

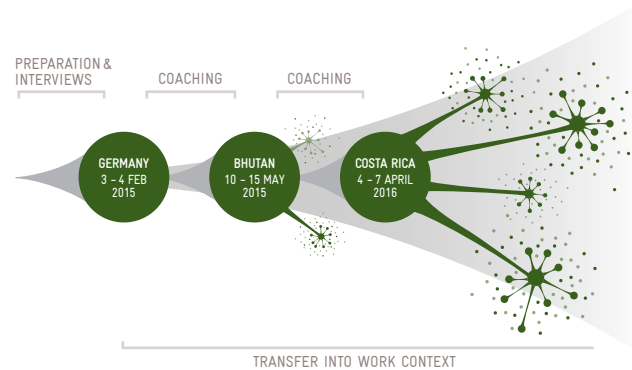


# The Global Wellbeing Lab 2.0

## Transforming Society and the Economy

A growing number of eminent economists, policy makers, and government leaders are pointing to the role that metrics such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) have played in driving our current economies and societal value systems. Broadening what is measured and prioritized to include dimensions beyond GDP could provide a critical opportunity to reorient our global community towards addressing current crises while fostering greater wellbeing and sustainability. Yet, despite many approaches and methodologies for more sophisticated and accurate measures of societal progress and wellbeing, the actual impact on governmental policies and business strategies has been limited. Even if a government or business were to adopt wellbeing and sustainability principles, without a strong shift in mind-set and consciousness this would not have a deep impact. While a number of promising initiatives are emerging around the globe, little collective momentum has yet been generated.

co-created by the GIZ Global Leadership Academy, the Pre-sencing Institute and the Gross National Happiness Centre (Bhutan). Its aim was to advance new ways of generating and measuring wellbeing at multiple levels in society.



The Global Wellbeing Lab 2.0 was designed on the principles of Theory U – an innovation process that individuals and groups can use to suspend habitual ways of paying attention, access deeper sources of knowing, and explore the future they want to create through rapid-cycle prototyping. The group embarked on an innovation journey that unfolded in five phases:

In the first Lab meeting in Berlin (3–4 February 2015), exchanges took place to uncover common intent on the issue of societal wellbeing, the relationships amongst participants were built up, and the local learning journeys were prepared within the regional clusters. During March and April 2015, Lab participants went on self-organized learning journeys in their respective region. Each group decided what aspect of wellbeing they wanted to explore, and identified hotspots of innovation in their own region they could visit to connect with key innovators, see and feel these people’s realities, and experience emerging solutions that could improve wellbeing for all stakeholders in a given context.

The Lab meeting in Bhutan (10–15 May 2015) was designed to explore Gross National Happiness (GNH) as one local ad-

25



PARTICIPANTS

9



COUNTRIES

### The Process

The Global Wellbeing Lab 2.0 convened 25 change agents (70% male, 30% female) from around the world: South Africa, Brazil, Costa Rica, the U.S., Denmark, Sweden, Great Britain, Bhutan, and Vietnam. Participants came from the business sector, government, academia and civil society. Organizations represented included the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Telecommunications (Costa Rica), Action For the City (Vietnam), Public Health England, Google (Ireland), Eileen Fisher Inc. (USA) and Nelson Mandela Children’s Hospital Trust (South Africa).

The Lab was a continuation of the Global Wellbeing Lab 1.0, which started in 2013 with a cohort of 25 international leaders and change agents, an action-learning platform,



adoption of a new development paradigm, reconnect individually to inner drivers of change and collaboratively evolving various prototype initiatives. Over the next eleven months, and accompanied by facilitators and peers, participants took their prototyping ideas further in their respective home context to adapt and scale them.

In the concluding Lab meeting in Costa Rica (4–7 April 2016), participants explored emerging prototype initiatives, shared lessons learnt, and reached out collectively to inform and inspire others through a public event, the Forum on Collaborative Leadership (7–8 April 2016) with around 120 people attending, among them the vice-president of Costa Rica Ana Helena Chacón Echeverría, members of parliament and business leaders.



Further information about the lab:  
[www.we-do-change.org/what-we-do/global-wellbeing-lab-20/](http://www.we-do-change.org/what-we-do/global-wellbeing-lab-20/)

## Impact

**“I’ve been completely surprised by what happened as a result of [our Global Wellbeing Lab meeting in] Bhutan in a way that I still don’t have the language or words to understand. Surprised by what happens when you participate in a process bigger than yourself and how you lead differently. I’m personally as an individual, as a practitioner, very different than I was before we started this journey.”**

*Louise van Rhyn, Partners for Possibility, South Africa*

Outcomes of the Global Wellbeing Lab 2.0 emerge on several levels: New organizational initiatives, spinoffs from the process of prototyping new initiatives, new directions personally and organizationally, and an ongoing influence in participants’ extended networks.

## Stories of Change

**Eileen Fisher Inc.**, a leading innovator in women’s clothing, was inspired by the Lab to aim for 100% sustainability by 2020 and, in the longer term, to transform the entire fashion industry (one of the planet’s highest-polluting industries). The company is now a triple bottom line company, setting not just financial targets, but environmental and internal/external social targets as well. They are currently in the process of strategic planning work related to these and in January 2016 received their B-Corp certification.

**Conversatories - Towards an Ecosystem of Civic Learning** (Malmö, Sweden). Contributing to a “Civic Learning Ecosystem”, based on broader social and environmental values, such as those included in the GNH concept, Lab participant Fredrik Bjork has developed a conscious dialogue space – Conversatories – that bring together diverse actors and people in a mutual learning atmosphere. More than 20 such events have taken place already in Malmö, elsewhere in Sweden and in Italy.

**A Flourishing South Africa** – multiple activities aimed at revitalizing the national vision 2030 and Ubuntu as a powerful connection point for South African society. Lab participant Louise van Rhyn and colleagues have run a series of Business in Education forums linking their work to Vision 2030 as well the SDGs – efforts they say would not have happened without the Lab. At least 1,200 people have been impacted by this commitment to Vision 2030.



70 %

improvement of innovation and leadership skills



80 %

received significant impulses for tackling current challenges in their home systems



78 %

were able to initiate innovation and change in their institutions and organisations

March 2017

Further information about our impact:  
[www.we-do-change.org/our-impact](http://www.we-do-change.org/our-impact)

## The convening organisations

### Presencing Institute

The Presencing Institute is an awareness-based action-research community that creates social technologies, builds capacities, and generates holding spaces for profound societal renewal. This community tries to contribute to shifting the economy from ego to eco and toward serving the wellbeing of all.

The first phase of the Presencing Institute began in 1996 with a ten-year research project conducted by Otto Scharmer and his colleagues at MIT, including Joseph Jaworski and Peter Senge. The study resulted in the development of a consciousness-based framework of leadership and change. That framework, referred to as Presencing or Theory U, posits that the quality of the results that a system creates is a function of the awareness from which the people in that system operate. The findings were published in the books Theory U and Presence.

The second phase of the Presencing Institute focused on many applications that resulted in a global ecology of laboratories, projects, programs, and initiatives that link partners in business, government, and civil society. Throughout this period, the online community of PI grew to over ten thousand members.

The third phase has started with the publication of Leading From the Emerging Future which introduces the 4.0 framework and the concept of the U.School as a global platform for helping a new generation of 4.0 eco-system entrepreneurs to act more creatively and intentionally and to be more connected.

[www.presencing.com](http://www.presencing.com)

### Gross National Happiness Centre, Bhutan

The GNH Centre, a non-governmental organization (NGO), aims to manifest in living practice, Bhutan's unique holistic development philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH), which integrates equitable and sustainable socioeconomic development with environmental conservation, cultural promotion, and good governance.

The Centre offers a diverse range of national and international programmes, all of which are designed to enable participants to:

- 1) Engage in a transformative experiential process through dialogue, self-reflection, and action - leading to a deepening of their understanding of GNH philosophy, principles and values;
- 2) Be immersed in a living experience of GNH by inhabiting, and co-creating a conducive environment, fully aligned with GNH principles and values; and
- 3) Implement GNH inspired projects and practices in their own personal and professional contexts.

Key collaborating partners of the Centre include: the GNH Commission, the Royal University of Bhutan, the Centre for Bhutan Studies and GNH Research, the Early Learning Centre, BMZ/GIZ, The Presencing Institute, Schumacher College, the Mind and Life Institute, and the Global Peace Initiative of Women.

[www.gnhcentrebhutan.org](http://www.gnhcentrebhutan.org)

### The Global Leadership Academy

The Global Leadership Academy offers interdisciplinary and practice-oriented programmes aimed at improving the innovation capacity and leadership skills of decision-makers from the fields of policy-making, business, higher education and research, and civil society. In the Lab they come together to look at global issues from a completely different angle. Gaining fresh perspectives allows them to implement the necessary change processes in their spheres of influence.

The Global Leadership Academy, funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), is a central component in GIZ's range of services for international human capacity development.

[www.we-do-change.org](http://www.we-do-change.org)

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