was sufficient sense of competition and animosity over two competing organizations, both headquartered in Syracuse, NY, both competing for resources to do virtually the same thing but having fundamentally different approaches and methodologies” (P8).

Eventually, this tension would lessen, partially in response to experiences collaborating, and informal dialogues began. Periodically, Waite would discuss the possibility of merger with leaders at LVA, feeling them out (P6; P8). The first round of talks involved a study by then LVA board chair John Eggert on the advantages and disadvantages of a merger, but concluded with a decision not to begin the process (P8). When a new president was hired at LVA, Kit Parker, negotiations opened up again (P8). These talks progressed with some LVA board members engaged, and general support within LLI, but failed to keep the rest of the board adequately informed, or secure the buy-in of Ruth Colvin (P8). Waite raised the issue several times with a third LVA president, Marsha Tait, but the conversation never began moving toward actual talks (P8).

Then, in 2000, Tait approached Waite, having already secured LVA board approval to begin talks about a merger (P8). In the time since the last failed merger talks, LVA’s board

gained new membership with private sector background who added more voices in support of the move, and expertise necessary to make it work (P9). For this round of discussion, the blessings of founders Ruth Colvin and Dr. Bob Laubach were obtained before negotiations began, providing essential symbolism to get others onboard (P9). In addition, the financial challenges facing the two organizations made the merger even more favorable (P6), as did “growing rumblings in the field as to why do we really need ... two organizations”, with many affiliates having joined both (P8).

LLI and LVA opened formal negotiations in 2001 (P8). Robert Wedgeworth and Ann Michel represented LLI during these negotiations, as did Marsha Tait and Shan Atkins for LVA (Colvin, 2005; P8; P9). “The challenge for the four of them was that none of them had very extensive experience in the field” of adult literacy (P8), though Wedgeworth’s background in library education bore some relation (Wedgeworth, 2004). Held over the course of around six months (P9), these negotiations included decisions on the process by which the merger would occur, the form of the resulting organization, and even decisions on content and programs. The general framework, major points of agreement, and mechanisms for the process were developed by the four negotiators, with much of the detail left to broader groups from both organizations (P9). A larger group of individuals at both organizations were formed to comment on these initial recommendations (P8). LVA also put the merger to a vote by its affiliates, despite not requiring such ratification in the organization’s charter (P9).

Among the content and programmatic decisions, three elements stand out: philosophy of training, accreditation standards, and regional presences. LLI and LVA initially operated under entirely different literacy training philosophies. LLI used a phonics based approach, the

“Laubach Way to Literacy”, with origins in Dr. Frank Laubach’s missions and literacy training abroad, especially work in the Philippines that led to the training ideal of “Each One, Teach One” to rapidly expand volunteer tutor numbers (P11). LVA relied on a whole language approach, developed with the assistance of Syracuse University education experts (P13). Earlier in their histories, both organizations identified strongly with their respective approaches (P8; P9), and some difficulty reconciling the approaches was expected during the merger (P5). Instead, easy agreement was reached to carry forward both instruction approaches and continue the full catalog of materials from both organizations (P8). In part this was because the organizations had gradually moved away from considering their approach as defining them. “I don’t think that either of the organizations were as doctrinaire in teaching style as the other one might have accused it of being” (P9), or that outsiders presumed (such as Christoph, 2009). Instead they had individually realized over time that the best training approach depended on the individual being trained, and the individual doing the training, leading them to develop some flexibility (P9), a decision supported by independent research (Belzer, 2006; Ziegler, et al., 2009). The merger formalized this flexibility, enabling PL to take the best elements from each approach, though it leaves the organization unsettled on how to advise potential trainees (P13).

Agreement on accreditation standards was trickier. LVA operated under a standard of strict accreditation, requiring members to adhere to a set of standards and be evaluated (P10; P13); those not yet accredited were labeled provisional members (P13). At LLI, accreditation was optional, and less of an organizational priority (P6; P10). Compromise between these positions was sought, but LVA needed to give up their hardline stance on accreditation for the merger to occur (P10). In the end, the organizations decided on an optional system that would

reach a broader set of affiliates with different needs (P6; P10). Recognition of different affiliate characteristics guided this decision, especially contrasts between rigid and flexibly structured and organized members (P13). Internal skepticism of this system remains, especially that no single set of expectations can be applied to all PL affiliates, as was in place under LVA (P13). A desire was in place to require accreditation for affiliates to receive grants, but PL lacked the funding necessary to make such commitments (P10).

Finally, a decision needed to be reached on the extent to which the combined organization would operate regionally. The field level structures of LLI and LVA differed significantly. LLI concentrated most of its attention within its divisions, mostly with a centralized national or international focus. LVA, on the other hand, had a partial network of state offices, aiming to have frequent regional ties to members (P9). Due to this structure, LVA maintained a closer connection to the field, but struggled with the costs of these offices (P9). In the end, a decision was reached consistent with that on accreditation; leaving more in the hands of affiliates, and mostly closing the state offices (P9).

In 2002, having convinced their respective boards that a combination organization was an overall better choice than remaining independent (P9), the two organizations merged to become ProLiteracy. PL began with five divisions: ProLiteracy America for domestic literacy, International Programs, New Readers Press, Public Affairs, and Fund Development (Colvin, 2005). This resulting structure differed little from that already in place at LLI, and PL continued operating in the LLI property. “The only major change was that we did establish ... an office for public policy and communications and that was the one that Marsha Tait [former president of LVA] oversaw” (P8), observations echoed by others (P6). All twelve of LLI’s board members

remained on the PL board, joined by seven of LVA's eighteen board members (LLI, LVA, & PL Form 990s from 2001 through 2003).

The limited structural changes reflected the substantial differences in sizes of the two organizations. LLI's staff, budget, and publishing division were ten times larger than LVA's, and had about three times as many affiliates (P5; P8; P9). LVA brought a somewhat larger national profile and a reputation within the field as a thought leader (P9), though LLI's NRP had the only real name recognition in publishing (P8). Despite the process uniting the two organizations explicitly acting as a merger between partners rather than an acquisition of LVA by LLI, some of the changes more closely resembled an acquisition, and some formerly LLI staff even considered it one (P8). LLI's facilities remained home to the new organization, and LLI managers and board members held many of the key leadership roles, including CEO and board chair, but elements of LVA, such as its governance structures, were incorporated (P8).

Affiliate organizations from either LLI or LVA were invited to maintain this relationship through PL and could retain names drawing on either predecessor names, though also needed to announce their affiliation with PL (Colvin, 2005). Before the merger, affiliates of either organization could use elements of the LLI or LVA names (P3). After substantial internal debate, they were explicitly not permitted to adopt the PL name (P3). This choice remains controversial, with some seeing that, "an ill-advised decision was made to not allow local members to use the ProLiteracy name, and a lot of branding visibility was let go of when that decision was made" (P3). In fact, this debate was later reopened, but PL "decided that it was just too far down the road for us to pick that up again since so many of our members across the country have moved on and selected other names" (P3). Affiliate members could also

participate in annual PL conferences; previously the LVA conference had been annual and LLI's biennial (P6).

PL started off in a good position, and "for a few years we really had a rain shadow of some good funding because people were excited about this potential merger" (P8). And the process of merging went better than anticipated (P8). Early advantages were realized, especially since "LVA and Laubach Literacy were competitors ... and the merger made us a larger stronger organization" (P6). But it seems that PL did not change enough during and immediately after the merger, and were unable to fully realize potential benefits from the merger. Several interviewees recognized this problem, and criticized the institutional reluctance to change, both structural and behavioral (P15). One noted of PL that "We are an organization that has been slow to change" (P5). Another noted:

"In many respects it was ahead of its time having its own publishing operation, doing innovative things, but in the last decade the organization had really slipped, had become really cushy, slow moving, academic in its approach, real intransigence and entrenchment on part of the senior staff, not a focus on innovation and change, intense resistance to doing anything new and different" (P3).

And a third stated that:

"There was not a lot that was new in terms of the ingredients, so I think we clearly only realized the small percentage of the potential that we knew was out there, but we didn't want to cause too much trauma at the outset by making a whole pile of wholesale changes, we just tried to blend the two entities and create some efficiencies in operations" (P9).

As a result, the merger was "not as painful ... as everyone might make it out to be" (P5).

Though the limited structural changes, consistent leadership, and resolute focus enabled the two predecessor organizations to become one, the board had recognized the need for a

change. Upon its initial CEO's announcement of plans for retirement, this change process began.

Changes at PL

Following a national search, David Harvey was hired as CEO in 2008, with a mandate to undertake significant changes. With revenues declining during the tough financial climate for nonprofits, and a thus far unprofitable attempt to expand into K-12 materials, PL's financial situation was challenging. Numerous changes followed, including the departure of several department heads, reorganization of staffing and responsibilities, an overhaul of the finance and accounting system, expansion of advocacy efforts, opening a small Washington, DC office, and surveys of affiliate organizations. These changes culminated in the 2012 sale of and move from LLI's original facility to rented offices in a former warehouse located in an impoverished Syracuse neighborhood.

Leading up to and during the period PL undertook major changes in leadership, strategy, and structure, it faced a challenging environment. Funding and attention for adult literacy never returned to the late 1980s high, hampering both PL and its affiliates. More broadly, adult literacy is generally perceived to take a back-seat to child literacy, with funders like governments and individuals focusing on K-12 needs (P4). This sector-specific fundraising and advocacy challenge coincided with the financial crisis, which began impacting nonprofits in 2007 (Morreale, 2011; Salamon, et al., 2009), just after a series of crises that attracted attention to disaster relief and away from other charitable causes (P5). Throughout most of the 2000s, PL's revenues were stagnant, with combined LLI and LVA, and then PL, annual revenues

hovering in the \$12 million to \$13 million range from 1998 through 2007, before dropping into the \$10 million range during 2008 through 2010 (LLI, LVA, and PL Form 990s). In addition, an attempt to expand into K-12 publishing had yet to demonstrate any return, despite an expensive investment. Recognition of this financially challenging environment helped set the stage for change.

Changes in board composition also set the stage for larger changes within the organization. Historically, the boards of LLI and especially LVA included many literacy practitioners and academics, with less representation from the private sector (P9). The post-merger board contained only legacy members from the two predecessor organizations, and no new members recruited exclusively for PL (P9). PL's second and third board chairs, Ann Michel and Shan Atkins, pushed to diversify the board, with new members from the private sector replacing legacy members as their terms expired (P9). To speed this process, they encouraged some members not to stand for re-election, instituted self and peer assessments, and focused on reforming governance; still, the changes took five years (P9). With the altered board composition, the need for change became easier to see: "it was clear that a lot of things in the organization really weren't working as the board had imagined and as needed to occur" (P9).

PL's board undertook a national search, looking beyond the literacy sector for leadership that could help launch significant changes. The board was fairly unanimous in desiring somebody with an advocacy background, which the search committee used to direct the process (P9; P10). Eventually they selected David Harvey due to his background of launching AIDS Alliance (www.aids-alliance.org), a DC based start-up with a reputation for successful advocacy efforts. He had no prior background in literacy or any closely related areas

(P3), and was selected primarily for his potential for increasing visibility of the organization and cause, and to alter the internal dynamics (P9). Perceived as a change agent, Harvey entered with strong backing from the board and a mandate to change the organization (P1; P3). Coming from outside the sector, he also was perceived as “someone who can generally bring a fresh perspective to our work because he’s never worked in the literacy field; he had no baggage” (P5).

Harvey did just that, launching into substantial changes throughout his five year tenure as CEO. He “shook up” (P2) the organization, altering its culture, financial systems, structure, and programmatic focus, with substantial support from board members and staff desiring change. The board strongly backed his efforts to reform the organization, concerned about its direction and structure, perceiving that “things have gotten too out of control here” with “rogue divisions doing their own things and run by people who’ve been here for a long time” (P8). Looking back, a board member reflected: “so probably the most important thing we did was to hire David and then support him in performing a very clear assessment of where we were, where we were not but needed to be, and what it was going to take organizationally and resource wise” (P9). Another commented that, “David’s done a lot of things in terms of organizational structure, has gotten us focused on Washington ... He’s challenging the board ... to get them more involved and more engaged” (P12). In these efforts, the “board’s role has certainly been supportive; it’s been advisory ... a sounding board for David” (P12), but “the board can be more involved in [fundraising]. I don’t think we’ve done as good a job getting involved in fundraising” (P12).

A critical first priority was an overhaul of the financial system. The range of activities undertaken by PL makes its finances complex, with lengthy annual financial reports (P4). PL's previous accounting and financial systems were mismatched with their nonprofit organizational form, including unclear financial reports, audits based on for-profit accounting standards and even members of the New Readers Press wrongly believing their unit to be a separate for-profit entity (P1; P3). These approaches were supported by logic, even if inappropriate. To serve as an effective earned-income source, NPR needed to operate much like a business, generally only offering products offering a positive return (P4), but, according to one respondent, had historically not fully accounted for their share of indirect costs, overstating their impact (P1). Harvey brought in consultants to audit the organization and reform the systems, eventually hiring one of the consultants as CFO (P3; P4). A complete overhaul of accounting, auditing, budgeting, and reporting systems resulted (P3; P4). In addition, the former LVA board treasurer joined PL's board, occupying the same role and bringing a financial background to it (P12). Through these reforms, Harvey discovered that the organization he joined was in far worse financial condition than either he, or many on the board (P13), had realized, with a \$3.7 million debt primarily from the unsuccessful expansion of NRP (P3). The K-12 product line, originated at LLI and furthered invested in during PL's first strategic plan (P9), was either poorly planned (P3), executed, or not given enough time (P9). The financing strategy for this investment, easy to handle during a thriving economy, became tenuous with the downturn (P9). Refinancing of the loans would alleviate some of the financial difficulty (P9), but other choices would need to be made.

PL underwent other significant structural changes during this period, including the departures of four out of the five department heads. One department head left with the announcement of David Harvey's hiring, recognizing an expected redundancy between her primary expertise and that Harvey would bring in advocacy (P6; P8). Three other department heads were eventually pushed out, the head of NRP almost immediately (P1; P11). The sole remaining department head, Peter Waite, shifted between departments as needed, from domestic to international to development to publishing (P8), briefly served as a senior advisor, and now serves as associate executive director (<http://www.proliteracy.org/about-us/leadership>, as of March 8, 2013). Other mid-level and junior staff were similarly shifted around, spending time in different departments (P2; P5; P6), which both helped to break down departmental barriers and fill organizational needs. Many existing junior or middle level staff moved up into positions of greater authority, and were provided with in-house training and professional development resources (P1; P2; P6). Regional fundraising officers were also let go, costing the organization around \$350,000 annually with insufficient returns to show (P3). Harvey brought in his second-in-command from AIDS Alliance around half a year after joining PL to head the Special Projects Division, through which various programmatic changes would be attempted (P1; P3). This structure itself created some problems, with the new division occasionally serving as a bottleneck for decisions (P14). Eventually, the domestic and international programs were combined into a single department (P8). Much of the planning and reorganization activities occurred through inter-departmental teams.

Not all of Harvey's early decisions were received well. Early on, he, with the board's support (P15), canceled a planned merger with COABE (www.coabe.org), a Chicago based

organization focused on supporting adult basic education professionals (P3; P6). The cancellation occurred due to multiple factors, including the differences between memberships at the organizations, the potential drift from PL's core mission, and the process serving as a distraction from other needed changes (P3). It had been led by the previous director, without much involvement of PL's board, making them concede easily to its cancellation (P8). The merger cancellation was unilateral and almost last minute, which burned bridges between the organizations that are only now starting to be rebuilt (P8). Disbanding of a separate US board followed a similar pattern, with a decision seen as necessary being undertaken quickly and without enough consultation, leaving hurt feelings in its wake (P8).

Under Harvey, the culture became more open, cooperative, and creative (P2). Senior staff were perceived as having their own agendas (P3), overseeing personal fiefdoms (P8), and creating an environment with little or no cross-division cooperation (P2). "Some of these staff members virtually have never spoken with each other" (P3). "Staff within NRP in particular were discouraged from interacting with folks over on this part of the building; it was really considered a waste of time and there was a real lack of respect for the work that went on over here" (P8). "There used to be a time where ... programs could not get any assistance from New Readers Press" (P6). An early staff retreat revealed the difficulties in getting staff to open up and disagree, after having been kept from doing so (P1). Cross divisional working groups that planned strategic changes, training regimes, human resources policies, and cost savings from eliminating redundancies broke down these divides (P1; P3), with "staff today working harder to cross bridges and to interact" (P8). Harvey also worked to replace the static leadership dynamics with an emerging culture of hiring from within (P2; P3). Breaking down the culture

divide between programs and publishing was particularly important because affiliates needed both training and materials aligned with their needs (P6). “David has his management style of wanting to empower staff at a variety of levels to try to make it less hierarchical” (P6).

One major initiative to help shift PL’s strategy was to get back in touch with affiliates. Concerned that “we had almost alienated our members” (P3) and that “we needed at ProLiteracy to discover again what our niche was” (P1), the organization placed a substantial priority on understanding their needs. At the core of this effort was an overhaul of member surveying efforts, headed up by the special projects division (P3). Previously an annual survey had gone out, with questions unchanging and not aligned with members interests, and results all but ignored (P1). In speaking of the survey, some affiliates (P1) borrowed a colorful name used for LVA’s annual survey, “the Lie in July”, where because LVA charged its affiliates by number of students some would ‘misreport’ their enrollment in order to pay less (P15). The new survey revealed a view that PL was “out of touch and non-responsive” (P1) and identified two distinct sets of affiliates sharing common interests and desires. The majority of members are reliant on volunteers, but the second group uses paid educators and are generally larger and financially stronger (P10). The first group is more interested in training, awareness, and resources, rather than expensive accreditation (P10). In fact, PL’s accreditation numbers had been slipping over time, with members deciding that the process was not worth the financial investment, especially as the economy worsened (P3). The second group, desiring of greater advocacy efforts and public relations (P10), is closely aligned with the vision Harvey was bringing to the organization. Even in the best economic times, there was a perception of not enough awareness or resources for literacy; with the down-turn, affiliate members are

struggling to make due with limited resources (P10). Harvey aligned with those members, select board members wishing PL to have a greater national profile, and staff sharing a similar view to expand PL's advocacy efforts. "Affiliates ... have always kind of done their own thing, and they can partake or not partake of what we have to offer" (P12). Harvey also instituted policies wherein traveling staff, especially himself, would meet with local member programs in person (P1; P3). Intentional efforts was put forth to develop a "culture around service to the members" (P1).

PL's expansion into advocacy involved significant investment of time and resources. Historically, LVA had recognized the importance of advocacy, but had not put substantial resources into it (P10). Literacy was "not on the national radar screen" (P3). LLI, and PL before Harvey's hiring, also had put only limited attention to advocacy, in part a remnant of the organization's disillusionment with attempts to secure federal funding. PL's new advocacy focus was intended to "put it [both literacy and PL] on the national public policy stage and give it more visibility" (P3), while also shaking up its messages, because "we'd been saying the same things about literacy for 20 years, 40 years, and we didn't seem to mind that the needle wasn't moving at all" (P1).

As part of this effort, PL established a DC office, out of which Harvey would work on occasion, hired two lobbying firms, brought on a public relations firm, established a public policy board committee, and created a new board approved public policy agenda (P3). Eventually the lobbying presence would be somewhat reduced and the public relations function brought in-house (P3). PL also took a more active role in the National Coalition for Literacy (www.national-coalition-literacy.org), including switching its representation from a board

member to manager (P6) and forcing its way into greater leadership of the organization, a development eventually leading to State Directors Basic Education departing the coalition (P3). As a result of these efforts, PL received its first ever federal earmark, immediately before Congress reformed its budgeting process to limit future earmarks (P2; P3). Partially in support of PL, Representative Dan Maffei established a literacy caucus, which attracted around 20 members (P5; P11). The public relations efforts also saw some returns, with greater media coverage than in PL's (if not LVA's or LLI's) history (P3). "We used to say, 'ProLiteracy is the nation's best kept secret', but now I think we're getting to be known" (P11). Others echoed this view, calling PL "the best kept secret in Syracuse" (P5). In part due to these advocacy efforts, respondents now say of the organization that "when they think of adult literacy, they think of ProLiteracy" (P8).

To address PL's financial position, Harvey saw one asset that could help the organization pay down its debt: its facility near Syracuse University's South Campus. High, and potentially rising, maintenance costs were a further justification for the move, especially with an aging facility (P3; P5; P9; P13). Opinions differed on whether to sell the property, and if so, where to move. "There was a lot of emotional energy tied up in, and attachment to, the old Laubach campus" (P9), making the eventual agreement to sell the facility tough, and necessitating Dr. Bob's support (P9). Debate raged on whether to leave Syracuse for DC (P5), with consensus emerging on staying because it would be more costly (P4; P5), would require substantial turnover amongst staff (P4), and "being a big fish in a little pond is a heck of a lot better than being a little fish in a big pond" (P4). Where to relocate within Syracuse also was subject to much debate, with the eventual solution being a low-income neighborhood that was being

revitalized through the Near Westside Initiative. “The two year process that we’ve been engaged with for this move has been driven far less by senior management than it has been by the task forces that have been made up by key staff around the building, most of whom were not at a senior level” (P6). These task forces, supported by outside consultants, led the process to identify possible locations and develop a recommended solution (P5), one which wasn’t immediately accepted by all. “A lot of people were skeptical at first ... especially [people who] are from outside the area” (P12). There was also skepticism about the specific location picked, especially early on before the warehouse was renovated (P12). To some, “the Near West Side was not the first choice ... because ... we weren’t sure they could be ready, they weren’t sure they could get financing” (P4). But others saw advantages, especially moving to a “community that desperately needs redevelopment” (P7), having the “opportunity to create an identity locally” (P7), that “this new office is ... just going to take it up another notch” (P6), “shake up ... a rather sleepy organization” (P1), and to catalyze, change the culture, and build energy (P9).

The move itself was planned by inter-division teams of staff. Many within the organization looked forward to the perceived advantages of local presence and involvement, including understanding community needs and thus be better positioned to help (P2; P5; P12). “We’re going to be much more a face of the community. We’re going to have much more of a presence in Syracuse than we ever did before because of this [move]” (P12). “Where they’re moving there’ll be a much more visible presence; there’s going to be a public television [studio] next door” (P7). Nonetheless, there were real concerns, within and without the organization, that taking on a greater local role could cause PL to compete with its local affiliates, especially with LVGS (P5; P7; P13). Some in the organization argue for a focus on pilot programs that tie

in affiliates, such as LVGS, as partners and thus avoiding competing for the same funding sources (P5; P13).

The sale of PL's facility and other reforms cut its debt in half (P3), and in May, 2012, PL moved to its new headquarters. Located in a former warehouse in the economically deprived Near Westside neighborhood of Syracuse, the new location was renovated in conjunction with a series of other efforts to reinvigorate the area (Dominzio, 2013). Two local literacy organizations also occupied space in the building, establishing closer connections (site visit). To draw upon the legacies of both LLI and LVA, two of the programs were renamed – to the Robert S. Laubach New Readers Press and the Frank C. Laubach International Programs, respectively – and the home of local efforts was dubbed the Ruth J. Colvin Center for Innovation and Excellence in Adult Literacy (PL, Sept. 5, 2012).

Internal expectations around the move's impact were high. There were expectations that organizational culture would continue to improve, with the physical space moving from an isolated departmental set-up to one more conducive to inter-departmental communication (P4). Even symbolic elements of culture changed. In the original facility, the CEO's office was set off in a corner with an assistant's desk positioned in a potential gatekeeping role; at the new location, the CEO's office is centrally located, with full glass walls on three sides and easy access for employees (site visits). Expectations also exist that local affiliates will use the facilities to conduct some programs (P5) and that members of the community will take advantage of them (site visit). In particular, the Colvin Center is seen as holding potential for community involvement and impact.

“The new work that we'll be doing at the Colvin Center is a change for us and the fact that we're going to have a computer center, that we're going to be able to

do literacy training right there on the new site with tutors and volunteers, we're going to be able to test new products, test new methods, and that computer center is going to be open to the general public" (P5).

Already, PL is seeing some return locally. In an earlier round of local efforts to improve literacy through the establishment of coalition, PL appears not to have figured prominently. An account of this process, albeit focused primarily on the local community foundation's role, highlighted the legacies of PL, LLI, and LVA but did not report any role of PL in the planning and creation (Ridzi, et al., 2011). More recently, PL's local profile has grown, and the organization has begun to receive funding from the local foundations. "We've had the first success that we ever had from the Allyn Foundation, the CNY Community Foundation, the Reisman Foundation; they only work locally so they never funded us before" (P5).

Future of the organization

Post-move, the leadership team at PL lasted half a year. In November of 2012, David Harvey left PL, with Board Chair Kevin Morgan temporarily taking over as acting director (Ellis, 2012), assisted by Peter Waite as Associate Executive Director (P15). Clearly this was not a planned departure, and the language around the change is suggestive of a firing: "He (Harvey) went on to pursue other opportunities in the Washington, D.C., area, and let's leave it at that," Morgan said. "The good news is that David worked for ProLiteracy for five years and did a lot of great things for the organization" (Ellis, 2012, 2). Other changes followed, including January, 2013 layoffs of eleven staff (P14; P15), a revision of PL's mission statement up for board approval in May of 2013 (P15), and a search for a new CEO that is expected to start in the summer of 2013 (P15).

The seeds of this change were already in place. Despite accomplishing the necessary organizational shake-ups and building up PL's advocacy capacity, PL's revenues suffered under the tougher financial climate, and at least as of 2010, the new sources pursued by Harvey had not replaced lost contribution and publishing revenues. Though 2012 was "the first year where we will rebound individual giving in a number of years. Foundation, institutional, [and] corporate side might be even slower to rebound than individual givers" (P5). As a result, even "if the economy continues to improve, it will still take us another estimated 3 to 5 years to recover" (P5).

Decisions on leadership, mission, strategy, and structure in 2013 will greatly influence the organization moving forward, and may reflect attempts to resolve ongoing debates about PL's central identity – or its dominant mission conception. In particular, PL's board and management must come to grips on how the organization will share its resources and attention amongst various priorities: the local community, serving members, international efforts, advocacy, and publishing. Under Harvey, PL focused on expanding its advocacy and local efforts, efforts generally overlooked by prior leaders (P2) and opposed by some internally (P5); the change in leadership might move the organization back away from these activities. These internal debates, previously thought settled, on the extent to which PL should focus on advocacy, local efforts, international activity, and serving membership, could reopen in the course of these upcoming changes. To guide PL's future direction, the board and management will have to reach a new agreement on who they fundamentally seek to serve, and how they will interpret and approach their mission heading forward.

Findings

Through examination of the factors influencing change at PL, four in particular stand out as leading to other changes: financial performance, leadership, mission, and structure. In common with other cases, the PL case indicates the presence of dynamic conceptions of mission differing between individuals and over time, a willingness to take risk outside the current organizational focus, strategic approaches to current and potential funders minimizing external control over the organization, windows of opportunity aligning with preexisting efforts to launch transformational changes, and the formation of internal coalitions to design and implement changes.

Role of financial performance

Both the external and internal financial contexts of PL and its predecessor organizations play significant roles in processes of change. The receptive climate for literacy efforts of the 1980s/early 1990s created opportunities for strengthening LLI and LVA's existing efforts. Financial challenges in the period around the merge, and again since the economic downturn, created windows of opportunity for change to occur and encouraged the organization to move out of its comfort zone and take new risks. These later two periods of challenging financial contexts require particular attention to their influence on change.

The ebbing national attention to adult literacy in the late 1990s, and resulting challenges to funding LLI and LVA, did not directly cause the merger. Nonetheless, it influenced decisions by individuals within the organizations on whether to support the merger, some of them changing opinions from prior attempts to merge. Some even feel that LVA's decision to merge

was born out of necessity and driven by financial considerations (P12). This tougher financial climate also led to a change in how PL approached donors, compared to pre-merge LLI, and possibly also LVA. “The way in which the organization began speaking to donor did change, especially donors from the business world, and that was quite useful not only in attracting some funding but also attracting board members to participate with the organization as directors in a way that previously hadn’t really occurred” (P9). This shift in mentality, and the new board members it garnered, would later factor into further changes at PL.

At PL, the economic downturn beginning in 2007 saw declines in donations from individuals (P2). The changing investment and lending climates also put pressure on PL’s assets. PL was not alone, with much of the sector seeing overall funding declines. Affiliate members of the organization saw their total income decline by over nine percent over four years, as seen below in table 19, indicating the revenue difficulties throughout the sector.

Table 19: Affiliate Member Income Trends (PL, 2008-2012, Statistical Reports)

Survey Year	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Total Income	\$183 million	\$176 million	\$177.8 million	\$168 million	\$161.9 million
Change		-3.8%	1.0%	-5.5%	-3.7%
Cumulative		-3.8%	-2.8%	-4.4%	-9.1%

Internally, these financial pressures led PL members to realize that “We’re not a business, but we have to act like one” (P4). It also led board members to dedicate greater time and attention during the crisis, though momentum would later be hard to sustain (P10). They also established opportunities to change, encouraged new efforts, and revealed unspoken preferences within the organization. Priorities shifted, with respondents claiming that PL has a history of wandering away from their focus on affiliates when faced with financial difficulties (P10). More recently, it responded to the financial challenges by cutting back funding to

international programs (P12). The prioritization of different programmatic areas for scarce resources would factor into changes in how PL interpreted and approached its mission.

Role of structure

In merging to become PL, LLI and LVA kept LLI's organizational structure, one with substantial separation between departments, and led by heads who functioned almost as CEOs themselves. Developed early on by LLI, this structure was developed due to the substantial differences between the activities of various departments. This structure influenced PL's ability to make changes; the desire for greater flexibility eventually required its dismantling.

The departmentalization of LLI may have begun with the acquisition of New Readers' Press (NRP), strengthened as NRP grew, and further strengthened with the creation of Laubach Literacy Action/Advance/America (LLA). Over time, long-serving department heads consolidated their individual fiefdoms, aided by CEOs who empowered them, and unwilling or unable to challenge one another (P14). Distinct advisory or governing boards, budgets, and branding further separated the departments, leading individuals within them to potentially identify more strongly with their department than the organization as a whole. Members of one department even believed it to have a different organizational form than the nonprofit as a whole.

Rather than dismantle the existing structure, the merger generally kept LLI intact, adding a new department for public relations that drew on LVA's organizational strengths. Although this decision minimized the turmoil from the merger process, it resulted in a PL little different from its predecessor organizations, especially LLI, despite conditions that made the

merger so beneficial. Combined with powerful department heads and a culture limiting cooperation between units, PL's structure prevented the development of a consensus on the form and extent of changes. Some saw this structure as even more problematic:

“Also before the merger, but after merger a really dysfunctional, highly silo'ed organization. ... Power within the organization [was] held very tightly in a few hands, and there was sort of a 'you don't challenge me, I won't challenge you' among the 4 to 5 people that had the authority within the organization, and the larger staff were dispirited, despairing some of them, no opportunity for people to work to their best capacity, no explicitly no opportunity for people to challenge anything” (P1).

According to respondents, “the biggest siloes within the organization were the New Readers' Press and the rest of us” (P1), with some interaction between other departments. The divides made it difficult for former LVA staff to integrate fully, and by the middle of 2012, PL was entirely comprised of former LLI staff and new hires, with no legacy LVA staff (P6). In addition to its internal impacts, this structure also diffused and confused PL's branding, leading to a situation where “lots of times people don't know that New Readers Press is part of ProLiteracy” (P6). This divided structure eventually motivated board members to seek substantial change, partially focused on breaking down the siloes. As a result, the structure has shifted substantially, with most respondents generally agreeing that “now with David's help it is very good; it's all one organization” (P11).

Role of mission change

Both LLI and LVA shared a basic underlying purpose, with addressing adult literacy at the core of their missions. Interview respondents and available archival information support this similarity. To them, “the basic programs and the basic message has always been the same; it's

been consistent” (P12). This basic mission is also readily accessible, in that “literacy is noncontroversial ... nobody is against reading” (P13). The brief information provided in both organizations annual IRS filings share this similarity, with LLI describing its exempt purpose as to “provide literacy services for adult non-readers” (1999, F990) and LVA as “to promote increased literacy” (1997-2001, F990). In providing additional details, LVA’s vision statement emphasized its particular role in literacy, with “Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc. (LVA) is a fully integrated national network of local, state, and regional literacy providers who give adults and their families the opportunity to acquire skills to be effective in their roles as members of their families, communities, and workplaces” (Colvin, 2005, p. 157). Both LLI and its domestic division LLA had their own missions, with societal transformation part of LLI’s (P6). “There was kind of a bit of schizophrenic sense in the organization. One part on this transformation and social change, one part on a more individual focused, maybe family focused, approach to adult literacy” (P6).

In establishing PL’s mission, the main focus of adult literacy provided common ground, but the differences within and between the organizations needed to be reconciled. The resulting post-merger mission incorporates a “sense that communities and societies are still a part of this” (P6), from both LLI’s and LVA’s, but not LLA’s, missions. The new mission statement was: “To sponsor educational programs and services whose purpose is to empower adults and their families by assisting them to acquire the literacy practices and skills they need to function more effectively in their daily lives and participate in the transformation of their societies” (Colvin, 2005, p. 157). When describing the exempt purpose in annual filings, PL continued with a focus on the basic issue, with “help to solve the world’s adult literacy

problem” (PL, 2005, F990). Later this would be described in more detail and closer to the formal mission statement, as “public education and dissemination of information on the literacy problem and its scope throughout the world and relating the function of ProLiteracy to those needs” (PL, 2007, F990).

In 2008, PL’s mission was redone so that it would be “short, sweet” (P2). This mission appeared in PL’s 2008 Annual Report, combined with the vision to read: “ProLiteracy champions the power of literacy to improve the lives of adults and their families, communities, and societies. We envision a world in which everyone can read, write, compute, and use technology to lead healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives”. The mission continues to be in place, with the two sentences of the statement explicitly being the mission and vision respectively, as seen on the website (<http://www.proliteracy.org/page.aspx?pid=303>, as of March, 2012; <http://www.proliteracy.org/about-us/mission-vision-and-history>, as of March, 2013). Briefer references to the mission incorporate elements of these empowering, community, or social roles, with recent tag lines reading as “improving lives and communities through adult literacy” (PL, 2008-2009, AR) and “turning pages, changing lives” (PL, 2011, AR). Respondents viewed this change as reflecting an important difference with the organization, that “we’ve got a community mission now, we’re part of a community, the community trusts that we’re not just some outsiders” (P1). Under each of these missions though, including today, internal differences on how to interpret and achieve these purposes, and even whether the formal mission statement accurately reflected organization priorities, continued, in the form of different conceptions of mission.

Presence of and changes in mission conceptions²

ProLiteracy (PL) saw changes in dominant mission conception, both as a merged organization and in its predecessor entities. Laubach Literacy International (LLI) began as internationally focused on both religious missions and literacy, with its own particular approach to literacy education. It dropped missions and added publishing, later adding a domestic element. Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) began in part due as a response to the limited domestic focus of LLI, and with a different approach to literacy education. By the time of the merger, both organizations no longer felt their distinctive approaches to literacy education were central to their identities, easing merger discussions. With the merger, PL combined the elements from each predecessor organization. In the years since, it has deemphasized international programs, to increase focus on advocacy and member service, with its dominant mission conception still somewhat undecided.

Throughout, individuals have held distinct personal mission conceptions, which factor into the dynamic and sometimes unsettled process of reaching a dominant mission conception. Some elements of these personal mission conceptions align closely with their respective departments, while others drew upon the values and purposes that motivated them to join the organization. In interviews, respondents recognized this tension without being prompted, with one stating, “I would say we’re very much a mission driven organization ... [but] I think there’s a lot of differences maybe in how people interpret the mission” (P1), and that “we’re a tough

² The terms used here are defined elsewhere in the dissertation. ‘Formal mission statement’ is the text used in documents such as annual reports, ‘about us’ pages, and IRS filings. A ‘mission conception’ is how that statement is interpreted and approached. Individuals have their own ‘personal mission conceptions’, while a single consensus ‘dominant mission conception’ can be in place across the organization at a point in time.

organization for an elevator speech” (P1). When asked for their ‘elevator speech’, they gave a wide range of perspectives on the underlying values they see the organization pursuing, how they interpret the mission, and the approach they prefer. Key language from each is in table 20, below.

P1	“Literacy and basic education is right at the center of so many social justice concerns and so many problems in the US”; separate national and international directions, changing US policies
P2	Help families and adults, provide training and materials, help build programs from the ground, presence in 26 countries
P3	Core social issue, intersects with other social problems, advance cause, serve national and international membership, publishing
P4	“You’re never too old to learn to read”, enjoyment of literacy, one stop shop for adult literacy organizations
P5	Illiteracy “underlies every social ill that we have”, scale of need, women’s literacy critical, greatest need amongst women and in developing countries, link between parents and children’s education, need to “break that cycle of intergenerational illiteracy”
P6	Domestic and international, help adults acquire basic literacy skills, fulfill both individual and community needs
P7	Ability to read is empowering, literacy necessary for economy and individuals to thrive, parents as first teacher
P8	“Nation’s largest national association and network of adult literacy programs”, literacy as vehicle for opportunity, key necessity
P9	Huge adult literacy problem in US, not just an immigration issue, high societal return on investment
P10	Literacy improves lives and community, volunteerism, personal stories
P11	“I’ve always thought that literacy is my mission”
P12	Basic literacy is tied to social problems and issues, economic, health, children
P13	Put audience in shoes of a non-reader, joy of reading, necessity of literacy, use stories

Most of these personal conceptions included elements related to how literacy is linked to other social problems, with only interviewees P4, P11 and P13 focusing on literacy primarily for its own sake. Nonetheless, some disagreement exists on the extent to which PL should focus on literacy in relation to other social problems. The dominant mission conception in

place does tie literacy to broader social problems, differing from early iterations. Literacy's role in promoting faith, rather than other social problems, was part of LLI's dominant mission conception at its founding, as reflected in its founder's writings (see Laubach, 1947; 1970), though gradually over time this would no longer be a key influence (P11). Post-merger, literacy's role in social problems appears not to have yet been fully part of the dominant mission conception at PL. Leadership disagreed with itself on this focus, with then CEO Robert Wedgeworth simultaneously advocating for the development of a 'literacy culture' (2004) focused on literacy for its own sake and tying literacy to social change. "Self-reliance, health, justice, peace, human rights, and preservation of the environment are the primary contexts in which ProLiteracy attempts to affect social change through literacy training" (Wedgeworth, 2004, 18).

During David Harvey's tenure as CEO, literacy's tie to social problems emerged to clearly become part of the dominant mission conception, though not without some alternative perspectives. According to one respondent, "we talk now a great deal about literacy as a [social] change" (P11), and "in the last few years we've also had a special emphasis on literacy for women" (P11). This same respondent raised questions that the organization has not raised sufficiently: "Every now and then I ask, 'how much literacy is there?'" (P11). And "Are we letting ourselves get so involved in social change that we forget that we are a literacy organization?" (P11). Believes this question has not been raised sufficiently (P11). Others are satisfied with the focus, but not results and feel PL isn't effectively making the connection between adult literacy and the community, especially children and the role of parents as the first teacher (P10). Others raise appeals back to PL's (and its predecessors') roots in the process of teaching

literacy. Ruth Colvin insisted that “everybody on our board read, A Way With Words, because people would be on our board for five years and have no idea what we are doing. They are interested in advocacy, which is good. They are interested in fundraising, which is good. But unless you know why we are doing it, that gives you the mission, nothing else is important” (P13). With another upcoming leadership change, the dominant mission conception could shift back toward literacy itself and away from social problems.

Two other critical elements of PL’s dominant mission conception remain unresolved: who the organization considers its primary stakeholders, and the level at which it should be focusing its attention. Options for resolving these questions include four potential stakeholders: the literacy movement, affiliate members, trainers/volunteers, or students; and three levels of attention: international, national, and local. Historically, LVA emphasized volunteers (P10) and students (P13), LLI trainers (P10) – both paid and volunteer – and PL its local affiliates (P10). Neither LLI nor LVA were local, with LVA being primarily national and LLI mixing national and international. After the merger, PL continued to combine national and international and exclude local. Under Harvey, PL’s dominant mission conception shifted toward the movement and members, raising concerns internally. It also moved quickly away from an international scope and gradually toward establishing an initial community scope, while maintaining a primarily national focus.

The attention to the movement was not new, though its importance was. Over the past “30 years, the organization [LLI and then PL] has really significantly matured in its understanding of its role as a national organization/association” (P8), shifting from a small organization with training programs to “today it is quite clearly one of the leaders, if not the

leader, amongst our colleagues and similar organizations in terms of literacy” (P8). This vision was advocated from the beginning of PL, albeit with attention to other stakeholders as well: “Our goal is to make ProLiteracy an advocate and leader in the adult literacy field. Ensuring that we provide the best possible literacy services to adult students here and abroad is at the heart of our mission” (Robert Wedgeworth, Literacy Advocate, Fall 2002, from Laubach, 2003, p. 323). This differed from its predecessor organizations, especially LVA. “LVA was much more a grassroots volunteer focused program, PL got more of a broader scope” (P12). Instead, PL is “more of a collaborative body that’s going to help out the affiliates, and we’re not as involved with the affiliates as we were” (P12). Under Harvey, this focus on the field or movement and playing a substantial advocacy and leadership role expanded, with interviewees noting that “our vision has certainly grown” (P12) and that “we’ve started to do more, higher profile campaigning and fundraising and policy-making in Washington” (P12).

In pursuing advocacy and other efforts, there also remains a focus on affiliate members as well. The refocusing upon members and overhauling of surveys show this attention becoming a core part of PL’s dominant mission conception, though not to the extent that some in the organization would prefer. To them, “one of the purposes of ProLiteracy is to find these wonderful things that are going on and bring them up and disseminate them around the country” (P13). This requires that PL listen more to affiliates, prove the effectiveness of the work, and emulate LVA’s focus and efforts (P13). Board and staff holding this view of PL’s dominant mission conception as that of a membership based organization see the affiliates as the primary customers of PL (P10; P15), with statements like: “the ‘we’ is the 1100 literacy councils all around the country” (P11). Yet supporters of this focus perceive reluctance by

others to recognize members first, and there is only one board member who is part of an affiliate member (P10). Nonetheless, PL focuses on these affiliates, trying to take up roles such as advocacy, publishing, and developing new approaches, that are even less feasible for smaller members.

The shift away from focusing on trainers, especially volunteers, is clearer, and subject to internal criticisms. Respondents report that focus on and commitment to volunteers has gradually fallen off over the past ten years (P8). “For a long time we [LLI and then PL] were perceived as the volunteer adult literacy organization. We in fact tried to position ourselves as something bigger than that, and I think that the unintended consequence of that was in fact a diminishing” (P8). This is a result of how resources and time were spent.

“Over time, and some of it has been strategic choices, we’ve done less of that field work, face to face work. More of the time trying to take advantage of technology, more virtual work. And we’ve done less on the credentialing of ... [and] training of trainers who train tutors; we made the decision to kind of put that on idle so it was sort of running itself” (P6).

Despite recent efforts to revitalize these programs, there’s a sense that “we’ve lost connection and loyalty to those trainers” (P6). If enough time and attention is not paid to training and volunteer management with a shift away from this focus, there are concerns about the organization moving forward. They claim that “people forget when they say ‘volunteers, it’s all free’ [that] volunteer management is very important, [as is] volunteer training” (P13), and more fundamentally that “if you don’t have good training for your tutors, your whole mission and purpose is gone” (P13).

LVA’s dominant mission conception focused on both students and volunteers. In fact, in A Way With Words, Ruth Colvin placed students at the top of the organizational chart (Colvin,

1992, 2005). With PL's more ambitious focus, concerns emerged that students were no longer central. Intentional efforts have placed more focus on students in board meetings and composition. "It's important at every meeting to have a study story or some inspirational story because you get so involved in the mechanics of it [running the organization]" (P13). PL now has its first ever student representative on its board, along with a student council comprised of adult learners (P5; P13), both of which continue LVA's legacy of directly involving students (P13).

PL's dominant mission conception is still coming to grips with the extent to which it includes division of its attention to international, national, and local scopes. The 'accidental' (P15) move away from international programs, attributed to financial struggles (P3; P5), is not well received by some in the organization (P5). Within the board there are three separate types of opinion on international programs: supportive, neutral, and opposed (P14), leaving it without a sufficient support for reemphasize efforts. On the other hand, the shift toward more of a local presence is generally perceived positively, with some differing perspectives. One respondent noted that:

"We had management ... of the organization that saw us as an international organization that was located in Syracuse, but our work was primarily national and international, and there were those of that were on the staff that had a real issue with that because, 'why wouldn't we be taking what we know, what we do with our work, and trying to give back to the community in which we reside, and try to provide additional services, especially because we know that Syracuse has such great literacy problems'" (P5).

PL's dominant mission conception explicitly does not include providing literacy training directly. "We are not a direct service provider, that's what our local members do, that's not what we do" (P5). But this potentially could change with an increased local presence.

“Part of what we do is facilitate by accrediting members and producing materials ... not necessarily doing a lot of the hands-on direct [work], although I think that’s changing a little bit, but has to be done in a way that’s not competitive with [LVGS] ... We might think about finding ways in which we could disseminate those materials better locally” (P7).

These unresolved elements of PL’s dominant mission conception will figure significantly in future changes, and the organization will likely emerge with a third iteration since becoming PL.

Risk taking and activities outside dominant mission conception

PL and its predecessor organizations intermittently demonstrated patterns of taking on new activities outside of the dominant mission conceptions in place at those points in time. LLI did so by adding publishing and domestic activities, LVA through its expansion abroad, and PL through various expansions to its publishing activities, increased advocacy, and local programs.

Adding a publishing arm to LLI supported its existing activities, but lay outside its original dominant mission conception of directly undertaking literacy and mission activities abroad. Eventually, this expansion benefited LLI, and then PL, significantly by providing a stable source of funding through sales of materials directly related to adult literacy. The later creation of Laubach Literacy Action, the domestic arm of LLI, again lay outside the dominant mission conception in place, though was likely inevitable in light of NRP’s domestic market for publications. LLI was already engaging with other literacy organizations, including many domestic community based organizations that would eventually become affiliates, selling publications to them, and eventually starting up NALA, a biennial conference, and eventually

LLA as its domestic arm. Nonetheless, this movement shifted LLI away from its predominantly international origins to become more of a national literacy organization.

LVA took the opposite track, starting as a purely domestic organization with local activities. The splitting off of LVGS left it as a purely national organization focused on serving its affiliates. The advocacy, conference, and publishing activities LVA pursued aligned with this dominant mission conception. Expanding internationally clearly did not fall into the 'national' identity previously in place. An unintended consequence of this shift, and the similar shifts at LLI, was to make the two organizations even more similar, with both serving networks of domestic affiliates, having an international presence, and publishing literacy materials. These choices may well have made the merger inevitable.

After its creation, PL broadened its approaches to literacy instruction, along with the teaching materials it provided, to include ESL, work skills, citizenship, and other materials with some link to adult literacy (P13). Ruth Colvin is pushing the organization to function even more on non-native English speakers, even to the extent of teaching Spanish literacy to the Hispanic community (P13). It also undertook an attempt to expand to K-12 programs, with a significant investment that was ended during Harvey's tenure, though a similar extension into GED materials succeeded (P15). Each of these new product lines for NRP constituted a risk, of varying degrees according to the extent to which PL invested resources in their development, and lay outside the organization's dominant mission conception. Individuals within the organizations expressed through interviews personal mission conceptions aligned with some of these activities, but even today a consensus does not exist for activities beyond adult basic literacy, with the possible exception of English literacy for non-native speakers. Efforts to

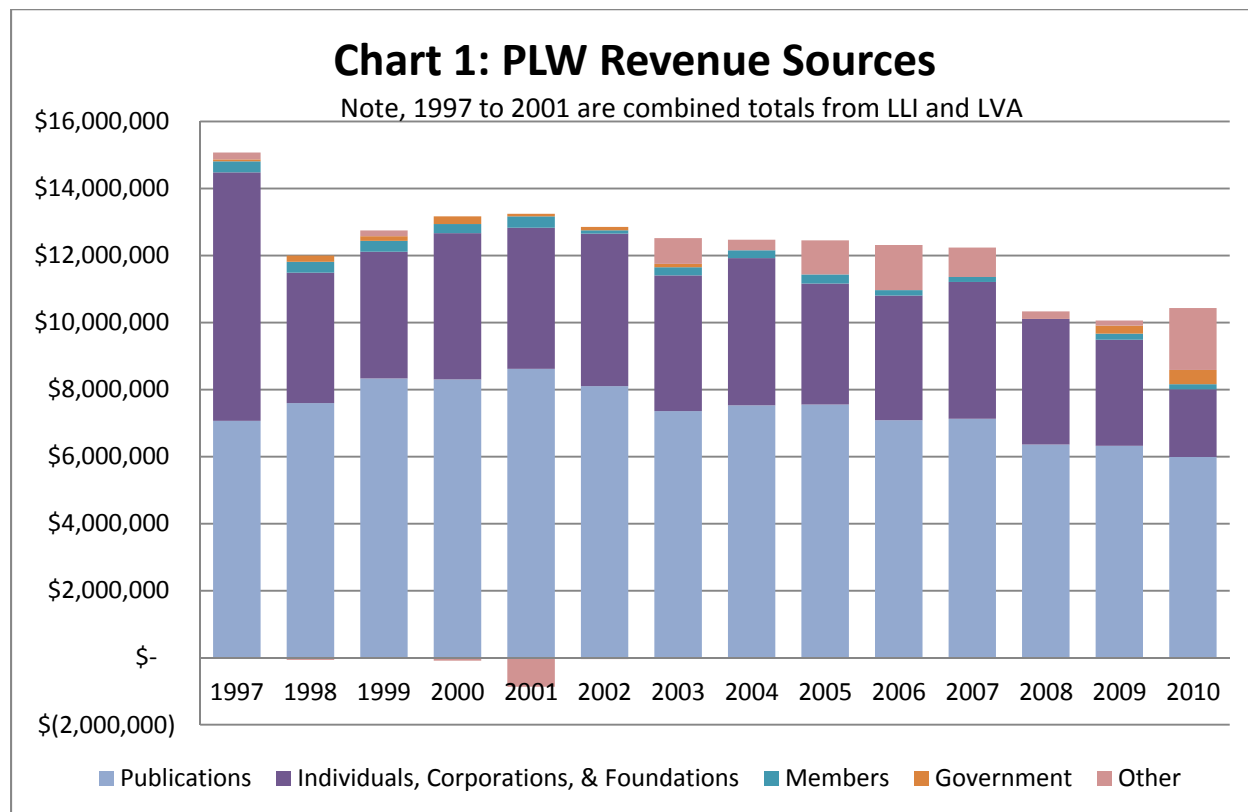
increase the use of technology and creation of materials in non-printed forms have also expanded. Of these efforts, respondents note that “we’ll never be in the forefront of technology because we’re a non-profit with very little funding,” (P5) but that there are strong desires within the organization to expand technology (P3; P5; P13). Overall, this willingness to expand the types of material available, related programming, and forms of distribution broaden PL’s activities and potential client/customer/member base, but potentially move it away from its dominant mission conception.

PL’s other expansions also involved risk, and could be perceived as lying outside the dominant mission conception. Expansion of its advocacy focus is partially in-line with prior efforts, especially those of LVA, but was a new effort outside the previous dominant mission conception. Most recently, the expansion of local efforts could also be construed as lying outside PL’s dominant mission conception, especially as it represents a partial shift away from being a national organization serving affiliate members, to a potential competitor to local literacy groups.

Moderated interaction with funders

PL’s publishing division, NRP, provides it with an earned income strategy and revenue diversification that makes it less dependent than many other nonprofits on donations. As seen in chart one, by far the largest source of revenues for PL (or for LLI and LVA combined before 2002) is from publishing, which since the merger has contributed a stable share of between 57% and 63%, though a gradually declining total. Private donations and grants provide the other main revenue source, with small, relatively stable contributions from membership related

fees, highly variable ‘other’ forms of income such as investments, and some government grants before the merger and in 2009 and 2010.



The diversification of revenues at PL would be predicted by organization theories, such as resource dependence, to provide the organization both bargaining power and flexibility in its interactions with funders. Evidence from PL demonstrates partial support for these predictions, but with some noticeable differences.

The publications revenues did provide PL flexibility and bargaining power when funders sought to shape the organization’s direction, but may have shifted this balance too far. Of PL’s publishing income stream, one respondent said, “you know, nonprofits kill for these types of things” (P3). But another noted that publishing “sustained the organization for years and years and maybe to its detriment” (P12), especially in attention to other revenue sources. PL could

choose between expansion efforts and was not constrained by requirements of funders, abandoning at least one potential expansion in response. The reliable publishing revenues also allowed it to intentionally reduce some funding sources and shift away from the efforts that attracted some of its longest term supporters. Lack of experience pursuing other funding sources, and potentially complacency, made it more difficult to secure new funding sources, especially grants, when PL's two main revenue sources began to decline during the recession.

In addition to the K-12 expansion, discussed elsewhere in this case study, PL also sought to establish other product lines for NRP. Extension into GED preparation materials is viewed within the organization as a continuing success (P15), and significant numbers of members' students seek training in their pursuit of a GED (PL, 2008-2012, Member Reports). PL also began exploring creating more publications on financial literacy, with a potential funder/partner lined up, but each had very different ideas about what to do, so they eventually dropped the idea (P3). This ability to refuse a potential funding source due to differing ideas, in part due to availability of other funding, is perfectly in line with resource dependence theory.

In response to the economic downturn, PL deemphasized the accreditation process for its affiliates, limiting one source of fees, but aiming to maintain demand for training services, conference attendance, and publication purchases. Since member fees were a small part of its total funding, PL could afford to be more responsive to member needs and financial interests.

PL's willingness to shift its priorities from those that originally brought many of its long term donors on board provides similar evidence. "Some of our top donors ... are international program donors ... that have given us the most money over their lifetimes" (P5). Much of this is the long-term group of donors who have been contributing to LLI and then PL over the past 30

to 50 years (P5). Yet PL has all but abandoned international programs in recent years, consistently spending eight to ten percent of its programmatic expenses internationally from 2002 to 2006 and then rapidly decreasing this to just one percent in 2010. This is not to say PL ignores these long-term donors' current preferences. This group is also invested in maintaining the Laubach Way of Reading to keep it current (P5), which PL continues to do. And PL explicitly set out to recognize the legacies of LLI and LVA in its new facility (P5), further maintaining ties with these donors.

In part, the hiring of David Harvey was intended to broaden funding sources, beyond the reliance on publishing revenues, to expand individual, corporate, foundation, and government funding sources (P3). Under Harvey, PL actively pursued government funding, gaining an earmark for the first time during its existence. Previously, PL had not dedicated significant attention to pursuing federal and state funding (P5), though received occasional grants (P15). The results of this new pursuit of federal funding have not been widely praised within the organization. "Federal grants though can be extremely time consuming and can be extremely expensive to support and produce those grants without a great deal of pay off. So it's been another funding stream for us, which is good, but that's also a declining funding stream" (P5). Timing accounts for part of this performance, while others criticize the execution: "The push for federal money or foundation and grant money maybe wasn't as coordinated or maybe hasn't been successful in building a long term base because they could rely on publishing" (P12). Though government funding rose quickly and substantially, they fell far short of replacing declining publishing and contribution revenues.

Windows of opportunity

Timing is essential. Alignment between organizational strategies and windows of opportunity, either external or internal, can determine whether or not additional resources can be obtained or changes accomplished. PL's predecessor organizations successfully tapped into opportunities during the 80s and early 90s, but PL's track record of accessing other opportunities is mixed. The absence of similar opportunities, which created internal environments ripe for change, led to some of PL's most substantial shifts.

LLI and LVA both rode the attention to literacy during the 1980s and early 1990s to attract greater attention, additional funding, and more affiliate members. Both organizations had established track records in adult literacy before Barbara Bush began championing the cause, placing them in ideal positions to seize opportunities. LVA had always focused most of its efforts within the US, while LLI had begun placing greater attention domestically and to publishing since the 1970s. Though only LVA is directly linked to the creation of the literacy agenda, through Ruth Colvin's ties to Mrs. Bush, both organizations report substantial advantages from this renewed attention. In fact, with its NRP brand name and capacity, LLI may have even extracted a greater long-term benefit from the opportunity window, through sales of its publications to a larger audience of literacy providers.

As this external window closed, an internal opportunity to change emerged. The more challenging financial climate for literacy, including pressures from donors and competition between organizations, created a context wherein a merger was considered possible. Though

the first two rounds of discussions did not lead to a merger, the further worsening financial context set the stage for a successful third round of discussions. Absent the internal window of opportunity created by financial challenges, it is unlikely PL would exist.

Since the merger, PL has sought to move into two new areas, in part seeking to establish new funding streams. In taking on a greater advocacy and reestablishing attempts to garner government funding, PL timed its efforts poorly. It received its first-ever earmark just before Congress altered its rules, making them more difficult, and pursued government grants at a point in time during which political attention is heavily focused on reducing government spending, particularly discretionary spending on social issues, which would include adult literacy. In starting up local activities with its 2012 move to new offices, PL may again be seeking to move into a window of opportunity as it is closing. Although PL has now received its first-ever grants from local foundations, it appears not to have been substantially involved in 2007 and 2008 that established a literacy coalition in the country. It is uncertain to what extent PL will be a significant player in local efforts moving forward, but not being involved in the recent creation of regional institutions puts the organization at a disadvantage.

Internal coalitions formed to enact change

At PL, internal coalitions formed around shared conceptions of mission at different points in time, seeking to enact change. The merger, attempted expansion into K-12 publishing, board composition changes, breaking down the silo structure, expanding advocacy, reforming the financial system, and moving facilities all involved such coalitions. Each of these coalitions involved members from at least two different groups: senior staff, board members, partner

organizations, middle managers, or junior staff. In two of the cases – the merger and K-12 publishing – the coalition appears only to have been involved in initial bringing forward the change, and not its implementation, harming the success of resulting changes.

To set the groundwork for the merger, a coalition from across both predecessor organizations teamed up to introduce the possibility of the merger and then brought other key actors on board, especially by securing approval of the respective founders. Most central to this coalition were Peter Waite, then of LLI, and Marsha Tait of LVA. They recognized the common mission of the two organizations and saw potential for gains through merger, and then garnered support from other senior leaders, board members, and the founders of the organizations. The actual merger negotiations did not begin with development of a shared conception of the merged organization's mission. Instead, one board member and one senior executive from each organization negotiated the key details of the merger. Hindsight makes it appear that not enough changed during the merger, especially moving forward with distinct agendas and identities for the separate departments.

Although recipients generally criticized the attempted expansion of NRP into K-12 materials, there was support for this effort at LLI when it started, and some of that support carried forward post-merger. The publishing division and board members from private sector backgrounds shared a vision for the division, and thus organization, that involved strategic investments to expand the product line, enabling for continued growth. This coalition of NRP managers, staff, and board members secured enough support from other board members and senior management elsewhere in the organization to invest substantial resources into the effort. The implementation of this change occurred entirely within NRP, leaving others in the

organization without any stake in its success or interest in continuing to devote time and resources toward building this capacity. Thus, when leadership changed, abandoning the effort seemed the natural course, as no other members of the organization shared the mission conception where this product line expansion fit within PL's focus.

More recent internal coalitions were engaged both in starting and implementing changes. While CEO, David Harvey relied heavily on a team based approach to changes. Despite entering with a reputation as a change agent, he generally did not seek to force his vision upon the organization unilaterally, but instead sought internal allies sharing a conception of PL's mission and future. The separate internal coalitions that formed to change various elements of the organization included a range of different individuals. Most of them included Harvey, some board member support, and middle and junior level staff. Senior staff generally were not part of these coalitions, because there was "a higher degree of alignment between the views and concerns of the line staff and the board of directors; it was the senior staff that was completely out of sync" (P3). Harvey also brought in a trusted new hire who shared his vision for increased advocacy, responsiveness to members, and a more collaborative organization. For some of these coalitions, outside consultants also served roles.

Despite Harvey's substantial role in them, these coalitions were not just tools for pushing his agenda. Dubbed "matrixes of cross-divisional teams", these generally junior-staff cross-divisional groups had "decision-making capacity", a shared commitment to the mission, and different ideas about how to achieve it (P2). They would develop a consensus decision independently, and then bring it to Harvey for feedback (P2). He generally supported their conclusions, and when he disagreed would provide feedback and leave the team to reassess,

rather than countermand the team's decision (P2). Some of these coalitions were established intentionally to plan key changes (P3), while others were created in response to issues arising during changes, especially in the presence of strong competing opinions (P2). Coalition membership generally shared the same basic mission conception elements of responsiveness to members, a national presence, and collaborative environment, though with some disagreements. In fact, for one major change, Harvey's likely initial preference was not supported, with the decision to move within Syracuse rather than to Washington, DC.

Chapter Seven: ActionAid International Case Study

ActionAid is a large, federation of national organizations with an international secretariat (ActionAid International or AAI) based in Johannesburg, South Africa. ActionAid began as a child sponsorship agency in the United Kingdom, grew into a coalition with similar organizations throughout Europe, shifted to a focus upon rights based approaches to development, and then really began to change. Through a process of ‘Internationalisation’, the European members ceded power over much of the funds they generate, joined with Southern members, and established an international secretariat and governance structure. Since 1999, AAI has operated under three different formal strategy plans (each with a different interpretation or approach to the fundamental mission), three different CEOs, three different governance structures, and a variety of different critical organizational systems.

Methods

In keeping with the basic case selection methodology of this project, AAI was selected due to the substantial level of organizational change during the past decade. ActionAid’s process of ‘internationalisation’, whereby it shifted to a Rights Based Approach to development, restructured the organization from an alliance to a federation, and relocated from the United Kingdom to South Africa, is relatively well known in the sector and been subject to some study. Perusal of the website reveals further details on AAI’s extensive and frequent change, including recent leadership and strategy changes. As a development organization with a human rights focus, AAI occupies a different sector (or sectors) than the

other three cases. Finally, a facilitated introduction was available to the organization, helping secure access.

Permission to study AAI was provided by Laurie Adams, International Head of Innovation and Learning, after brief e-mail conversations. Laurie Adams recommended a set of potential interviews, current and former staff members at AAI or its affiliates who factored substantially into changes in the organizations. Two other members of AAI, Wendy Surrier and Hamlet Johannes, assisted by providing introductory e-mails to current staff members and access to internal documents, respectively. Participation, by staff, board members, and outsiders alike, was completely at the option of individual interviewees, their comments were kept confidential, and they could choose which questions to answer or to end the interview at any time. These options did not factor significantly into the interviews; decisions not to participate were a consequence of being unable to find mutually convenient times, and respondents rarely elected not to respond to questions, and then only due to limited recall of events further in ActionAid's past. All interviews were conducted over phone or Skype and according to the standard project protocol, modified as necessary for individual interviewees. In all, five current and three former members of AAI were interviewed. Document review, primarily completed before the interviews, though with some new documents provided or suggested by interviewees, included 27 annual and quarterly reports, 32 other internal documents, 6 book-length manuscripts, 3 news items or press releases, and 14 scholarly articles.

As a much larger organization than the others studied in this dissertation, and one with a formal process of change, the logic for selecting interviewees differed for AAI. In order to

cover AAI's processes of change, interviews needed to focus on secretariat staff with relatively lengthy periods of engagement with the organization and leadership roles in one or more of the strategy development cycles. This logic raises potential limitation of gaining perspectives primarily from the 'old guard' who pushed for AAI's internationalisation, though the relative abundance of internal and external documentation served as important checks and sources of additional information.

The narrative and findings developed from this case study drew from analysis standard to this dissertation, through a process tracing methodology. Though interview transcripts and documents were entered into NVivo and a coding system developed, the narrative from this case study was developed iteratively through examination of entire transcripts and documents rather than selected codes. The timeline developed for the narrative's core was created prior to initial interviews, used to prompt questions about major changes and timing, updated after completion of the interviews, and further refined following examination of transcripts. Draft versions of this case were shared with interviewees and others at AAI for feedback.

History of Organization

ActionAid³ stands out from its peer organizations for undertaking an all but unheard of change, its 'Internationalisation' process that included moving its headquarters from the global North to the global South, creation of a secretariat, and donor country members ceding substantial power over donations directly received by them. In addition, ActionAid undertakes

³ In this paper, 'ActionAid' is intended to refer to the organization as a whole, not just ActionAid UK (before 2003) or ActionAid International/AAI (from 2003). AAI is used only when referring directly to the secretariat, when referencing documents from the secretariat, or when citing interviewees.

changes in a formalized, cyclical process, wherein every 5 to 7 years the prior strategy is evaluated, a new strategy is developed, programmatic priorities change, a new CEO is hired for the secretariat, and a major reshuffling of personnel conducted. Each cycle of this process differs from prior incarnations, and mid-strategy adjustments also led to changes in the organization, which each of these major change processes also fitting into an intentional long-term reimagining of the organization (see table 21 for a summary of major changes).

The Origins of ActionAid

Founded in 1972, as a United Kingdom based child sponsorship charity with programs in India and Kenya, ActionAid originally went by 'Action in Distress' (Archer, 2011; Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010). Affiliated organizations in France, Ireland, Italy, and Spain started up over the next decade, as were additional programs in low and middle-income countries, six of which continue until today. In 1984, the UK organization and its other European partners adopted variations of the name ActionAid (Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010). During the 1980s, ActionAid UK and its affiliated partners shifted away from a programmatic focus on helping individual children to participatory community development efforts (Brown, et al., 2010; Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010). Even today, child sponsorship remains a primary fundraising vehicle for the organization and participatory community development a major programmatic focus for country programs in low and middle income countries.

Table 21: ActionAid Timeline of Change

Year	Structure	Leadership & Governance	Strategy	Systems
1972	Founded in the UK as Action in Distress			
1984	Renamed ActionAid			
1988				APRS established
1995	Decentralization of programmatic decisions to regional and country managers			
1998		Salil Shetty becomes CEO		AAS developed but never ratified
1999	ActionAid Alliance created		"Fighting Poverty Together" begins	"Taking Stock I"
2000				ALPS established
2003	ActionAid International established and registered in the Netherlands	Ramesh Singh becomes CEO		Resource Allocation Framework starts
2004	Move to South Africa; Restructuring of positions		Ends	"Taking Stock II"
2005			"Rights to End Poverty" begins	ALPS revised
2006				Global Monitoring Framework
2009	AAI Constitution; Legal status changed from foundation to association	Separation of General Assembly from International Board; First AAI General Assembly		
2010	Resource Allocation Framework alters power over resources			"Taking Stock III"; New Monitoring & Evaluation requirements
2011	Recentralization of AAI in South Africa		Ends	Capacity Building Initiative
2012		Joanna Kerr becomes CEO	"People's Action to End Poverty" begins	ALPS revised
2013	All AAI staff positions reorganized and reopened for application			HRBA resource book published

In ActionAid's first two decades, power over resources and programming remained heavily centralized and bureaucratized. ActionAid UK and its four European affiliates directly ran country programs, and developed systems of control. In 1988, ActionAid created its Annual

Planning and Reporting System (APRS), a top-down and bureaucratic system of accountability and reporting intended to generate systematic information (David & Mancini, 2004; Scott-Villiers, 2002). Over time, individuals within the organization would begin to disagree with ActionAid's centralized, bureaucratic structure, Northern/European identity, and development project oriented scope of work (A7; David & Mancini, 2004). The 1992 *Moving Forward in the Nineties* and 1994 *Giving People Choices* strategies (AAI, 1999, FPT), documents almost solely created by the CEO at the time (A6; A7), would set the stage for future changes. "Colleagues who were like minded" used these documents to illustrate where they wanted the organization to go, but at the time remained "on the margins" (A7).

The impetus for change also was pushed by the 1995 decentralization of programmatic decisions to regional and country managers (Scott-Villiers, 2002), which led to wide variation amongst country programs (A2; A7). Through expanded use of participatory methods, such as participatory rural appraisal (PRA), at the community level, field staff began experiencing dissonance between their work and that of the organization (Scott-Villiers, 2002). As a result, tensions arose between ActionAid's centralized bureaucracy and systems, further establishing potential grounds for major changes.

By the end of the 1990s, a core group would emerge, coalesce and set out to drastically alter the organization, beginning the process of shifting the organization to a rights based approach to development, and eventually to a geographically broader identity (A1; A3). The changes that followed would drastically alter the organization. ActionAid had been "on the conservative wing of the international NGO movement and has subsequently moved very radically from a traditional needs based service organization to a rights based organization"

(A6). Human rights based approaches to development, often abbreviated as HRBA or RBA, focus on supporting claims to rights, rather than direct provision of service, and represented the approach a minority group in ActionAid wished to spread throughout the organization.

The Shift to a Rights Based Approach

A group of 5 to 10 senior managers, middle managers, trustees, and country program heads held a similar view of what ActionAid should become, sharing a desire to move it toward a focus on a human rights based approach to development and be more representative of the communities and populations with whom it was working (A1; A3; A4; A5; A7). In 1998, a key member of this group, Salil Shetty was appointed as CEO, in part due to support by a group of trustees sharing this vision (A3; A5; A6; David & Mancini, 2004). A long-time member of the organization, having served 13 years in country director positions in Kenya and India (Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010), Shetty simultaneously fit the tradition of promotion from within and stood out in pushing for radical change (A6). Following Shetty's recommendations, and with the then chair – Ken Burnett – leading the way, the board agreed to new policies that created and enforced tenure limits, leading to almost immediate replacement of almost half the board (A6). In place of departing trustees, Shetty and Burnett recruited a more internationally representative group of board members desiring of change (A6). Among the board of trustees was noted scholar of participatory development, Robert Chambers, who would factor into the changes, as would a core group of long-time staff (A1; A2). Others within the organization who favored RBA also emerged to take on more central leadership roles (A7). The resulting group

leading the changes would see some turnover as ActionAid changed, but would remain a core of 5 to 10 leaders sharing a view and pushing for substantial change (A3; A5; A7).

This core leadership group then ushered in ActionAid's new strategy, *Fighting Poverty Together* or FPT (ActionAid, 1999). Developed by a group of second tier managers within the organization, including Salil Shetty's eventual successor Ramesh Singh, this strategy laid out ActionAid's rights based approach and reframed its mission as eradicating poverty by working with the poor to overcome barriers (A4; A6; ActionAid, 1999, FPT; David & Mancini, 2004). Though involving participatory and consultative elements (A4), including an International Staff Conference that called for sweeping change (ActionAid, 1999, FPT), the drafting team developed in relative isolation, and then passed it along to Shetty, who secured support for it from the board (A6). It forged a then radical path for ActionAid, shifting to a rights based approach to development, and one that likely would not have been passed if put to a vote at the time (A4). It also served as a "rallying point for the organisation, providing members with a sense of direction and set of principles for their work" (Scott-Villiers, 2002). Other strategic, structural, and system changes would follow that would support this broad change.

Two of these major changes began in 1999 with the commencement of the strategy. ActionAid UK and its affiliated partners established more formal ties with the creation of the ActionAid Alliance, intended to allow them to pursue their objectives collectively and with greater coordination. An external evaluation of ActionAid, *Taking Stock*, sought to assess the organization's capacity to pursue its new strategy, and found substantial limitations. According to an external reviewer for ActionAid's accountability changes "insiders have described it as brutal, but true" (Scott-Villiers, 2002, p. 431). With the evidence of a disconnect between

rhetoric and practice, the impetus for further change helped Shetty and other leaders of the changes to further shake up the organization, providing them “a clear mandate to initiate change” (David & Mancini, 2004, p. 6).

Then in 2000, after two prior attempts to overhaul ActionAid’s reporting system, the Accountability, Learning and Planning System (ALPS) was developed by a small but influential group of staff and trustees (A1; David & Mancini, 2004; Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010; Scott-Villiers, 2002). A complete overhaul, ALPS moved entirely away from the bureaucratic, procedural and reporting intensive system to one focused on ‘downward accountability’, reflection, and customization to fit country and department contexts (A1; David & Mancini, 2004; Ho, 2011; Scott-Villiers, 2002). ALPS also was intended to shift ActionAid from being upward accountable to donors to being downward accountable to rights holders (A1; Scott-Villiers, 2002).

Finally, in the course of pursuing the objectives laid out in FPT, the group leading this change came to agreement on the need for ActionAid itself to be structurally aligned more closely with the rights holders with whom it works and the goals it pursues, leading them to the radical change dubbed ‘Internationalisation’. An international workshop, convened by David Archer, a staff member part of the group pushing for change, and intended to focus on participatory methodologies, turned into a widespread conversation about power dynamics inside and outside the organization (David & Mancini, 2004), and served as a symbolic launching point for further change (A1; A6).

The Internationalisation Process

Internationalisation primarily focused on changing the identity of ActionAid from a loose alliance of primarily European based NGOs conducting work in Southern countries to a federation with power shared between Northern and Southern members. In 2003, ActionAid overhauled its structure, governance, and leadership. The alliance members spun off an international secretariat – ActionAid International, incorporated in the Netherlands as a foundation – agreed to a system for sharing power over funding, and began functioning as a federation (Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010; Ho, 2011). Under this new structure, country programs and members would hold even greater formal power within the organization (A2). Critical to the success of this structural change was obtaining support from existing member organizations in the North, primarily ActionAid UK, the largest entity and most significant source of funding (A4). This decision was controversial, with internal resistance in both European members and amongst country programs, though with vocal leadership amongst senior managers and trustees (A3; A4). As a result, the changes eventually left to the departure of ActionAid's French and Spanish member organizations (A3; A4).

With its creation in 2003, the new secretariat's international board appointed Ramesh Singh as CEO (A4; Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010). Shetty, in keeping with ActionAid tradition, departed after a term as CEO lasting for one strategy cycle (A2; A4), but simultaneously pushed for the Internationalisation process to start during his final six months in office (A3). The first non-European head of ActionAid, Singh previously occupied a number of different leadership roles in the organization, including as in country director roles – in Ethiopia, Nepal and Vietnam – as a regional director and as Shetty's international director for operations (A4; Ebrahim &

Gordon, 2010). Part of the strategy drafting team for FPT, he had a clear vision of where he wanted to take the organization, but also an appreciation for the culture of diffused leadership (A4). Further transformational changes occurred under his tenure. In 2004, the organization completely restructured, moving most of its headquarters and support functions to Johannesburg, South Africa, though some support functions remained in London (A4; Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010). The physical move emanated from several major rationales: a symbolic separation of ActionAid International (AAI) from ActionAid UK, establishing more of a Southern identity, and being located closer to where most of the work was being conducted (A4; Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010). Before settling on Johannesburg, other alternatives were considered, and there was strong support for Nairobi as an alternative (A4). FPT was extended for two years, running until 2005, and giving the new secretariat time to develop a new strategy plan.

Development of this plan *Rights To End Poverty* or RTEP followed quickly on the heels of a second external review, *Taking Stock II*, in 2004. *Taking Stock II* included nine separate reports covering various functional and thematic areas of focus (Cohen, et al., 2004). In contrast to the first *Taking Stock*, the external reviewers gave an overall positive picture of ActionAid's performance and alignment to its goals, albeit with a range of suggestions and one significant exception, women's rights (Cohen, et al., 2004). Concerns emerged of limited shared understanding of women's rights and the implications for pursuing them, along with substantial internal opposition or skepticism to their prioritization (Cohen, et al., 2004). The new strategy would add emphasis to ActionAid's focus on women's rights, as would other internal efforts to change the organization.

Drafted by a diverse team of second-level management, as with the early strategy (A4), RTEP only partially drew on Taking Stock II's findings, due in part to overlapping timeframes between the two efforts and little formal overlap in responsibilities between members of the organization working with the external reviewers and those on the strategy drafting committee (A6). In the cover letter for Taking Stock II and its accompanying management response, Singh explicitly called for its findings to be incorporated into its "international, regional, thematic and functional strategies" and used for "reviewing our annual performance and progress" (Cohen, et al., 2004, p. 2). Singh selected the drafting committee, intentionally identifying strong voices with varied backgrounds who shared the general view of ActionAid continuing and expanding its rights based approach to development and process of internationalisation. (A4) Then he stepped back, allowing them to shape the organization's agenda, before reentering the process to help garner approval of the draft from the international board (A4). Though more consultative and participatory than the prior strategy, some concerns emerged about quiet, last minute changes by leadership during the drafting of RTEP (A6). RTEP was intended to cover 2005 through 2010, though it too would later be extended for two more years, and provided greater specificity than the prior strategy, including laying out focal themes of Education, Food Security, Governance, HIV/AIDS, Human Security, and Women's Rights. The creation of this new strategy right on the heels of internationalisation starting also provided breathing room for the changes to take hold, pushing off further strategy changes for at least five years (A3).

AAI would alter its systems and structures in the years following commencement of this strategy, with the intention of better aligning these with its redefined objectives. The secretariat was structured with ten international directors who were simultaneous responsible

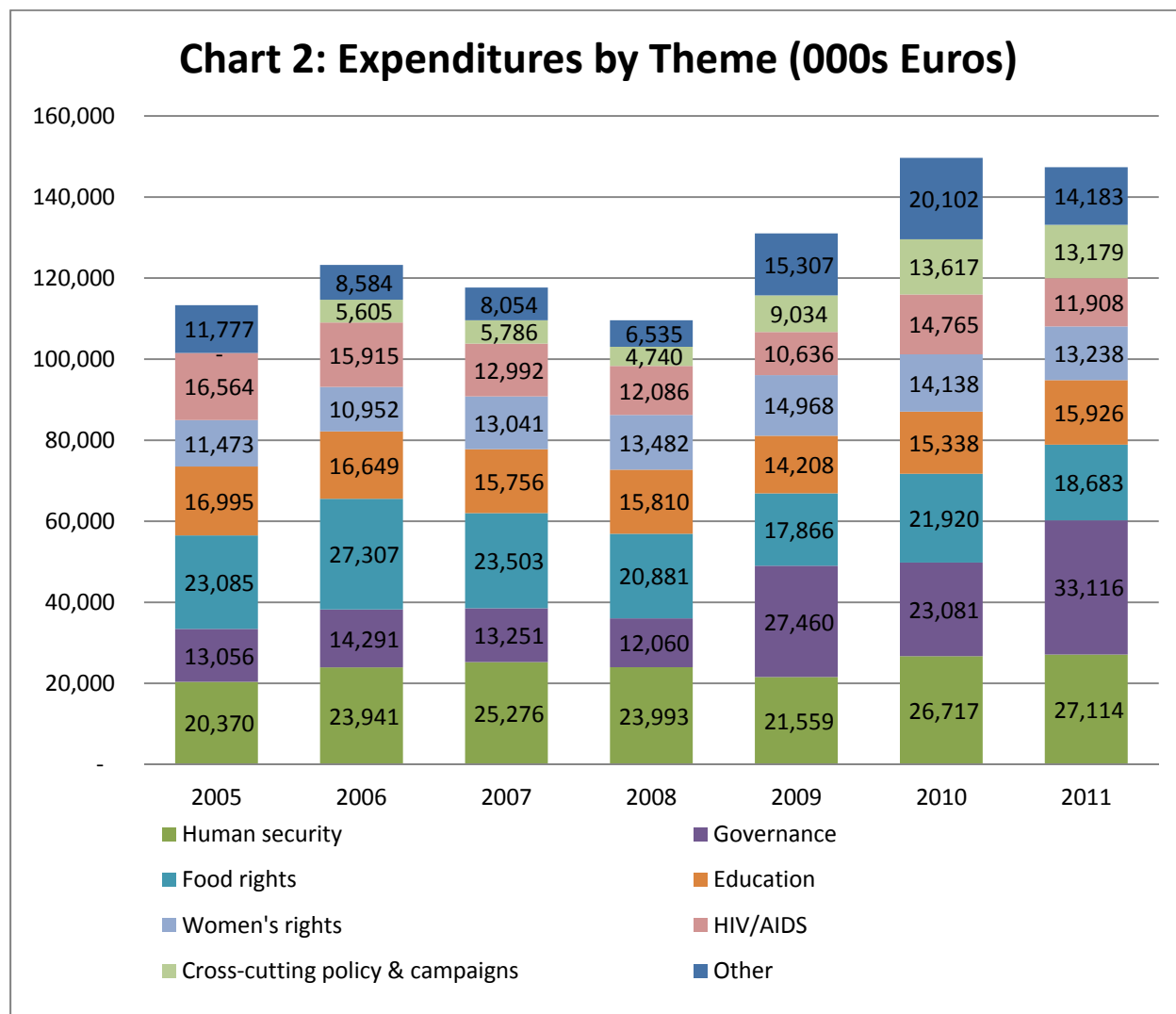
for potentially a couple of the 17 different organizational units, which included 5 regions, 6 themes, and 6 functions (A2). ALPS was reviewed in 2004 (Gujit, 2004) and revised in 2005, then a Global Monitoring Framework developed in 2006 to capture some of the reporting information not being obtained by the more voluntary ALPS procedures and principles (Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010), with an evaluation of ALPS following in 2007 (Ho, 2011). From 2006 to 2008, ActionAid conducted a review of its governance structure, which led to major overhauls in 2009 (A5; Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010). During that year, two governance entities were separated: the general assembly and international board, the Dutch legal status was shifted from foundation to association, ActionAid's Constitution was created, and the first general assembly was held. Still, questions were raised about AAI's extent of changing its structure, with criticisms that it needed major structural changes (A2), rather than another round of strategy change, by the time the strategy reached its end date (A8).

Programmatically, ActionAid during this period was very flexible, with country directors and regional/thematic directors having substantial leeway to attempt new projects and define the extent focus of their efforts, as long as they fit broadly within the strategy. Each region, theme, and country also needed to develop its own strategy, drawing on RTEP for guidance. Ramesh Singh applied a management philosophy of "letting a thousand flowers bloom", though not without some internal disagreements on this approach (A4; A5; A8). The leadership group pushing these changes argued that "if you had too much structure, the size of the change would be too big" to succeed (A5), which led to leaving substantial room for flexibility and perhaps less structural change than needed.

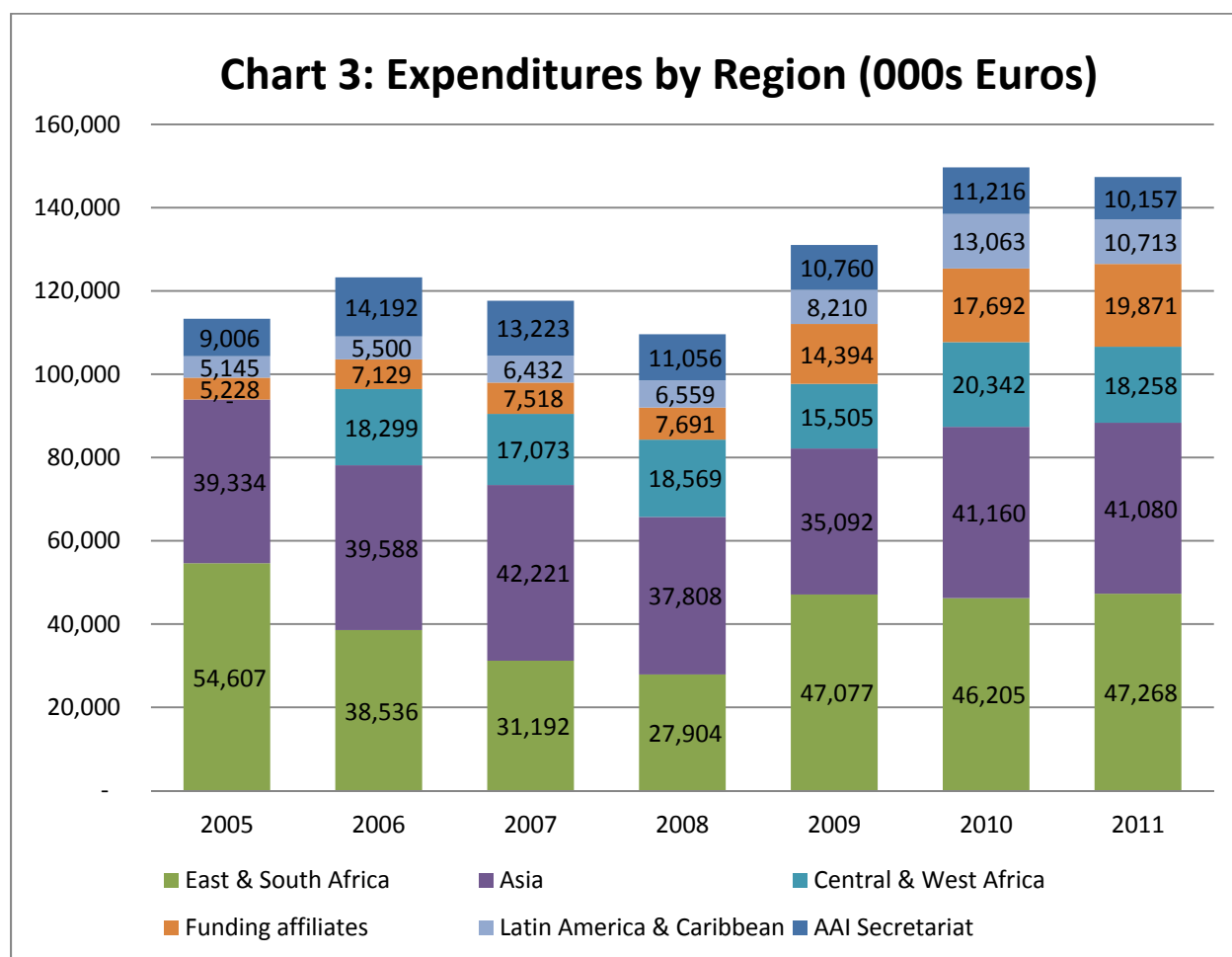
These programmatic changes were particularly noticeable in Women's Rights, especially given the negative feedback from Taking Stock II. Prior to RTEP, ActionAid focused on Gender, with an emphasis on mainstreaming, rather than addressing inequalities and paternalism (A8; Win, n.d.). This division of the organization was led by a feminist activist from Zimbabwe, Everjoice Win, who was recruited from outside AAI, but shared the same vision at the root of the internationalisation and human rights-based approach to development or HRBA (A2; A8) and was part of the strategy drafting team (Win, n.d.). Win had joined the organization in 2002 with a mandate to mainstream gender, which under the label Gender Empowerment, was one of the four goals in the prior strategy (ActionAid, 1999, FPT; Win, n.d.). With the new strategy, this effort was placed centrally as one of the themes, renamed Women's Rights, an act with both symbolic and programmatic implications (A8). Expansion of ActionAid's work on women's rights occurred both within the theme and within every one of the other themes, as reflected in the international strategy (AAI, 2005, Women's Rights Strategic Plan). Due to the importance of politics within the organization and Singh's approach of allowing staff to test a range of approaches, buy-in from individual countries and success from individual projects were necessary in order to spread programs focused on women's rights more broadly (A8). Nonetheless, ActionAid began to overhaul the internal and external approaches to women's rights and established some successful projects in the area during this period (A8).

Throughout the period covered by this strategy, ActionAid prioritization between themes remained relatively constant, when examined financially (see chart 2), with the exception of the Governance theme, which saw dramatic expansion for 2009 through 2011. The addition of an existing organization in Denmark with considerable expertise in, and funding

for, governance projects helped drive this relatively rapid expansion (Brown, et al., 2010). As with women’s rights, the education, food security, and HIV/AIDS themes predated RTEP, while the governance and human security themes mostly began with the strategy (Brown, et al., 2010). The education program remained relatively unchanged from its community development roots, continued serving as an important link to child sponsorship, and benefitted from stable, long-term leadership (Brown, et al., 2010). Each of the other themes saw substantial changes under RTEP, seeking to align more closely with RBA (Brown, et al., 2010).



As with thematic funding, region distribution of resources during this strategy remained relatively constant (see chart 3), with Africa receiving the most funding and Asia the second-most. From 2009 through 2011, a sizable increase in the 'Funding Affiliate' expenditures was driven by the addition of new members in Europe. In part, this relative stability was driven by the Resource Allocation Framework and importance of child sponsorship funds, both of which led to predictable funding streams.

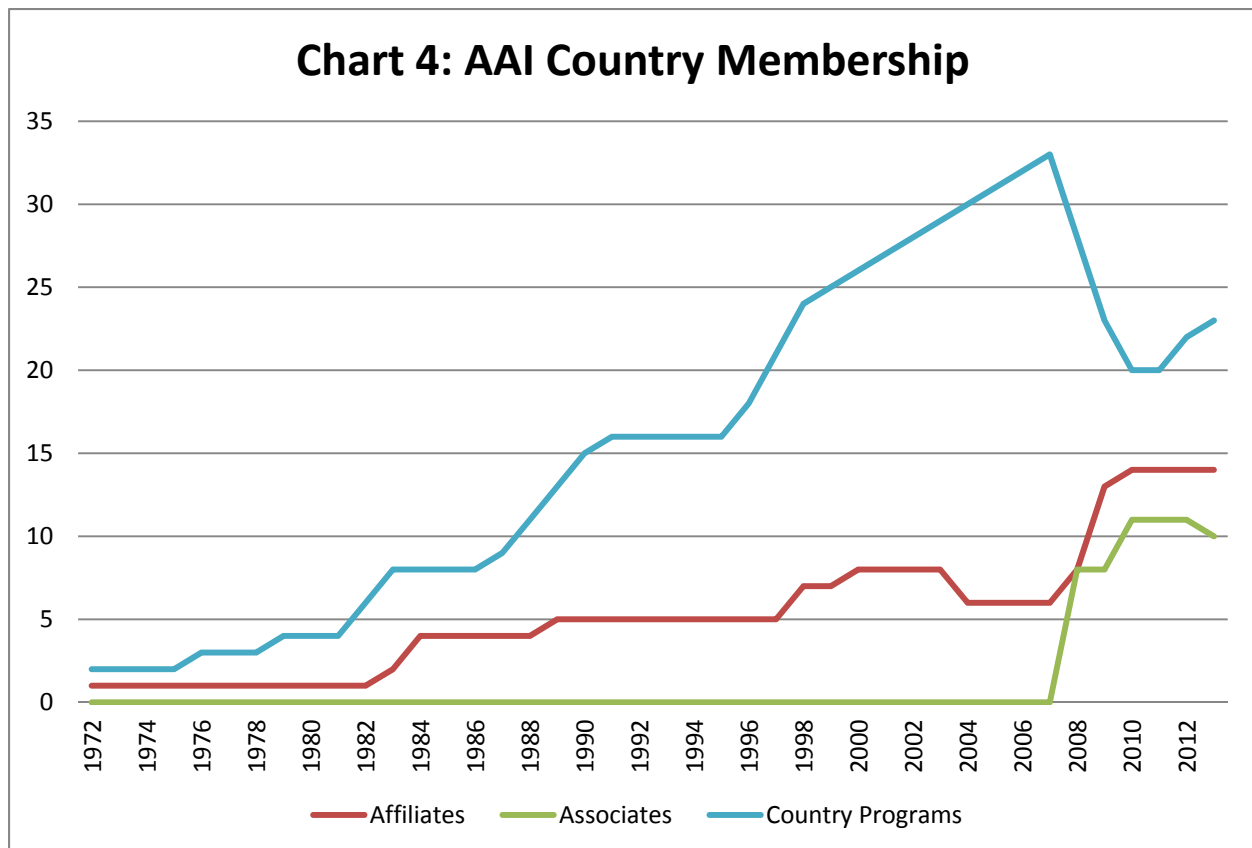


Between 2008 and 2012, major strategic, structural, and system changes occurred. In 2009, AAI overhauled its governance, changing its legal registration from a foundation to an association with three distinct management and governance bodies: the general assembly,

international board, and international secretariat (AAI, 2009, Constitution; Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010). The constitution laying out this change was ratified and then its first General Assembly was held in June of 2009 (AAI, 2009, Constitution). A monitoring and evaluation task force created in 2009 established new requirements in the following year (Ho, 2011) and revised ALPS in 2012. ActionAid adopted a formal Resource Allocation Framework or RAF in 2010 (Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010), formalizing and expanding upon its earlier agreements to share power over funds. It also drafted an HRBA resource book, "Action on Rights", intended to draw together experiences from the RTEP strategy and thus inform future HRBA efforts within ActionAid (Hargreaves, et al., 2010). The finance unit relocated from the UK to Johannesburg in 2010, and a capacity building initiative was established for 2011 and 2012 (A2).

The period of 2008 through 2010 also saw an overhaul of ActionAid's membership, as seen in chart 4. In 2003, AAI's six founding members were Brazil, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the UK, and the US (Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010), which remained unchanged until Ghana and Sweden shifted from Country Programs to Affiliate Members in 2008 (AAI, 2008, Annual Report). A new category of members, Associates, was created in the same year to include former Country Programs Guatemala, India, Malawi, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone (AAI, 2008, Annual Report). These Associates members were intended to become full-fledged Affiliates after a couple of years of acclimatization (Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010). In 2009, three more Country Programs converted to Associates (Bangladesh, Tanzania, and Thailand), two others jumped right to Affiliate membership (Kenya and Uganda), Guatemala and India graduated to Affiliate status, and three outside organizations joined as Associates (Denmark, France, and the Netherlands) (AAI, 2009, Annual Report). In 2010, Denmark became an Affiliate, joined by an existing

organization from Australia, while three last Country Programs became Associates (The Gambia, Nepal, and Zambia) (AAI, 2010, Annual Report). The recruitment of Mellempfolkeligt Samvirke to become MS ActionAid Denmark was a particularly important coup, as the organization brought with it substantial official funding streams and was the largest and most established organization electing to join AAI (A4). Two existing country programs were also closed in 2010, resulting in some backlash from Southern members (Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010). Since the 2010 changes, membership has been constant, except for the creation of two more Country Programs in 2012.



These changes completely altered ActionAid's makeup, leading to Southern majority amongst the leadership (A4), with a simultaneously expanded presence in the North. Expansion into new Northern countries served to fill the gap lost with the departure of

ActionAid's initial French and Spanish members (A3), while adding Southern Affiliates was the key element of internationalisation. "Before we were an international organization; now we are a national organization with national leadership and empowered leadership" (A5). "This federation has given this space ... for the Southern leaders to redefine what development means for them, have their voices heard during the general assembly ... and hold the federation to account" (A7).

The Latest Changes

At the turn of the decade, the major changes continued. For the first time in 18 years, and only second time overall, an outside CEO was appointed to the organization (A4; Archer, 2011). Joanna Kerr joined the organization in 2010, previously serving as Policy Director for Oxfam Canada and Executive Director of the Association of Women's Rights in Development (Perret Laver, 2010). Singh overlapped briefly with Kerr, ensuring continuity in the transition and to initiate the evaluation and strategy drafting processes (A4). Much of the other senior leadership has also changed over time, with only one of the six directors having been with the organization for more than a couple of years (A2), though some former senior secretariat leaders have moved to positions within individual members (A3). As with CEO turnover, this is in part driven by cultural expectations and even formal limitations on tenure of senior leaders, such as country director terms capped at 5 to 7 years (A2). This new leadership structure differs substantially from the prior strategy, with six international directors responsible for just one function (A2) and the creation of a second senior leadership tier (A2; A6). This creates

more separation between the CEO and Country Directors than under Singh, where only one layer of management separated them (A2).

Even more so that with the previous rounds of strategy drafting, the development of *People's Action To End Poverty* or PATEP involved intensive consultations and tied into the external review process (A6). From three applicants for the position, David Archer, a long-serving member of the organization, former international director for education, and key member of the management group supporting ActionAid's shift to RBA and internationalization, was selected to lead the drafting team by Kerr and Singh (A2; A6; Archer, 2011). He brought with him a substantial background in participatory methodologies, especially in education (A6). The rest of the team intentionally included a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives from AAI's second tier of management, and served as both the reference group – or first point of contact for the external review – and strategy drafting committee (A6).

In 2010, *Taking Stock III* was released, with its results used to inform the strategy development. This review also drew on multiple sub-reviews focusing on different aspects of ActionAid's work, though with an intentional focus on identifying cross-cutting themes (Brown, et al., 2010). As with the second external review, *Taking Stock III* generally found positive results, with “substantial progress in implementing the ambitious goals of the RTEP Strategy” (Brown, et al., 2010, p. 3). It identified needs to solidify and formalize the RBA and internationalisation changes, and to develop two essential narratives: one “that persuasively links its mission and core values to its fundraising and program activities” and another that is “a well-developed, explicitly-articulated social change theory” (Brown, et al., 2010, p. 11). With

ALPS, Taking Stock III also raised concerns that ActionAid shifted emphasis on downward accountability too far, leaving it unaccountable to funders (Brown, et al., 2010).

The drafting committee facilitated an intensive participatory process to generate ideas, solicit feedback, and build consensus on ActionAid's future direction (A6; A7; Archer, 2011), with this consultative process viewed favorably within the organization (A5) and even including partner organizations (A7). Central to this process were a call for proposals from within the organization, submission and consideration of 80 self-organized group and 50 individual propositions, two Future Strategy Days conducted across ActionAid's membership to engage communities and partner organizations, and a five day international conference that included 120 representatives from 45 countries (Archer, 2011). Kerr, entering without preexisting biases related to the prior strategy, also factored significantly in the strategy drafting process (A6), convening a Governance Reference Group to engage the General Assembly and International Board in the process (Archer, 2011). Following this process the strategy, PATEP was approved by the General Assembly and intending to run from 2012 through 2017. This strategy included some new elements, included greater specificity, a series of promises, and a theory of change (A5; A6).

Following the release of the strategy, AAI also set out to provide further support for countries to develop their own strategies. Instead of releasing 17 additional sub-strategies internationally, as followed RTEP, Archer led a team that revised AAI's resource book for human rights based approaches, entitled *People's Action In Practice* (A6; Archer, et al., 2012). The 2012 publication of this document "in some ways is the 230 page elaboration of that [one sentence] theory of change" (A6) from the strategy, and related workshops helped provide

guidance to country directors and staff (A6; Archer, et al., 2012). This publication is seen as a big change helping to embed and institutionalize the latest strategy and AAI's HRBA (A5).

Only after completing this strategy development did AAI turn to restructuring the organization to pursue it, including a process whereby every 200 of the 255 jobs in the secretariat were reshuffled and reopened for application (A2). Eighty percent of these were filled from within, but resulted in major shifts in job responsibilities and titles (A2). With these changes, AAI is moving away from changes and activities being driven by internal politics to a more professionalized, almost contractual, model, with member agreements holding country directors responsible for following policies (A2). In addition, it is moving to a leaner secretariat, with more of the capacity coming from within individual countries (A2).

Findings

From examination of ActionAid's narrative of change, useful patterns emerge, for the organization, other NGOs, and scholarship. Three distinct, yet mutually influential, challenges face ActionAid as it continues in the current strategy cycle: continued institutionalization of RBA and Internationalisation, balancing autonomy and bureaucracy, and responding to environmental changes. Historically, key influential factors for changes emerge, including three unique to the organization in the context of this dissertation: timing, formalization of change processes, and leveraging of existing strengths to build capacities related to desired changes. Evidence relating to the six cross-cutting themes from this dissertation's case studies also emerges, addressing the role of mission change, presence of and changes in mission conceptions, risk taking and activities outside the dominant mission conception, moderated

interactions with funders, windows of opportunities enabling change, and the formation of internal coalitions to enact change.

Future of the organization

Widespread recognition exists of the need to institutionalize RBA and Internationalisation, within AAI and individual members of the federation alike. “The internationalisation process from a legal point is now complete for one could say almost 10 years now, but we are basically halfway through if you think of what we’re trying to do in many different countries” (A3). Both Taking Stock II and III raised this issue, addressing the reality that full-scale acceptance and implementation of the sweeping changes in the organization naturally take far longer to establish than shifts in leadership, strategy, structure, and systems.

Building up the institutionalization of these changes, and shifting staff throughout the organization from development to rights mindset will require new leaders to step up within the organization. With many of the core group that led the initial change having moved on, there are some concerns about the need for leadership on institutionalizing the changes (A5). The complexity and political nature of ActionAid makes this a difficult task, with new managers joining the organization needing as much as two years to acclimatize to it before being able to exert influence internally (A8). General agreement is at least in place amongst senior leadership on the need for spreading buy-in of the changes more widely, and the participatory elements in drafting the most recent strategy engaged a wider spectrum of staff earlier in the process.

With the most recent governance changes, most of the work occurs sub-nationally, raising questions about how the countries will be able to work together to achieve the promises laid out in this latest strategy (A2). “Currently the international secretariat is really very much following the countries” (A3). Some country strategies predate the global strategy, others are developed on its heels (A7), leading to variation in alignment with the new strategy.

Interviewee comments such as “we have different stages of development of the [internationalisation] process in different countries” (A3) and “we are working in each local micro context [in ways that] are so very different” (A7) illustrate this challenge. In addition to the formal processes of the strategy cycle, governance structure, and various systems, there is also a more gradual process of mutual influence between the local and global (A7).

In devolving power to country programs consistently with each earlier round of changes, including the 1995 decentralization, shift to RBA, internationalisation, creation of the General Assembly, and Resource Allocation Framework, essential buy-in for further changes now lies within the countries. “By default without the very strong leadership at the center, what happens is that of the 50 countries in practice, 5 take the lead because the others do not have a capacity to do so” (A3). Though significant power resets with the country directors, there is substantial variation on their ability to leverage this power, determined in part by structural differences, but also due to comfort and familiarity with the internal political context. “There are 5 to 6 countries that are leading the organization, and if you look at it, is basically the countries where 60-70% of the resources are generated and spent”, to include “Kenya, India, Nigeria, Brazil, and a couple of European countries” (A3). Taking Stock II noted the power of

country directors and recommended approaches to ensure greater accountability on the part of these leaders:

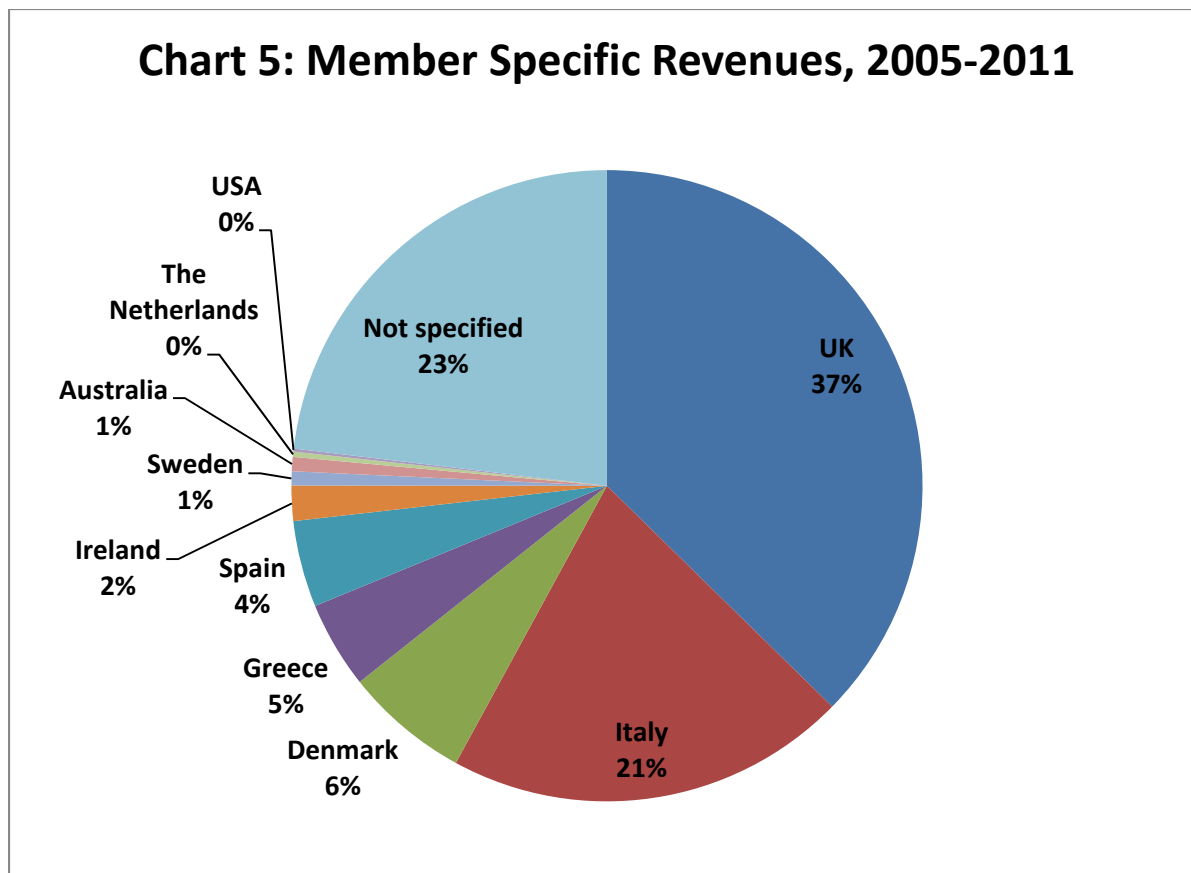
Country Directors have very significant autonomy within light line-management structure and can choose not to allow their peers or management team to hold them to account for all of their actions. They are in a powerful position, perhaps too powerful, and this is an issue for decentralisation at every level within the organization. It may be appropriate to consider ways of strengthening downward accountability rather than hierarchical methods of clipping Country Directors' wings. (Cohen, et al., 2004, p. 35)

Taking Stock II again raised the point, while simultaneously raising concerns about excessive focus on downward accountability, at the cost to other forms. Inside the organization, opinions vary, with recognition of the extent to which the organization has decentralized, the presence of efforts to alter this balance, and some concerns about returning to excessively centralized and bureaucratic systems. A central dilemma moving forward it thus, "we've decentralized a huge amount; what is the right balance between autonomy and centralization?" (A6).

The latest strategy attempts to answer this with a balanced solution, increasing some centralization while also shifting more capacity to countries (A2). Mutual accountability is emphasized through an almost "contractual" approach wherein members and the secretariat hold one another responsible for promises and agreements made in the form of ratifying the strategy, various systems, and General Assembly resolutions (A2). Changes in the AAI's structure in 2012 have further implications for altering the balance between autonomy and centralization. By creating a management structure with two layers of leadership between CEO Joanna Kerr and country directors, the structuring of responsibilities is more coherent, but an additional layer of bureaucracy is introduced, in comparison to the structure under Ramesh Singh. This raises concerns that "there can be tendencies of trying to centralize" (A7), and that

by bringing in outside leadership, there is a threat of reinventing the wheel (A7), such as establishing more bureaucratized reporting systems like were in place before the creation of ALPS.

Both efforts to institutionalize change and strike a new balance between autonomy and centralization could be affected by environmental changes, especially the continued tough financial climate. Already concerns are being raised that the Europe's worsening economic environment could lead to the most recent strategy's growth targets being unattainable (A6). ActionAid receives a substantial majority of its funding from European members and sources (see chart 5), with the UK, Italy, Denmark, Greece, Spain, and Ireland together accounting for at least 75% of ActionAid's revenues from 2005 through 2011, and likely more, as part of the not specified 23% also originates in these countries. Further delays in Europe's economic recovery, or additional setbacks, would thus have a disproportionate impact on ActionAid. The organization is taking efforts to mitigate this potential challenge, including emphasizing revenue diversification, expanding fundraising within Southern members (AAI, 2012, PATEP), and becoming more involved on campaigns within Northern members (A3). In addition, some of the individual members have thrived in spite of national economic downturns, such as recent fundraising efforts from Greece outpacing expectations (A6).



Still, to the extent that the economic downturn affects ActionAid's revenues negatively and beyond expectations, the goals laid out in People's Action To End Poverty become more difficult to achieve, especially less tangible efforts such building capacity and internal support to institutionalize change and strike an effective balance between autonomy and centralization. Addressing these three challenges will factor significantly into ActionAid's efforts in the newly begun strategy period.

Influential factors

Timing the rapidity of change factored significantly in ActionAid's changes. In pushing RBA, FPT, and internationalisation, the leadership moved quickly, before internal resistance

could mobilize. Later changes would happen more gradually, with more time built into for processes of consultation, participation, and consensus-building. Further, the timing of major changes within the strategy change cycle and leadership shifts benefitted them.

Respondents recognized the importance of moving quickly on ActionAid's early transformational changes. "Really big things needed to move fast ... if [ActionAid] had delayed in the beginning, it would have been more difficult to do it later, but that's true with most radical change" (A4). The RBA and internationalisation changes were major shocks to the organization, drastically altering it, and with more gradual implementation, opposition would have had time to build and attract support. Similarly, with internationalisation falling relatively shortly after RBA and FPT, this other major change took place before structures fully developed. "I'm not sure whether that change [internationalisation] would be able to happen now where you have 26 members that all have their national boards and they all have their positions" (A5). In this context with greater formalization of governance and power-sharing, the more gradual pace of developing and implementing the last two strategies, especially PATEP with its heavy emphasis on participation, function effectively, but result in less transformative changes to ActionAid's identity, if not AAI's staffing structure.

The shift to RBA and FPT followed immediately after Shalil Shetty becoming CEO, and internationalisation as he was heading out. RTEP and PATEP followed suit, coinciding, intentionally, with leadership transitions. Both internationalisation and ActionAid's governance overhaul came near the end of a strategy cycle, leaving little time for responses to these major alterations prior to the commencement of the strategy drafting process. As a result, the new strategies created breathing room of at least five years for these changes to take hold and for

support to build (A3), before they would be relatively more open for reconsideration in the course of planning another strategy.

ActionAid's change processes differ from the norm for the extent to which they have become formalized. Norms developed and have held since the late 1990s of CEOs serving with the organization for only a single strategy period, outside evaluations occurring near to the end of a strategy, second level leaders drafting the global strategies, and structural changes following ratification of new strategies. Major governance changes fell outside of this formalized clustering of changes, as did some systems changes, but the leadership, strategy, and structural changes formally overlapped. Though there were substantial differences between each period, and the formal process of change was altered with each consecutive cycle.

This formalization became problematic to some, with resistance by senior leadership, especially former CEO Ramesh Singh, to change structure mid-strategy. The maxim "structure follows strategy" (A2) led to AAI's structure not adjusting sufficiently to needs and leading to criticisms of dysfunctions arising as a result (A2; A8). From at least one interviewee's perspective, "he should have restructured halfway through the last strategy" (A2), a sentiment shared by others (A8). This may not have just been an effect of the formalized change process, though, because system changes throughout the RTEP, the addition of new members, and governance overhaul need the end of the strategy occupied attention that might have otherwise gone to such structural changes. Given that structural changes could be expected to follow a new strategy, delaying them, despite negative impacts, in order to achieve other major shifts not guaranteed as part of or following the strategy change, may have been the right choice.

Finally, ActionAid turned two of its existing activities from its child sponsorship and participatory community development eras into strengths for building the necessary capacity in order to make changes. The stability created by ten-year long child sponsorships enabled ActionAid to build up local capacity that became effective agents of change in the shifts to RBA, Internationalization, and the establishment of a General Assembly.

Funding was very much concentrated in long term development programs in particular areas in the countries where we were working. And so the people who were running those programs in the field had a much higher level of control over the shape of the programs than is the case in lots of other organizations where funding is subject to small, one, two or three year project cycles. Because you've got security of funding, you have a confidence of your perspective, and a confidence of the Southern voice, ActionAid became strong much quicker than any like-minded organizations. (A6)

Similarly, ActionAid's history of using participatory methodologies enabled it to more quickly adapt to RBA and shaped both the process and outcome of its changes. "That culture of using participatory methodologies ... to address sensitive issues such as power relations sort of got into internal affairs as well, where we started to talk about how do we use participatory methodologies ourselves in our own practice to improve decision-making to democratize our own practice" (A6). The entire design of ALPS descended from this tradition, while it also shaped planning processes for change, including the governance reforms and most substantially the PATEP drafting.

Role of mission change

Despite its substantial changes, ActionAid's formal mission and related statements only saw relatively minor language since the shift to RBA. This change itself, and the earlier shift from pure child sponsorship to participatory community development, likely involved

substantial changes to these statements, but the lack of archival documents predating Fighting Poverty Together preclude the ability to make such comparisons. ActionAid’s strategies, given the intensive process around their creation and role in guiding the organization over periods of 5 to 7 years, provide a venue for potential mission changes.

Strategy	Fighting Poverty Together (ActionAid, 1999, p. 7)	Rights To End Poverty (AAI, 2005, p. 15)
Mission	To work with poor and marginalised people to eradicate poverty by overcoming the injustice and inequity that causes it	To work with poor and marginalised people to eradicate poverty and injustice
Vision	A world without poverty in which every person can exercise their right to a life of dignity	A world without poverty and injustice in which every person enjoys their right to a life of dignity
Values	Mutual respect, equity and justice, honesty and transparency, solidarity with poor and marginalised people , courage of conviction, humility	Mutual respect, equity and justice, honesty and transparency, solidarity, courage of conviction, independence , humility

Fighting Poverty Together established ActionAid’s formal mission, vision, and values, while Rights to End Poverty made minor modifications that placed injustice on the same footing as poverty, and introduce independence as a value (see table 22 for a comparison between the two). Major subsequent documents continue to use these unchanged (AAI, 2012, PATEP; Hargreaves, et al., 2010; Archer, et al., 2012), and these statements have become the essential unifying elements for the federation.

The 2009 Constitution uses these elements as the federation’s call to action, “ActionAid International must act as one organisation in solidarity with poor and excluded people and others” (p. 2), and identifies these items as central in establishing a shared identity, “through their membership of the Association, the Members form a federation comprised of a number of

self-governing organisations united by a central international structure and by shared values, vision and mission” (p. 4).

The basic ideas at the roots of the initial mission change helped shape the subsequent changes, but the lack of further variation limited the role of formal mission changes in future processes. Given the extent to which ActionAid’s mission, vision, and values statements have become formalized and difficult to change further in light of the organization’s more complicated governance structure and expanded membership, these statements will likely change again only in light of other major changes or decisions to explicitly focus on them. Nonetheless, important changes in mission have occurred throughout the period of study, and continue forward, but in the form of interpretations of and approaches to achieving this formal mission – or mission conceptions, concepts introduced elsewhere in this dissertation.

Presence of and changes in mission conceptions

Evidence of individual mission conceptions – the interpretations that people or groups within an NGO hold of its mission – and dominant mission conceptions – the consensus on interpreting an NGO’s mission at a particular point in time – appears in the ActionAid case, albeit in a different form than other cases in this dissertation. The individual mission conceptions of interviewees in this case show less variation than in other cases, due to the focus on capturing perspectives of those substantially involved in pushing for change. Some variation remains, and additional evidence from these interviews and written materials identifies substantial variation elsewhere in the organization on how to interpret and achieve the formal mission. The three global strategies – FPT, RTEP, and PATEP – align closely with the

concept of a dominant mission conception, especially elements such as goals, priorities, and objectives. These global strategies contain additional detail that read further into strategic planning territory, but also serve as key processes and documents for developing consensus around how to interpret and approach the achievement of ActionAid's formal mission. Other major changes, before, after, or during these strategy changes also impact the dominant mission conception.

Interviewees, all of whom were members to various extents of groups within AAI pushing for substantial human rights oriented changes, generally held similar basic elements of their individual conceptions, and their 'elevator speeches' were relatively similar. Instead, in their different views on the end result of changes at ActionAid, some variation in their individual mission conceptions can be observed. Differences exist on the extent to which ActionAid should focus on children's rights (A6), women's rights (A7; A8), or social movements (A7). Different views also exist amongst this group on the extent to which work in the North should be prioritized and/or be the same as in the South (A3). Similar divergence exists on whether the changes they pursue are primarily external or internal, with one asserting that "the change that we've been managing for the last 7 years is about changing the power balance within the organization" (A5), with others identifying a more balanced role for change (A8). Most of the respondents would label ActionAid as a rights-based development NGO, though another feels that "definitely we are ready to describe ourselves as a social justice organization rather than a development organization" (A3), a critical distinction on the extent to which it pursues human rights to the exclusion of material poverty eradication, as opposed to redefining

poverty more broadly while pursuing both rights and poverty eradication (A8). Even in asserting these differences, the respondents generally noted room for difference perspectives.

Further, the interview respondents noted substantial differences in how others in the organization interpret ActionAid's mission. Those with tenure in the organization predating many of the changes also recall a time where their share individual mission conception was in the minority (A3; A4; A6; A7). "There's been a high level of space for people to operate within the program that is laid out. It has sometimes led to a diversity of views, a number of things, and we recognize that while that's sometimes a strength, there's a point at which it becomes a weakness" (A6). To this group, this space was a strength when they sought to gain broader support for their shared conception, but becomes a weakness when the changes fail to lead to sufficient consensus or institutionalization of them. In part this gap draws from different experiences and understanding of the most basic element of the mission, poverty. "A critical part of the challenge is in redefining how staff within the organisation themselves understand poverty, and making a break with older understandings of poverty as a material lack" (Win, n.d., p. 4). Differences in the individual mission conceptions held by others in the organization were also identified as leading to resistance to changes and sometimes unexpected behaviors, such as two countries pursuing entirely different policies on the same topic.

The two most recent external evaluations also provided evidence of varying individual mission conceptions. Taking Stock II found that some field staff found ActionAid's new mission and vision to have been imposed upon them without sufficient involvement or consultation (Cohen, et al., 2004). Taking Stock III found widespread support for ActionAid's most basic mission elements across staff and external stakeholders, but that the shift away from

participatory community-level development to RBA was incomplete, especially at the country-level (Brown, et al., 2010). At that point, there was also “confusion about the differences between rights-based and community development approaches” (Brown, et al., 2010, p. 27). These variations have over time fed into processes by which the dominant mission conception at ActionAid has shifted, often drastically.

ActionAid began as a UK based child sponsorship charity that supported development programs abroad, added partner organizations elsewhere in Europe to become an alliance, and shifted to emphasize participatory community development, with each of these changing the dominant conception. Strategy documents in the early 1990s began a push for alterations to this conception, as did the 1995 decentralization. The shift to RBA and start of FPT achieved this change. The Internationalisation process further altered the dominant mission conception, shifting it from a Northern-led NGO to global one sharing power, with the 2008 governance reforms and accompanying membership expansion turning it into a truly global federation. The global strategies RTEP and PATEP shifted emphasis to particular themes and specific change promises, respectively. These various changes all led to different dominant mission conceptions, parts of which continue forward, while also potentially giving rise to further changes in the variety of individual mission conceptions held throughout the organization.

The three strategies most clearly lay out other elements of the dominant mission conception in place following their ratification. FPT laid out a relative broad conception of how it would approach RBA, identifying four broad key areas as poverty eradication goals (see table 23). RTEP modified these, placing a greater emphasis on states, changing gender to women and girls, and paying attention to communities and civil society in place of the anti-poverty

movement. It further narrowed this conception by introducing six strategic priorities, which correlated to the themes in the resulting AAI structure. PATEP moved to greater specificity, both in its five objectives – which generally aligned with the theme from RTEP, albeit without a specific HIV/AIDS objective – and even more so with the ten accompanying change promises.

Table 23: Programmatic Goals Across the Strategies				
Grouped according to similarity of focus				
FPT: Poverty Eradication Goals (p. 4)	RTEP: Poverty Eradication Goals (p. 7)	RTEP: Strategic Priorities (Themes) (p. 7)	PATEP: Objectives (p. 14-19)	PATEP: Change Promises (p. 5, 14-19)
1. Poor and marginalised people will increasingly be able to realise their potential.	1. Poor and excluded people and communities will exercise power to secure their rights			
2. The anti-poverty movement will be strengthened.	3. Citizens and civil society across the world will fight for rights and justice			
3. International constraints to poverty eradication will be mitigated		2. The right to food	1. Promote sustainable agriculture and control over natural resources for people living in poverty	1. Securing women’s land rights 2. Promoting sustainable agriculture
		3. The right to education	3. Improve the quality of public education for all children	5. Transforming education for girls and boys 6. Harnessing youth leadership to end poverty and injustice
	4. States and their institutions will be accountable and democratic and will promote protect and fulfill human rights for all	4. The right to human security during conflicts and emergencies	4. Build the resilience of people living in poverty conflicts and disasters and respond to disasters with people-centered rights-based alternatives	7. Building people’s resilience to conflict and disaster 8. Responding to disasters through rights

		6. The right to just and democratic governance	2. Advance the political influence of people living in poverty to hold governments and corporates accountable	3. Holding governments to account on public service 4. Achieving redistributive resourcing of development
4. Gender equity will be enhanced	2. Women and girls will gain power to secure their rights	1. Women's rights 5. The right to a life of dignity in the face of HIV and AIDS	5. Ensure that women and girls can break the cycle of poverty and violence, build economic alternatives, and claim control over their bodies	9. Increasing women's and girls' control over their bodies 10. Generating women-centered economic alternatives.

In addition to greater specificity in the objectives pursued, PATEP also introduce, for the first time, ActionAid's theory of change – on how rights can be achieved and poverty eradicated – with “we believe that an end to poverty and injustice can be achieved through purposeful individual and collective action, led by the active agency of people living in poverty and supported by solidarity, credible rights-based alternatives and campaigns that address the structural causes and consequences of poverty” (2012, p. 9). The dominant mission conception at ActionAid as of early 2013 would thus appear to including carried forward elements of rights-based approaches to development, a power-sharing global identity as a federation, participatory practices oriented and power sharing structures and activities, the specific objectives and change promises of PATEP, and its theory of change. Individuals, groups, or even members within ActionAid may disagree with parts of this dominant mission conception, hold distinctive individual mission conceptions that further alter or would seek to replace elements of it, and/or remain undecided about falling into the consensus around it, but moving

forward it is serving as the primary interpretation of and approach to achieving the formal mission.

Risk taking and activities outside dominant mission conception

ActionAid has demonstrated a willingness to take risks and shift its efforts outside of the dominant mission conception in place prior to these changes. In overhauling its approach from child sponsorship to community development to RBA, such changes overturned its dominant mission conception. But even within a given dominant mission conception, a culture of willingness to enable individual countries, themes, campaigns, groups, and even individuals to take on approaches that interpret this conception differently thrived. In addition to the explicit flexibility provided by the organization, there also was a tradition of individuals within the organization creating their own. As one respondent phrased it, there are “two parts to looking at flexibility: [one] that the organization gives, the other is the flexibility that you create” (A7).

ActionAid has been a relatively non-hierarchical organization with room to interpret the strategy and develop new approaches (A3; A4; A6; Brown, et al., 2010). In particular, AAI’s prior CEO, Ramesh Singh, took an approach of having “a thousand flowers bloom” (A4; A6) where those within the organization tested a variety of rights-based approaches to development. Programs able to demonstrate success were emulated across the organization, even if they lay outside of prior areas of focus and attention. This freedom encouraged individual countries to take on leadership roles, for a wide range of activities to be tested, and for innovative new approaches to rights to emerge. ALPS also relies on flexibility, encouraging countries and staff to determine the shape of their accountability activities in partnership with

those to whom they ought to respond, which has strengthened downward accountability for many. Both RTEP and PATEP formalized this focus by emphasizing the development of new alternatives for RBA, recognizing this willingness to take risks as an organizational strength. Benefits go beyond ActionAid itself, where in taking on its new approaches, first to community development and then RBA, it established a number of helpful participatory tools that benefit many outside organizations (Brown, et al., 2010).

The risk-taking comes with downsides. Even in the midst of this approach, members of the organization raised challenges, such as quote passed along second hand by one interviewee: "Letting a thousand flower bloom is very dangerous, no? Because you will have poisonous flower and good flowers. You will have ugly flowers and pretty flowers ... So which flowers do you put in the house?" (A8). Taking Stock II and III raised concerns of overloading staff, spreading activities too thin, and an opportunistic approach, while the creators of ALPS recognized the flexibility leaving some countries behind. "There is also a concern that AAI spreads itself too thin and should consolidate those campaigns where it has expertise and has made some progress" (Cohen, et al., 2004, p. 16). Another downside to the approach is overloading staff, with a variety of themes and campaigns all potentially demanding their attention (Brown, et al., 2010). ALPS encouraged and even depended upon the flexibility of individuals within the organization, but also led to countries struggling to adapt to the lack of guidance (David & Mancini, 2004). Finally, within ActionAid, there is "a tendency to make opportunistic rather than strategic decisions about growth and program choices" (Brown, et al., 2010, p. 3). Though these criticisms have merit, their mitigation could be too costly in terms of ActionAid's efforts to be rights-focused, downwardly accountable, power-sharing,

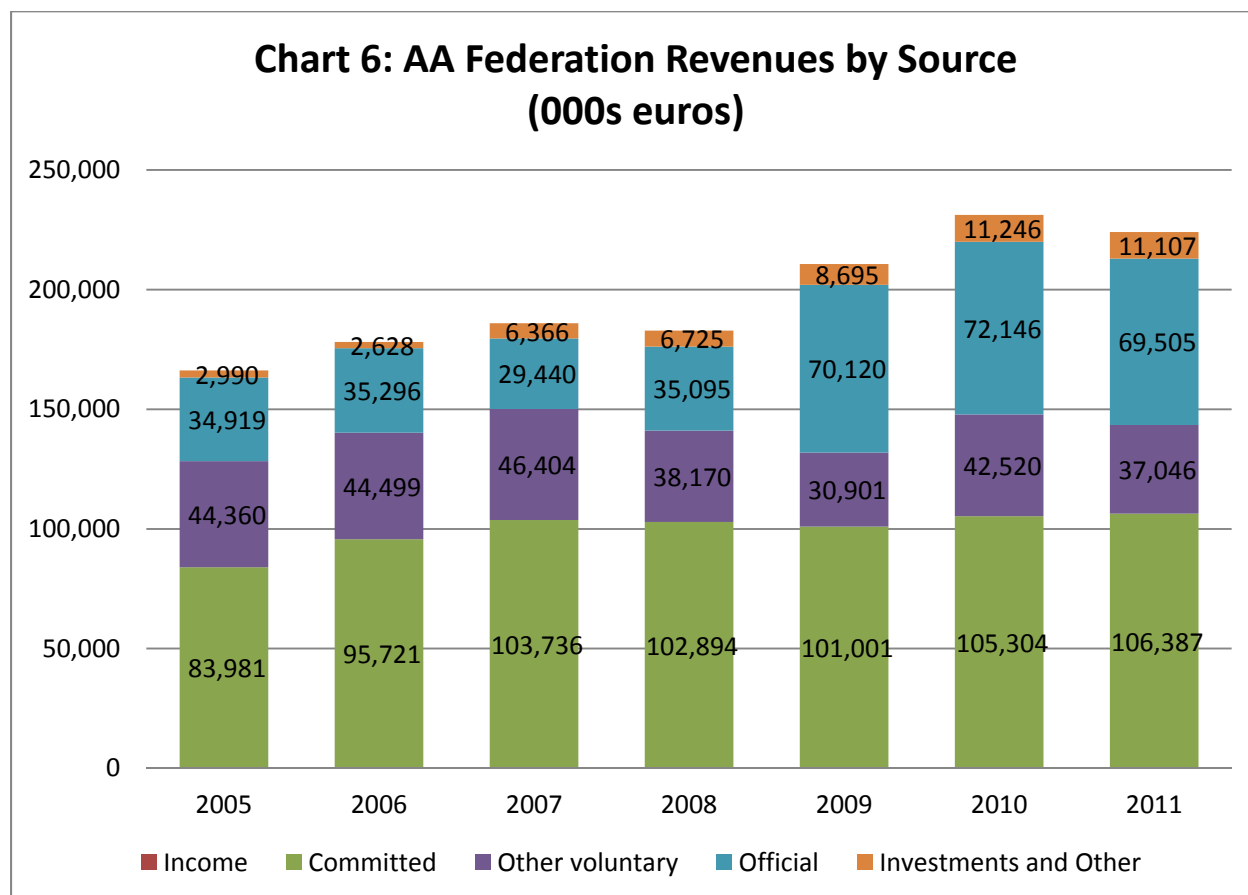
decentralized, and response to a changing environment. The most recent strategy showed efforts to address these concerns, including through greater specificity of objectives and the creation of change promises, but further moves toward strategy decision-making and reduces flexibility might not be acceptable in light of efforts to continue pursuing ActionAid's dominant mission conception and identity.

Moderated interaction with funders

Since its founding, ActionAid relied heavily on its child sponsorships. These long-term commitments by individual donors generally lasted for ten years, targeted a specific country and even community, and included a match between the donor and a child benefiting from ActionAid's programs, even if just indirectly. Over the course of its many changes, the foundation of this relationship shifted, while ActionAid sought to diversify its revenue sources, both in types of funding and country of origin. Though the individual child sponsors could restrict their funding to countries and/or communities, the relative stability of this funding benefitted the organization. A willingness to push back against donor requests and to focus more on accountability to rights holders further enabled ActionAid substantial control over the other types of funding relationships into which it entered. In addition, the systems designed to share power over resources further removed the potential for external control.

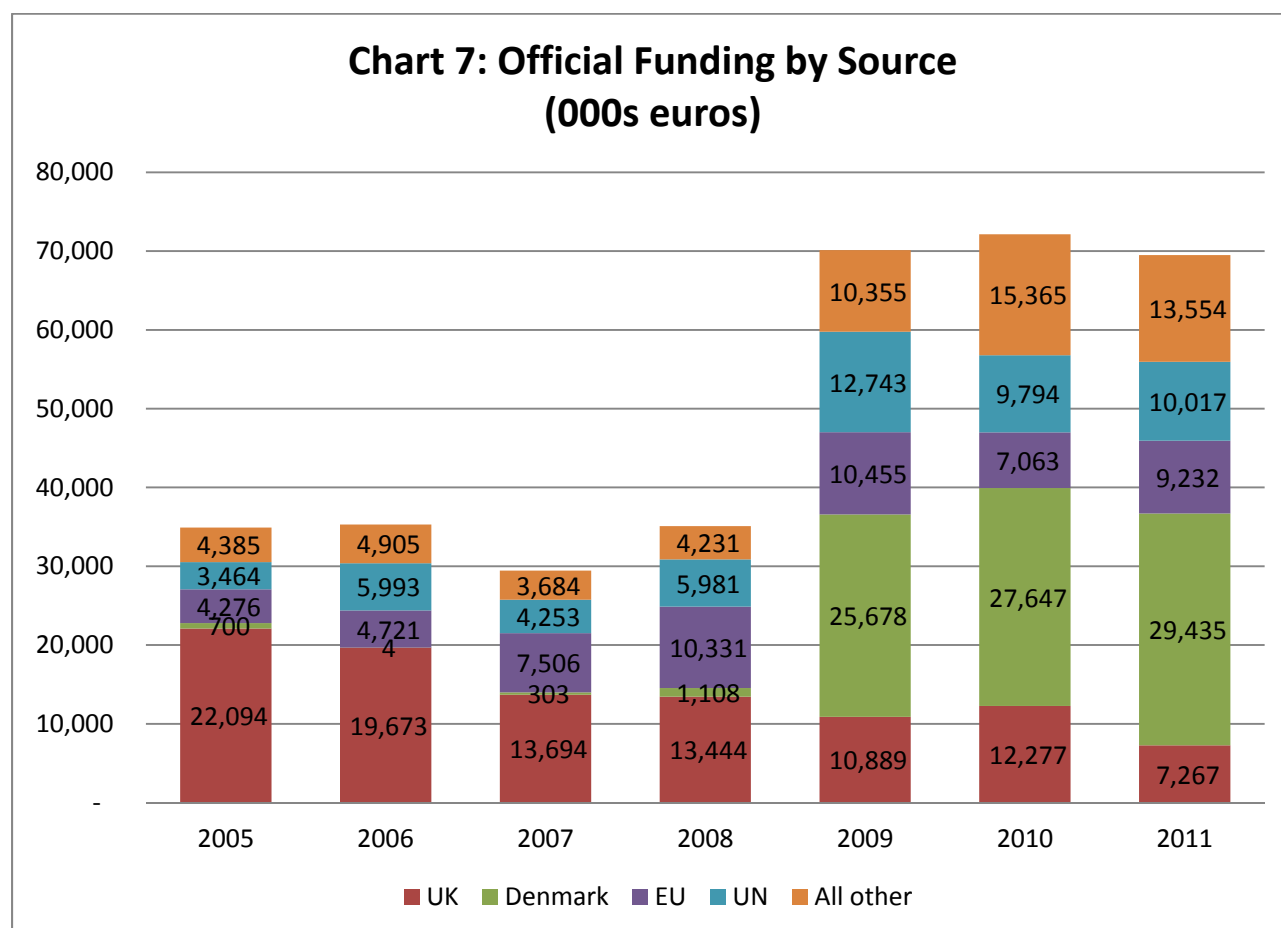
Despite concerns about losing funders with major organizational changes, ActionAid's revenues rose during its first and second RBA strategies. In fact, following ActionAid's shift to RBA and during its internationalisation, its fundraising outpaced decision-making on how to allocation funding, leading to substantial build-up of reserves as of Taking Stock II (Cohen, et al.,

2004). Similar growth, though with structured allocations avoiding similar reserve accumulation, followed during Fighting Poverty Together, especially in the latter half of the strategy.



Child sponsorship provided 70% of ActionAid's funding during the period in which it first began shifting toward HRBA and internationalisation (David & Mancini, 2004), but during the Fighting Poverty Together strategy period (2005-2011), it remained between 46% and 56% of total revenues, with official funding growing substantially over that period. During the course of RTEP, ActionAid succeeded in substantially diversifying and growing its funding base (Brown, et al., 2010), with a substantial increase in revenues beginning in 2009 (see chart 6 above). The effort benefitted from the new structure of organization, with fully national members, opens up

potential to access some forms of country spending funding unavailable to ‘international’ NGOs (A3), and with the addition of new members. Starting in 2007, ActionAid deliberately set out to counterbalance child sponsorship funding with higher levels of official funding, and by joining in 2009, MS Denmark brought over substantial amounts of government funding (A2). As shown in chart 7 (below), funding from Denmark’s government and other official sources rose rapidly in the first three years with MS Denmark as a member of the federation.



A potential downside to this switch emphasizing more institutional funders, whether government or foundation, are the different forms of reporting requirements, focused on more measurable outcomes, in contrast to the stories and letter preferred by child sponsors (A2). With ALPS, ActionAid had also shifted its attention toward downward accountability, making it

less focused on accounting upward to funders. The organization felt some attempts to influence the organization, where “external pressure – especially from donors – to carry out ‘business as usual’ was (and remains) enormous” (David & Mancini, 2004, p. 17). But when these demands became too onerous, the organization pushed back. For example, ActionAid’s attempt to negotiate a partnership agreement with the UK’s DFID turned into a lengthy and turbulent process, in part due to ActionAid’s unwillingness to cave to donor requirements unaligned with its primary purposes (David & Mancini, 2004).

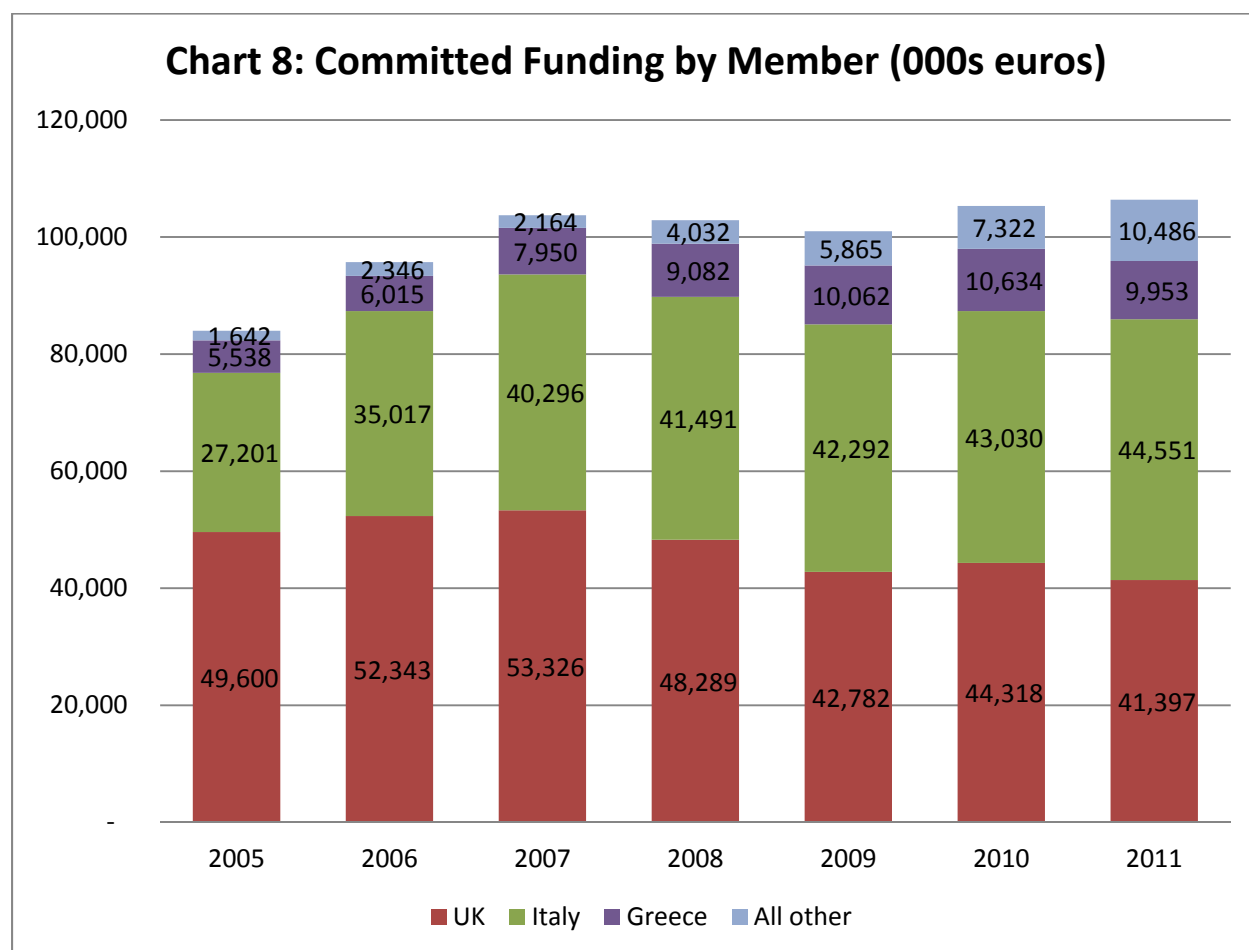
In pursuing diversified funding streams, ActionAid felt other constraints, with “constant tension between the fact that it’s easier to raise money for immediate needs than it is to raise money for other kinds of change” (A2). It balanced this tension in expanding its efforts to include disaster relief, by targeting its programs in this area on ensuring human rights, rather than shifting outside its dominant mission conception in pursuit of funding.

Still, even with attempts to diversify in place, ActionAid needed to convince its major funding stream, child sponsors, to continue their support as it switched from direct development programs to a rights based approach. Child sponsorship provided stable long-term funding (A6), but came with direct impacts on the work:

For example in country programmes, there are/were staff employed to visit villages, to get pictures of children who were being sponsored, collect stories and updates, etc. Individual donors want/ed to see how ‘their’ children were doing as a result of their donation. Although this is now changing, for some it was important to show pictures of the poor child/ren with snotty noses to the current or future donor who is not really interested in longer term political issues. (Win, n.d., p. 3)

To help limit this influence, and to provide needed flexibility for its changing approach, Action Aid intentionally sought to encourage existing child sponsors to provide unrestricted funding instead. This effort generally succeeded, leading to just under 70% of ActionAid UK’s

voluntary funding being unrestricted in 2004 (Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010). Success in converting child sponsors in the UK, long the leading fundraising member, provided the needed flexibility to pursue RBA. Up until 2008, it remained the clear leading source of child sponsorship (or committed giving, as in chart 8), when Italy began to narrow the gap and even surpass it.



The Resource Allocation Framework's policies on international contribution, discretionary income allocation, and international program allocation (Ebrahim & Gordon, 2010) greatly limit the potential role of donors in making decision over funds. They can restrict the funds, which AAI or its members can then choose to accept or not, but as the funds may then be controlled by a direct spending member than raised the money, exercise informal power becomes more difficult. Similarly, ALPS requires greater attention to communities and

partners, at the potential cost of donor concerns. Between these two systems and the independence provided by more than half of ActionAid's revenues coming from individual child sponsors and donations, ActionAid's bargaining power relative to large donors is enhanced, and its ability to shift in response to external pressures diminished. Limited response to such pressures is further restricted by the attention to other voices and desires to push for altered power structures at all levels. As a result, ActionAid is able to successfully moderate pressures from funders; where changes have occurred, such in adding HIV and then disaster relief themes, and more recently with enhanced monitoring and performance targets, these originate from desired changes within the organization, rather than pressure from outside.

Windows of opportunity enabled change

Both internal and external windows of opportunity factored into ActionAid's ability to change. The creation and rapid leverage of internal contexts permissive of changes allowed a large organization to shift dramatically, while drawing on existing organizational competencies allowed ActionAid to access new outside opportunities as they arose.

Structurally, "the secretariat doesn't have much formal power. We don't have allocation power over money, because for child sponsorship, once somebody signs up for a child, it's for 10 years" (A2). It does not have a voice in the appointment of Country Directors by Affiliates and Associates, though it directly appoints leaders for Country Programs, but even those directors have substantial power and leeway (A2). Yet the secretariat plays a substantial role, in part through its leadership of the formalized international change processes of strategic planning. This process and the accompanying external reviews create room for major changes

and to garner additional country-level support for changes, leading to major steps forward and greater institutionalization of the changes.

Externally, ActionAid relies on its existing competencies and approaches, expanding them to enable it to access opportunities as they arise. These need not be beneficial environmental changes, but can be difficulties in which ActionAid emerges to play a greater role. In its *Rights-based Approach to Emergencies*, ActionAid (n.d.) explicitly addresses this role, discussing the opportunities to promote rights that occur in the wake of emergencies. By focusing on providing assistance in a manner conducive of and encouraging the guarantee of rights, it becomes part of disaster relief in way that draws on and reinforces its rights-based approach. Its ties to communities and history of participatory practices were similarly essential competencies allowing ActionAid to access an opportunity it sought out. With the decision to switch to RBA, it also sought to connect with local social movements. This was often difficult, due to skepticism of the role of outside funding (A7), but ties to these movements, developed through local expertise and involvement, have become central to the success of various campaigns (A8). So far, ActionAid has weathered the challenging financial climate facing NGOs. It attracted established Northern NGOs as new affiliate members shortly after the economic downturn began, using its governance reforms, track record for RBA in the South, and sharing of power to make the case.

Internal coalitions formed to enact change

In the third Taking Stock examination of ActionAid, the external reviews raised concerns about the culture of disaggregated power and hands-off leadership. "This organizational culture at AAI encourages non-compliance with settled policies, remaking decisions, ambiguous standards, power lodged in informal coalitions, high transaction costs for getting work accomplished, and lack of accountability to performance expectations" (Brown, et al., 2010, p. 28). Though raised as a concern, ActionAid's internal politics and coalitions have played essential roles in the organization's narrative of change, benefitting the organization. Instead of being concerning, this political nature may be instead a strength of the organization, allowing individuals sharing a conception of ActionAid's mission the room to organize and attempt to influence others to change the organization.

During at least five different points in ActionAid's history of change, internal coalitions formed to push for change, with members sharing a common conception of what its mission should be. The first occurred as a group developed, gained power, and then shifted ActionAid to HRBA and developed the first formal strategy. Shortly thereafter, a small group that included some members of this first coalition developed ALPS and succeeded in gaining approval for its implementation, overhauling ActionAid's approach to accountability and reporting. Many of the same coalition members who pushed for the shift to HRBA then extended their vision, beginning the process of internationalisation and creating the second strategy. During the second strategy period, a small group within AAI pushed to change the organization's external and internal approach to women's rights, with partial success. Finally,

the drafting of the third strategy started with an internal coalition that shared a procedural understanding of ActionAid's mission, and then set out to build a consensus strategy.

As detailed in the organization's narrative of change, a small internal coalition of 5 to 10 senior leaders and trustees led the changes to a rights-based approach and then internationalisation, along with the accompanying strategies. The first change resulted from a shared perception that ActionAid needed to address rights and not just material poverty, which was the beginnings of the shared mission conception in common between coalition members. In pursuing this change, they also realized the need to change the organization itself, and not just its approach, thus leading to internationalisation. For both sets of changes, this relatively small core gained power, both formal – including consecutive CEOs as members of the coalition – and symbolic – by tying RBA to their history of participatory approaches – and exercised it to push through the shifts faster than potential opponents could react. “The Internationalisation process is clearly driven from above, and not updated to other staff in the CPs below senior management level” (Cohen, et al., 2004). Despite this centralized control and substantial formal power, the alignment between the two sets of changes and conformity with a spreading conception of ActionAid's mission as being rights based created broader acceptance. “They could have made change even if it was not aligned with the values in our HRBA approach, but because it was aligned with the values of the HRBA approach, everyone bought into it” (A5).

In 2000, Robert Chambers, then a trustee, and Rosalind David, head of ActionAid's Impact Assessment Unit, devised the basic principles of an accountability system that was focused on transparency, reflection, and participation, at Shetty's request (A1; David & Mancini, 2004; Scott-Villiers, 2002). Before then, Shetty had delayed creating a new reporting

system until after the strategy was in place (Scott-Villiers, 2002). Chambers and David convened a group four other members of the organization to develop the system that became ALPS (David & Mancini, 2004; Scott-Villiers, 2002). This group included a diverse set of staff from throughout the organization, with substantial individual power, and ties to other key leaders (David & Mancini, 2004). The marketing (or fundraising) division was intentionally and 'conspicuously' excluded (David & Mancini, 2004), in part due to the strong divergence between the interests of child sponsors and that of rights-holders that the ALPS developers aimed to reach. Once implementation of ALPS started, there was internal resistance, and its advocates needed to continue pushing in order to achieve more widespread roll-out (Scott-Villiers, 2002). Others found a change to support, especially country directors who "had fought long and hard against the organisation's bureaucracy" (David & Mancini, 2004, p. 12). Internationalisation and drafting of second strategy; required a "critical mass" of managers and trustees supportive of the changes (A4).

In between strategy change cycles, the effort to mainstream Women's Rights within AAI centered on an internal coalition sharing a concern with both the external and organizational contexts for addressing them. A small group of staff focused on the issue, led by Everjoice Win, pursued both Women's Rights specific campaigns and integrated efforts with other themes throughout the FPT strategy period. One respondent described this group as "this small little band of feminists inside this big organization where we really had little power. We did, we needed to influence the half of minds of those who wielded the power" (A8). Then CEO Ramesh Singh supported the group when needed, but did not intervene in disagreements between theme leaders or between secretariat and national leaders (A8). Instead, projects

needed initial successes on the ground within countries in order to gain acceptance and more widespread application (A4; A6; A8). Individual projects saw resistance from others in the organization who were focused on different aspects of ActionAid's mission, and were achieved only where the coalition could develop allies (A8). In an environment without widespread support for the shift from gender equity to women's rights, the mainstreaming coalition spread slowly, where national leadership included feminists and/or ties to local women's movements (Win, n.d.), and thus a shared conception of the role of Women's Rights in the mission. In addition to the explicit dual approach of a separate theme and mainstreaming of efforts (AAI, 2005, FPT; AAI, 2005, Women's Right Strategic Plan), the coalition also took on both efforts outside and inside the organization, eventually shifting more of their attention within the organization (A8; Win, n.d.). Findings from the Women's Rights external review (Plowman, 2009) and Taking Stock III (Brown, et al., 2010) support these approaches while also revealing the limits of the coalition's ability to gain broader support for their shared mission conception. The dual approach was credited for the theme's (and thus coalition supporting it) successes, while also identifying the existence of barriers within the organization and mindsets unreceptive to feminism and concerns about patriarchy. As a result, the mission conception of women's rights being integral to **all** of ActionAid's work failed to spread as far beyond senior leadership as this coalition desired, though it remains a priority in the latest strategy.

The drafting of ActionAid's most recent strategy added further formality to the process, and focused on widespread participation, yet still shared elements of an internal coalition developing a shared vision and pushing for change. The coalition pushing this process differed in on key way; instead of starting with a shared conception of mission and then seeking broader

consensus, they used widespread engagement with others inside the organization, and even key external stakeholders, to inform the emergent conception and thus have greater buy-in from the beginning. “This is about using the same principles that we use in a human rights-based approach at a community level – and applying them to our own internal process” (Archer, 2011, p. 22). Archer convened a team from a wide variety of nationalities and areas of expertise to undertake this process (A6; Archer, 2011), following the model for the two previous strategy drafting teams. “The intention was to have a group of senior people across the organization, but not to include any International Directors in order to ensure some independence and willingness to critique the past” (Archer, 2011, p. 2).

To various extents, Archer, the drafting team, new CEO Joanna Kerr, the Governance Reference Group, and the independent consultants undertaking Taking Stock III and identifying elements of future studies relevant to ActionAid served roles in the coalition pushing for this latest round of changes. But in a break from the earlier strategy planning processes, the recruitment of a broader membership for the coalition occurred before drafting of the strategy. Eighty separate internal coalitions briefly formed on their own initiative and developed proposals for ActionAid’s strategy. Individuals submitting their own briefer proposals provided additional ideas, as did community and partner organization members who took part in Future Strategy Days, especially within the “at least 12 countries [who] engaged in very systematic processes” (Archer, 2011, p. 5). The drafting team drew together all of the recommendations and feedback from these various processes, and from the external consultants, to identify areas of clear agreements and the tensions still remaining (Archer, 2011). Then four senior AAI leaders – Kerr, Archer, Latin American Director Adriano Campolina, and Tanzania

Director/member of the drafting team Aida Kiangi – developed three different scenarios for what AAI would look like in 2020 (Archer, 2011). These scenarios drew on the tensions identified and served as the launching points at the international conference (Archer, 2011) that would help build widespread consensus on AAI's future direction. Having developed ActionAid's dominant mission conception for the upcoming strategy cycle, the drafting team wrote PATEP, going through four distinct drafts with substantial internal and external feedback (Archer, 2011).

The role of these internal coalitions, and variety amongst them, is potentially informative for other organizations. ActionAid's context is unique in potentially both encouraging – through the importance of internal politics – and displacing – through formalized change processes – these groups. The variation over time is of particular interest, with smaller closed coalitions driving change prior to widespread agreement with the group's shared conception of mission, and then in the latest strategy drafting cycle a coalition focused on engaging others in the organization from the beginning, at a point in time where the basic, if not specific, elements of this shared mission conception has become dominant within the organization.

Chapter Eight: The Marshall Legacy Institute Case Study

The fourth case is a null or comparison case; a nonprofit that has not undergone substantial changes during the past decade. The Marshall Legacy Institute (MLI) is a small landmine eradication nonprofit whose primary activity is building national mine detection dog capacity in affected countries. Founded in 1997, the organization did some work on health and peace during its first two years, but shifted completely to landmines by 1999. Ever since, its mine detection dog has been MLI's primary program, supplemented with a varying set of other landmine related programs. Its current executive director joined the organization in 1998, and has led the organization since 1999. During its history, only three different individuals have chaired MLI's board, its founder (who stepped in as chair again in 2009), a board member who joined in 1999, and a third who joined in 2001; all three remain on the board. From 1998 until 2007, MLI gradually, and relatively consistently, grew, its revenues rising from under half a million dollars before 2000 to more than twice that in 2007. In 2008 and 2009 its revenues grew rapidly, more than doubling the previous high, before gradual declines in 2010 and 2011. Outside of this sudden financial growth, the most substantial change in the organization during the past decade was the creation of a new program that became MLI's second largest, an advocacy and awareness building program, and a greater focus on a third largest program assisting those injured by landmines.

Methods

In contrast with the basic case selection methodology of other cases in this dissertation, MLI was selected for lacking the substantial and frequent organizational changes of the other

cases. Lacking a change in executive director or structure, minimal board leadership changes, and a consistent primary program over the past decade, MLI changed far less than other cases. Nonetheless, minor strategy changes in the form of creating new programs and shifting attention between secondary areas have occurred throughout its history, and enough organizational memory in the form of leadership continuity exists to study the early changes in MLI's first three years. As part of the conflict resolution/post-conflict reconstruction sector, MLI faced a different sector-specific environment than other cases in this dissertation. Finally, I had previously worked at the organization for five years, which both facilitated access and raised methodology concerns needing resolution.

Permission to study MLI was provided by the current CEO, Perry Baltimore III, after brief phone and e-mail conversations that also helped sketch out logistics for the study. Participation, by staff, board members, and outsiders alike, was completely at the option of individual interviewees, their comments were kept confidential, and they could choose which questions to answer or to end the interview at any time. An August 2012 site visit was conducted and included interviews with most of the organization's staff. Other in-person and phone interviews were conducted with other staff, former members of the organization, and a key outsider. In all, 5 staff, 2 former staff, and 1 outsider participated in interviews. Document review, primarily completed before the interviews, included 14 annual reports, 6 other internal documents, 7 external documents (journal articles and news items) and MLI's websites.

As I spent 5 years with the organization, prior to beginning the interviews, I conducted a self-interview, answering the basic protocol questions and laying out my own understanding of the organization's history. This exercise was intended to identify preexisting knowledge and

perceptions of the organization, and aiming to avoid subconsciously projecting them into other interviews. This self-interview also serves as a source of data, and is being treated the same as other interviews, although I intentionally rely on it only in the presence of other confirmatory or contradictory evidence from other interviews or documents.

The narrative and findings developed from this case study drew from analysis standard to this dissertation, through a process tracing methodology. Though interview transcripts and documents were entered into NVivo and a coding system developed, the narrative from this case study was developed iteratively through examination of entire transcripts and documents rather than selected codes. The timeline developed for the narrative's core was created prior to initial interviews, used to prompt questions about major changes and timing, updated after completion of the interviews, and further refined following examination of transcripts. A draft of this case study was shared with interview respondents, who provided minor corrections.

History of Organization

In 1997, on the 50th anniversary of the Marshall Plan, General Gordon R. Sullivan founded the Marshall Legacy Institute (MLI) (Eichenberg, 2005; Interview M2). He intended MLI to be a lasting organization that would continue George C. Marshall's vision of enabling people in conflict-torn countries to recover (Eichenberg, 2005; M2). MLI began without a clear vision of the specific way in which it would address post conflict reconstruction (M2). Its early efforts included training, peace conferences, and medical programs, before shifting its focus almost entirely to landmine eradication (M2). Since reaching this primary focus in 1999, MLI has been very stable, with the same executive director – Perry Baltimore III – and only three

different board chairs – General Gordon R. Sullivan, General Jack Merritt, and Anthony Lake – each of whom remains on the board, and a consistent main program and strategy (see table 24 for brief summary).

Year	Structure	Leadership	MDD Program (# of dogs*)	Other Programs
1997	MLI founded	Sullivan founds MLI as Chair; Layton as CEO		Telemedicine
1998			Fact-finding trips	Forging Peace Conference
1999		Baltimore becomes CEO; Merritt becomes Chair	MDD conference	Balkan officials visit
2000			Nicaragua indirectly receives dogs	Vietnamese officials visit
2001			Eritrea (6); Lebanon (6)	Mine awareness booklets
2002		Lake becomes Chair	Armenia (6)	Prosthetics project
2003	Move offices		Armenia (6); Thailand (6)	CHAMPS, Wyoming
2004			Bosnia (5); Sri Lanka (6)	CHAMPS expands
2005			Azerbaijan (7); Bosnia (7); Sri Lanka (7)	
2006			Azerbaijan (12)	Big Bang project starts
2007			Afghanistan (3); Azerbaijan (4); Bosnia (8)	CHAMPS International starts
2008			Afghanistan (6); Bosnia (2); Lebanon (11)	Big Bang project ends
2009		Sullivan becomes Chair	Afghanistan (9); Iraq (6)	New victims assistance projects
2010	Move offices		Azerbaijan (1); Bosnia (3); Iraq (4); Lebanon (6)	VA projects expand
2011		Two staff members promoted to vice president	Afghanistan (10); Angola (6); Sri Lanka (6)	VA projects expand
2012			Iraq (4); Sri Lanka (6)	Explores large VA project in Iraq
			*From 2011 Annual Report	

General Sullivan founded MLI to emulate the Marshall Plan’s approach to rebuilding local capacity after conflict ends (Eichenberg, 2005; M2). Beyond that general purpose, the organization did not begin with a set area of expertise. Desires to incorporate technology and existing global expertise informed early programmatic decisions, such as early efforts around telemedicine (Eichenberg, 2005; M2; M5). MLI’s early staff and leadership leveraged their connections to defense, national security, and international relations experts along with prior experience conducting fact-finding trips and high-level meetings (M2; M5). Under a grant from

the Department of Defense, MLI organized the 1998 “Forging Peace” conference at Harvard addressing civil and military relations following conflicts and humanitarian crises (Pallone, 1998; M2). During the same year, MLI would begin to identify its primary issue of focus – landmine eradication – and then its niche within the field – mine detection dogs.

MLI’s switch to focus on landmine eradication resulted from a confluence of events, both external and internal. The year of MLI’s founding coincided with the passage of the Ottawa Landmine Ban Treaty, an initiative and issue championed by Princess Diana in the year immediately before her death (Eichenberg, 2005; M2; M5). As a result, the issue received substantially attention during the final years of the 1990s. As artifacts of conflict, landmines were a natural fit for MLI’s mission, if approached in a manner aligned with MLI’s capacity-building intention. “One thing we knew we didn’t want to do was go and get rid of the mines for the people but to be Marshall-like; to provide training and to provide resources to help the people help themselves” (M2). MLI’s first CEO, Dan Layton had a background in mine action (M5), but it took additional exposure to the issue by senior leaders of the organization before they identified a niche and decided to switch focus.

A visit to landmine affected countries in Africa led MLI to this niche: landmine detection dogs. In 1998, Perry Baltimore, then working with MLI as a consultant, led a fact-finding mission in Africa that included the United Nations Association and a delegation of corporate leaders (Eichenberg, 2005; M2). After visiting Angola, Mozambique, Rwanda, and the Central African Republic, the delegation arrived in Eritrea (M2). There the country’s president, Isaias Afwerki, explicitly asked for landmine detection dogs to address the country’s landmine problem (M2). Unfamiliar with the dogs, MLI approached the Department of State’s Office of

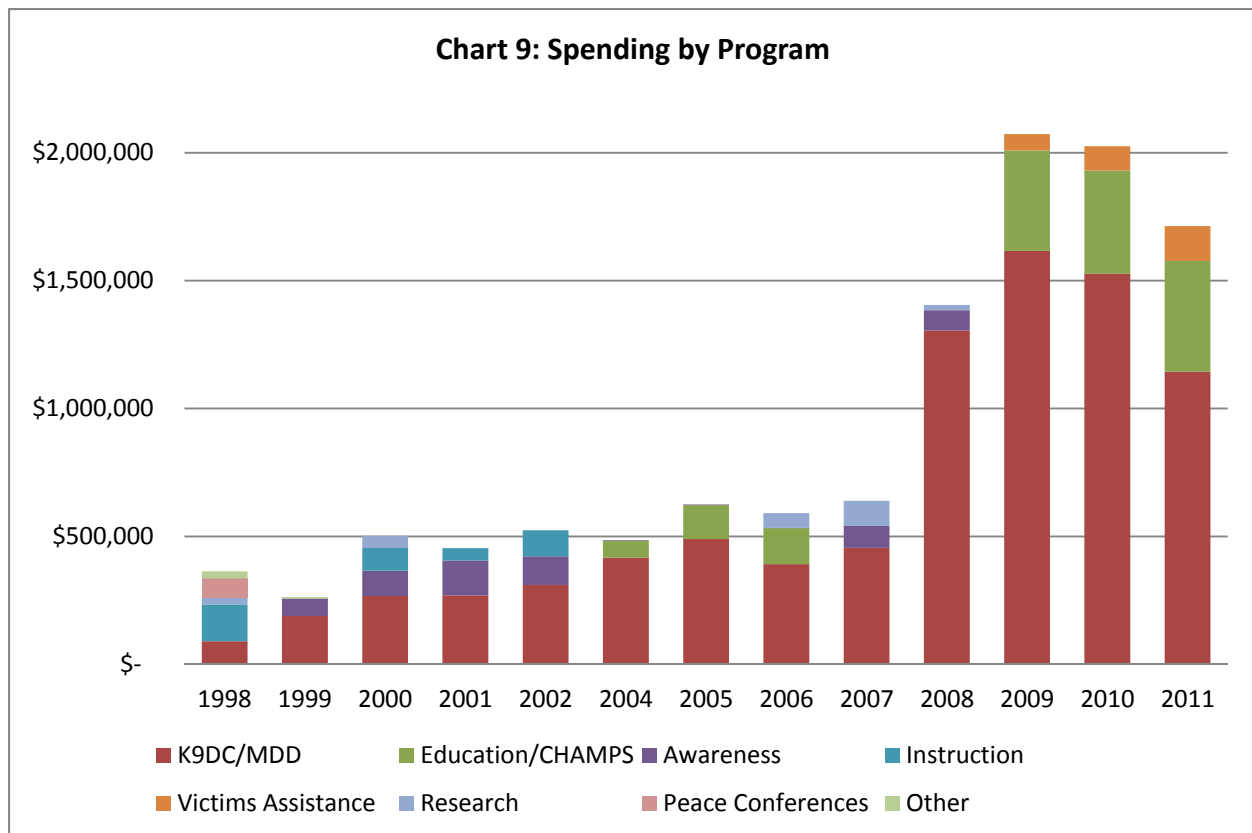
Humanitarian Demining Programs (HDP), the primary U.S. government entity dealing with landmine eradication efforts, to find out more information (Eichenberg, 2005; M2; M6).

Lacking much information about these dogs, the office approved a grant application from MLI for a global assessment of these programs (M2; M6).

MLI underwent another substantial change, with its board and executive leadership changing in 1999. Dan Layton resigned as CEO for a familial move (M5), though he remained involved with MLI as a staff member and then consultant for several more years (MLI, 1999-2001, Form 990s). Perry Baltimore took over as CEO, “for just a couple of years” that have turned into almost 15 (M2). The same, General Jack Merritt joined MLI’s board as chair, with General Sullivan moving into the chairman emeritus position (MLI, 1999, Form 990). General Sullivan ran another organization, the Association of the U.S. Army, full time as executive director, which exerted substantial demands on his time, though he remained heavily involved in MLI in his new board role (M5). General Merritt served a three year term and then became board secretary and chair of MLI’s K-9DC Advisory Committee (later International Advisory Committee), replaced by former National Security Advisor Anthony Lake in 2002 (MLI, 2000-2002, Form 990s). During Baltimore’s early years as CEO, MLI engaged heavily in mine action and settled on a distinctive niche.

Early in its landmine efforts, MLI drew on its prior experiences with coordinating conferences and visits, hosting visits by Bosnian and Vietnamese landmine experts, and a mine detection dog conference in 2000 (M2; M5). This last event helped solidify MLI’s niche in the field, while also bringing together a scattered field lacking substantial scientific evidence of effectiveness, where experts have “a lot of pride and they feel it’s all art, no science” (M2).

Other organizations took on the projects of extending this knowledge (M2), but MLI moved to create a program building capacity in mine affected countries. Since 1999, this program, under the names K-9 Demining Corps and Mine Detection Dog Program, has accounted for between 53% and 93% of programmatic spending each year (see chart 9). With mine detection dogs as MLI's signature program, the organization is often recognized as the 'dog' nonprofit, building a niche and reputation distinguishing itself from other organizations (M1; M3). In addition, staff, board, and supporters identify substantially with this program, with symbolism related to the MDDs appearing in its logo and throughout all public materials.



MLI also undertook deliberate efforts to address potential criticisms and recruit private supporters. It did so by gathering information about the safety of these programs and bringing Dr. Paul Irwin, the head of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), into its assessment

of mine dog programs and eventually the MLI board (M2; MLI, 2004-2011, Form 990s).

Assistance from Irwin and others at the HSUS helped forestall potential criticisms, especially when combined with the evidence of safety; these key partners also facilitated introductions to long-term major donors for MLI (M2; M5). Similarly, bringing corporate leaders on the assessment trips broadened the potential base of support and included many sponsors for initial programs, including some who remain on MLI's International Advisory Committee (MLI, 2011, Annual Report; M2).

MLI's first effort to introduce dogs into a country's landmine eradication efforts led to other organizations providing the dogs and training. Sent to examination Central America's landmine problems in the wake of Hurricane Mitch, MLI staff conducted an assessment trip, identifying problems in Nicaragua caused by flooding displacing landmines (M2). Feedback from this work led to requests from the Nicaraguan government for a mine detection dog capacity, which the U.S. Department of State and Organization of American States established (M2; M4).

Lebanon and then Eritrea would become the first two official mine detection dog partnership programs for MLI (M2; MLI, 2011, Annual Report). Over time, MLI would add eight other countries, with 20 distinct rounds of providing dogs and training (MLI, 2011, Annual Report; refer back to table 24 for more detail). The program's structure has remained relatively consistent over time, with private donors – individuals, corporations, foundations, community or school groups – donating \$20,000 to \$25,000 for each dog to cover the acquisition and training of the dogs, and grants – usually from the U.S. Department of State – covering the in-country training of handlers for the dogs (M2; M3; M4; M5). Historically, most of MLI's dogs

came from the only U.S. trainer, Global Training Academy, but as the program expanded, MLI also began partnering with the Mine Detection Dog Center in Bosnia, especially for programs in the Balkans and Caucasus region (M2; M3; M4).

Despite its primary focus on landmine detection dogs, MLI continuously worked on smaller programs elsewhere in the landmine eradication field, including work on landmine awareness, research, technology development, training, and survivors' assistance. The extent to which MLI dedicated resources to these efforts varied over the years, dependent upon opportunities, availability of funding, identification of partners, and requests from beneficiary countries. Three such programs stand out as potentially significant moves outside of MLI's comfort area: the Children Against Mines Program (CHAMPS), the Big Bang project, and its most recent round of survivors' assistance programs. Aside from programmatic changes, MLI also began an annual fundraising and awards dinner that would become a major source of funding.

In 2003, Diana Enzi, the wife of Senator Mike Enzi of Wyoming, learned about MLI's dog programs and saw an opportunity for the organization to get American children involved in international issues (Eichenberg, 2005; M2; M5). Upon hearing her idea to conduct a program across the state of Wyoming that would educate elementary school children and engage them in raising money to sponsor a dog, Baltimore, Lake, and other board members quickly saw the potential of this project and moved to implement it (M2; M5). During 2003, a group of donors had also mobilized, seeking to fund a dog program in Sri Lanka to help with a relatively lull in the decades long conflict on the island (M4). By tying CHAMPS, Wyoming to Sri Lanka, MLI engaged the Sri Lankan Embassy and US Department of State, both of whom sent officials to participate in the week long trip (M2; M5). This pilot project was a success, raising twice and

much as expected and generating media coverage (M2). Baltimore and the board, to which Diana Enzi joined, favored expanding CHAMPS to other states, a decision some staff questioned as potentially unsustainable, given the significant outside assistance received in Wyoming (M4; M5). Early efforts tested expansion to other small states, with a director hired to run CHAMPS, but eventually the program settled on a model of identifying individual schools (M3). More recently, CHAMPS began linking schools in the U.S. to schools in countries with MLI programs, and expanding from not just providing a one-time donation of a dog, but also engaging in ongoing mine awareness and victims assistance projects (M2; M3) (see table 27 at end of case for additional definitions of these and other terms).

A three year project that also pushed MLI outside its comfort zone, the Big Bang study originated with board member questions, particularly from Tony Lake, of how much it would actually cost – and how many dogs would be necessary – to clear the world’s landmines (M4). After examination of available materials (conducted by the author), there was no easy answer as relevant information was too scattered, idiosyncratic, and poorly measured. MLI’s staff started moving forward with this idea, recruiting partner organizations with the necessary expertise and preparing a grant application. Though MLI had been uninvolved in coordinating or conducting research since its first two years, Baltimore, some staff, and the board saw the project as a means for potentially accelerating MLI’s work, and that of others in the mine action community. From 2006 through early 2008, the research project took place, with MLI staff coordinating a team across three partner organizations and recruiting an advisory panel intended to involve potential critics from the beginning (M3; M4). Nonetheless, as the study’s results were being finalized, it became obvious they would not see the light of day, facing

political opposition from within the field and with the State Department unwilling to allow them published, even though a willing venue existed (M3).

This intentional effort to accelerate progress stalled, but larger geopolitical concerns opened other opportunities for MLI to expand its dogs programs, with renewed attention to Lebanon and Sri Lanka following cessations of renewed conflicts, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq stabilizing enough to involve humanitarian demining effort, including expanded dog programs (M2; M3). An earmark through the Department of Defense allowed MLI to also expand its mine detection dog program into Angola (M2; M3), a country with which MLI had long conducted a dialogue about this possibility, but which it previously had not obtained sufficient funding (M4). With early mine detection dog programs and these most recent expansions, MLI helped build up indigenous mine detection dog programs with donations of over a 170 dogs (MLI, 2011, Annual Report; M2). In addition, every country in which MLI donated dogs later expanded their programs (M2). As of 1999, MLI staff estimate there were 150 of these dogs in 6 countries but by the end of 2012 there were over 900 dogs in 28 countries, increases driven both by direct MLI assistance and indirect advocacy for increased “proper and safe use of the dogs” (M2). Though a few critics remain, most in the industry have grown to accept and value the role of these dogs (M2; M3; M4; M5; M6).

As MLI saw the expansion of its dog programs in these most recent countries, and succeeded in securing record numbers of government grants, in part due to a new hire with prior experience on the other end of the grants (M2; M3), it also began expanding its efforts to assist landmine survivors (M2; M3). Throughout its history, MLI engaged in small programs focused on mine awareness and survivors’ assistance. Often these were targeted projects

servicing small communities or individual survivors (M4; M5). In developing and strengthening its partnerships in countries served by dog programs, especially those with multiple iterations of the program, MLI became more engaged in the efforts of local NGOs who met the full range of mine action programs (M2; M3; M8). Expansion of survivors' assistance projects, in particular, followed as MLI secured funding for them from grants and CHAMPS. Beginning in 2012, MLI started planning an even greater expansion of these efforts, doing the groundwork and reaching out to potential funders to establish a major, long-running program to build local survivors' assistance capacity in Iraq, primarily Basra (M2; M3; M8). In creating this project, MLI intends to "establish the biggest ever holistic survivor assistance program in Iraq" (M2). This last project, intended as a potential model for other countries, requires securing substantial private funding in order to move forward (M2; M3; M8).

In part this latest shift is strategic, as little demand for brand-new mine detection dog programs exists globally, and more of MLI's future dog work is expected to be in providing period assistance in strengthening existing capacity, rather than developing it from scratch. It also is a response to the competition and funding environment. Not all of the nonprofits in the sector weathered the financial downturn, and with organizations like Landmine Survivors' Network closing, new opportunities existed (M2; M3; M6). The State Department also was starting to focus less on humanitarian demining, with a growing mandate to focus on eliminating stockpiled weapons in post-conflict countries, potentially threatening MLI's typical model for the MDDPP (M3; M6; M8).

MLI's final significant change was the creation of an annual fundraising event, the "Clearing the Path Gala". It began in 2002 as a joint event with the U.S. Fund for UNICEF, but

became a solely MLI activity the following year (M5). This event outperformed expectations, becoming profitable in the second year, and by the fourth year began providing a substantial portion of MLI's annual administrative costs (M4; M5). More recently MLI added other events, but the gala remains its largest annual fundraising event (M8).

Findings

MLI's stability over the past dozen years is the result of several factors, consistent leadership, identification of a primary program and selling point to build its strategy around, developing some consistent funding sources, a flexible mission statement and willingness to take risks on various projects allowed it to keep moving in related areas and seize opportunities as they arise, and relatively limited employee turnover. These factors are inter-related, and may not necessarily be relied upon as MLI faces future challenges that could lead to more substantial organizational changes.

Future of the organization

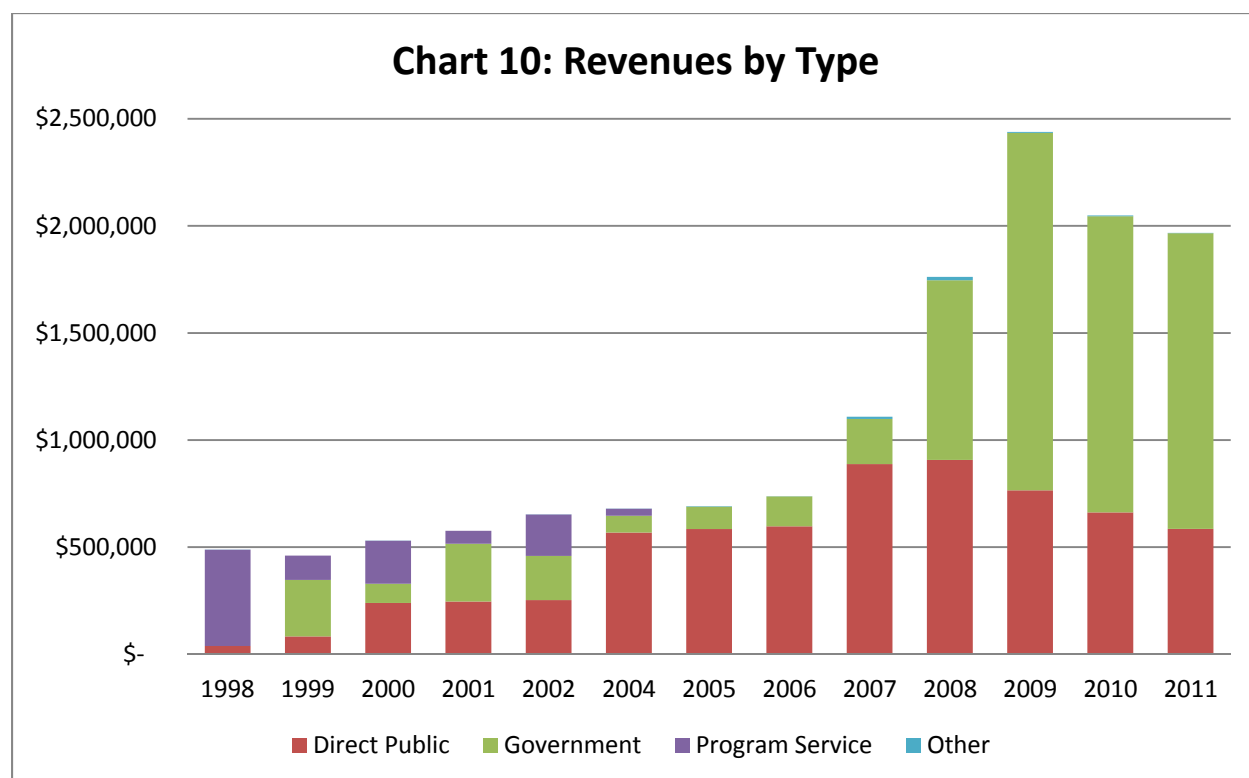
Moving forward, MLI faces three critical issues, both in the short-run and longer range. First, interviewees reveal some brand confusion and coordination challenges, with CHAMPS having too much of a distinct identity separate from MLI and yet overlapping substantially with the other programs. Second, MLI, despite being only minimally impacted by the economic downturn, faces a changing funding environment in the future, aiming to restore more of a balance between government and the various private funding sources, while still maintaining

the larger footprint of the past four years. Finally, MLI lacks contingency plans for two major potential changes: progress on landmine eradication and leadership transitions.

MLI emphasized establishing its programs, making them identifiable. With an organizational name not directly related to landmines, the direct links in its K9DC/MDDPP, CHAMPS, and Survivors' Assistance programs more clearly establish the sector and type of activities involved. In creating program specific logos, materials, websites, and even a separate advisory committee, these efforts create potential brand confusion. Over time, MLI's K9DC became less prominent, with the current MLI website and publications clearly identifying it and the MDDPP as clearly MLI efforts. For CHAMPS, there is still a more separate brand, and even its own website (<http://www.champskids.org/>) that as of April, 2013, includes limited reference to MLI as a whole (a logo in the lower right hand corner not much larger than similar logos/acknowledgements for two supporting/donor organizations) and is managed separately from the MLI website (M3; M8). The CHAMPS staff operates remotely, which can create coordination challenges (M3; M4; M5; M8), further impeding uniformity in MLI's branding. Building an easily recognizable brand that can appeal to students and engage potential participants in CHAMPS is essential to the program succeeding, and too much emphasis on controlling the brand and ensuring identification of MLI could hamper these efforts. Nonetheless, the current distance between MLI and CHAMPS materials and webpages results in brand confusion.

Although MLI weathered the economic downturn and its impact on nonprofits well, some of its key sources of funding are becoming more difficult to obtain. Government funding in particular is becoming less readily available (M3; M8). MLI will have to adjust, especially

after relying upon government funding for the majority of its revenues from 2009 through 2011, and seeing overall declines in total public funding since 2008 (see chart 10). Staff at MLI are already investigating and approaching alternative sources of funding, in particularly looking for new revenues streams in order to pursue its proposed expanded survivors' assistance program in Iraq (M8). It also expanded the number of events, adding an annual K9 9k Walkathon (M2; M3; M8) and a onetime Manmade Dinner in Sarajevo (M2; M3). Individual members of the organization have also begun undertaking cost saving activities that could be further expanded to help streamline an already lean organization, such as greater use of Skype to replace phone calls and even some international travel (M3).



MLI's final challenge moving forward is to put into place contingency plans for potential internal and external changes that are anticipatable. Internally, MLI will at some point undergo a leadership transition once Perry Baltimore chooses to retire. Concerns already exist about

the potential impact of such a change. “Perry is such a force and the board loves him ... whenever he does decide to hang up his hat and retire, it’s going to be difficult for whoever ends up taking over for him” (M3). Given the widespread board support for him, and perceptions in field and by donors of his value and dynamism, this decision will almost certainly be on his timeframe. Nonetheless, having a plan in place for dealing with the change could help MLI to better weather it.

Similarly, having longer term plans in place for transitioning elsewhere within the field of mine action and even moving beyond it could help MLI as the issue changes or becomes less visible and attractive to funders, especially with concern already present in the organization and elsewhere in the sector about donor fatigue on landmine issues (M2; M6). In 2006, MLI conducted a long range strategy planning effort that involved senior leadership, board members, and key outsiders, including some major funders (M2; M4). Little follow-up on the ideas discussed in this meeting followed, though MLI elected not to shift attention toward other forms of conventional weapons disarmament through this process (M2; M6). Similar discussions and potentially the development of a long term strategy could help navigate continued changes in the sector as progress is made clearing mines, and potentially serve to motivate board members, staff, and outside stakeholders alike in pursuit of major initiatives. Some of these discussions are already underway internally, though infrequently. MLI has been pursuing other related areas, such as the expansion of its survivors’ assistance programs or the creation of a project to evaluate and help maintain existing mine detection dog programs, that better match declining needs for new dog program capacity (M1; M2; M3).

Influential factors

MLI's infrequent changes result from several different forms of organizational stability, including programs, leadership, and major supporters. Perry Baltimore's style of leadership is also identified by interviewees as factoring significantly into MLI's ability to simultaneously remain relatively stable while also taking risks and seizing opportunities as they arise. The combination of this stability and leadership has led to relative uniformity in interpreting MLI's mission, the ability for groups within the organization to reach agreement on new strategies, and proactive relationships with existing and potential funders.

The mine detection dog niche, MLI's primary program, is unoccupied by other nonprofits, with MLI one of the few organizations involved in mine clearance programs that is both nonprofit and substantial recipient of private donations (M3; M6). MLI focused its efforts on landmine eradication in a period where the sector was maturing from a relative infancy in 1997 (M2; M6), though more recent changes may put pressure for future changes at MLI (M3).

Stability in leadership, board membership, and staff similarly reduces pressures for substantial change. As seen in tables 25 and 26, most of MLI's current board has been with the organization for at least six years and two thirds for ten or more, while half the staff has been with the organization for at least six years and all of it for at least three years. Amongst both groups, about half of MLI's historic board membership and employees are currently with the organization. In addition to Baltimore's long tenure with the organization, a core group of board members has remained consistent over time, including all of the officers. Only three changes in the board chair have occurred since MLI started, with most recent occurring when Anthony Lake was appointed as Executive Director of UNICEF (UN, 2009), necessitating that he

step down from his chairmanship of MLI, though he remains on the board. General Sullivan resumed the chair position after ten years as chairman emeritus (M3). Most recently, MLI added new board members, aiming to maintain the benefits of its longer tenured members with new perspectives (M3).

Table 25: Board tenure

Years	All members	Current
15+	5	5
10-14	5	5
6-9	7	4
3-5	5	0
1-2	8	2
Total	30	16

Table 26: Employee tenure

Years	All employees	Current
15+	1	1
10-14	2	1
6-9	4	2
3-5	7	4
1-2	4	0
Total	18	8

Securing relatively stable funding streams also enabled MLI to grow gradually without major pressure for substantial changes. Since 2003, its annual fundraising gala provided unrestricted funding that in some years covered its entire administrative costs, primarily driven by a consistent group of corporate donors (M4; M5; M7; M8). Several family foundations have been consistent major funders to the organization over a similar time frame, providing grants for CHAMPS, MDDPP, and MLI in general (M2; M4). Government grants, usually from the State Department, have also been a reliable source of funding for programs, especially MDDPP, but also frequently small pilot projects, some of which have expanded (M2; M3; M4; M5). Of

course, changes in any of these funding streams could pose future challenges. The consistent board and executive leadership helped maintain and expand these relationships (M2; M3; M6).

Perry Baltimore's leadership, especially given his lengthy tenure in the organization, also factors substantially into the limited extent of change at MLI. "A lot of MLI's success, particularly with private donors really lies on Perry's shoulders" (M3), an opinion echoed by other interviewees (M1; M4; M5; M6; M8). His powerful personality in speaking engagements and interactions with donors (M3; M5; M6) is not mirrored in his day to day management of the nonprofit. Instead, he provides substantial leeway for his staff and errs on the side of assuming them able to handle tasks (M3; M4; M5). Respondents note that while he reserves the right to make final decisions, it is an inclusive environment where employee voices are heard (M3; M8). This leadership tactic enables relatively junior staff to quickly be involved in difficult tasks and gain proficiency (M1; M5), but leaves room for potential failures. From employee perspectives, this approach was a combination of both Baltimore's trust in the staff and the necessity of a small organization seeking substantial accomplishments (M5).

Role of mission change

MLI remains consistent in some elements of how it describes its mission, but over time has altered that language. In 1999 and again in 2000, MLI changed how it described its exempt purpose as it strengthened its focus on landmines. In 1998, MLI's mission read:

"To extend the conceptual approach of George C. Marshall in addressing problem situations in the developing world, to facilitate the examination, evaluation and development of new technologies and systems for use in humanitarian contexts, *to employ telecommunications, information technologies and health institutions as conduits for the export of knowledge to developing nations*" (MLI, 1998, Form 990).

In 1999, the last line of that statement, italicized above, was changed to reflect MLI beginning to focus its efforts on landmines, with “and to restore hope and alleviate human suffering by building local capacity to reduce the threat of landmines in severely contaminated countries” (MLI, 1999, Form 990). This change reflected MLI shifted toward landmine efforts, and in 2000, MLI changed its language even further, to include the basic ideas and highlight its current focus and distinguishing efforts, with:

“MLI is an international humanitarian organization that provides resources and training to help developing countries help themselves in reducing human suffering, restoring hope, nurturing stability and promoting social economic growth. Currently, MLI's primary focus is building local capacity in countries plagued with severe landmine contamination” (MLI, 2000, Form 990).

The 1999 and 2000 changes revealed alterations in the interpretation of MLI’s mission, if not its formal mission statement. 1999 provided room for landmine eradication activities, while 2000 identified these as its primary focus, closing off the 1998 activities in other sectors.

With a consistent primary program and smaller programs all within mine action, MLI did not alter the language used to describe its exempt purpose until 2006, beginning a period with several iterations of language, but of limited actual impact on mission or its interpretation. The 2006 report included the same basic information but added additional historical context on the organization’s founding and additional paragraphs on K9DC and CHAMPS (MLI, 2006, Form 990). For 2007, MLI reverted to the more basic mission, though written with some mild differences from the long-running depiction, as “the current focus of MLI is assisting nations in establishing affordable and sustainable programs to rid their land of the scourge of landmines. MLI works to restore hope, alleviate suffering, and nurture stability in war-torn countries” (MLI,

2007, Form 990). In 2008, MLI echoed this statement in describing its exempt purpose, but included another paragraph describing its mission:

“To apply practical solutions to assist countries in easing the scourge of landmines and thereby reducing suffering and restoring hope to people, especially children, in war-torn countries, through the provision of mine detection dogs, management training, and mine awareness education. MLI also uses innovative technologies to improve the quality of life of landmine survivors” (MLI, 2008, Form 990).

Since then, MLI consistently used this statement to describe both its mission and exempt purpose. Though the 2007 and on revisions to MLI’s description of its purpose/mission differ from its 2000-2005 description, they do so only in providing more details on the range of landmine programs the organization undertakes, rather than actually altering the activities or values it pursues. The 2006 document, with its information on CHAMPS, which lies outside of the standard mission description of mine action activities, shows more of a shift in mission, but one not picked up in basic descriptions in annual filings. Beginning with its 2011 annual report, and continuing on its webpage’s About Us section as of April, 2013, MLI describes its mission and activities with greater specificity in focusing on three programs: MDDPP, CHAMPS, and Survivors Assistance (MLI, 2011, Annual Report), rather than the broader range of mine action activities from the 2007-2011 IRS filings. Though these post 2006 changes do not appear to show major changes in MLI’s mission, they do reveal subtle differences in which activities fitting within the broader organizational focus were favored.

Presence of and changes in mission conceptions

The Marshall Legacy Institute (MLI) began focused broadly on post conflict countries, and then narrowed its focus to landmine eradication. It then focused even more specifically on primarily providing landmine detection dogs and training, later adding a domestic education and awareness element, and then a renewed focus on also providing assistance to survivors of landmines. Each of these changes represented a change in the primary interpretation of MLI's mission or its *dominant mission conception*. CHAMPS gradually becoming part of MLI's dominant mission conception show this process of change, with some staff members doubtful of its long-run fit within MLI's mission (M5; M6). For both CHAMPS and Survivors' Assistance, they began as small test programs, but as they succeeded and were expanded became part of the dominant mission conception.

Today, interviews showed a clear consensus for the current dominant mission conception, with each employee noting all three of MLI's programs in providing their 'elevator speech' or discussing MLI's mission (M1; M2; M3; M7; M8). Current and former staff differ on the elements of MLI's mission they find most compelling, including its focus on sustainability and building capacity (M1; M3; M4), use of dogs (M5; M7; M8), international focus without geographic restrictions (M5; M8), and helping to develop global citizenship, such as through CHAMPS (M1; M3). Substantial differences also emerged when they were queried about how MLI might adapt as the environment for mine action shifts, raising different possibilities including (1) shifting to focus on survivors' assistance (M2; M7; M8), (2) addressing unexploded ordnance (M1), (3) moving into health more broadly, building off expansion of survivors' assistance (M8), and (4) more generally returning to post-conflict activities (M2; M3).

Risk taking and activities outside dominant mission conception

Despite having a major distinctive program responsible for most of its programmatic spending, MLI also consistently undertook a range of different projects, taking risks potentially seen as outside the dominant mission conception at place prior to these efforts. The impact of these efforts varied, though some have since become major parts of its identity. This willingness to task risks and expand programs is seen as the result of a culture of “latching onto opportunities as they arise” (M8).

Among these programmatic expansions are MLI’s domestic education program, Children Against Mines Program (CHAMPS), and its survivors’ assistance programs, now considered its other two major programs. CHAMPS began at the suggestion of an outsider who shortly thereafter joined the board, but was enthusiastically embraced by management and the board. Others on the staff questioned its alignment with MLI’s mission and long-term feasibility, given that it involved substantial domestic efforts and would require the investment of substantial resources (M4; M5). Over time, it became a central part of MLI’s identity and is now clearly captured in its dominant mission conception. Less opposition existed for the gradual expansion of assistance to survivors (M8), in part because occasional efforts in this area were a part of MLI’s work from the very beginning of its mine action efforts (M5). Nonetheless, small projects helping a limited number of survivors without building up much indigenous capacity fit less clearly with MLI’s founding mission, though its plans for a larger capacity building project in Iraq demonstrates a closer fit.

A range of other projects have also demonstrated this willingness to take risks, without them becoming a part of MLI’s dominant mission conception. Many of these involved

partnerships with other organizations and a willingness to seize funding opportunities as they arose. The Big Bang study estimating global landmine contamination and costs for clearance is one such example, with research lying outside MLI's usual focal activities. Though MLI attempted to find support for another round of this study and dedicated some staff time to revised estimates (M1; M3), most such work ended with the original grant. Earlier on, MLI also engaged in occasional projects to conduct mine action management training, develop mine awareness materials, and even conduct technology development (M4), none of which has become central to its identity or activities. Most recently, MLI repatriated and found adoptive homes for retired mine detection dogs, which generated substantial publicity for the organization (M3; M8). Since MLI's agreements with host countries involve care for retired dogs locally, and many handlers bond so closely with their dogs that they end up caring for them (M2; M4), this project is unlikely to be repeated frequently.

Not all of the opportunities MLI pursues pay off, but generally only cost time rather than substantial financial investment, especially since it tends to pursue projects only once grants or donations have been secured. MLI's willingness to partner with other organizations and take these risks generally require that limited resource strain on MLI would occur in developing these activities. For example, MLI has agreed to be a sub-contractor for three different for-profit humanitarian demining organizations holding major contracts with the Department of State, processes that required some work on proposal development (M4). These agreements have led to little or no work eventually being directed to MLI (M1; M4; M5), but were of negligible cost to the organization. Outside of its fundraising events, MLI has not pursued opportunities requiring substantial costs in the absence of guaranteed funding. Despite considering the

possibility on multiple occasions, MLI elected not to start up a direct mail campaign after holding discussions, both internally and with potential consultants (M4; M8). The willingness to take programmatic risks, combined with caution in dedicating MLI resources to unfunded ventures, allows MLI to both take advantage of opportunities as they arise and negotiate its relationships with funders.

Moderated interaction with funders

MLI demonstrates a pattern of engaging with funders in ways that result in maintaining control over its own priorities and activities. In part, this is aided by the relative stability of its annual gala (and now its other events), which usually funds most of MLI's administrative costs. This frees it to undertake programs funded by a combination of government grants, foundation grants, and private donations.

Historically, the State Department has been MLI's single largest funder, providing half or more of its revenues from 2008 through 2011 (refer back to chart 1). For the MDDPP, MLI almost always follows State Department country priorities, though has secured other funding sources for projects in Angola and Sri Lanka that were not prioritized. Most other funded projects result from MLI proposals, to which decisions are then made. Some of these projects involve multiple rounds of unsuccessful grant applications. Despite this central funding role, MLI did not accompany the State Department's shifts in priorities, and has not participated in any arms reduction activities. Grants were potentially available, especially to the extent that mandates for private sector partnerships continued in the department (M3; M6), but MLI felt

these projects were a poor fit for the mission and not well suited for obtaining private sectors donations (M2; M3).

Major corporate, foundation, and individual donors have the freedom to choose between MLI's projects and planned countries for their donations to benefit, or to provide unrestricted gifts, but MLI has rarely allowed them to dictate the creation of new projects. A group motivated to see a mine dog program in Sri Lanka began pushing for such a program and raising funds, even before MLI successfully negotiated for its partnership program grant to apply there, but this occurred at a point in time when MLI was looking to expand the program and reach other countries (M4). At times, other opportunities arose potentially pushing MLI further outside its comfort zone, which the organization eventually decided against, including three separate such opportunities that organization chose not to pursue between 2004 and 2007 (M4).

Windows of opportunity enabled changes leading to stability

In taking advantage of windows of opportunity, MLI developed its niche and key supporters, enabling it to maintain the other organizational stability it has exhibited over the past decade. Three of these emerged with its principle funder, the State Department. First, MLI's consideration of and then planning to move into landmine eradication occurred during a point in time in which there was substantial public attention, limited knowledge, and a sizable degree of flexibility within the Humanitarian Demining Program (M6). At another point in time, MLI's limited track record and exploratory projects would not have been funded (M6). Later, the office shifted to place greater attention on building up public-private partnerships, which

helped MLI's MDDPP become engrained as a frequent joint program (M2) and allowed MLI to secure support for both CHAMPS and the Big Bang project (M4). Then, following HDP's full transition to become the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement, several other shifts emerged, including greater professionalization requirements for grant applications and reporting, shifts in geographic priorities, and less attention to landmines (M3; M4). In hiring a program director with experience at the office and clear understanding of how best to position MLI's applications and reporting, MLI was able to improve its relative performance and expand its programs to new priority countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq (M2; M3). This led to MLI's 2008 through 2011 success in securing government grants, which then built up the network of local partnerships for MLI's survivors assistance and CHAMPS international programs in those countries.

Internal coalitions formed to enact change

Each time MLI switched programs, coalitions comprised of management, staff, board members, and key outside stakeholders pursued and implemented these changes. In the initial shift to mine action, MLI's then CEO Dan Layton, then staff member Perry Baltimore, and founder General Sullivan concurred on the alignment between the issue and MLI's purpose, pursued identification of a niche the organization could fill, and gained the support the Department of State's Office of Humanitarian Demining. Upon identifying mine detection dogs as MLI's target niche, Baltimore, Sullivan, and the rest of MLI's board and staff recruited further support from key outsider stakeholders, including much of the group that remains on MLI's International Advisory Committee. Most recently, to start up and expand CHAMPS, Baltimore

and Tony Lake supported Diana Enzi's idea from the start and then gained additional internal and external support. They found support amongst other board members, the State Department, and the Sri Lankan Embassy. Other staff supported the initial project but questioned the expansion of CHAMPS. Over time some of their concerns were realized, but then mitigated as CHAMPS focused in on individual schools and communities, rather than entire states. The extensive linkages between CHAMPS and MLI's other programs made the alignment with the dominant mission conception clearer, and the program's popularity with participants and donors led to it becoming a central program.

Term/Phrase	Definition
Anti-personnel landmines	As opposed to anti-tank or anti-vehicular mines; smaller landmines that target individuals
Canine Demining Corps (K-9DC)	MLI's program to improve 'quality and quantity' of mine detection dogs globally
Children Against Mines Program (CHAMPS)	MLI's educational program, originally just domestic, that engages students with MLI's dog and now victims assistance programs
Global Training Academy (GTA)	Texas based dog training facility that is only US provider of mine detection dogs
International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL)	Organization resulting from social movement to stigmatize and ban landmines
Humanitarian Demining	As opposed to military clearance; Inspection of land for mines and their removal and/or destruction with aim of restoring land to use
Humanitarian Demining Program (HDP)	The U.S. Department of State's office focused on mine action from 1997 until 2006
Mine Action	Efforts to address landmines, including humanitarian demining, mine awareness, and victims assistance
Mine Action Information Center (MAIC)	Hosted at James Madison University and published a journal for mine action
Mine Awareness	Efforts to inform potentially mine affected populations of landmine dangers and how to take risk-reducing actions
Mine Detection Dogs	Dogs trained to find landmines, usually following a search pattern
Mine Detection Dog Partnership Program (MDDPP)	MLI's program providing dogs to individual countries; dogs are usually funded by private donors and the training by government grants
Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (WRA)	The U.S. Department of State office concerned with mine action, along with other forms of conventional (not nuclear, biological or chemical) arms, from 2007 on
Ottawa Treaty or Landmine Ban Treaty	1997 treaty making manufacture, sale, and use of anti-personnel landmines illegal, and requiring their clearance
Unexploded Ordinance (UXO)	Bombs or other explosives that failed to detonate when used
Victims Assistance or Survivors Assistance	Aid, usually medical, to those injured by landmines or UXO

Chapter Nine: Conclusion

This dissertation opened with an example of change at a nonprofit. The Water For People case study in chapter five discussed this shift from a project to community based program approach to its activities. This example is remarkable for falling in the middle of all other changes: transformative but less so than many others, ad hoc but requiring formal approval, originating internally but drawing on external ideas, led by a small internal coalition, no active opposition but challenging the status quo, and altering the dominant mission conception without overturning it. Other examples covered in the WFP and other three cases vary from this standard but reveal patterns across these units of analysis. Null examples from the cases, such as stalled changes or different structures of change, and the quantitative analysis, rather than challenging these patterns of change, provide further support for three key cross-cutting findings. Each of these findings has implications both for practice and scholarship while answering the research question of “what role do different interpretations of missions play in the processes by which nonprofits change?”

First, the empirical evidence supports the existence of personal and dominant conceptions of mission that can change over time. Confirmation of the existence and impact of mission conceptions, both personal and dominant, in each case, and in the distinctive nature of mission from the quantitative analysis, argue for a dynamic and contested understanding of nonprofit missions, which has implications for both nonprofit scholarship and practice.

Second, the organization theory model of change provides some insights into processes of change but provide only limited predictive or explanatory value. Little evidence for the impact of institutionalism’s isomorphic forces on mission is found in either the quantitative or

qualitative analysis, though external actors such as funders, professional networks, or competitors can serve as sources of information or support for change. The loose-coupling predicted by resource dependence is present in the cases, but is rarely accompanied by strong pressure from donors. The risk-taking behavior raised in prior nonprofit management literature that shifts organizations away from prior interpretations of their mission is present, but originates internally, rather than in response to outside forces. These results do not repudiate the organization theory model of change, but call for alternative explanations, modifications, and/or identification of causal mechanisms. Under other organizational contexts, this model of change may hold up better, which requires additional testing. For practice, these findings strongly support the ability of nonprofits to proactively engage with funders and limit external pressures to alter their mission conceptions.

Third, an internal politics model, where internal coalitions organized around a shared mission conception drive change, is supported. Each basic element identified in the internal politics model of change is present in some or all of the changes present within each case study; with changes viewed as successful following a basic process. Internal coalitions formed around shared mission conceptions pursued change and competed with other coalitions or the status quo. Members of these coalitions sought further support internally, exercised available power over decision-making, established links to external actors, and took advantage of windows of opportunity that aligned with their preferred mission conception. In addition to placing attention on internal processes and dynamics, such a model of change also opens possibilities for organizations to shift the distribution of power, engage with a broader set of ideas, and involve more participants in processes of change.

Mission conceptions

In each nonprofit studied, clear evidence emerged of varying interpretations of missions and preferred approaches to achieving them. Individuals and groups within each organization held different personal mission conceptions, that varied along the values, strategies, and functions believed to be most important. Further, a dominant mission conception was currently in place at each nonprofit that differed from both the formal mission statement and previous iterations of the dominant mission conception.

Water For People began with a focus on building water and sanitation infrastructure internationally, on a per project basis that involved industry volunteers. It shifted to a program-based model serving specific communities in a limited number of countries, later expanding that set of countries. Most recently, Water For People identifies its approach as ‘Everyone, Forever’ with an emphasis not just on serving communities, but ensuring widespread, long-term access, through monitoring and local buy-in.

ProLiteracy saw changes in dominant mission conception, both as a merged organization and in its predecessor entities. Laubach Literacy International began with an international focus on both religious missions and literacy, with its own particular approach to literacy education. It dropped literacy and added publishing, later adding a domestic element. Literacy Volunteers of America began, in part, as a response to the limited domestic focus of Laubach Literacy International, and with a different approach to literacy education. By the time of the merger, both organizations no longer felt their distinctive approaches to literacy education were central to their identities, easing merger discussions. With the merger,

ProLiteracy combined the elements from each predecessor organization. In the years since, it has deemphasized international programs, to increase focus on advocacy and member service.

ActionAid International began as a UK-based child sponsorship charity that supported development programs abroad, adding partner organizations elsewhere in Europe to become an alliance. With its internationalisation process, it switched to a rights based approach to development, split off an international secretariat with a Southern location and identity, and saw its identity shift to empowering recipient country programs to become full member organizations. More recently, it has overhauled its governance structure to create a general assembly and devised a new strategy with greater specificity in the rights it pursues.

The Marshall Legacy Institute began with a broad focus on post conflict countries, and then narrowed its focus to landmine eradication. It then narrowed its focus even more, with the primary goal of providing landmine detection dogs and training. Later, it expanded its focus to include a domestic education and awareness element and the provision of assistance to landmine survivors.

Within each organization, there is also substantial individual variation, some aligning with and others distinct from the dominant conceptions currently in place. Most of the personal conceptions within each organization share a central element, though sometimes this is as minimal as the sector in which the organization operates, such as adult literacy for ProLiteracy. From this basic element, wide variation exists in the values underlying the mission, activities central to its identity, stakeholders of primary concern, and basic approach. Even amongst ActionAid interviewees, all of whom identify with the change process pushing for a rights-based approach, there is variation in the desired end-point and groups of primary

concern. The presence of these conceptions, and differences over time and between individuals, is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for the policy process model to hold. Differing ideas within the organizations are present, as they must be for there to be internal contention around whether and how to change, which become evident in the presence and role of internal coalitions driving change, and intentional leveraging of the external environment, which occur through the organizations seizing opportunities aligned with desired changes.

Organization theory model of change

Organization theories, primarily institutionalism and resource dependence, and prior nonprofit management literature identify a model of change where the external forces seek to influence change and are moderated by organizational characteristics. Comparison between this model and results of the quantitative analysis and case studies reveal a poor fit. Partial support is found for nonprofit management scholarship's attention to nonprofits undertaking activities outside their mission, but the case studies reveal that instead of being driven by a response to external pressures, such changes began within, motivated by individuals' desires to shift efforts in a particular direction. Institutionalism cannot be rejected by these results, and may play subtle indirect roles in processes of change, but almost no support exists for its propositions in either set of evidence. Support is also present for resource dependence, with some evidence of correlations between financial measures and change along with each of the cases demonstrating patterns of moderating funder influence, but again the direction of

causality in the context of these cases is reversed, with the nonprofits (instead of funders) leading changes and initiating relationships.

Deviance from mission

In the nonprofit/NGO management literature there is widespread concern that nonprofits and NGOs undertake activities deviating from their missions in response to external pressures. The potential for these behaviors is necessary for the organization theory model of change to hold, and are central concerns in institutionalism, resource dependence, and nonprofit scholarship drawing on other theories. The presence of activities that could be construed as lying outside a given nonprofit's dominant mission conception, or actual observation of mission change, would serve to establish the presence of these behaviors for this dissertation. The panel data provides widespread evidence of changes in the language used to describe nonprofit public purposes or missions. A total of 266 language and 131 substantive mission changes occur in the panel data; based on this frequency, on average more than a tenth of the organizations changed their mission language each year.

The case studies provide further evidence of what could be construed as deviance from or change in mission. In each of the four cases, individual projects or programs were initiated that fell outside the dominant mission conception, as predicted, but these activities began at the instigation of individuals or groups within the organizations rather than in response to external pressures. Water For People initiated its Sanitation as a Business project, receiving funding from the Gates Foundation after a couple of years of pursuit. It also developed a smartphone software application for evaluation, Field Level Operations Watch (FLOW), which

moved it outside of its traditional water and sanitation activities. It has since handed over much of the ongoing work on FLOW to Akvo, a Dutch technology foundation. ProLiteracy broadened its approaches to literacy instruction, along with the teaching materials it provided, to include ESL, work skills, citizenship, and other materials with some link to adult literacy. It also undertook an attempt to expand to K-12 literacy, with a significant investment that has since been ended. ActionAid's prior CEO, Ramesh Singh, took an approach of having "a thousand flowers bloom" where those within the organization tested a variety of rights-based approaches to development. Programs able to demonstrate success were emulated across the organization, even if they lay outside of prior areas of focus and attention. The Marshall Legacy Institute's domestic education program, CHAMPS, began at the suggestion of an outsider who shortly thereafter joined the board, but was enthusiastically embraced by management and the board. It also led a multi-organization multi-year research project to estimate the global extent of landmine contamination, at the instigation of a board member, though funded by a government grant. CHAMPS became a central part of the organization over time, while the research project ended with the grant's conclusion.

Institutionalism

Prior nonprofit management scholarship frequently draws on institutionalism to explain mission and other changes (e.g., Minkoff & Powell, 2005, among others, see chapter one). This theory, predicts a substantial role for isomorphic forces in how organizations change (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, among others, see chapter two). Specifically, it argues that isomorphic forces, including direct pressures applied by funders, government, and other influential external actors

(coercive), along with indirect pressures from competitors (mimetic) and professions (normative), lead organizations to emulate external examples (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Formal linkages serve to strengthen these isomorphic pressures, creating or strengthening opportunities for external actors to directly or indirectly influence decision-makers within organizations. However, organizational characteristics, such as age and size, mute the impact of these forces, and potentially reduce the likelihood of changes.

Neither the quantitative analysis nor the case studies offer substantial support for this theory. Only two organizational characteristics have statistically significant results for models of mission change, with both formal membership and service activities negatively correlated with change. For the other forms of change, age is positively correlated with leader and strategy shifts, repudiating the prediction from institutionalism that older organizations will resist change. Neither sector variables nor board characteristics demonstrate statistically significant correlations with mission change, providing no evidence of isomorphic forces emerging from these variables. On the whole, the quantitative analysis does little to support the applicability of this theory to explaining organizational change, at least amongst the population studied.

As with the quantitative analysis, institutionalism is also not substantially supported in any of the qualitative case studies. The interviews provided limited evidence of explicit pressure to adopt certain behaviors or practices. Similarly, little or no information emerged of professional norms or emulation of competitors leading to changes. Where board linkages to businesses, foundations, or governments existed, they ran counter to the direction of causality predicted by this theory, with changes predating membership affiliations.

Respondents in all four cases mentioned requirements around reporting and monitoring when applying for foundation and government grants, as opposed to private or corporate donations, providing at least partial support for the presence of coercive forces, but did not attribute these requirements as leading to any major changes. Instead, they made minor shifts to how they applied for these funds or reported on projects, and saw varying success depending upon how their already in-place activities aligned with altered priorities of these institutional donors. For example, Water For People began securing funding from technology corporations and foundations after it began pursuing the development of monitoring technology.

Emulation of 'competitors' did not appear in any of the interviews, minimizing the presence of mimetic isomorphism. Instead, comparisons with other nonprofits tended to address distinctiveness and the efforts of the organizations to establish their niches and distinctive reputations. The nearest comparable concern were desired expressed by some members of ActionAid to change themselves well before the sector does, not wanting to be left behind. Instead of moving along with the sector, they shifted ahead of others and in ways different from their peer organizations. As with the coercive forces, more indirect influences from these mimetic forces could be present in the cases and not observed.

In analyzing personal mission conceptions, I anticipated discovering some evidence of professional norms influencing individuals with similar roles and backgrounds across organizations. These patterns of normative isomorphism did not emerge, even when comparing financial or fundraising staff across organizations. Shared elements of personal conceptions related to the activities of an organization were similar within departments of the

same organization, but could be explained by the day-to-day work of these employees, rather than their profession.

The design of this research may have limited the applicability of isomorphic forces. The exclusion of organizations with less than five years of existence rules out the entire population of start-up organizations who, lacking organization-specific norms, may draw more heavily on peers, funders, or professional backgrounds for guidance. The geographic and sector variation of the cases studied may also restrict the potential to observe isomorphic forces. Future research focused on a particular location or issue might pick up evidence of these influences through comparisons between organizations, and thus not be reluctant on interviewee recall. On the whole, though, this theory fails to provide substantial explanatory power for the quantitative and qualitative empirical evidence in this dissertation, arguing for a model or theories with a greater focus on internal dynamics.

Resource Dependence

As with institutionalism, resource dependence theory includes a substantial role for pressures brought to bear on organizations by their sources of support, and is widely used in nonprofit management research (e.g., Froelich, 1999, among others, see chapter one). Resource dependence also assumes a desire by some external actors to alter the behavior of organizations, but also assumes agency on the part of the organizations allowing them to moderate these pressures through loose coupling (e.g., Pfeffer, 1978, among others, see chapter two). This loose coupling enables power balances and the availability of options to decide these tensions, with some organizations failing into line and others modifying funder

behaviors or switching to other sources of support. The relative stability of funding sources and diversification of revenues impacts the ability of organizations to moderate funder pressures.

Evidence from this dissertation provides partial support for this theory. Some of the logit models show statistically significant correlations between financial variables and forms of change, albeit not consistently or even in direction predicted. For example, government funding, where statistically significant, is negatively correlated with changes, although the theory predicts that it will lead to change, given the relatively strong bargaining power of these sources. The individual cases provide stronger evidence in support of this theory, albeit in the opposite causal direction. In each case, the organization draws upon a variety of funding sources, relies on some consistent sources to limit external pressures, selectively recruits new sources, and seeks to convince prior funders to accompany them when changes are made. Changes originate within the organizations and not in response to external pressures, and the activities aligned with donor preferences predate the pursuit and receipt of such funding.

Water For People consistently draws support from the wastewater industry, but when changing from a project to program model, needed to convince industry donors to continue their support. It did so in part by recruiting them as volunteers for evaluation, and through open dialogue. Some chose to leave the organization with each major shift, but the total funding provided by the sector has grown over time. Water For People actively pursued new sources of funding in the form of building a model for local financial support of water and sanitation system, and engaging innovation and technology focused foundations to support new programs and evaluation technologies.

ProLiteracy receives around half of its revenues from its publishing division, which provides the organization with bargaining power and flexibility. Under its new CEO, it actively pursued government funding, gaining an earmark from Congress. In response to the economic downturn, it deemphasized the accreditation process for its affiliates, limiting one source of fees, but aiming to maintain demand for training services, conference attendance, and publication purchases.

ActionAid needed to convince child sponsors, who form its major funding stream, to continue their support as it switched from direct development programs to a rights based approach. Intentional efforts to diversify resulted in child sponsors dropping from 70% to 50% of revenues, while official and other private sources rose. The increase in official funding rose during a period when its reporting structures made it less accountable to donors, because it added a new member with success attracting these forms of funding and pursued issues of HIV/AIDS and governance that may have aligned with individual donor government priorities. ActionAid also explicitly pushed back against a major funder seeking to alter its reporting structures.

The Marshall Legacy Institute relies on an annual gala to fund its administrative costs, freeing it to undertake programs funded by a combination of government grants, foundation grants, and private donations. At three distinct points in time, it saw increased government funding as a result of efforts it already was undertaking.

Although the cases reveal that organizations could mitigate donor demands, there is little evidence of substantial efforts by donor to influence the organizations. Where new programs are pursued, funded by new or existing donors, the initiation of these projects begins

within the nonprofits, not with a funder recommendation, and in contrast to the direction of causality from resource dependence theory. Interviews with three major donors, for the Marshall Legacy Institute and Water For People, corroborate this finding. Each donor interviewed reported their engagements to originate with the nonprofits, and decided to fund because there was alignment between practices already in place at the nonprofits and the donor's preferences. Thus, though the evidence shows some alignment between elements of resource dependence like the intentional efforts to identify alternative funding sources, convince established funders to change, and diversify revenues, the pressure from funders predicted is limited, and changes originate counter to this theory's propositions.

The organization theory model of change may apply better in other organizational contexts, especially for organizations more dependent on specific external actors or operating in environments where those actors are explicitly seeking to influence changes. The population studied in this dissertation generally is not in either situation, which necessitates finding another, more internally focused, model.

Internal politics model of change

An internal politics model provides an alternative perspective on processes of change that pays greater attention to internal dynamics, the roles of ideas like missions, and shared power. Translated from global and national level theories of advocacy and policy processes, the process described by this model includes the following stages: (1) multiple coalitions formed in each organization, at different times, in the pursuit of change; (2) membership in these coalitions depended upon shared interpretations of and approaches to mission; (3) the

coalitions drew on external forces or actors to support their preferred changes; (4) members within the coalitions exercised power to reach decisions in line with shared mission conception, and to implement these changes; and (5) new dominant mission conceptions emerged in line with the shared vision of these internal coalitions.

The panel data used in this dissertation's quantitative analysis does not address these elements. Nonetheless, some basic observations from this analysis suggest the applicability of the internal politics model. The limited support for the organization theory model calls for an alternative explanation. The differences between mission change and other forms of change require that attention be paid to distinctive elements of mission, such as the importance of ideas, language, and interpretation. Finally, the increased explanatory power of analyzing combinations of changes calls for increased attention to internal dynamics and consideration of multiple forms of change. The internal politics model of change fits each of these requirements.

Three sets of findings that align with these theories were present in all four case studies. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the cases met a necessary condition for this model holding by having varied personal mission conceptions and changes in dominant mission conceptions over time. Instead of responding to strong environmental pressures to change, each of the nonprofits leveraged windows of opportunity that aligned with changes already being pursued. Further, internal coalitions formed around common conceptions of mission to pursue change at multiple points for each nonprofit, generally following the five stages described above.

Windows of opportunity

Instead of arising from donor and other external actor pressure, environmental influences on change arose in the form of opportunities that the nonprofits were able to successfully pursue. Strategies, structures, and purposes already in place at the organizations aligned with changes in the external environment, consistent with the model of change from policy process theories. The garbage can model of organized anarchies (Cohen, March & Olsen, 1972), three streams model of agenda-setting (Kingdon, 1984), and advocacy coalition framework (Sabatier, 1991) all include similar elements where external opportunities align with internal strategies and structures.

At ProLiteracy, an unfavorable fundraising climate for literacy helped proponents of a merger overcome doubts and opposition. The predecessor organizations discussed a potential merger twice before abandoning talks; the greater comfort between the organizations and the financial challenges faced by both made the option more attractive during the third round of discussions, gaining the necessary support within each nonprofit to move forward. Water For People also saw advantages in a tough financial climate, growing substantially throughout the recent economic downturn. Interviewees within the organization attribute this to the preexisting approach focused on measuring outcomes and long-term sustainability becoming more attractive to cautious institutional donors. The Marshall Legacy Institute identified and captured a niche as the field of landmine eradication was first starting, and at three distinct points in time saw grant-writing success because the action it already was undertaking aligned with major donor shifts in priorities. ActionAid uses existing activities to take advantage of both internal and external windows for change, such as using its existing participatory community

development to help build the necessary support for shifting to a rights-based approach and the international secretariat leveraging the global strategy developing process to build member support for changes. Much like the opportunity windows emerging from the policy stream in Kingdon's (1984) model of agenda-setting, these changes in each nonprofits' operating environment helped changes already being pursued to take effect.

Internal coalitions

In each of the cases, internal coalitions formed to introduce and pursue potential changes. Membership in these internal coalitions depended upon shared interpretations and approaches to the nonprofit's mission and was mostly restricted within the organization. Similar to expert communities (Baumgartner & Jones, 1993), advocacy coalitions (Sabatier, 1991), transnational advocacy networks (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001), or social movements (Tarrow, 1998), these coalitions emerge from voluntary involvement of actors around common ideas and compete in a political process to shape larger efforts. The internal coalitions observed in each case sought to change the status quo or differed from other internal coalitions in the changes they preferred, much like their equivalents from theory. They also were the mechanisms by which successful changes generally occurred.

Three separate internal coalitions also emerged during the past decade to drive change within Water For People. First, the new international programs director built a coalition with existing headquarters program staff and select in-country managers who favored shifting from a project-based approach to community based programs. Despite originating lower in the hierarchy, this fundamental change occurred as this coalition successfully influence board and

management to adopt this new conception of Water For People's mission. Second, a new board chair took a similar approach, allying with senior leadership and select directors to completely reorganize the board. Finally, the CEO teamed with some staff, new board members from outside the water industry, and select outside stakeholders to undertake new approaches emphasizing market solutions, monitoring technology, and thought leadership within the sector. Whether these elements are central to Water For People's current dominant mission conception is still contested internally, despite being held strongly by the CEO and some other senior leaders.

At ProLiteracy, internal coalitions emerged during three key periods. First, a coalition from across both predecessor organizations teamed up to introduce the possibility of the merger and then brought other key actors on board, especially by securing approval of the respective founders. Merger negotiations were formalized with selected individuals from each nonprofit's management and board, not on the grounds of a shared conception of the merged organization's mission, losing the benefit of a coalition with a shared vision. The new CEO, when hired, entered with a reputation as a change agent, yet teamed with board members, mid-level managers, outside consultants, and a trusted new hire who shared a vision of ProLiteracy's mission that emphasized advocacy and responsiveness to members. This coalition quickly changed financial management structures, member relations, and advocacy efforts. Later, cross-functional teams of junior staff, with the support of the CEO, planned various changes to circumvent internal resistance, including much of the planning for ProLiteracy's move.

Internal coalitions factor significantly in ActionAid. Despite a formalized change process, these coalitions, if anything, occur more frequently and factor more heavily into organizational changes at ActionAid than the other cases, in part due to explicit concern with participation and sharing of power. Shared conceptions of ActionAid's mission and future drove membership in small coalitions that led the organization to shift to a rights-based approach to development, its process of internationalisation – establishing an international secretariat, opening full affiliate status to members in Southern countries, and moved its headquarters from the UK to South Africa – drafted the two strategy plans following each of these major changes, and developed a system of accountability and planned focused on beneficiaries and communities. Membership in each coalition overlapped substantially, and most members began efforts to achieve the ideas behind these changes while in positions of less authority. Other internal coalitions facilitated processes with more explicit participation by others in the organization for more recent changes in governance and strategy, but still began with shared interpretations and visions of what ActionAid's dominant mission conception should be.

At the Marshall Legacy Institute, two distinct internal coalitions emerged to drive the few changes that occurred during the period examined. Shortly after its founding, a coalition of leaders and board members identified landmine eradication as a focal issue aligned with the organization's basic mission, set out to develop a niche, and then secured the external support necessary to make its mine detection dog program an ongoing and integral element of its dominant mission conception. Similarly, a coalition of leaders, staff, board members, and key outside stakeholders designed, implemented, and then institutionalized its key education and

outreach program, despite skepticism from other staff. Over time this opposition eroded, and the program became part of the Marshall Legacy Institute's dominant mission conception.

Discussion

Although this study has limitations, the findings help inform future practice and research. Concerns about generalizability, in particular, raise concerns about contexts to which these findings can be applied, but also open avenues for future research. Other issues, particularly those concerning its nature as exploratory theory-building work, also limit the strength of conclusions drawn from this study.

Limitations

Even though the policy process model of change fits the cases in this study, generalizing from the specific contexts of these organizations is difficult. To the extent that other organizations share similar contextual elements, the policy process model might also provide a useful theoretical lens for examining the mechanisms by which changes occur. In particular, these cases share several contextual elements, including: (1) complexity, with multiple different types of activity, (2) international presence, (3) partial sharing of decision-making power, (4) different interpretations of the basic ideas pursued by the organization, (5) limited hierarchical structures and power, and (6) an organization-specific public purpose. These contexts are not limited to nonprofit organizations, and can also appear amongst public organizations with multiple mandates, mixed-sector organizations, social enterprises, and socially responsible or dual bottom line private firms. The findings from this dissertation could

hold for organizations sharing just one of these contextual elements, with greater expectation for generalizations to hold as more of them are present. Future research will be able test the extent to which these findings hold for other contexts, including domestic nonprofits, public organizations, and private firms.

This dissertation is not intended to make causal claims, but instead to build theory for future testing. The convenience sampling used to narrow the population studied and identify specific cases also challenges the findings, especially if there are unobserved characteristics of the included cases or materials that drive the findings, which would threaten generalizations even to the narrow population of study. The role of interpretation potentially further challenges the internal validity of these findings. Feedback from interviewees and others within the organizations studied helped mitigate the impact of author judgments, especially when confirming findings.

One critical alternative explanation remains, that the organization theory model indirectly influenced change in manners not measured by the research. The divergence between mission and other forms of change in the quantitative analysis challenges this explanation but does not reject it. The propensity of interviewees to attribute greater agency to themselves and their organizations than outside influences would support this alternative. Interviews with key outsiders that corroborate the perspectives from insiders support the interpretations made in this dissertation, as do the self-critical comments made by many insiders. Nonetheless, this alternative explanation cannot be rejected and is worthy of future exploration.

Implications for practice

Despite these limitations, these findings can inform nonprofit management. An emphasis on mission is likely even more important within practice than scholarship, given mission's role in establishing the public purpose of nonprofits. Proactive efforts to discuss mission interpretation and achievement can provide a route for improving accountability and evaluation, two major trends in the field, or to cope with a tough financial climate. Internal coalitions formed around a shared conception of the nonprofit's mission offer leaders, staff, volunteers, board members, and other stakeholders an effective route to change that can enable them to better serve their vision of the nonprofit's public purpose. Despite limited evidence of funder pressure in these cases, other organizations face the reality of these pressures, and dialogue on mission can help nonprofits to walk the line between competing pressures and perhaps find alternative routes that satisfy both funders and other stakeholders with different conceptions of the nonprofit's mission.

Findings from this dissertation reveal the complexity and negotiated nature of nonprofit missions. The divergence between mission change and other forms of change in the quantitative analysis reveal a distinction between mission and other organizational elements, and the inter-relation between mission change and other forms of change. The variety in how individuals interpret their organization's mission and favor specific approaches to achieving it found in all four of the cases establishes the existence of distinct personal mission conceptions. Similarly, the change in consensus interpretation of and approaches to their mission over time establish the dynamic nature of nonprofit missions, even when formal statements remain unchanged, and establish the presence of dominant mission conceptions that can change over

time. Some examples from the cases reveal the presence of internal dialogues addressing how to build a consensus interpretation and approach to mission, including the Marshall Legacy Institute's decision to focus on landmine eradication and dialogue on the organization's future, Water For People's efforts to define 'Everyone, Forever,' and ActionAid's strategy drafting processes. Nonprofits can learn from these examples by establishing space for dialogue that allows variations in personal conceptions to arise for debate and help to proactively build a consensus on whether and how to change the organization's dominant mission conception. Recognizing that mission is not just a formal statement is a necessary first step for nonprofits to proactively address, and perhaps change, its interpretation.

In each of the nonprofits studied, change neither resulted from external pressures nor purely from senior leadership. Instead, the change processes were political and negotiated. With little extant nonprofit literature on conducting change processes, exemplar forms of practice are needed to guide others seeking to lead changes; the three cases provide such exemplars. Specifically, the use of internal coalitions to design and implement change by the nonprofits studied have two distinct forms applicable to practice within other organizations: (1) relatively closed internal coalitions to drive transformative change in the face of strong potential opposition and (2) more open coalitions engaging in participatory practices to build early consensus for contexts with general support of the basic principles behind the changes being pursued.

Most of the changes completely overhauling elements of how the nonprofits interpret their mission and operate began with the formation of small internal coalition sharing a common personal conception of mission, dissatisfaction with the status quo, and concerns

about significant internal and/or external opposition. Water For People's shift from projects to communities and board governance overhaul, PL's breaking down of department silos, and ActionAid's shifts to rights-based approaches to development, internationalisation, and a system of downward accountability all share this form. Nonprofits, other organizations, and groups within their entities seeking to emulate these practices can look to common elements across these examples.

In each case, these internal coalitions began with a couple of individuals forming a group that shared a similar mission conception and vision about the organization's direction. These groups of three to ten individuals initially tended to include just a couple of senior leaders or board members providing formal power to influence the organization and a larger number of middle level staff providing closer ties to the field, a feel for the culture, and informal power deriving from their tenure with and/or respect within the organization. In each case, this small group decided on the main elements of the change being pursued, and then sought to build support for the change, developing evidence of potential benefits, exercising available power, expanding the coalition within the organization by bringing others into agreement with the shared conception, and sometimes obtaining external support. These changes did not require widespread consensus, and often circumvented powerful internal opposition. Instead the winning coalitions gained just enough power to implement the changes. Over time, successfully institutionalized changes occurred former opponents departed and others in the organization gradually came to agree with the new dominant mission conception.

The other form of internal coalition driven change occurred in circumstances where the change was less radical and transformative, but more detailed and logistically trickier,

benefitting from greater preexisting support and consensus. Members of coalitions pushing for these changes also shared at least a basic common mission conception and initial consensus on the direction for the organization, but were also open for debate and variation in the details of these changes. The process by which these changes occur is also different, far more consultative and less competitive, more process-oriented, and involving the building of a consensus on the final outcome. Examples of these more consultative change processes include ProLiteracy's move to a new facility, Water For People's identification of countries for an expanded presence, and ActionAid's governance reform and the drafting of its two most recent strategies. The merger creating ProLiteracy had many of the elements in place to become just such a change process, but instead became a formal negotiation process that resulted in insufficient change. The process creating ActionAid's most recent strategy falls to the other extreme, serving as a model of participatory practice, albeit so intensive that organization's not in a position to dedicate substantial time and resources to process cannot emulate it. Coalitions driving these changes did not necessarily depend on senior leadership, and often were led by middle-level staff, though with support of board members and management. In each of these examples, the internal coalition set out the process and basic framework for the potential change, led consultations, identified and evaluated alternatives, drafted proposals for change, and sought feedback. Approval of the changes followed these processes and was provided by senior management and the board.

For individuals seeking transformative change potentially subject to internal resistance, emulating these less consultative processes would help initial changes to occur but may slow or result in failed institutionalization. The more participatory and engaged processes would have

the opposite effect, taking longer and being more likely to stall prior to gaining approval, but if succeeding having greater buy-in and institutionalization of the change. Coalitions forming to pursue change in an organization would benefit from careful consideration of which process to pursue, given their specific context.

The examples from these cases are not the only source of guidance for designing participatory processes of change led by internal coalitions. Two bodies of prior scholarship address similar processes, albeit in completely different contexts than within individual organizations: those addressing citizen participation in government and those addressing community participation in development. The latter already served as inputs for the design of ActionAid's accountability system and most recent strategy drafting process.

Participation in governance differs on three distinct criteria: who participates, how information exchange and decision-making are performed, and how discussions influence policy and action (Fung, 2006). Variants of participatory governance include 'quasi-legislative' activities that engage citizens in dialogue and decision-making around policies, 'quasi-judicial' activities that serve as alternative dispute resolution techniques (Bingham, et al., 2005), and deliberative democracy focused on citizen engagement in processes of discourse (Chambers, 2003; Nabatchi, 2010). Scholars have identified different requirements for the success of these practices including: empowerment of stakeholders to join process, stakeholders perceiving themselves as interdependent, outcomes of process honored by other systems of decision-making, efforts to build trust and social capital, 'organic' leaders or mediators, clear ground rules, transparency, openness, the generation of small wins early in the process, and plans for ongoing cooperation (Ansell & Gash, 2008); mutual understanding and respect, impartiality,

and rules guaranteeing procedural equality (Chambers, 1995); and access to processes and information, power to influence, structures and personal characteristics enabling of constructive interactions, rigorous analysis, and focused on enabling future processes (Webler & Tuler, 2000). These approaches also emphasize a distinct set of skills that include collaboration, facilitation, and negotiation (Bingham, et al., 2005).

Nonprofits seeking to develop processes informed by participatory governance and deliberative democracy need to consider the basic elements of participants, processes, and intended room for change, but also identify individuals able to lead participatory activities and consider the extent to which these practices can incorporate the elements identified from successful practices in the public sector. At a minimum, by establishing room for discourse around interpreting mission and potential changes, organizations can benefit from the knowledge and ideas of those engaged in the process, whether they are staff, board members, or key outside stakeholders.

A wide variety of participatory approaches have been tested in the context of international development (Andreassen & Mikkelsen, 2003), motivated by a wide range of underlying concerns and attempts to engage a variety of stakeholders lacking access to traditional levers of power. These approaches challenge ideas of donor-, government-, and NGO-driven development, instead seeking a greater focus on beneficiaries and communities (Chambers, 1997). Despite criticisms of these approaches for failing to overcome local political dynamics (Kumar & Corbridge, 2003; Platteau & Abraham, 2002), target the poor (Mansuri & Rao, 2004), avoid fraud (Platteau & Gaspart, 2003), and address the complexities of participation (Michener, 1998), they can still inform the change processes of nonprofits. If

anything, these limitations make paying attention to the design of processes and the identification of participants more important.

Generically labeled as participatory development, these approaches vary widely. Much like participatory governance approaches, they differ on where information is generated, who holds power, and the form of processes involved. Participatory rural appraisal (PRA) approaches involve outsiders facilitating engagement with communities to draw on their knowledge (Chambers, 1997; 2007), as are the wide variety of participatory learning and action (PLA) approaches that have drawn from their basics (Chambers, 2007). PRA approaches share an emphasis on visual methods, changes in the behaviors and attitudes of the outside facilitators to become more receptive, and sharing, both amongst participants in a given process and within the broader community using these approaches (Chambers, 2007). Nonprofits seeking to utilize these approaches for internal change processes can draw on organizations or communities focused on them as resources, such as the Institute for Development Studies' (<http://www.ids.ac.uk/>) research on participatory methods (<http://www.ids.ac.uk/idsresearch/participatory-methodologies>) or even, like ActionAid, engage them or other experts as consultants in change processes.

Other sets of approaches include community-based development, which engages beneficiaries in the design and management of aid projects (Dongier, et al., 2004; Pozzoni & Kumar, 2005) and community-driven development, which cedes some decision-making power over projects to communities being served (Dongier, et al., 2003; Mansuri & Rao, 2004; Pozzoni & Kumar, 2005). Both have been favored by the World Bank and other key development actors at times (Whitford & Mathur, 2006). Community-driven development, in particular has

involved the creation of guidelines, which could translate to nonprofit contexts by requiring investments, mechanisms for participation, access to the process and information, and a simple, flexible design appropriate to the context (Dongier, et al., 2003).

Nonprofits engaged in these activities can design their own processes, drawing on just the most basic ideas or more established sets of principles. ActionAid pioneered several participatory approaches, including its education approach Reflect (ActionAid Interview 6; Chambers, 2007), and its Accountability Learning and Planning System (Gujit, 2004; Ho, 2011). These and other similar processes informed its more recent changes. For example, its most recent strategy drafting process incorporated these practices by encouraging spontaneous formation of internal groups to propose ideas for change, engaging external stakeholders, conducting a conference to build consensus on the basic future direction and address key areas of potential disagreement, and undertaking multiple rounds of draft-writing and feedback cycles to develop its final product (Archer, 2011).

At the most basic level, organizations seeking to draw on these findings can dynamically and proactively start dialogues on interpreting their mission, involve members of the organization outside of senior leadership in guiding processes of change, leave room for internal coalitions to emerge and test different ideas, and engage key internal and external stakeholders, especially those with limited formal power, in discussions and processes of change.

Implications for theory and future research

For future scholarship, the findings from this dissertation suggest a need for renewed emphasis on mission, and a model or theory of internal politics, such as an internal coalition driven process of change. Individuals differ on how to interpret and achieve nonprofit missions, and even the consensus within organizations changes over time, regardless of whether the formal mission statement is altered. As mission identifies and explains the primary purpose of nonprofits, increased study of them is critical for governance and management of these organizations. Given the internal dynamics observed in these cases, the potential need for a model or theory of internal politics that better reflects actual processes of change may be needed. Such a model is needed in contexts of differing ideas and shared power, frequently found amongst nonprofits, but also in other forms of organization. Dynamics of change in such organizations may be closer approximations of global or national level advocacy and policy processes than of traditional organization theories, opening up the potential to draw from these other bodies of literature.

In the context of mature, complex, relatively larger, and internationally active nonprofits (the population of interest in this dissertation), little support is found for existing organization theory explanations of organizational change. Resource dependence is a noticeable exception, but even there is only partially supported. The quantitative analysis showed partial support for the role of some relevant financial variables in processes of change, while each of the four case studies showed the presence of loose-coupling that enabled them to limit funder influences. In cases where these organizations shifted into new areas aligned with funder interests, such shifts originated within the nonprofits, rather than with the donors as resource dependence

theory would suggest. There was even less support for the other organization theory widely used in nonprofit management literature, institutionalism, with very limited roles for organizational characteristics in the quantitative analysis, and no observable impact of professional backgrounds or peer organizations on changes within the case studies. Prior scholarship on organizational politics, though in principle aligned with the process of internal competition over mission conceptions, is poorly aligned with the contexts of the nonprofits studied in this dissertation, with concerns of unsanctioned behavior, individual self-interest, and competition over resources far less prevalent in these organizations than debates over how to interpret and achieve mission. Other theories, such as survival/ecology models, institutional logics, principal-agent theory, organizational culture, managerial networks, and economic theories of organizations fail to provide propositions or models that both address change and are aligned with the context of the population studied. The applicability of organization theories cannot be rejected on the grounds of this limited support, even in the context of organizations sharing these characteristics, but future research needs to be open to alternative explanations, such as the internal politics model of change laid out in this dissertation.

As with organization theories from the private and public sector, prior nonprofit management scholarship, with its emphasis on donor, government, and competitive pressures initiating changes, is insufficiently supported by findings from this dissertation. Instead the findings support a process wherein internal coalitions form around a common mission conception, gather power and support, and seek to effect changes. Thus, to develop a theory of internal politics, other bodies of literature are needed.

Future research that starts with the basic model and propositions tested and supported in this dissertation can examine additional propositions from these individual theories, further expand upon it, and begin to identify causal relationships within this model of change. Testing this initial model in other organizational contexts can identify the limits of its potential applicability. Organizations sharing elements specific to the population studied – the six characteristics raised in the limitations section, along with nonprofit legal status, organizational maturity, and relative financial stability – are more likely to find this model relevant. Future research can test in greater detail where this model holds. Finally, ‘action research’ or participant-observation can test the applicability of internal coalition driven changes.

At its core, this dissertation calls for two major changes to the study and practice of nonprofit management while answering the question of “What role do different interpretations of missions play in the processes by which nonprofits change?” Greater attention to nonprofit mission that is open to interpretation and change is necessary, and answerable by consideration of dominant and personal mission conceptions. Renewed focus on the internal dynamics of change is also necessary, and can be accomplished by testing and expanding the internal politics model introduced in this dissertation.

Appendix One: Key text from IRB application

Rationale for Exemption

This project's case studies will focus on nonprofit organizations that draw upon public documents, private documents that managers are willing to share, and interviews with a range of key individuals affiliated with the nonprofits. Private documents sought will not include personal correspondence, but organization-wide materials such as strategic plans, board meeting agendas or minutes, and fundraising appeals. Individuals will not be required to participate in interviews, their personal statements will be confidential unless they expressly request for them to be publicly quoted (for example, founders or CEOs may wish their remarks to be public), and they may refuse to answer or request an answer be off the record if they have any concerns. Disclosure of participant responses outside of the research is not expected to have any potential harm to employability, financial standing or reputation due to innocuous lines of questioning, senior management consent and provision of requested feedback to the organization. Questioning will focus on perceptions of how to interpret mission statement content and views about historical events within the organization. Confidentiality of responses is intended to encourage open dialogue and reflection, rather than as a necessary protection for respondents. In addition, case studies will occur only with consent and participation from the senior most leader of the organization, ensuring that less senior staff who speak with me will not be acting against the wishes of leadership. For each case study, feedback will be provided to the nonprofit that fills a useful need (such as input for strategic planning processes, etc. about internal views on how to interpret and achieve mission), further encouraging participation in the project.

Recruitment

Recruitment of cases will begin with an approach to a senior leader in relevant nonprofits, with an introduction from a colleague where appropriate. I will present the case study plan to the leader, in a brief form, asking if they would be willing for their organization, themselves, or their staff, board members, and key stakeholders to participate in the project. As part of the case studies, I am willing to provide feedback in a useful form to the nonprofit, such as anonymized information about how members of the organization view the relationship between activities and the mission. Individual interview subjects will be approached after initial case student approval, selected primarily through snowball sampling, wherein the senior leader will identify recommended interview subjects. When approaching other subjects, I will mention approval from the senior leader, but will not imply or state any requirement for them to participate. Given that my topic and type of interview questions are non-controversial, time availability rather than concerns about the research project are likely to be the biggest constraint for recruitment. Since the nonprofits study

have activities crossing national borders, I will likely be recruiting some subjects internationally.

Methods

Participants will participate in semi-structured interviews of up to an hour's duration, answering questions about their personal motivation for joining the organization, the language they use when discussing the mission, perceptions about alignment between mission and organizational activities, and views of the processes by which the organization and its mission changed. Where appropriate and if approved by supervisors, they will be asked to identify other potential interview subjects and/or share documents (difficult to obtain public, archived public, or non-controversial private) relevant to the study. Interviews will be recorded electronically and transcribed, if approved by subjects, and only the researcher will have access to the transcripts.

Oral Informed Consent Script

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. Before we start, I wanted to ensure that you understand the purpose of this project and consent to participate in this interview. This is a research project that is studying the manner in which mission statements come up for discussion and possibly change when nonprofits are undergoing other significant changes. This interview will last less than an hour and cover questions about your view of the relationship between mission and activities at your organization, the language you use when speaking about the organization, and your perception about the processes by which change occurred at your nonprofit. Your participation in this project and answers will remain confidential. At any point, you are free to refuse to answer a question or end the interview. I would like to digitally record this interview for transcription, if you approve. The transcript of our conversation will remain confidential and not be shared with anybody else.

Generic cover letter

Dear <CEO>,

<Brief reason for approach>, I am approaching you to see if you would be willing for <nonprofit> to be one of the cases for my dissertation on nonprofit mission change.

Nonprofit missions serve central purposes and are subject to different views on interpreting, achieving, and redefine them. Unfortunately, prior research on nonprofit mission change too frequently uses pejorative terms like 'mission creep' and focuses primarily on the tensions between funding and fidelity to

mission. In this dissertation, I seek to approach the topic of mission change in a nuanced and open-minded manner. I plan to examine cases of nonprofits with recent changes, in strategy, leadership, or structure. Through interviews and examination of documents, I will try to understand the manner in which mission factored into discussions around change, particularly whether or how public statements about the nonprofit's focus changed.

<Nonprofit> would be an excellent case for this dissertation due to <recent major change at organization and other reasons for selection>. You would personally be an essential interviewee, due to <personalized reasons why CEO would have particular expertise helpful for study>.

For this case study, I would like to interview around 10 key individuals associated with <nonprofit> – you, active and vocal board members, department heads, founders or former leaders, and other actively involved stakeholders. These interviews will be relatively brief (all less than an hour, most around 30 minutes) and will ask questions about personal interpretation of the mission and perceptions of processes by which changes occurred. Individual responses and participation will be confidential, but I would prefer the case study to publicly identify <nonprofit>. I will also examine public documents (annual reports, 990s, websites, news articles or publications) and any archived or internal documents willingly shared with me (strategic plans, meeting notes or agendas, fundraising appeals).

This dissertation research is not intended solely as an academic exercise. I intend to also directly benefit the nonprofits studied and the broader nonprofit community. As part of conducting this case study, I would like to provide back to <nonprofit> a brief report of some form that would be helpful to you.

I hope that you have the time available and are willing for <nonprofit> to be part of this study. I am happy to answer further questions, provide additional background information about the project, or discuss timing and logistics. Thank you for considering this request and best wishes on your continued good work.

Sincerely,

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Talking points for discussion following initial approval

- Thank you for agreeing to participate in project
- Would like to briefly speak with you to reach agreement about how this particular case will be conducted
- For the timing and logistics:
 - o when would be a good time period (for you and organization) for the interviews to be conducted (start and end date, if necessary)?
 - o Would you prefer them in-person, over the telephone, or on a case-by-case basis?
- Your personal involvement:
 - o Participate in an interview (likely closer to one hour than half an hour due to your relatively more extensive knowledge of changes and the organization) and ideally before I begin interviews with others in the organization.
 - o Your permission to approach others affiliated with the organization is necessary before I proceed to reach out to others to schedule interviews.
 - o I would welcome any introduction to staff or board members (e-mail, etc.) but with the provision that any participation as an interviewee is completely voluntary and confidential.
 - o Any recommendations of others to interview are also welcome.
- Content of research:
 - o Share generic interview protocol; request that CEO not use it for substantial preparation before interview so that responses are comparable to others interviewed
- Providing access to internal documents:
 - o Not necessary but would be helpful.
 - o I am not seeking personal correspondence, but broader documents showing how interpreting, achieving or changing mission occurs and how the mission is portrayed to the public.
 - o Such documents could include strategic plans, board meeting agendas and/or minutes, fundraising appeals, newsletters, or other documents you feel comfortable sharing.
 - o Your choice if I only ask you for them or if other interviewees have the freedom to identify and share other items.
- Sharing of research:
 - o I would like to incorporate as a significant part of this case study the creation of a brief document providing feedback.
 - o This could take whatever form would be most useful to you, but would draw on the interviews (keeping individual responses confidential) and any documents to provide information on one or more aspects of the research project.
 - o Examples of possible ideas (brief oral history of process of change, report on perceptions of alignment between mission and activities, or even the addition of a broader survey of staff/board members, etc. on a subset of questions).

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Vita

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MPA Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University
Public Administration **June 2008**

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Business Administration **May 2002**

Honors: Summa cum Laude, School of Management Honors Program, Trustee Scholar

Honors Program Senior Thesis: The Ethical and Strategic Implications of Pharmaceutical Pricing in Developing Countries. Advisor: James E. Post

Honors Program Case Study Research: The Impact of Daewoo's Corporate Culture on Public Policy and Customer Selection. Advisor: Peter Arnold

PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- Berlan, D. & Bruno-van Vijfeijken, T. (2012). The Planned Close of an NGO: Evidence for a New Organizational Form? *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*.
- Berlan, D. & Shiffman, J. (2012). Holding Health Providers in Developing Countries Accountable to Consumers: A Synthesis of Relevant Scholarship. *Health Policy and Planning*, 27(4): 271-280.
- Shiffman, J., Berlan, D., & Hafner, T. (2009). Has Aid for AIDS Raised All Health Funding Boats? *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes*, 52(Supplemental): S45-S48.

INVITED COMMENTARY

- Berlan, D. & Halperin, D.T. (2011). Apparent displacement of global health funding priorities: Time for some difficult decisions? A commentary on Lordan et al. SSM D-10-0244R2. *Social Science & Medicine*, 73(3): 356-358.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) Annual Conference.** Indianapolis, IN. November 15-17, 2012. "Negotiating Nonprofit Mission and Strategy During Times of Change."
- Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) Fall Research Conference.** Baltimore, MD. November 8-10, 2012. "The Influence of Organizational Characteristics, Environmental Factors and Changes on Nonprofit Missions."
- American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting and Exposition.** San Francisco, CA. October 27-31, 2012. "A Second Wind? A Comparison of the TB and Pneumonia Policy Networks" (with Kathryn Quissell, Jeremy Shiffman, and Gill Walt).
- International Studies Association (ISA) Annual Meeting.** San Diego, CA. April 1-4, 2012. "A second wind? A comparison of policy networks for pneumonia and tuberculosis" (with Jeremy Shiffman).
- Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) Annual Conference.** Toronto, ON. November 17-19, 2011. "Cracking the Black Box of Internal Politics: Applying Theories of the Policy Process within Nonprofit Organizations."

Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) Annual Conference. Toronto, ON. November 17-19, 2011. "Organizational dynamics and mission change: analysis from a large N nonprofit sample."

Public Management Research Conference (PMRC) Biennial Meeting. Syracuse, NY. June 2-4, 2011. Poster: "Bringing Idea Conflict into the Organizational Black Box: Examining Nonprofit Mission Contestation with Global and National Scale Theories."

Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) Annual Conference. Arlington, VA. November 18-20, 2010. "Disagreement on the Right Approach for Rights: Observing Mission Contestation in Human Rights NGOs."

Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) Annual Conference. Arlington, VA. November 18-20, 2010. "Leadership, Time-bounds, or Approach: What Accounts for Realizing Rights' Impact?" (with Tosca Bruno-van Vijeijken).

CONTRACT RESEARCH REPORTS

Berlan, D., Miller, B. & Durmashkina, A. (2010). A Tale of Two Systems: Comparison of Health Care in Cuba and Puerto Rico through Historical Analysis. MEDICC.

Berlan, D., Chan, H.C., Davidson, A. Gamarra, C., Greebon, D. & Keo, K. (2008). Pro Poor and Democratic Decentralization in Africa. *The Governance Link*, 4. ActionAid.

FUNDED RESEARCH

Pneumonia Case Lead Investigator, Global Health Advocacy and Policy Program 2010 – 2012
Funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Co-Investigator, Health provider accountability to consumers in developing countries 2009
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Lead Investigator and Coordinator, The 'Big Bang' Project 2005 – 2007 Multi-
organization research initiative to map extent of global landmine contamination,
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TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Maxwell Teaching Assistant, Critical Issues for the U.S. Fall 2012 & Spring 2013

Teaching Assistant Public Administration and Democracy Summer 2010, 2011 & 2012
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Guest Instructor	Public Administration and Democracy	Spring 2011 & Fall 2011
	Public Organizations and Management	Fall 2011
Facilitator	Executive Leadership	Summer 2009

AWARDS AND HONORS

Maxwell Teaching Assistant , Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs	2012 – 2013
Syracuse University – Competitive award across all social science disciplines	
Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award , Syracuse University	2012
Doctoral Consortium , Public and Nonprofit Division, Academy of Management	2012
Graduate Student Research Mini-Grant , Campbell Public Affairs Institute	2012
Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University	
Summer Research Award , Department of Public Administration	2011 & 2012
Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University	
Institute for Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research	2011
Future Professoriate Program , Syracuse University	2009 – present
Research Associate , Campbell Public Affairs Institute, Syracuse University	2008 – present
Graduate Assistant and Full Scholarship , Department of Public Administration	2008 – 2012
Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University	
John Ben Snow Fellowship , Department of Public Administration	2007 – 2008
Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University	
Trustee Scholarship , Boston University	1998 – 2002

PROFESSIONAL AND VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Graduate Assistant , Department of Public Administration, Syracuse U., NY	2008 – 2012
John Ben Snow Fellow , Central New York Community Foundation, Syracuse, NY	2007 – 2008
Consultant , The Marshall Legacy Institute, Arlington, VA	2007 – 2008
Business Manager , The Marshall Legacy Institute, Arlington, VA	2002 – 2007
Fundraising Intern , Australian National Committee for UNICEF, Sydney, Australia	2001

Business Co-op , Shipley Company, Marlborough, MA	2000 – 2001
Local Director & Organizer , Russian Orphanage Clothing Drive, Bonn, Germany	1996 – 1998
Summer Employee , American Embassies, Bonn, Germany and Oslo, Norway	1995 – 1998

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management	2011 – present
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SERVICE

Founder & Organizer , Public Administration PhD Program Peer Orientation	2011 – 2012
Student Representative , Campbell Public Affairs Institute Steering Committee	2011 – 2012
Peer Reviewer , Health Policy & Planning	2012
Peer Reviewer , Social Science & Medicine	2011 – 2012
Student Representative , Birkhead-Burkhead Teaching Award Committee	2008, 2012
Lead Organizer , Conference on Social Transformation and Development	2009 – 2010
Volunteer , Minnowbrook III Conference	2008
Associate Editor , Journal of Social Transformation and Development	2008
Organizing Committee , Conference on Social Transformation and Development	2008
Student Representative , Academic Conduct Committee, Boston University SMG	2001 – 2002