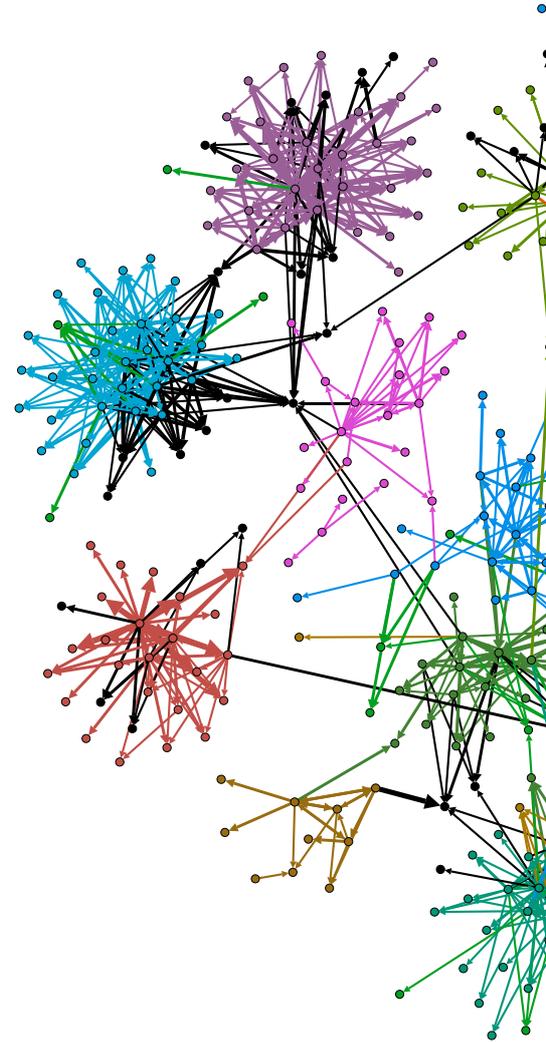


# GLAC Community Report |2018|



17 | May | 2018

Commissioned by the Global Leadership Academy (GLAC)

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# |1| Introduction

Over the past years, the Global Leadership Academy (GLAC) has brought together a pool of high-profile actors in international development, business, academia, public administration, and civil society. As of now, close to 600 such experts and change-makers have participated in either GLAC Labs<sup>1</sup>, Global Diplomacy Labs or the Transformation Thinkers Network, all organized or co-hosted by the Global Leadership Academy of the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ). The Global Leadership Academy believes, however, that engagement and networking should not be limited to one-off occasions and it is therefore the ambition of the Global Leadership Academy to help build a new GLAC Community which will be a home for like-minded expert participants in those three programs – GLAC Labs, Global Diplomacy Labs or the Transformation Thinkers Network – who are seeking global, regional and local action on the challenges of our time.

To support the development of this new GLAC Community, the Global Leadership Academy commissioned this study to take a close look at the already existing connections among participants of the GLAC Labs, the Global Diplomacy Labs and the Transformation Thinkers Network, as well as to get a better sense on how to promote an active community and foster strong engagement. Furthermore, in order to build its own strategy of community support, the Global Leadership Academy is keen to know which services or offerings are in high demand and which types of communication the members of this new community would prefer.<sup>2</sup>

Seeking to shed a light on these issues, this study blends innovative social network analysis with a more classic approach of community mapping. In doing so, the study draws on the results of an online survey, launched in March 2018, of all the current and former participants of GLAC Labs and Global Diplomacy Labs and members of the Transformation Thinkers Network (Table 1). The online survey was complemented by interviews with selected community members, conducted via Skype, which aimed to gather more detailed information on the most critical issues raised in the survey.

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<sup>1</sup> Global Wellbeing Lab 1.0; Global Wellbeing Lab 2.0; The Passion and Politics Lab; The Mandela Dialogues on Memory Work 1; The Mandela Dialogues on Memory Work 2; The Power of Diversity; The Urban Innovation and Leadership Lab; Sustainable Oceans Lab; Transforming Leadership: Women, Men, Power and Potential; The Migration Laboratory; Inclusive Insurance Innovation Lab

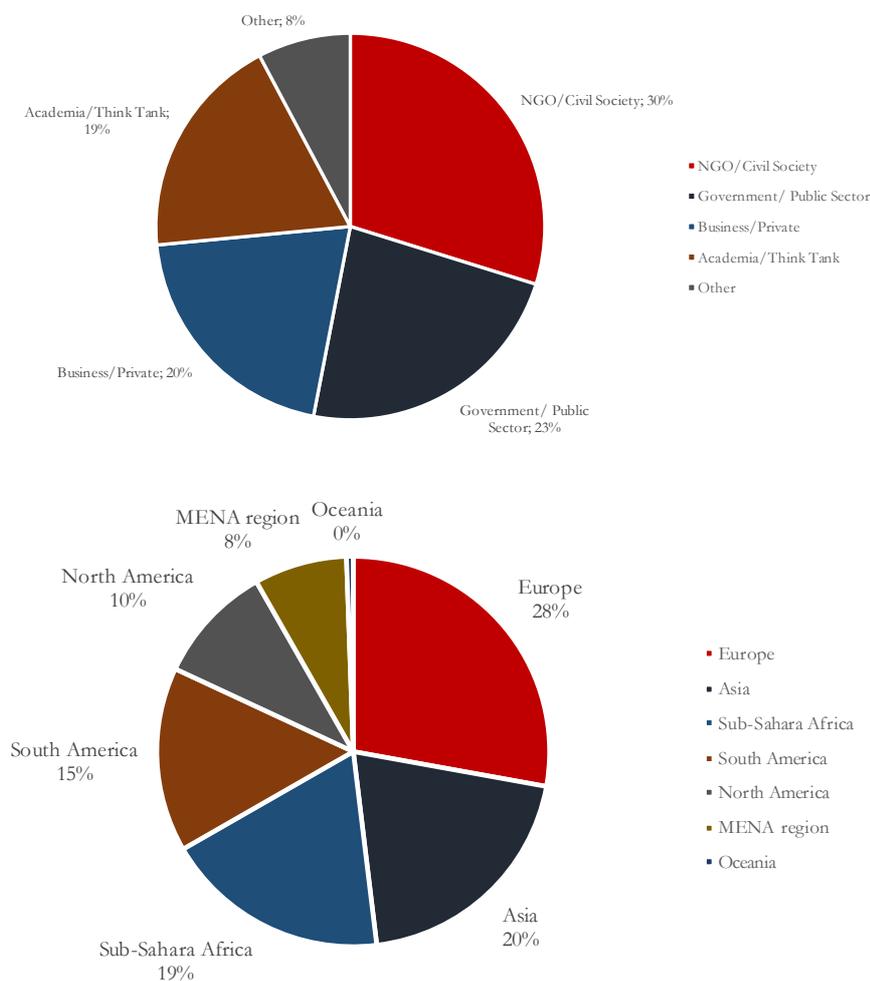
<sup>2</sup>This report is a shortened and translated version of the more detailed GLAC Community analysis commissioned by the Global Leadership Academy.

## |2| About the members of the GLAC Community

Who are the future members of the GLAC Community, what are their backgrounds and where are they from? The recent GLAC Community survey - with responses from 183 survey participants out of 592 persons contacted and a corresponding response rate of 31 percent - gives initial answers to these questions (Figure 1).

The number of women (51 percent) and men (49 percent) that participated in the survey reflects the expected gender balance within the GLAC Community as a whole. The professional background of respondents is fairly balanced: a similar share of respondents work in NGOs or civil society, the public sector, business, or at universities or think tanks. Those who indicated “other” overwhelmingly work in international organizations. Looking at the regional distribution, the greatest proportion of participants is from Europe (28 percent), followed by the Americas (25 percent). Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa each provided a fifth of the participants. Only 8 percent live in the “Middle East & North Africa” (MENA) region, and just one participant is from Oceania. We expect that these patterns accurately represent those in the larger potential GLAC Community.

Figure 1: Professional background and regional distribution



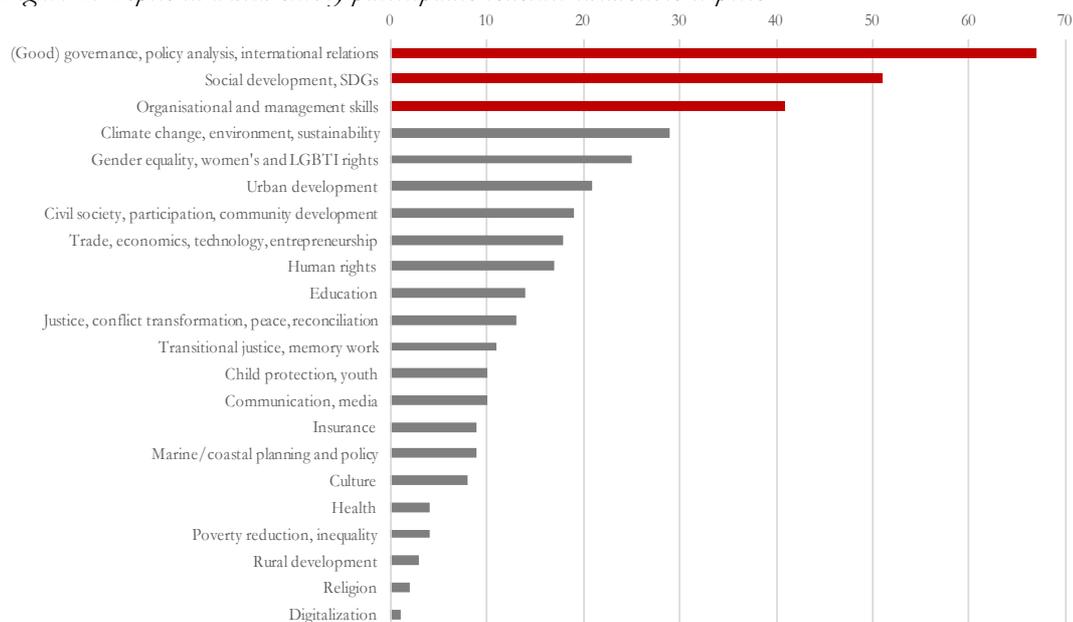
The survey not only asked for the participants' region, but also about their country of residence. Table 2 shows those countries where more than one respondent live.

Table 2: Country of residence

2 Participants	3 Participants	4 Participants	5 Participants	>5 Participants
Croatia	Argentina	Albania	India	Germany
Ecuador	P.R. China	Cameroon	Mongolia	Kenya
El Salvador	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Chile	United Kingdom	Mexico
Greece	Brazil	Ethiopia		South Africa
Jordan	Cambodia	Ghana		USA
Netherlands	Canada	Morocco		
Pakistan	Egypt	Philippines		
Palestinian Territories	Indonesia			
Spain	Serbia			
Sweden	Sri Lanka			
Switzerland	Vietnam			
Uganda				

Beyond this geographic diversity, the survey results also shine a light on the impressive breadth of expertise among the experts and change-makers that participated either in GLAC Labs, Global Diplomacy Labs, or the Transformation Thinkers Network. When asked in which area(s) they consider themselves experts, many gave multiple responses such as “urban development, local governance, human settlements, and development” or “renewable energy, climate change, mobility of the future” which shows that the members of the future GLAC community are truly interdisciplinary experts. Many respondents see themselves in particular as experts on governance, dealing with a broad set of issues such as good governance, policy analysis, and international relations (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Topics in which survey participants consider themselves experts

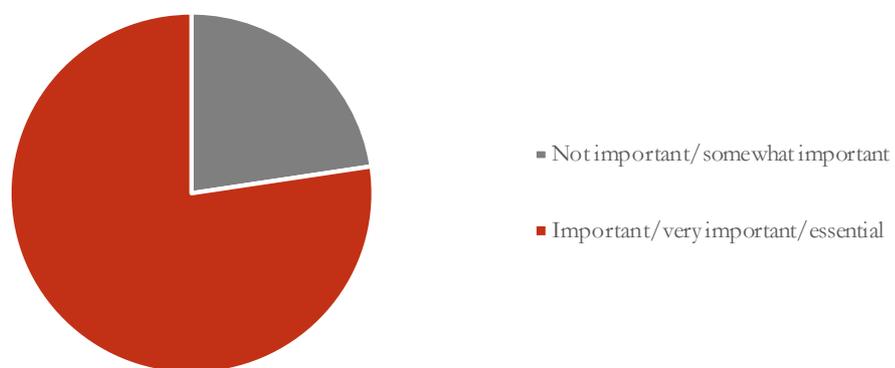


### |3| Relevance of the GLAC Community

A key aim of this study is to create an understanding of what the GLAC Community means to its members at this early stage of its informal existence. This knowledge is critical to support the effective development of the GLAC Community. Accordingly, survey participants were asked how strongly they already feel connected to this emerging community.

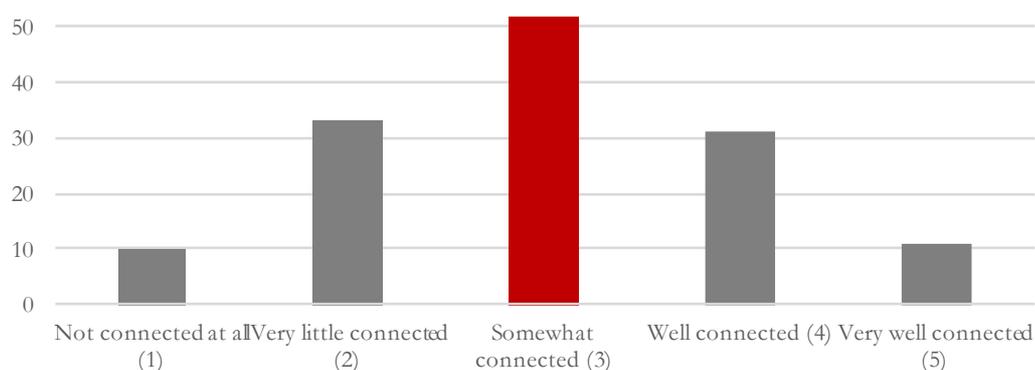
Asked about the importance of the GLAC Community, the majority of the survey participants already attaches great importance to this community. More than 75 percent of the respondents consider the GLAC Community already as either “essential”, “very important”, or “important” to them personally (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Importance of the GLAC Community



Beyond simply asking about the importance of the informal GLAC Community, the survey also asked participants to indicate how attached they feel to the Community (“How connected do you feel, at this point, to such a community on a scale from 1 (not connected at all) to 5 (very connected)?”). This question highlights another indicator of the relevance of the community: the higher the perceived attachment to the community, the stronger and more resilient the GLAC Community is in its entirety. After all, feeling attached to the community is an important precondition for engagement and networking. The results show that an equal number of survey participants feels either not/very little connected or well/very well connected while a large group of survey participants is at the center with some connection to the GLAC Community (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Feeling connected to the GLAC Community

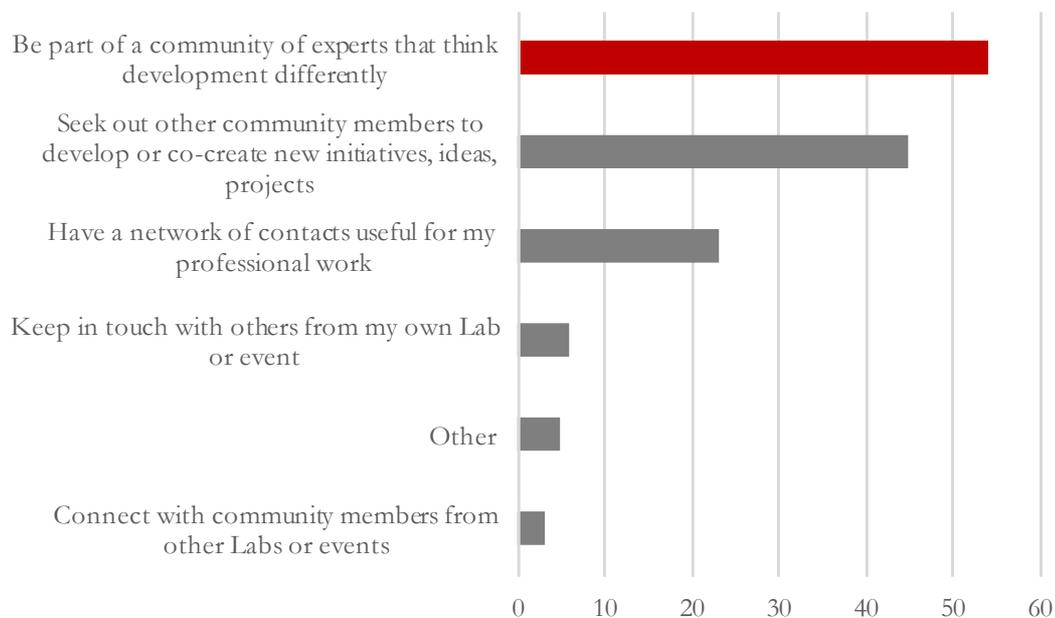


What this also shows is that even at this very early stage of the GLAC Community, the majority of respondents feel some or even a strong connection to the GLAC community and its other members. While this is very encouraging, participants were asked for reasons of having no or only a limited connection to the GLAC Community. The answers are unsurprising and can be expected at this point in time: the vast majority of the survey participants simply did not know about the other members of the community and also did not know how they could have made contact. For many participants, there were no opportunities for personal encounters that could have resulted in lasting connections and feeling more strongly connected to the GLAC Community.

Another critical piece of information related to the importance of the GLAC Community is knowing about the “glue” that binds the community and its members together. Glue is hereby shorthand for the elements that the members of a community or network share and view as important. We asked two questions to uncover the unique glue of the GLAC Community: First, we asked about the main purpose of community (“*What is, for you, the main purpose of a GLAC Community?*”); Second, we asked an open question about the unique features of the GLAC community (“*Since we are starting the GLAC Community in 2018, what could (or should) be - in your view - the unique, distinguishing features of such a GLAC Community?*”). Together, they help to get us closer to understanding the essence of the GLAC Community.

Across all programs, respondents think that the main purpose of the GLAC Community is to be part of a community of experts that seek for new and innovative solutions to social, political, economic, and environmental problems. Another frequently mentioned purpose was that of targeted interaction with community members with the goal of developing new ideas and launching new projects. These two answers were clearly selected most frequently (Figure 5).

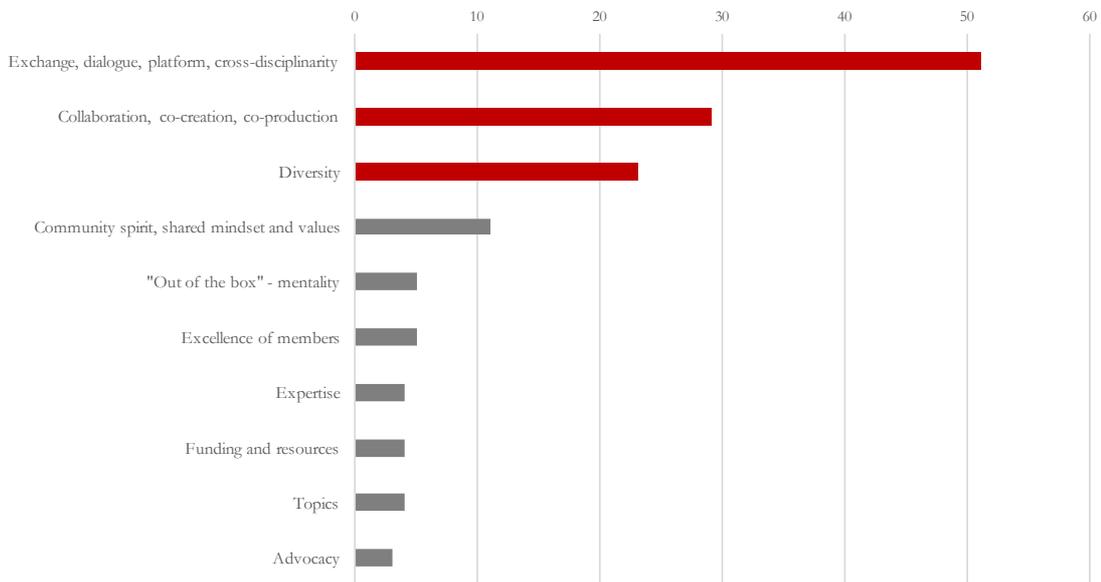
Figure 5: The main purpose of the GLAC Community



The answers to the open question about the unique, distinguishing feature of the GLAC Community confirm the ideational core. Most respondents understand the community as a forum for dialogue and exchange. Many respondents also emphasized collaboration, co-

creation and co-production among community members. A further frequently mentioned feature was the great diversity of the community members (Figure 6).

Figure 6: The unique, distinguishing features of the GLAC Community



Notably, respondents emphasized the importance of ideals in their answers to both questions. More pragmatic or self-serving motives, such as networking to advance one's career, seem to play no role at all. Clearly, GLAC Community is driven by altruistic motives. To foster these particular traits of the GLAC Community going forward, it makes sense to make these the center-piece of the future GLAC Community brand. The essence of such a GLAC Community brand would have three aspects: (1) an ideational community ("think about development differently"); (2) a forum for new ideas and common projects ("do development differently"); and (3) an interdisciplinary and diverse network ("be part of a diverse and global group of experts that share a passion for social and political change"). It is worth discussing the GLAC Community brand extensively with the members of the GLAC Community.

## |4| The GLAC Community network

The core of this report is a mapping of the interactions that already exist among those that participated or are currently participating in GLAC Labs, Global Diplomacy Labs and the Transformation Thinkers Network, as well as among GLAC staff and the hosting team.

Using social network analysis as a method to unveil the already existing networks within this community, the necessary data to map interactions within and beyond the different programs also came from the recent GLAC Community survey. Depending on the program, the questions about personal networks were slightly different. GLAC Lab participants were asked about their contacts to all other Lab participants (*“Please list, for each person that participated in your program (“Lab”), your degree of interaction since the end of the lab”*). Because there were no complete participation lists, participants of the Global Diplomacy Labs and the Transformation Thinkers Network were asked to indicate up to 10 persons from their respective program that they were in touch with during the past three years.

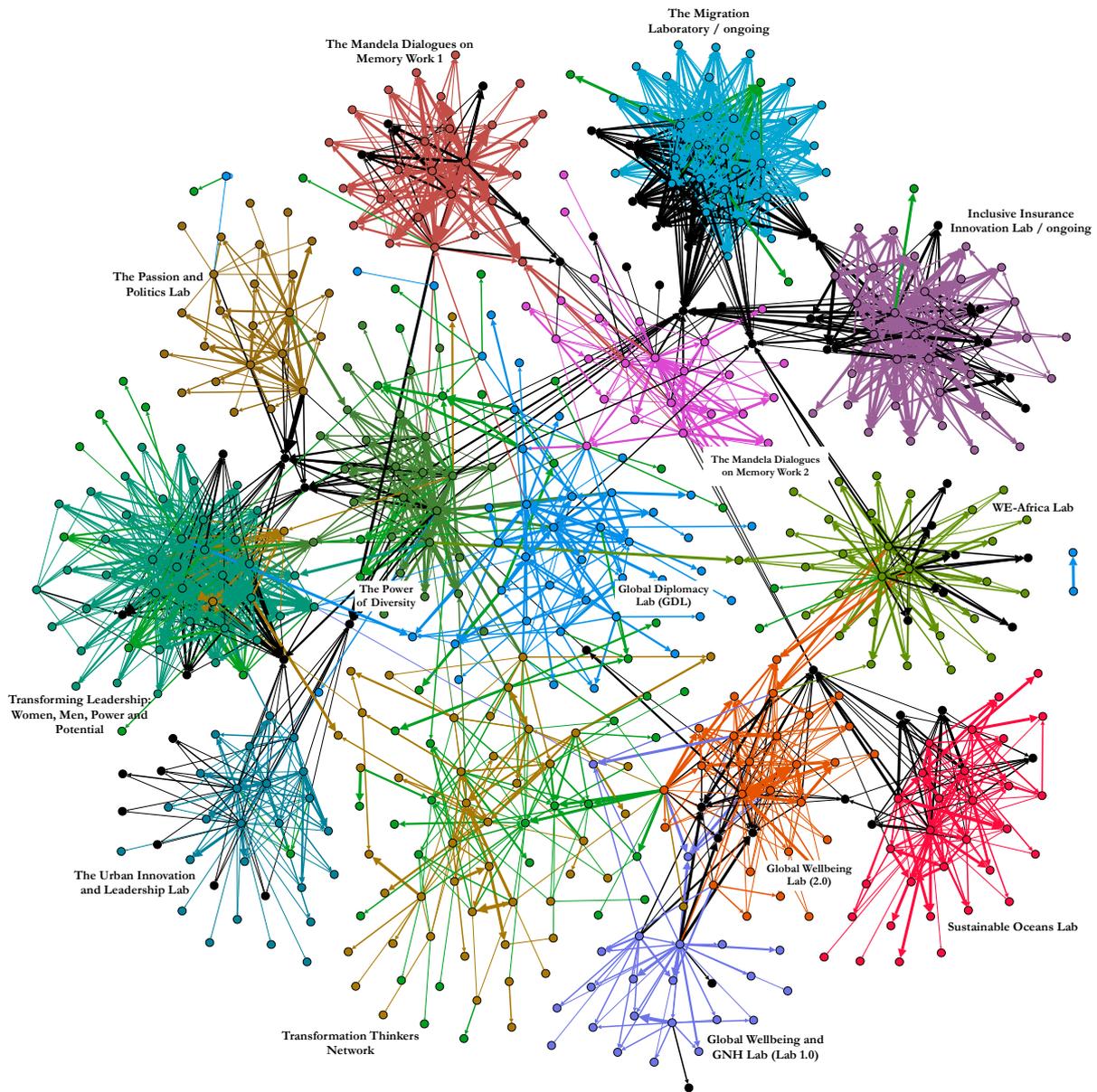
Finally, participants of all the three programs were asked about contacts beyond their own program (*“We are now interested in your connections beyond your immediate program (“Lab”). Have you been in touch with participants of other programs, Labs or GLAC staff during the past 3 years?”*). If the answer was positive, respondents were asked to name these contacts (*“Please list up to 10 GLAC Community members – other than those from your own program or Lab – and GLAC program staff that you have been in touch with during the past 3 years and the strength of your connections with them”*). The information gained from the answers made possible a visual presentation of the existing network structures that already define the informal GLAC Community.

### **A network structured along Labs and Programs**

Figure 7 on the next page visualizes the entire network based on the answers about connections provided by the survey participants. Each node or circle in the network stands for a single person. The node color indicates different programs. A connecting line between two nodes means that one person is in contact with the other person. The direction of this relationship is visualized by arrows and by the color of the tie having the same color as the target: As being a contact target implies a certain amount of influence, targets are of a higher analytical interest than sources. For visual reasons, those persons who did not mention any contact and those who were not the contact target of anyone were removed from the graph.

It is clear that the network is structured in reflection of the different Labs, and that there are Labs with a large number of connections within them and Labs that have far fewer connections within them. Also shown in the map below are black nodes which represent the team members that hosted the GLAC Labs. The network map also reveals that, at the starting point of the GLAC Community, only a few participants have contacts outside their respective program. However, this is not discouraging. Rather, knowing about the current level of connections will help evaluate the community and the steps towards greater activation in the future: we can assume successful community management if the number and strength of ties between community members is growing, and if the number of persons without ties decreases.

Figure 7: Network of the entire GLAC Community (except persons without ties)



### A network with few strong connections

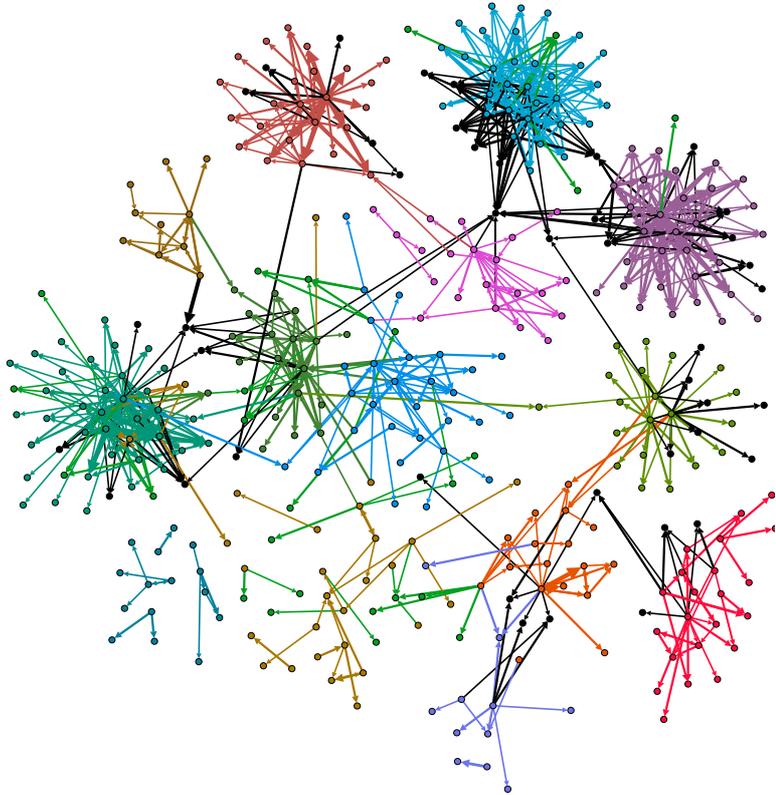
The map above illustrates the manifold ties that already exist between community members, in particular within the different Labs and programs. However, it is pivotal for the quality and resilience of a network that people are frequently in contact, as opposed to only on rare occasions. This study therefore analyzed the quality of the existing relationships.

To check how strong the existing connections are, respondents were asked to qualify the frequency of their contacts with other community members, choosing between “never”, “rarely”, “sometimes”, “often” and “very often”. The following two network maps (Figure

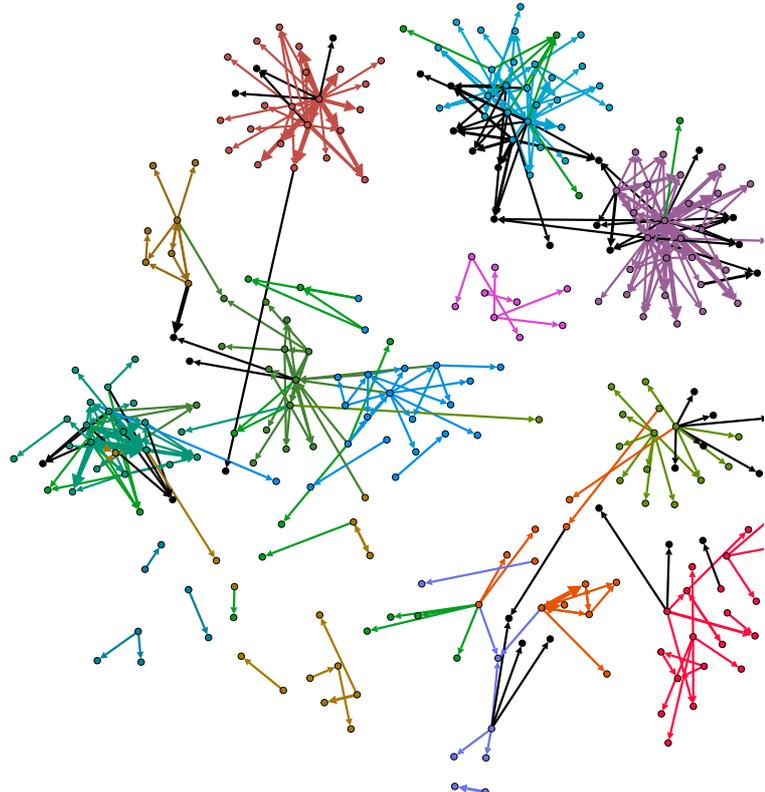
8) visualize only those ties that were qualified as at least occasional (“sometimes”) or frequent (“often”). They show how the network looks when very infrequent connections are removed.

*Figure 8: Frequent contacts in the community network*

*Connections which are at least qualified as “sometimes”:*



*Connections which are at least qualified as “often”:*



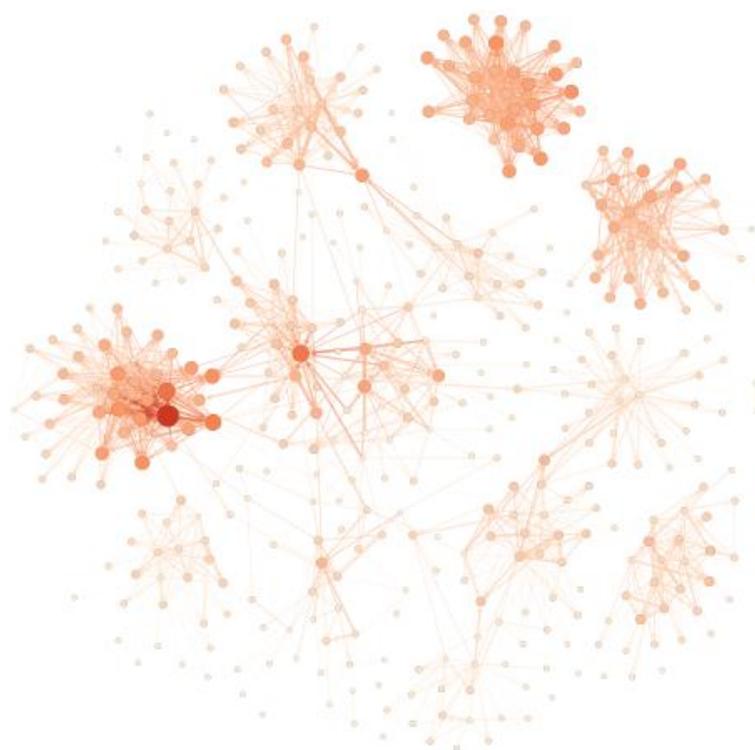
Both maps clearly show that the number of constant, stable relationships in the network - that is, those described as communicating often or very often - is significantly lower. These relationships occur most frequently in Labs that are currently taking place or were finalized just a short time ago. As a rule of thumb, the longer ago a Lab took place, the less intense are the ties of its participants. However, as strong relationships are the crucial benchmark for a stable network, it should be the most important goal to increase the number of frequent and stable ties within the GLAC Community by bringing together members of the community with similar interests and appetite to collaborate.

## **Influencer and Networker**

Network analysis is also able to identify people in the network who can have a positive impact on the cohesion of the GLAC community through the number and quality of their relationships with others. Two types of people are relevant to this study: "influencers" and "networkers": influencers are those actors who are particularly frequently contacted by other people. The more a person is contacted by others, the more interesting and relevant they are considered. Networkers, on the other hand, are people who contact a particularly large number of other community members themselves and thus maintain a particularly large number of relationships with other actors.

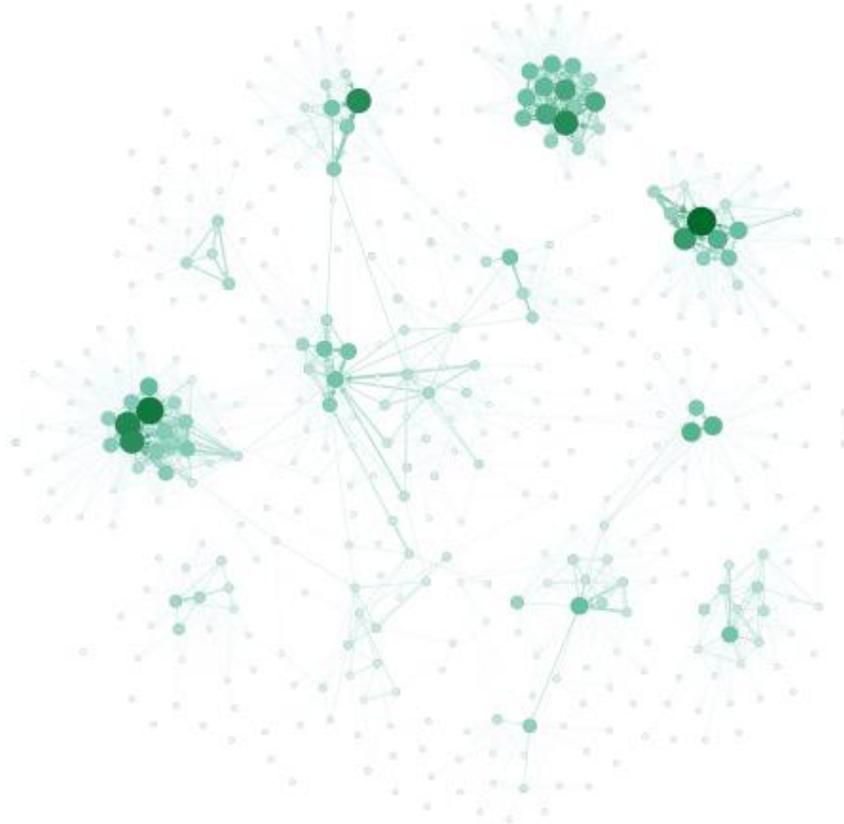
Figure 9 shows the influencer network of the GLAC community among participants only. The darker and the larger the node, the more influence this person likely has within the network. It should be noted that the influence of persons usually applies only within the network of the Lab they attended. Also, more recent Labs have a larger number of influencers because the general level of interaction is still high.

*Figure 9: Influencer within the GLAC Community network*



The top networkers in the community are the counterpart to the top influencers: they are the people who contact a particularly large number of other community members. In this way, they support the network with their openness and communication skills and are important persons when it comes to disseminating information in a network. Figure 10 shows the distribution of these networkers in the community. As for the influencers, also networkers reach out mainly to people within their Lab, and more recent Labs are those with the most active networkers.

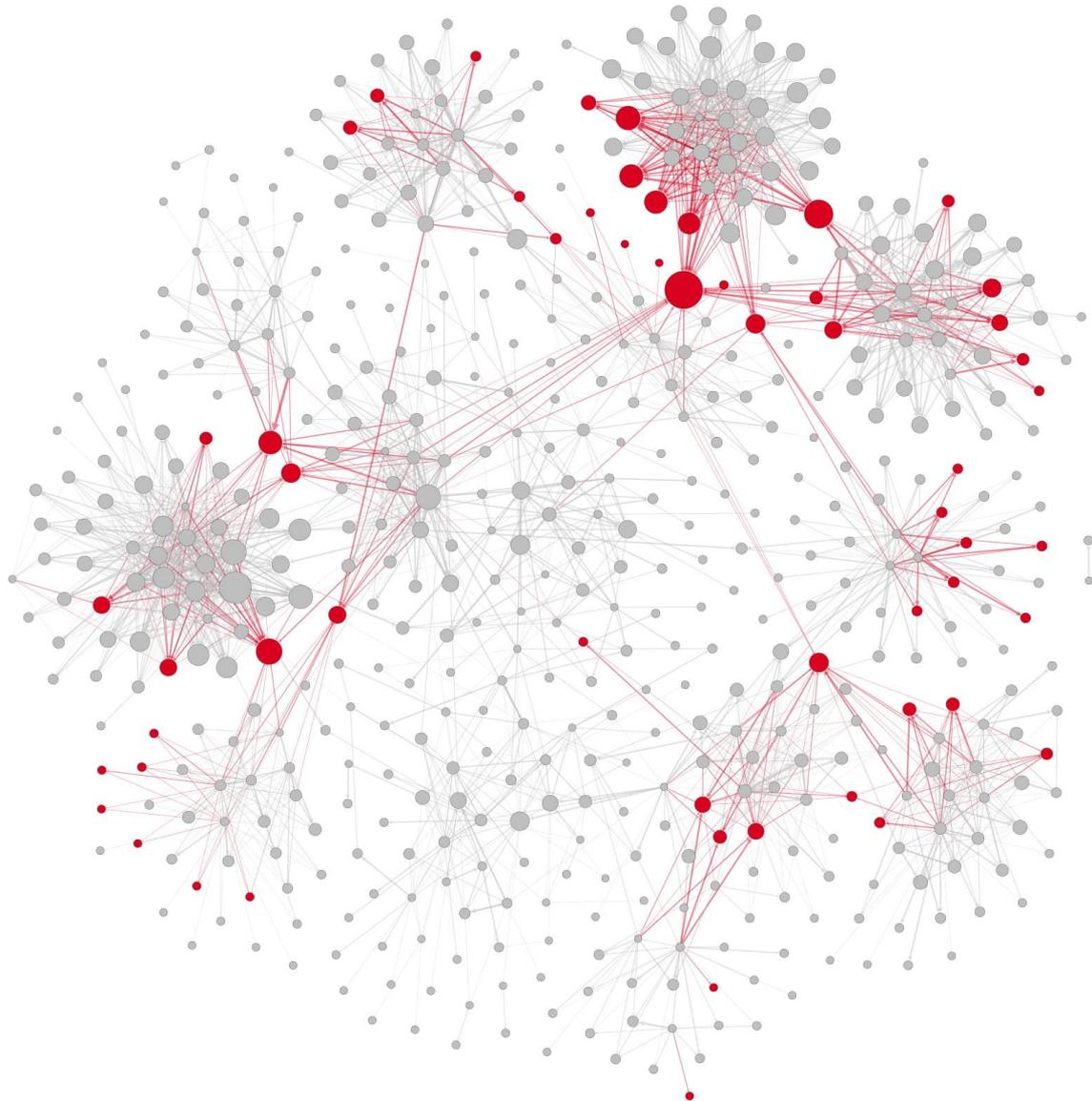
*Figure 10: Networker within the GLAC Community network*



### **The role of the hosting team and the Global Leadership Academy**

Our analysis of the networks within the informal GLAC Community also allows for a detailed analysis of the role of the hosting teams and the Global Leadership Academy. Figure 11 below highlights the hosting team members and GLAC staff in red, while community members are visualized grey. In addition, the node size indicates the number of incoming contacts: the bigger a node, the more people mentioned this hosting team member or GLAC staff as a contact target.

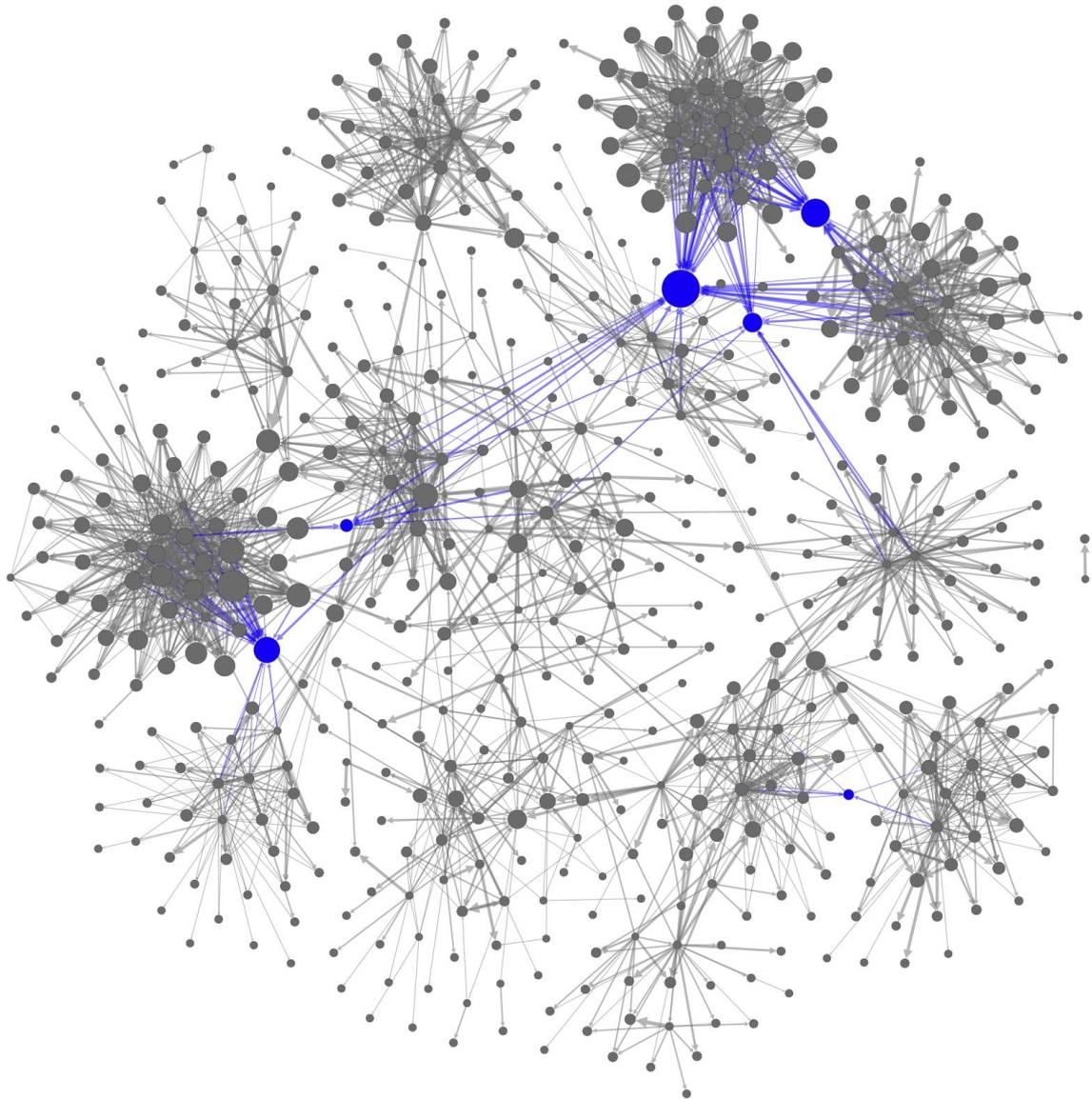
*Figure 11: The role of the hosting team members and GLAC staff*



Persons with many incoming ties can be interpreted as being somewhat influential. Figure 11 above shows that the hosts vary quite significantly with regard to influence measured this way. At this stage, we explain this largely by the fact that some hosts attended more Labs than others, resulting by default in a greater prominence and making them natural intermediaries between programs. In any case, hosting team and GLAC staff members are among those persons in the network with the highest number of incoming ties, and the community management should take advantage of their influence in the build-up stage of the Community.

The following network map (Figure 12) zooms in on the role of the staff members of the Global Leadership Academy. Every current staff member of the Global Leadership Academy that was mentioned by survey participants as a contact is colored blue. It becomes apparent that some GLAC staff members are mentioned as a contact target very frequently. Even more so, the map shows that the person with the most incoming ties across the entire network is a staff member of the Global Leadership Academy.

*Figure 12: The role of GLAC staff members*



This network map raises the question of how the Global Leadership Academy interprets its own role in the future GLAC Community. There are several options, depending on the activities, services, and formats that the Global Leadership Academy chooses to offer, how the Community itself views the role of the Global Leadership Academy, and the Community's goals. For instance, the Global Leadership Academy could play a very central role, making direct offers to the community members. Otherwise, it could play a facilitator role, fostering interaction among members within a self-sustaining community; or, it could play the role of an "academy" in a narrow sense, focusing on educational offers and coaching. These three examples illustrate that the Global Leadership Academy can interpret its role in very different ways and combine different elements of community management. Each type of role has its strength and weaknesses, which need to be considered carefully.

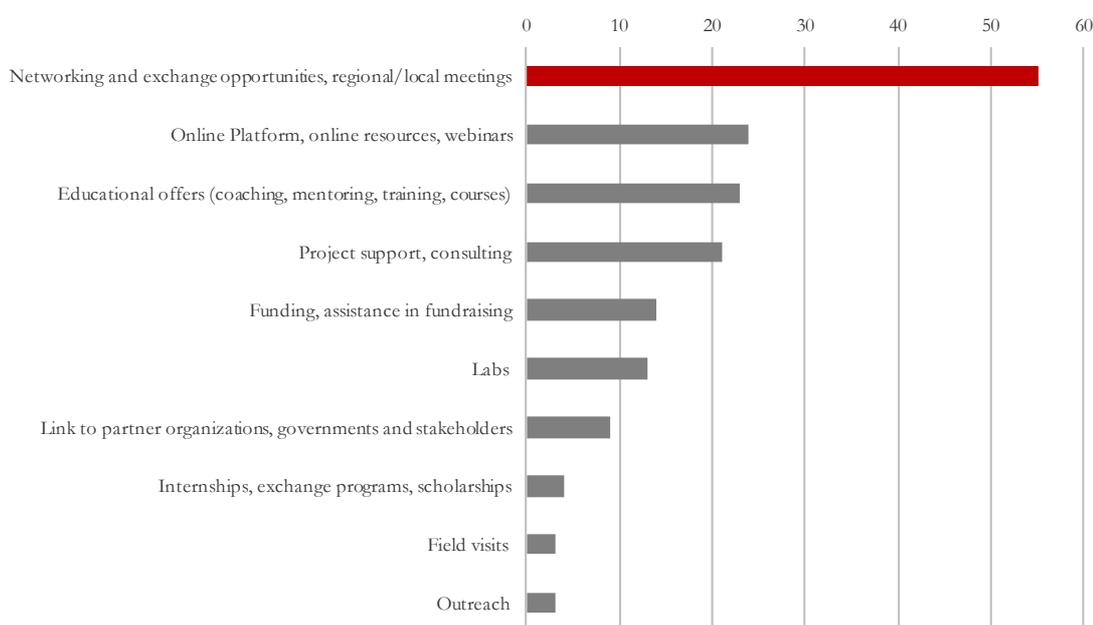
## |5| Activities and topics to advance the GLAC Community

The third focus of this GLAC Community analysis is on the different types of activities or services that are most in demand among community members. Even though the GLAC Community will depend considerably on the engagement and initiative of its members, the Global Leadership Academy is prepared to support the Community and offer activities and services that will help the GLAC Community to grow. This part of the report highlights those potential activities and services.

### Future activities

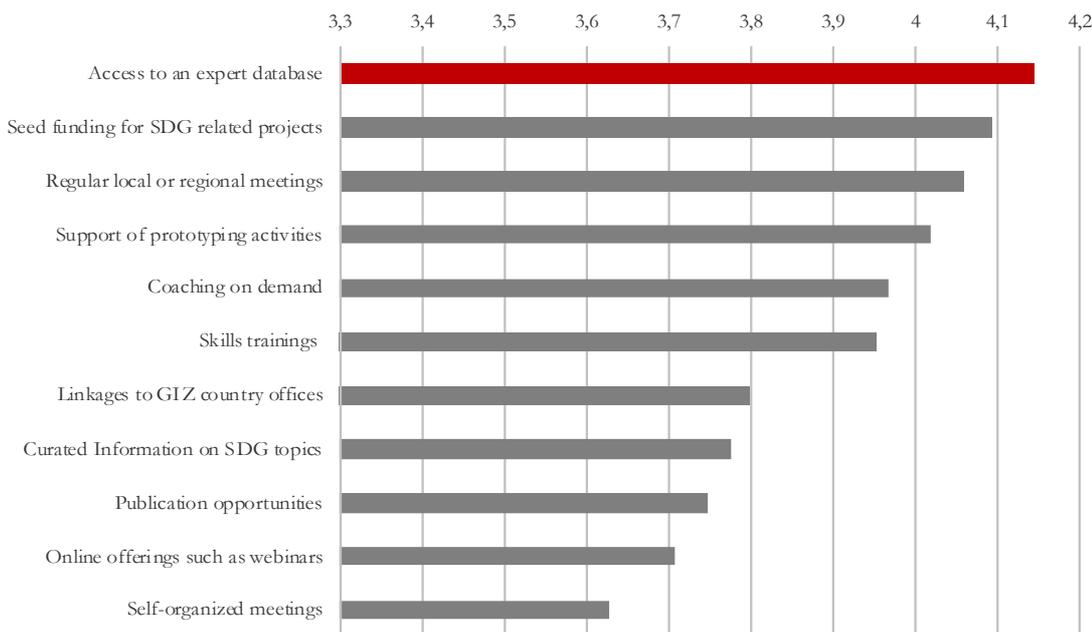
An open question asked survey participants about the services, activities or formats that the Global Leadership Academy and its partners should offer primarily. All answers were coded systematically and Figure 13 below shows the results of this analysis. Opportunities for exchange and networking are by far the most sought-after activities. Additional interviews with survey participants also emphasized the central importance of personal (regional) meetings, especially to get an idea of who is part of the community, what drives the members and where there are commonalities from which future joint activities can develop.

Figure 13: Sought-after service offers



Survey participants were also asked to grade activities and services on a scale from 1 to 5 based on a predetermined list established by the Global Leadership Academy. The higher the grade, the more valuable the service is considered. The results are slightly different from the open answers presented above. Across all respondents “*Access to an expert database*” was ranked the most relevant potential service offer by the GLAC Community, followed by “*Seed funding for SDG related projects*” and “*Regular local or regional meetings*”. Much less interest exists in self-organized meetings or online educational offerings such as webinars (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Assessment of pre-selected service offers



The data allows further concentration on differences by region and professional sector and shows the existence of variations that the Global Leadership Academy should take into account (Table 3).

Table 3: Services in demand, by sector and region



**Sector:**

- Academia/think tanks: Seed funding
- Business/private sector: Access to an expert database
- Public sector/public administration: Access to an expert database
- NGO/civil society: Access to an expert database
- Other: Skills trainings



**Region:**

- Asia: Seed funding
- Europe: Access to an expert database
- MENA: Seed funding
- Sub-Saharan Africa: Access to an expert database
- North America: Seed funding
- South America: Regular local and regional meetings

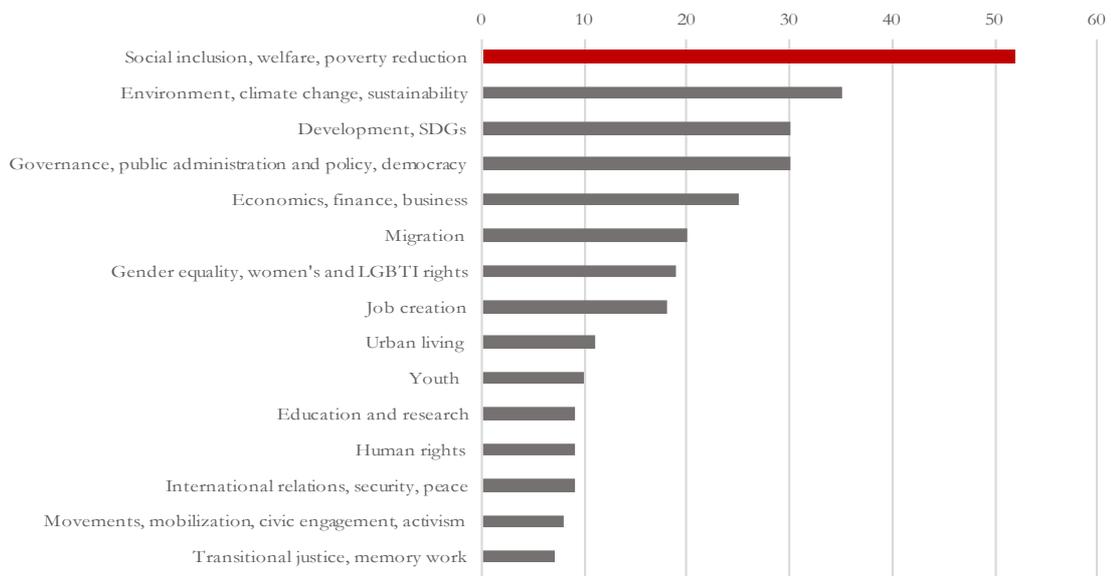
Considering this information, we suggest expanding GLAC Community activities in two steps. As a first step, the GLAC should focus on offering the top three most demanded services: an expert database, project financing, and regular local and/or regional meetings. These services should be prioritized during the early stages of the launch. After an active, interactive community has emerged, more bespoke activities and services for particular groups could be launched as a second step.

Independent of the services offered, it is critical to discuss within the Global Leadership Academy, as well as with and among the community members, the extent to which cost-sharing is feasible and sensible. While a majority of respondents signaled that they would attend GLAC events without reimbursement of costs, many community members - particularly those from developing countries and working for NGOs - would not be able to do so. Many respondents answered frankly that despite having a nominally very senior position in their jobs, they would not be able to attend GLAC events without reimbursements. It is important for the Global Leadership Academy to consider this.

## Future topics

Respondents were also asked to indicate the topics that they find most interesting and most appropriate for future GLAC Community activities and events. While social inclusion, welfare and poverty reduction lead the list of suggested topics by far, the runner-up topics are extremely varied and range from environmental topics to the SDGs, finance, and migration. Many other issues were also mentioned, showing the enormous breadth of interests (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Topics most in demand



By far the most demanded topics concern social inclusion, welfare, and poverty reduction. Job creation was not included into this category because it was mentioned so frequently that it merits consideration as a topic in its own right. Social inclusion and related topics cut across many other issues and can thus be addressed in combination with virtually any other topic and from multiple perspectives. However, it can also be dealt with as a topic of its own right at Labs, regional meetings, or alumni events. The second most in demand group of topics deals with questions around environmental protection, climate change, and sustainability. Other topics which are in demand are: development and SDGs, governance, and democracy, as well as economic and business topics.

## Communication

In order to determine the most suitable ways of communication with the members of the GLAC Community, the survey participants were asked which communication channels they prefer. Emails are the clear favorite, with 75% of respondents saying that they wish

to receive information via email. Far behind are LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter as preferred communication channels.

Participants were also asked to indicate whether they would like to be listed in an online community or database with their own profile. The interest in such an offer is, as already became clear in other questions, very large: 72% of the study participants expressed their interest and 52% agreed already to feed the personal data raised with this inquiry into a profile.

## |6| Conclusion

The GLAC Community has all it takes to become a successful forum for like-minded experts seeking change and action on the challenges of our time. This report offers a window into the current and future GLAC Community and charts a way forward in terms of activities and topics.

Strongly requested at this early stage of the GLAC Community is, in particular, an online database that gives everyone in the community easy access to the contact details of all other community members. After all, knowledge of the other members, their expertise, and their current projects is critical to foster co-creation and for making the GLAC Community a network of doers. Closely related is seed funding for SDG related projects. Lastly, the members of the GLAC Community surveyed ask for more local and regional meetings. Many interviewees stressed that at this point and to many members, the GLAC Community is largely unknown as a new space to share ideas, network, and collaborate. Regular local or regional meetings, as well as regular and targeted communication about the community, its members, and its achievements are critical to changing this perception.

The Global Leadership Academy, who commissioned this study, is keen to support the GLAC Community along its way and engage with the community members to define the best way forward.

Between|ness is a consultancy founded in 2017 on the premise that people and networks, not structures, matter most in organizations.