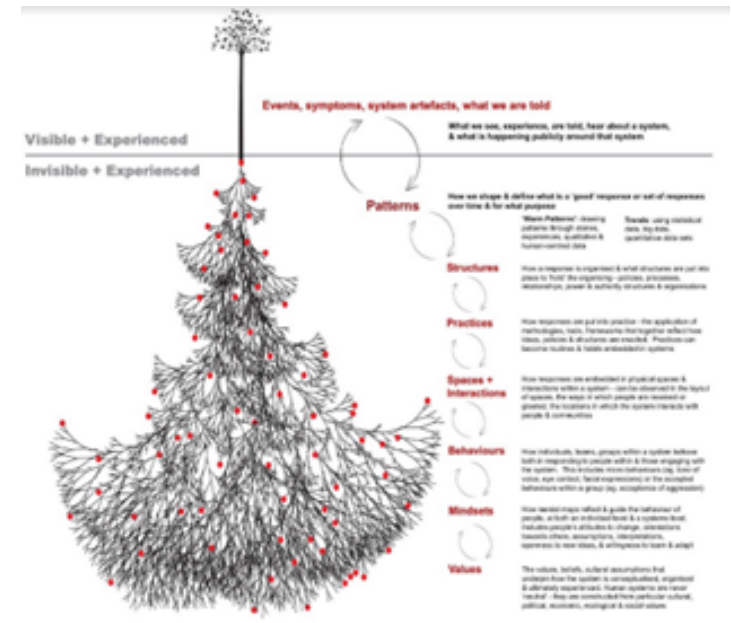


What

Facilitating a connected community means not only working to build local social infrastructure, but also connecting community-led initiatives to larger systems, institutions and movements. Communities are the building blocks for meaningful city building and global change efforts. Governments, institutions and other systems level players may seek to have a positive impact on the community, and yet have little grounding in the community context. In CCA, working at multiple scales means centring community context in discussions and decision making taking place both inside and outside of the community.

Why

When you are facilitating Connected Communities you are engaging in systems change in action. Ursula Wright in her 2019 article "[Systems Change is a Noun and Verb](#)" describes six conditions of systems change: mental models, relationships and connections, power dynamics, resource flows, practices and policies. All these conditions are present both at the local and at a broader systems level. The Connected Community Approach recognizes that systems level decision making should not be made in isolation from community building work, nor should the burden of changing systems be downloaded onto residents, grassroots groups and service providers. Working at multiple scales is an important key as it emphasizes the need to connect systems level and community level strategies and to shift perspectives and assumptions between players.



How

Key Question(s)

- What systems do you need to influence for local success?
- How might you go about influencing them?
- Who else is seeking to influence those systems?
- How might you work together?

Actions

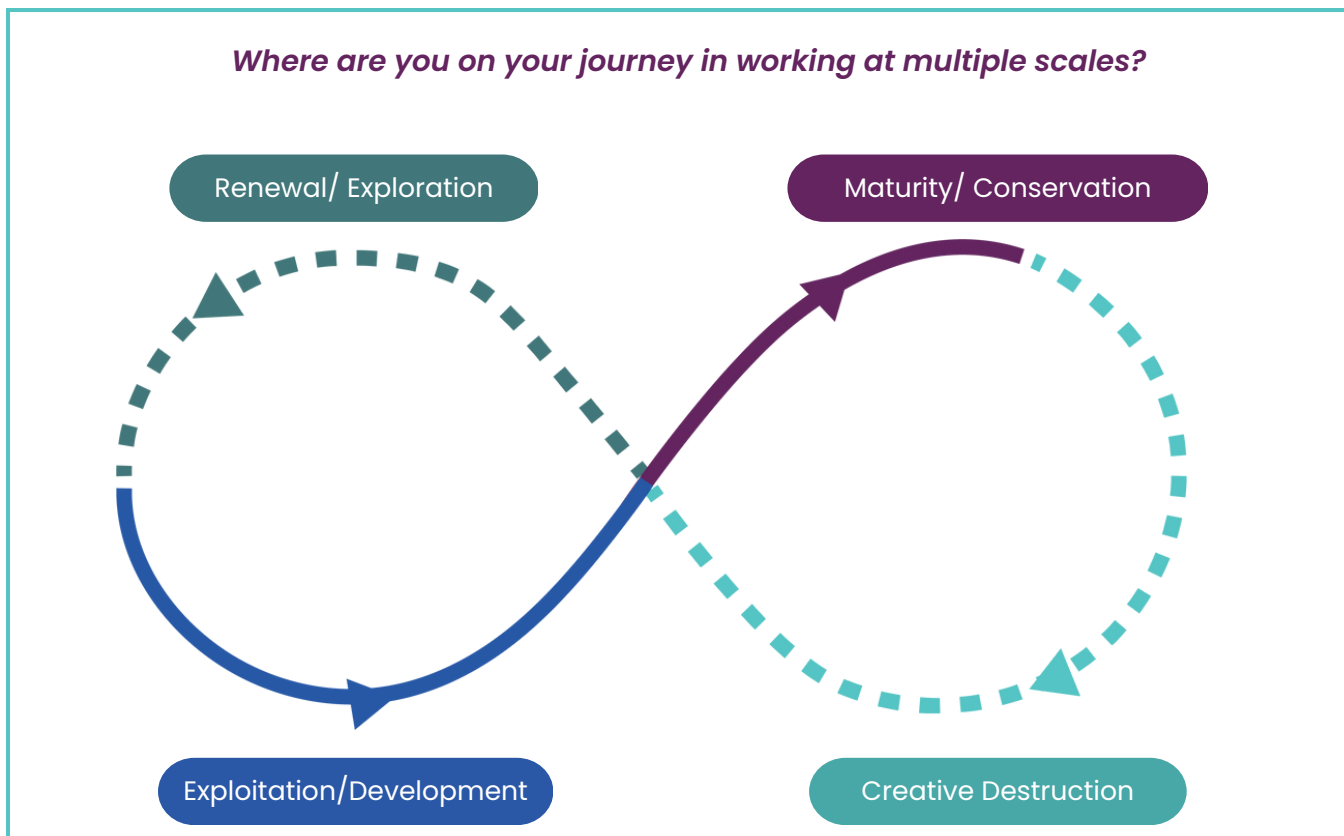
- Whether they are local community builders, bureaucrats or employers in large corporations, you will be working with people. The [Empathy Map](#) is a useful tool to help you understand how the people you seek to influence see the world and their work and what motivates them to want to work with you.
- When thinking about influencing systems, it is helpful to think of how people act on a day to day basis in relation to deeply rooted mental models, belief systems and norms. This [simple Ice-berg model](#) can help you reflect on the different layers of deeply rooted attitudes that need to shift in a system in order for it to change.
- It can often be difficult for community based players to be recognized as partners with systems level players. [This tipsheet](#) will help you to get the relationship off to a good start, maintain the relationship over time, and finally, deal with inevitable hiccups along the way
- Place-based work happens in the context of multiple complex systems. This [Guide to Trend Mapping](#) can help you and your network to identify systems, trends and patterns and how they may support or hinder their collective strategies/goals.
- One of the challenges of working at multiple scales is that systems level players often see “community organizations” as all the same. [This table](#) can help describe the various types of organizations in a community and their role in fostering community-centred resilience.
- Similarly, there are various ways in which grassroots groups and players engage with formal organizations. Understanding the nuances of this relationship can make a big difference when engaging with residents. This [spectrum](#) demonstrates some of the different ways in which organizations might work together on community building efforts.

Indicators of Success

- ❑ There is ongoing communication with key actors from the community and governments and institutions.
- ❑ The realities of different actors in the community ecosystem are understood across scales.
- ❑ Each player feels listened to, respected and understood
- ❑ People in institutions and policy makers are intentional in seeking to understand how their decisions impact local communities.
- ❑ Residents, grassroots groups, social service and community development organizations feel the by-the-community-for-the-community approach is at the centre of decisions that affect their communities.

Reflection Questions

- At each level of scale; grassroots, organizational, employer, institutional and policy, who has been engaged in the process? Who has been difficult to reach? How have connections been made across scales?
- How are you balancing the larger scale systems work with the day to day responsibilities of designing and facilitating local workforce pathways?
- How are you grounding yourself in community context so that when you are meeting with governments and institutions you can help ground them?
- What do your collaborative efforts with systems level players mean for your relationship with local advocacy efforts?



We hope you find these tools useful in continuing the momentum to build on local strengths, facilitated collaborative processes and learn together. Catalysts' Circle offers workshops, coaching and strategy design services that can further help you dig deeply into these keys and explore the others that can help you make a truly Connected Community.



Catalysts' Circle can be found at www.connectedcommunities.ca or email agloger@catalystscircle.ca for more information