



Annual Reflection **2014**



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## MESOPARTNER PROFILE

Mesopartner is a knowledge firm that specialises in economic development, competitiveness and innovation. Our strategic intent is to be globally acknowledged as an innovator in economic development and partnering with strategic customers and associates through capacity building and coaching, as well as programme design, method and tool development and capture, knowledge management and problem solving.

We operate as a service provider both to development organisations (development agencies, ODA (Official Development Assistance) donors, development banks, NGOs, cluster networks and others) and to consultants and consulting firms. Since 2003, the knowledge that we have shared, and the tools that we have developed, have helped development organisations and stakeholders in many developing and transformation countries to conduct territorial and sectoral development in a more effective and efficient way.

Mesopartner offers the knowledge that local actors need to address the challenge of innovation and change. We develop innovative tools based on local and regional economic development, cluster and value chain promotion, strengthening of local innovation systems and related topics. We coach and equip practitioners, and conduct leading-edge learning events for practitioners.

# Foreword

## Taking on a new challenge in economic development

There is an increasing understanding within the development community that the way development work has been done so far is too simplistic. The approaches that development practitioners apply to plan and map out required change, such as in the form of impact chains or other planning instruments, and to monitor and evaluate what has happened during the life of a project, are oversimplified and do not sufficiently reflect reality. The world is not linear; it is more complex than that. Furthermore, it is almost

impossible to plan for every eventuality and therefore we need to design programmes in a more flexible way while still satisfying funders that our programmes are not wasting resources. Hence, systems thinking and complexity need to be more strongly integrated into our work, our themes, our tools and methods.

Considering this, leading development organisations anticipate a paradigm shift in development work. Better understanding of the context and patterns





of development, and exploring plural interventions to stimulate the natural evolution of economies, are becoming more important as donors realise that interventions have to be more sensitive to the complexity of those societies in which they want to see positive change happening. Over the last three years, Mesopartner has become actively engaged in the debate about new complexity-sensitive approaches in international development and how they affect development practices. Several partners and associates

have been involved in moderation and exploration with a variety of international development networks on these topics.

A milestone for us was a three-day training on Complexity and the Cynefin framework with Cognitive Edge before the start of the 2013 Summer Academy in Berlin. This training was open for associates, clients and other close development practitioners. The event with its 16 participants turned out to



be a fascinating enrichment of our perspective on international development efforts and it was fully in line with our strategy to develop new and innovative solutions jointly with our customers. Mesopartner has participated in various other events on complexity, cognitive science and social network analysis to gain a deeper understanding of these topics.

In the meantime, we have started experimenting with the complexity approach and application of narratives in several project contexts. Our relevant knowledge and interchange platform is the Systemic Insight Webpage ([www.systemic-insight.com](http://www.systemic-insight.com)). The Mesopartner Working Paper No. 16 "Gaining systemic insight to strengthen economic development initiatives" summarises our understanding and was received with great appreciation by the development community.

Following the vibrant internal and external debate, we at Mesopartner decided to dedicate this Annual Reflection 2014 entirely to complexity thinking and its practical implication for our work on economic development. Eight articles in this publication address this new paradigm and try to explore it further from different angles. While some of the ideas are easy to



apply and require small changes in how we do things, there are other issues that are much more challenging to come to grips with in practical applications. We need to point out that we are currently engaged in a search process aimed at integrating a complexity-sensitive way of thinking into our work and making it applicable in the field. This means that in two or three years from now some of the articles presented here might be written differently. For the time being, however, they represent our current status of exploration and understanding.

The first two articles in this publication address the basics of complexity, including a presentation of the Cynefin framework, and how it affects the design and monitoring of development projects. We furthermore discuss the probability of complexity thinking becoming a new development paradigm and how it relates to the progression of previous paradigms. We debate the implications of complexity for our own preferred methodologies and tools, whether adjustments are required, and if so, what kind of adjustments those could be. In the context of a PACA process in Burundi, our associate Doug Hindson provides a very specific example

of how this new thinking revalidates and questions our own process consulting and training approaches.

Moreover, we reflect on how we are trying to check and ensure that the approach to the Mesopartner “themes” is in fact becoming more complexity sensitive. We continue to discuss to what extent good and best practices are still relevant in the future, and whether facilitation techniques and practices in economic development need to undergo a critical review and adaptation.

As demonstrated by this Annual Reflection 2014, Mesopartner has started to explore the implications of a complexity development paradigm for our work, our approaches, our themes and instruments. We will continue working on this fascinating and relevant topic together with our most innovative clients and collaborators to whom we offer our support to start embracing complexity thinking as well. Ultimately we expect this new paradigm to come strongly to the fore sooner rather than later.

**Christian Schoen** ([cs@mesopartner.com](mailto:cs@mesopartner.com))

# 01

## Complexity – what's the fuss?



In our work in international development we face different kinds of problems. Some are relatively easy to solve, and others have proved difficult to tackle. Many problems persist even when we believe we have solved them. Particularly social problems such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, violence, etc. seem to persist without a solution in sight.

So far, most development problems have been approached with the same mind-set. Approaches are guided by an understanding of linear, controllable and

measurable cause-and-effect relationships. Experts confidently present their solutions with a logic of "if we only do this, then that happens and the problem is solved". For every expert, the solution usually lies in his or her field of expertise. Inputs and activities are transformed into outputs and outcomes in a seemingly predictable way with very specific indicators that typically only measure very narrow results. Outcomes are then measured, attributed back to the project, and the "evidence" is used to inform future programme design or policy choices. This approach has a lot of validity if



applied to the simpler type of problems; however, this logic cannot be generalised to apply to all situations.

The problems that can be tackled with an outcomes-based planning approach are problems where cause-and-effect relations, and hence solutions to problems, are either obvious or discoverable through analysis. If, for example, crop yields in a particular region are low, agricultural experts can develop strategies to overcome this problem by introducing new varieties or analysing soil composition to recommend the correct fertilizer

application. Outcomes can be defined and targets can be set as we can predict with some accuracy what increase in yield can be expected. The change – increased production – can be measured and clearly attributed to the intervention.

There are, however, also situations where there is little agreement on the problem in the first place and high uncertainty of what solution will lead to what result. A situation can be described as being complex when multiple hypotheses could explain in a coherent way

what is going on. Looking again at the example of increasing agricultural productivity, the way to sustain the new agricultural practices, bring the products to market, and translate higher productivity into higher incomes, is not so obvious. Even when asking experts we will get a multitude of opinions and perhaps even contradicting advice. The problem is complex. There are many possible routes to take, and all seem to hold some promise. Many different actors with different perspectives are involved. We cannot predict with certainty what will happen. Reactions to interventions might be disproportional to the input or they might be negligible. It is difficult or

even impossible to relate observed changes back to the interventions, and hence attribute improvements to the project. In these situations, an outcomes-based planning approach is not effective. Outcomes cannot be defined in advance as we don't know what a good outcome would look like and how we can get there. We need an approach that is better adapted to the situation.

The ability to distinguish between the different types of problems allows us to select an appropriate and adapted strategy. There are a variety of approaches that support us in appraising the situation and selecting the best strategy for different aspects of a problem. At Mesopartner, we have been increasingly using the Cynefin framework for this purpose.<sup>1</sup> Cynefin is a framework that can be used in a participatory way to make sense of a situation.

Cynefin has five domains:

- **The obvious domain: the domain of best practice.** This domain is characterised by clear and stable cause-and-effect relationships that are evident to everyone. The right answer is obvious and undisputed.
- **The complicated domain: the domain of experts.** In complicated contexts, there might be more than one right answer. Although cause-and-effect relationships are clear, they are often not evident. Hence analysis and expertise are needed to approach such situations. Outcomes-based planning works well here.

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<sup>1</sup> The Cynefin framework was developed by Dave Snowden of Cognitive Edge (<http://cognitive-edge.com>)



- **The complex domain: the domain of emergence.** In complex situations, the right answers have to emerge from within the context. Complex systems are in constant flow, and instead of attempting to impose a course of action, project interventions must try different things and allow the path forward to reveal itself. Rigid outcomes-based planning does not work in this domain.
- **The chaotic domain: the domain of rapid response.** Chaotic situations are marked by great turbulences cause-and-effect relationships are impossible to determine, and no manageable patterns exist. Interventions need to be fast and decisive and need to establish some kind of order.
- **Disorder.** The fifth domain of Cynefin, the disordered domain in the centre, essentially contains all situations where there is disagreement or ignorance as to whether the context is obvious, complicated, complex or chaotic.

Examples from the complicated and the complex domains are the technological fix for low productivity and the translation of these fixes into sustainable poverty-reduction outcomes respectively.

Although the Cynefin framework can be used for categorisation, it is most effective as a sense-making model to support people in making sense of their own situation. This starts by collecting data fragments about a given situation, e.g. decisions taken in the past or short narratives of situations taken from a project or an organisation. The Cynefin framework can then be constructed around these fragments. In this way, the domains and the borders between the domains are constituted by situations that people can refer to. Consequently it will be easier for this group of people to relate any new situation to one of the domains by comparing it with the situations used to build the framework.

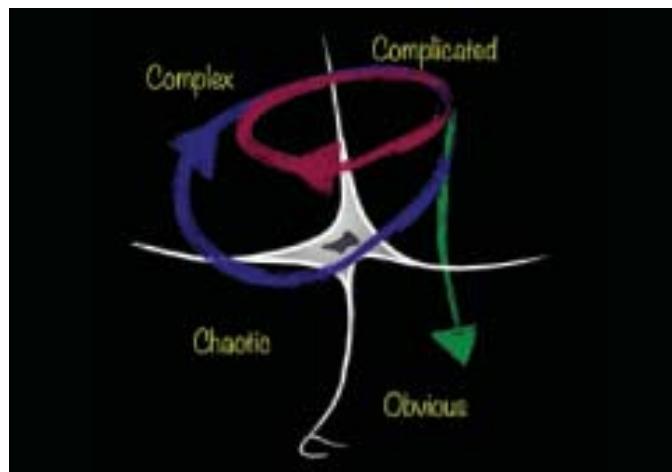


Figure 1: The Cynefin Framework showing the five domains (disorder is the grey domain in the middle). The arrows show possible movements of a situation between the domains (Source: Cognitive Edge)

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# 02

## Designing and monitoring change initiatives to tackle complex problems

When tasked with designing and monitoring change initiatives in complex contexts, we are facing particular challenges that we cannot tackle with conventional approaches. Traditional approaches to project design and monitoring are based on the premise that we can predict a pathway of change that starts with the intervention of the project and follows a clear line of cause and effect until the change eventually reaches the goal level. Consequently, projects are designed around a

"theory of change", often expressed in the form of a logframe, results chains or other linear<sup>2</sup> causal models. Key performance indicators are then defined for different stages of the causal chain and measured periodically to see how the project is doing. While

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<sup>2</sup> The term 'linear' is used here in the sense of a sequence (A -> B -> C) rather than in the mathematical sense contrasting exponential.



many practitioners see the limitations of these causal models and try to amend their theories to make them more useful in complex settings, they still cling to the idea that there are clear causal reactions that can be started by the project and the subsequent changes can be attributed back to the project. While we recognise that a project can start a reaction of change and that there are many projects out there that have had a very positive impact, change in a complex system does not happen along an evident

line of causality, nor is the project – or anybody else in the system for that matter – the sole driver of this change.

Why? When tackling complex problems, the simplistic concept of linear causality does not apply. In the complex domain (see “Complexity – what’s the fuss?”), causalities are not clearly discernible, nor are they stable. Every action is influenced by many different factors, and not driven by a single driver



assuming single, billiard-ball-like causality. If an action B were driven by a driver A, changing A should have a predictable effect on B. In complex situations, however, many other forces influence the reaction of B to changes in A in non-repeatable ways. When, for example, an entrepreneur takes a decision about his/her business strategy, this decision is influenced by many different factors, such as his/her financial situation, his/her social environment, political considerations, etc.<sup>3</sup> The decision is most likely also influenced by the behaviour of the entrepreneur's peers. Hence one action influences other actions. So



<sup>3</sup> Even if in some cases it seems as if one particular factor or event shaped a decision, how a person decides is also strongly dependent on how this person got into this situation. Hence all the factors that influenced the person in the past also influence the person's decision in the present. The fact that history matters in complex systems makes discerning causality in these types of systems even trickier.

rather than understanding change as an individual big force that drives decisions and behaviours in the way that the cue ball drives another billiard ball, in complex systems many forces are at work, modulating the disposition of the system from which change emerges. But wait, what does that mean? And what is the consequence for our understanding of causality?

First, when looking at complex systems, it is more helpful to see influencing forces in such a system as modulators rather than drivers of change.<sup>4</sup> Understanding what modulators are in play will help us to understand the behaviour of the various actors in the system. Second, the different modulators give the system a certain disposition for change, i.e. a tendency or propensity to move in a particular direction. It is therefore better to think about the disposition for change of a complex system, rather than about the causality of change. It is not one cause that leads to a particular change, but the disposition of the system that allows (or not) the change to happen.



Our intervention should consequently not be seen as the cause of a change, but as part of the chorus of different forces that together modulate the disposition of a system to change towards a state that is more

<sup>4</sup> Read more about the concept of modulators vs. drivers here: <http://cognitive-edge.com/blog/entry/3199/drivers-and-modulators>



desirable to us. In other words, real systemic change happens when we can influence the evolutionary path of a system. This, in turn, ensures that our intervention is sustainable and reaches scale by touching upon the whole system.

A project intervention is just one modulator of many. In fact, even if we spend a lot of time analysing a complex system, for example a specific economic sector in a country, we cannot know all the influencing factors and how the dynamics of their interactions will play out. We cannot predict how our intervention will influence the disposition of the system. Hence we should not try to make a project a driver for



a particular change. Rather, the consequence of complexity thinking for the design of a project is to develop a portfolio of different interventions that try to probe and influence the disposition of the system from different angles. Probing in this context means interacting with the system to see what works and how the actors react, i.e. experimenting with different ideas. We must see our role as supporting or injecting novelty into the system, so that the system itself can have more possibilities from which to evolve. We should consequently not develop an elaborate and consistent theory of change for the whole project, but every intervention should be based on a "micro-hypothesis" about the disposition of the system that will be tested. Each intervention should have a consistent logic in itself, but the overall portfolio of interventions should be as diverse as possible.

Ideally, a portfolio of probes would test for contradicting hypotheses, widening the solution space



we explore. In essence this means that we learn about what works, what doesn't work, and what is possible or plausible. We thus increase options and learning within the system. The probes have to be designed in a safe-to-fail way as some will inevitably fail. Safe-to-fail experiments must be designed such that as few

resources or reputations as possible are damaged if an experiment does not deliver the desired results. Failing probes are at least as important as working probes, as they also provide opportunities for learning. In this approach, we mimic real life in that our valuable experience develops during the process of change, and is not based on an ex-ante assumption about what would be relevant, valuable and worthy of recording.

What is the consequence for monitoring? We cannot only build causal chains and use key performance indicators along these chains for the monitoring of a systemic change initiative. Causal chains might help us to think through the coherence of individual interventions or probes. For the initiative as a whole, we additionally need a wider network of sensors that can detect changing patterns in the system beyond

our causal chains. Furthermore, we need to be able to pick up these changes early, when they are still weak signals and would be overlooked by conventional monitoring systems that focus on the average. This sensor network can also help us to determine the disposition of the system and how this disposition is changing over time. Another aim is to find other modulators, such as powerful actors in the system, and see if we can directly influence them. If we like the disposition of the system and the direction of change it is taking, we can strengthen our efforts towards this change, and if we don't like it, we need to dampen these efforts. It also becomes clear that real-time data is critical and has to be directly fed into management decisions. A project's reaction to this information needs to be flexible and agile.

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# 03

## Life cycles of LED paradigms in the last 50 years

For many decades we have been reflecting on how to address economic development in general and Local Economic Development (LED) in particular. Constantly changing development paradigms during the last 50 years were based on different world views and interpretations about how to promote businesses and strengthen competitiveness in a changing environment. Development paradigms are not necessarily wrong or incorrect, but they might be insufficient. Early approaches were based

on rather simplistic assumptions on how LED might work. Failed development projects and an increasing understanding of interdependencies and systemic elements in development resulted in more holistic approaches. The life cycles of development in the graphic representation in Figure 2 assumes that the still dominant current systemic approach will be succeeded by a complexity paradigm, offering a more promising way of intervening in complex systems.





The following short description of each paradigm emphasises the interfaces of declining curves with newly emerging curves of the new paradigm. However, the distinctions between succeeding paradigms are not as clear cut as the graphic might suggest. There are always elements of "previous" periods still relevant in "new" periods.



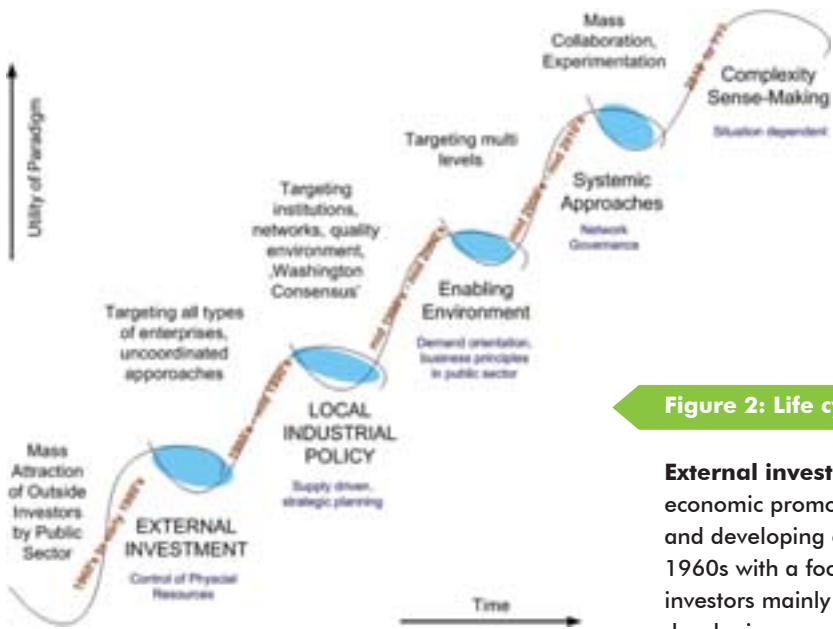


Figure 2: Life cycles of LED paradigms

**External investment paradigm:** Active economic promotion policies in industrialised and developing countries started around the 1960s with a focus on attracting external investors mainly for two reasons. In many developing countries import substitution models followed the logic of “catching up with industrial development”, attracting external companies into the regions and promoting public and private local industrial conglomerates (especially in heavy industries such as steel or chemicals). In many industrialised countries, the attraction of large businesses in labour-intensive mass-production sectors (such as the automotive industry) contributed to new local employment opportunities based on heavy subsidies, tax breaks or closed market advantages. The “Fordist” production and import-substitution models ran into a crisis around the early 1980s when the specialisation and globalisation of production processes and product development gained importance. The external investment paradigm was too simplistic and was dominated by the belief in the efficiency and



competitiveness of large enterprises. National top-down industrial policy approaches failed to consider more bottom-up development activities and the promotion of local competitive advantages and local SME structures.

**Local industrial policy paradigm:** The importance of SMEs and the development of local economic advantages gained ground in the 1980s. Municipalities and regional governments started to promote SMEs with a focus on start-ups, existing businesses as well as new investors considering LED potentials. The focus was rather on the quantity than on the quality of support activities. Local strategic planning approaches became relevant, still guided by the public sector as the driving force of development, using instruments such as direct business subsidies and the provision of supply-driven services (such as publicly financed consultancy services, investment promotion credit lines and market research). This was often accompanied by local infrastructure development efforts, such as developing local industrial parks. At the end of the 1980s, this model went into crisis again. Isolated local SME promotion approaches, which were still organised





in a top-down and public sector-dominated manner, failed to deliver the expected impact on employment and income generation. It lacked private sector involvement and a deeper understanding of market failures, market dynamics and government failures.

#### **Business networks and enabling environment**

**paradigm:** LED in the 1990s was promoted by two main intervention areas: promoting business networks at the micro level and promoting an enabling environment at the macro level. This approach was the consequence of the critique of the former development paradigm, which was strongly influenced by the Washington Consensus and its emphasis on liberalisation, deregulation and reduced government involvement. Public supporting institutions at the meso level were mainly considered inefficient, not sufficiently demand oriented and ideally to be privatised.

At the business (micro) level, promotion activities became more network- and bottom-up driven, learning from examples of successful industrial districts in Germany, Italy and other countries. The promotion of business networks instead of individual enterprises and stronger listening to the private sector to understand market requirements gained relevance. This included enhancing network relations among local existing businesses and new start-ups as well as the promotion of selected external investors. The overall approach moved more towards the development of local competitive advantages, including knowledge-intensive service providers. In parallel, enabling environment factors gained importance. Not all international donors and local governments fully bought into the Washington Consensus, but they still pursued a more demand-oriented LED approach. On the one hand, this included the facilitation of private



business services and an increase in the efficiency of public service delivery to SMEs. On the other hand, it called for increasing public management competencies and decreasing red tape at the regulatory framework (macro) level.

**Emergence of systemic approaches:** While the former LED paradigm was focusing on the promotion of the micro level (business networks) and the macro level (enabling business environment), the coordination between the two levels was rather weak. The lack of consideration of complex interrelations between systemic levels as well as the important role of supporting business and knowledge institutions in coordinating and promoting information gained importance in the first decade of the new millennium. Especially cluster approaches became the new focus of LED, which included strengthening national and local innovation systems, emphasising interdependencies of local and regional public management and promotion capabilities and enhancing knowledge-intensive support structures. Micro, meso and macro policy interventions had to work hand-in-hand to promote competitive advantages. Socio-cultural aspects gained relevance, where patterns of behaviour of the economic actors and the significance of local value systems for economic development were considered.

Network governance was the emerging keyword to express the need for coordination and joint steering requirements of the public and private sector. At the same time, the paradigm was dominated by the understanding that a systemic way of interaction could organise LED in a more efficient manner.

**Complexity and sense-making:** Is a new paradigm emerging today that will consider the complex interplay of dynamics that are typically involved in development processes? Current discussions within the development community are starting to question the present systemic development paradigm. Its limitations and challenges are being emphasised and additional ways of understanding and intervening in complex economic systems are being sought. Earlier articles in this Annual Reflection present frameworks of, and deliberations on, why and how to intervene in complex realities. This will require more flexibility in testing and probing the dynamics of a given system instead of trying to identify causal relations early on. It presupposes the openness of donors and development promoters to another paradigm shift, and to reconsidering former world views and development practices.

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# 04

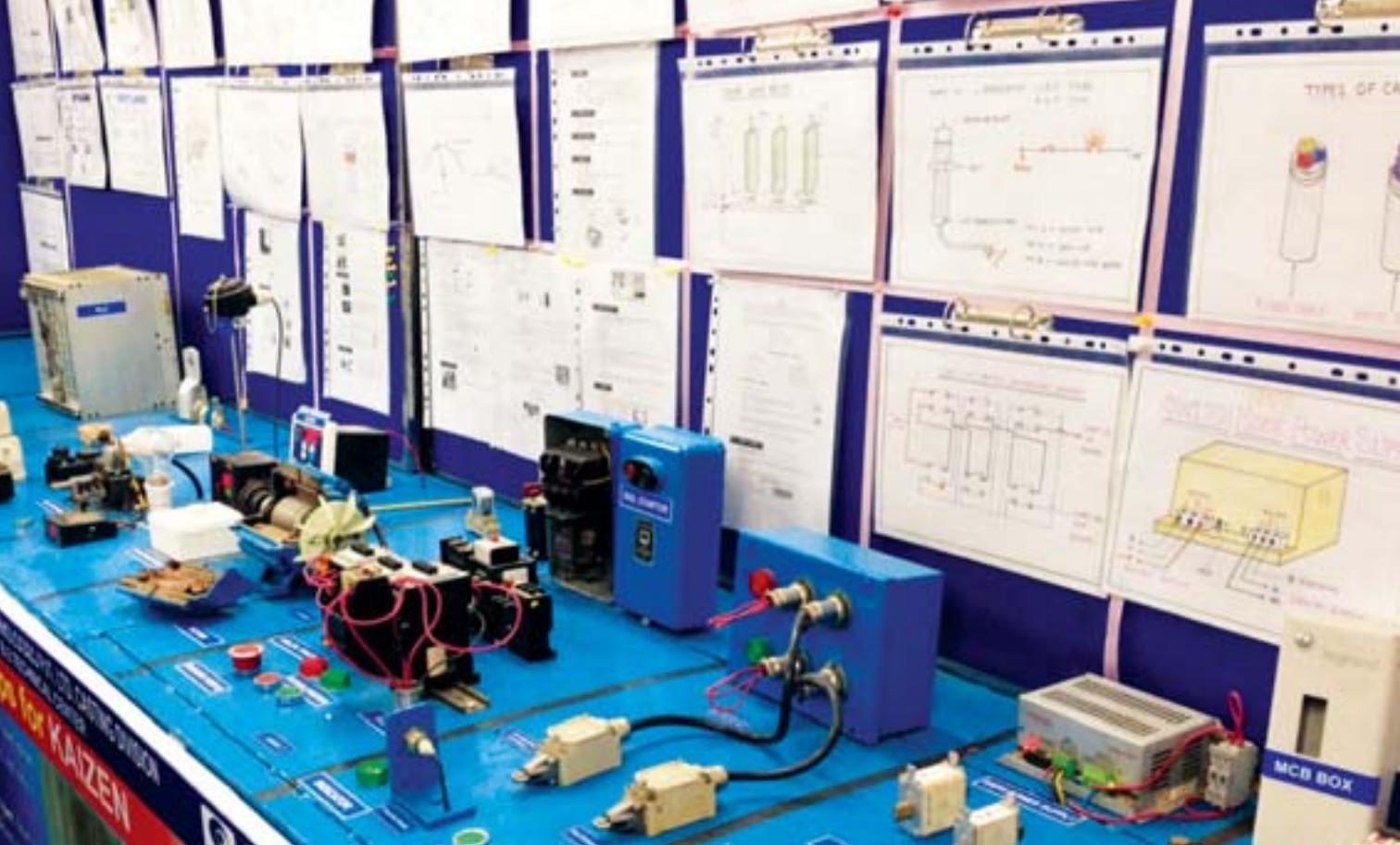
## **Understanding the effect of complexity on our instruments and tools**

In its early years, Mesopartner developed a reputation for a portfolio of simple-to-use analytical tools that were grouped into methodologies, such as PACA, RALIS, Compass and others. Over time these instruments became popular as a means to equip experts to conduct analyses of local economies in order to find ways to upgrade the local economy and collaboration between different economic actors. The beauty of many of these instruments is that they are simple enough for people to use even without having a deep understanding of topics such as economics,

geography, competition theory, innovation theories or good governance.

Over time Mesopartner and its clients became more interested not only in equipping local stakeholders to be able to better influence their own upgrade paths, but also in affecting the way economies evolve through active policies and effective interventions. While a participatory process in a specific locality or industry is ideal for mobilising stakeholders into a more dynamic process based on their own self-assessment,





it is not so effective in creating new meso institutions, or affecting structural adjustment in the economy, if this is necessary. The interactions between different economic systems that ensure the long-term evolution of economies, technologies and social systems are complex, interdependent and very sensitive not only to their unique context, but also to a range of conditions such as history, past choices and even assumptions about the future. It is difficult for stakeholders and facilitators to take all these issues into consideration when conducting an analysis.

Economic analysis often depends on simplified models because markets and the social systems they are embedded in are complex. The beauty of these models is that they are simple enough to allow us to guide stakeholders through a participatory assessment. Their weakness is that they are a simplification of the real world and hence purposefully exclude complex inter-relations and feedback loops that may affect the behaviour of the systems we work with. When combined with ideological preferences or bias towards particular solutions (e.g. rural development,



gender empowerment), these simplified models may introduce more complexity into a situation, and viable development options or constraints may be excluded or overlooked. The consequence of this is that we are attempting to change (develop) systems where we are not even sure what is keeping the system trapped in its current status. Complexity thinking and being sceptical of simple linear cause-and-effect models have helped us to better understand these complex systems.

As facilitators in these contexts, we have to understand the limitations of our instruments and models. In complex situations, we have to depend less on our instruments and models and focus more on the dynamics in the relations and the behaviours of the stakeholders. For instance, when our stakeholders invite participants to a meeting, it is equally important to understand why certain people were invited and

why certain people were excluded. Many of the instruments widely cherished in the development field (e.g. creating an enabling environment, making markets work for the poor) depend on certain factors being in place, while ignoring other factors that could offer viable development opportunities. The context and the history of the society matter in the present and limit what is possible in the future. We must facilitate more the exploration of ideas, constraints and possibilities and depend less on expert analysis if we want to support meaningful change. Of course, visual facilitation techniques can be used to guide these discussions. Our role must be to challenge conventional linear cause-and-effect thinking by assisting stakeholders firstly to understand that their past and current approaches could be ignoring important dynamics or be based on ineffective assumptions. Many of the visual facilitation methods

we take for granted, such as a mindmap drawn on a flipchart, a simple SWOT analysis or visualisation with a marker pen are all powerful instruments in the hands of a facilitator who is sensitive to the importance of dialogue, narrative and complexity. These same instruments are traps in the hands of those who do not understand what people are saying, the words they use and what shapes their perspectives, because the stories people tell reveal many of the complexities and interdependencies that exist beneath the surface.

Our recommendation for diagnosis and improvement processes is to make sure that practitioners are very clear about their assumptions (hypotheses) and that multiple instruments and tools are used to facilitate dialogue and exploration during diagnosis. Our intention should not be to seek consensus between stakeholders, but to understand the variety in the systems we work in. The more variety, the healthier the system. We emphasise the need to identify the outliers in the system and the behaviours our instruments cannot explain, as these tell us how constraints may be overcome. We have to be much more humble in

the way we try to change the system through our proposed interventions, recognising that important constraints exist and that we do not understand the whole situation. We have to develop portfolios of interventions that combine both simple actions to address obvious deficiencies, while at the same time assisting local stakeholders to experiment with new or different ideas (introduce novelty) in ways that do not create risks to assets or reputations.

In conclusion, methods such as PACA, RALIS, Compass and facilitation techniques still have a role to play. They allow a structured approach to enable discussion and assist stakeholders to become aware of some of the factors that are constraining their development. However, instead of seeing instruments as solutions, we have to use them to assist stakeholders to identify and experiment with novel solutions that are within their reach in ways that do not create irreversible risks to reputation or resources for the stakeholders, and thus help them to test the boundaries that keep their system in its current shape.

**Dr Shawn Cunningham (sc@mesopartner.com)**



# 05

## PACA and complexity – reflections on Burundi

In the light of recent discussions within Mesopartner on the use of complexity thinking in Local and Regional Economic Development (LRED), this article looks back at the Participatory Appraisal of Competitive Advantage (PACA) exercise in the community of Gisozi in Burundi in May–June 2013.<sup>5</sup>

We suggest that the PACA approach anticipates aspects of complexity thinking in LRED. Some of the prescriptions to promote change in complex systems are already present within PACA. PACA's effectiveness could be enhanced by taking this further.

In the last 12 years, Burundi has been struggling to recover from a protracted civil war. Following peace negotiations, development support focused first on emergency aid and then on food security. Now donors are turning to enterprise and market development. This is where the PACA exercise sought to contribute.

<sup>5</sup> Hindson D (2014). LED and Complex Systems: Applying PACA and The Logical Framework in Burundi, April 2014, discussion paper for Mesopartner.



An article in this annual review entitled “Complexity – what’s all the fuss?” explains the Cynefin framework. This framework is a “sense-making device”. It promotes “descriptive self-awareness” among stakeholders rather than expert advice. Here we focus on complex adaptive systems (CASs), where individual and collective action results in “self-organisation”, producing “emergent trends” at the system level, an idea akin to that of “organic LED” in the PACA approach.

Drawing on this thinking, Jenal and Cunningham (2013) provide the following guidelines:

1. Open up interactive discussion and dissent.
2. Manage starting conditions and monitor for emergence using probes.
3. Promote self-regulation.

How well did the PACA exercise match up? How can PACA be further strengthened?



At its core, PACA is a bottom-up, participatory approach. That is how it was conducted in Burundi. Great care was taken to identify a host, champion and team that met most PACA criteria. The terms “personne lumière” (one who lights the way) and “personne ferment” (one who ferments change) were used in place of “champion”. These are indigenous terms, free of the “winner-takes-all” connotation. The team was large (eighteen) and its sector representation wide, which helped to foster intense interaction and deep deliberation, but at the expense of fuller fieldwork coverage. Working with a large team may be an option for future PACAs.

In the complexity approach, facilitators are advised not to “interfere” in data interpretation. Experience with PACA shows that the best way to do this is to generate the data from the process itself, and not to gather it all beforehand. In Gisozi, Porter’s Diamond, the Five Forces, Value Chain mapping and other tools were used. This facilitated deep discussion.

The primacy given to rivalry within Porter's Diamond and the Five Forces was questioned. Conscious of the devastating effects of conflict, the participants insisted on the primacy of cooperative relations. The holy cow of competition needs reconsideration in these settings, and perhaps in others too.

Self-awareness on the part of facilitators may be as important as stakeholder "descriptive self-awareness". Facilitators bring not only process tools, but also attitudes, theories and previous experience that may or may not be helpful. These are all carefully scrutinised by the stakeholders.

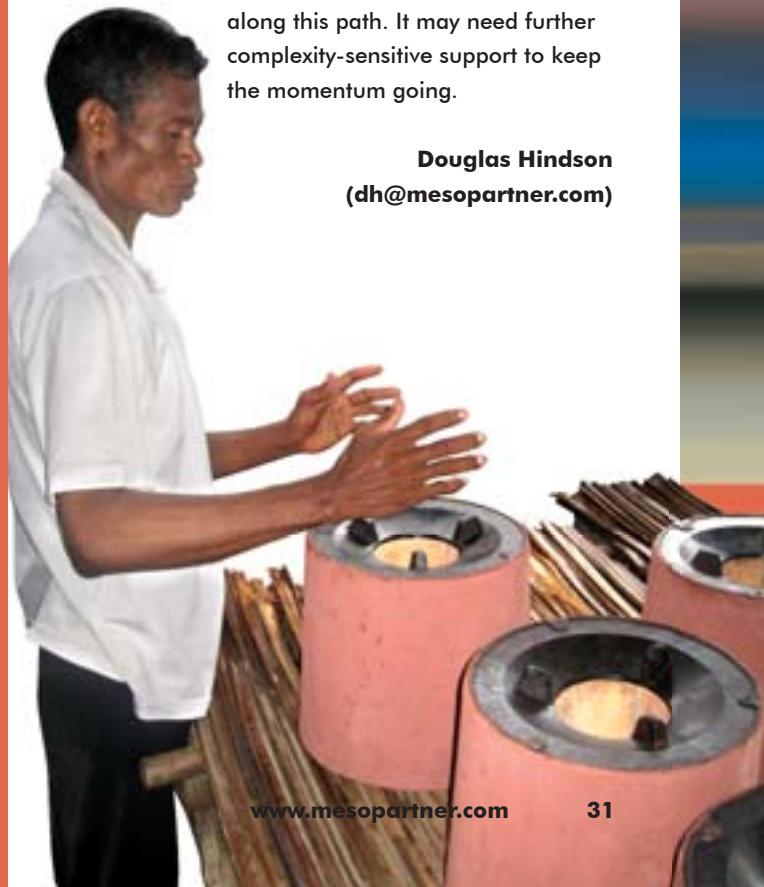
In hindsight, the fieldwork revealed a number of "emergent" trends, some positive, some negative, for example market-focused household production and bureaucratic interference. However, emergence in these contexts cannot be said to be "free of a central power" – the way Dave Snowden defines it. Even fragile states intervene. Donors intervene too. PACA should be re-oriented towards emergent trends, but thought must be given to the meaning of "emergence" in LRED. No locality is entirely free from all central power for very long.

The term "probe" is absent from the PACA lexicon, but "quick wins" are close to the small-scale, safe-to-fail probes envisaged. The team was reluctant to accept the quick-win logic: expectations were high that PACA would bring large-scale donor support. Playing into the process but not buying into the logic, the team agreed to apply the three criteria, but gave 25 projects the maximum score of 27 each! Further thought is needed on how to apply the quick-win logic

in post-conflict situations. Potentially, quick wins can build trust and capabilities while acting as probes, but expectations need to be better taken into account. The term "self-regulation" does not appear in the PACA manuals, but the structure set up in Gisozi was a self-regulation mechanism by another name. A day-and-a-half was devoted to setting it up, double the time usually allocated. Using complexity language, we could say that PACA's short-cycle M&E enables rapid adjustment to emergent trends. It helps to create the upward spiral which is the shared aim of PACA and the complexity approach.

There are signs that Gisozi is moving along this path. It may need further complexity-sensitive support to keep the momentum going.

**Douglas Hindson**  
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# 06

## Approaching Mesopartner themes in a complexity-sensitive way

Whenever Mesopartner combines contract work with significant action research, we call such a working area a “theme”. Taking complexity into account introduces a new awareness and sensitivity into the application not only of our themes, but also of our methods and instruments. Our understanding of complexity challenges the way we approach our current themes and calls for an active awareness.

Approaching Mesopartner themes in a way that is sensitive to complexity thinking crucially depends on



the context of our clients and their flexibility to adapt certain rules, preferences or assumptions. It is not the themes that are complexity sensitive, but their application. Complexity insensitive, for instance, is defined as a rigid target group selection or an exact outcome determination, such as increasing growth by 5%, increasing the number of jobs by 6 000 or increasing the number of female-owned enterprises by 30%. Any programme that is under the illusion that it can achieve such specific goals directly and exactly is ignoring complexity.



In each of our themes there are various things that are obvious or simple, such as supply and demand issues that can be detected by using instruments like Porter's 5 Forces. There are many other things that are complicated, for instance in Quality Infrastructure (QI) the question of how sophisticated the QI needs to be in a particular country for a specific sub-sector. Upgrading QI becomes complex, however, when looking at interconnections, for example between government, industry and consumers, or when

we are not sure whether there are actually causal relations between our observations at all. It could be counterproductive to try to optimise functions of QI bodies and standards, ignoring the relevant environmental factors. Using a Value Chain (VC) approach for QI already makes it more complexity sensitive, as problems elsewhere in the system that had an effect on a particular sub-sector now stand a better chance of being noticed. In effect, a VC approach to QI, such as "Calidena", will



already make it possible to challenge some very narrow assumptions of cause and effect that may be prevalent in a technical field or engineering environment.

The willingness of our clients to be more complexity sensitive is a much larger determinant of how flexibly

we can run our processes to better suit the context. For instance, when it comes to Innovation Systems, the rule of thumb is to look at the relation between competitive pressure and types of innovation or to look at the relation between knowledge flows and innovation. We can find locations where people are quite innovative without institutions being present at all, or people innovating without any role ascribed to educational institutions. This is definitely a complex situation, because more than one coherent hypothesis – with its theoretical base – can credibly explain what is going on. This is why each innovation system has to be analysed from within, using an approach that allows testing and probing to better understand the interrelations and processes. The areas where industrial policies fail to reach their objective and where knowledge is insufficiently translated into innovation need to be analysed more

intensively and the reason behind each case better understood.

Through research efforts, Mesopartner is actively trying to make its methods more complexity sensitive. Even in the theme Systemic Insight, which is specifically designed to look at complexity in development, we are still designing experiments to learn something new about complexity. For instance, a RALIS process could employ a narrative sense-making approach as part of the Systemic Insight theme.



Such research efforts lead to the question of whether we are willing to accept that (1) we do not have all right theories at hand, (2) that we prefer certain theories over others and (3) that due to our clients' preferences we also cannot try all the different theories to see which works.



Having the right theories available is important, for instance when it comes to efforts to promote Green Economic Development. Identifying holistic adaptation or mitigation strategies to reduce climate change and its impact at the local level is certainly a complex challenge. It requires a deeper understanding not only of climate science, but also of the societal value systems and receptiveness of climate change adaptation and mitigation measures at national and sub-national levels. Early probes need to find out what might work and what would not work in such a situation, and what and who really enables or undermines Green Economic Development in order to actively consider those forces and actors.

In all themes, but particularly in Local and Regional Economic Development (LRED), Value Chain



Development and Bottom-up Industrial Policy, we have to have a deep understanding of what motivates or demotivates stakeholders to coordinate, cooperate and share resources. In order to better understand that, narrative storytelling needs to be included in the research process with the relevant actors. In the analysis phase, we need to integrate the assessment of outliers that behave differently from the mainstream and that might indicate weak signals early on that could play an important role in the future. This helps to consider alternative development and intervention strategies.

In a Pro-poor Development context deploying a range of safe-to-fail interventions is even more important, since failure of development measures can have dramatic consequences for poor individuals and their communities. Pursuing economic activities below or around the poverty line hardly happens in simple or complicated domains. In complex situations, however, specific development activities that attempt to secure livelihoods or lift income levels that were successfully applied elsewhere may or may not work. This again depends on a variety of factors, such as cultural norms, sub-sector-specific parameters, changing market demands, types of motivation of entrepreneurs, experience with past development efforts and so forth. Hence, probing with a range of possible interventions is necessary to avoid unintended, negative impacts, which could

mean a false investment, a failure of income and in the worst case starvation and even more dramatic consequences.

In conclusion, customers and collaborators who are willing to accept that there is more than one way to achieve a particular goal, or that a particular goal might even not be that desirable, are already much more receptive to an approach guided by complexity thinking. Therefore, for some clients and collaborators, complexity-sensitive approaches will be very sensible. Others, especially those strictly

clinging to their logic, will not be so open to consider that we need to experiment more before designing intervention strategies and particular support measures.

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# 07

## The future relevance of good and best practices

Today development practitioners recognise the increasing complexity in their field of work and accept that there are no simple one-size-fits-all solutions. Nobody questions the assertion that context matters. On the other hand, there is a lot of accumulated knowledge about what has worked in the past and – even more so – what has not worked. Therefore we do not want to start from scratch when working on a new project in a region or sector. We usually apply concepts and techniques that have proven to work in different contexts. The application of these kinds

of good or best practices is efficient, which avoids having to reinvent the wheel in every new project.

The Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) addressed this challenge in its strategy for Regional Economic Development (RED) to identify so-called best practice principles. Over a period of nearly twenty years the MIF accumulated experience in promoting business development services, industrial clusters and Local Economic Development. For each of these fields





a study identified the underlying problems and associated solutions, some evidence of the results that were produced, the enabling conditions that made each approach possible, the driving factors that distinguished each approach from the others, and a set of best practice principles.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Romis, M. (2013). Analytical framework for RED strategies in Latin America: a taxonomy of approaches and best practice principles. Washington.

These best practice principles were used as an input to develop a model-based approach which should help the MIF to cooperate with other national institutions or international development organisations to reach a larger scale of their interventions. At the same time, the MIF highlights the necessity to contextualise the application of each model-based approach to respond to the particulars of each productive system where they intervene.

In 2013, MIF commissioned a consortium of Mesopartner and SISTME to conduct a thematic study on RED and give advice for their future strategy in this area. We proposed to differentiate intervention models according to different ideal types of territories. Each type of territory is characterised by different economic challenges and institutional settings. This typology could help to define distinctive intervention strategies.

However, even when using this typology approach an international development organisation needs to be careful when applying a contextualised model-based approach. There is always a risk of focusing too much on the model and becoming blind to contradicting patterns. Therefore in all intervention processes we recommend the introduction of a phase of gaining deeper understanding of local realities. Here we pose

the following question to ourselves, our counterparts and local actors: what is really going on? This question helps us to revisit our own beliefs and value system and provides the opportunity to challenge our model-based framework.

In the thematic study for the MIF we started experimenting with narratives of RED practitioners and policy makers. About 200 stories were collected at the Global Forum of Local Economic Development in Foc de Iguaçu (Brazil) and by a supplementary online survey. The participants of this exercise qualified their stories on their own using so-called signifiers. The outcome of this exercise was presented in a workshop in Washington D.C. and helped the MIF to compare its own perspectives with complementary and alternative viewpoints. It was a new experience for the clients not to rely





on consultants, but instead to interpret the narrative material on their own, to identify patterns and to make sense of them. This technique is called "disintermediation" and helped the clients to reach a deeper understanding of the complexities in RED.

In conclusion, it is useful to draw on experiences, document lessons learned and identify best practice principles. But we need to cultivate our ability to question and challenge those experiences and become sensitive to the concrete reality we encounter in a new situation.

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# 08

## Facilitation and complexity

Mesopartner has for a long time been well known for its easy-to-use and follow tools, methods and techniques to facilitate Local and Regional Economic Development (LRED) processes. Much of the company's good reputation was the result of the use of facilitation tools and techniques that encourage participation and engagement mainly through the use of the card methodology. The card methodology enabled long-drawn-out deliberations and discussions to be curtailed in favour of crisper direction of participants towards more concise contributions that

support decision making. In this methodology, much value was attached to clustering and ultimately to finding points of greatest consensus and convergence by sticking dots, applying the Pareto rule and using other means of indicating alignment in thinking. If this consensus is also aligned to the thinking and approach of the facilitator, so much the better. As a consequence, many workshops and processes seemed to conclude on a positive note, but often there was only limited or no change after the workshop. As the realisation of the complexity of our world





becomes more evident and Mesopartner delves deeper into complexity thinking, the company is being challenged to begin exploring the value attached to the current facilitation tools and methods used. This is also an opportune moment to reflect broadly on facilitation and more specifically facilitation in the context of complexity, questioning the role of the facilitator as well as the relevance of the tools and methods in the context of complexity.

What is becoming even more critical is the value of encouraging participants to explore their world rather than to depend on the facilitator or expert to give meaning or to direct the outcome of a facilitated session or process. Participatory tools and techniques that encourage deliberation and discussion in which the richness of context begins to emerge become more insightful and constructive, rather than those that seek consensus too soon and

in so doing glide over divergent perspectives and create superficial consensus. It is through robust dialogue that divergent views and perspectives are voiced, existing myths and beliefs are verbalised and emotion becomes evident. In such sessions that which is not said becomes audible. Exclusive reliance on the use of cards, where written statements are not used as an opportunity to open up discussion, will miss these important nuances. It fails to dig deeper to gain insight into, and find significance of, the meaning attached to the written word and thus tends to de-contextualise what is said. Facilitators thus need to develop tools and techniques that challenge participants and encourage the discovery of meaning and understanding.



As stated, many traditional facilitation approaches were motivated by the drive to seek alignment and consensus, but complexity thinking attaches value to the exploration of diversity and dissent. However, this also leads to a greater chance of conflict arising, which results in a process that is not "neat and tidy", but possibly messy and uncomfortable for both the participants and the facilitator. Facilitators should, however, be able to discern the value and richness that emerging conflict adds to a process, rather than seeking it out as an end in itself. In so doing, facilitators should be able to manage the conflict in a manner that does not hurt people, appreciate the revelation of conflicting views, manage these, facilitate negotiation and resolution and ultimately extract useful meaning from the process. At the heart of this is the facilitators' understanding of their own response to and comfort with conflict, as this impacts on the integrity of facilitating a process in which conflict arises.

In their paper Bramble Bushes in a Thicket, Cynthia F. Kurtz and David J. Snowden make a distinction



between an idealistic and naturalistic approach to leadership which also holds true for facilitation. They caution against idealistic approaches in which the facilitator sets out an ideal future state that is to be achieved, as opposed to the naturalistic approach that seeks to understand the adequacy of a current state in order to stimulate its evolution. They indicate that idealistic approaches also tend to prize “expert knowledge, analysis and interpretation, while naturalistic approaches emphasise the inherent unknowability of current and future complexities, and thus place emphasis on the value of facilitating and enabling emergent meaning at ground level.” They also highlight the fact that idealistic approaches tend to separate diagnosis from intervention, whereas naturalistic approaches view diagnosis as an integral part of intervention and that all interventions provide an opportunity for further diagnosis.

Complexity thinking presupposes that facilitators refrain from directing stakeholder thinking linked to a predetermined outcome, but should enable people

within the systems to take responsibility for deciding what is important to figure out and to achieve. The facilitator can add much value by finding creative ways to reflect current reality back to the participants so that they are able to “see” opportunities that are close and within reach – the so-called “low-hanging fruit” that could catalyse action. Complexity thinking requires facilitators to create environments in which this can occur, for instance by facilitating the identification of heuristics and stretching thinking about alternatives and polarities: this forces people to think and map metaphors, and to see the obvious, often overlooked quick wins that generate energy and motivation.

As Mesopartner recognises complexity thinking as a different way of approaching economic development processes, it makes sense for the company to explore ways in which it can contribute to the development and refinement of robust facilitation in the context of this new paradigm.

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# The Dr Jörg Meyer-Stamer Scholarship – Current Status

The JMS Scholarship aims to bridge the gap between research and practice in development. The scholarship is named after Dr Jörg Meyer-Stamer, an influential development thinker, trainer, consultant and founding partner of Mesopartner, who passed away early and unexpectedly in 2009. His academic colleagues and business partners decided to maintain Jörg's legacy by supporting young development researchers and practitioners.

Until now, five selected young researchers have been awarded the JMS Scholarship. So far, three papers

have been published on the Scholarship website (<http://www.jms-scholarship.com/publications/>):

1. *The value and limitations of success stories in understanding and promoting Local Economic Development (LED) – Lessons from selected cases studies in Ecuador.* The first scholarship was awarded to the LED expert Brian Wallis and was supervised by Prof. Dr Peter Knorringa, chair of Private Sector and Development at the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) at Erasmus University in Rotterdam.

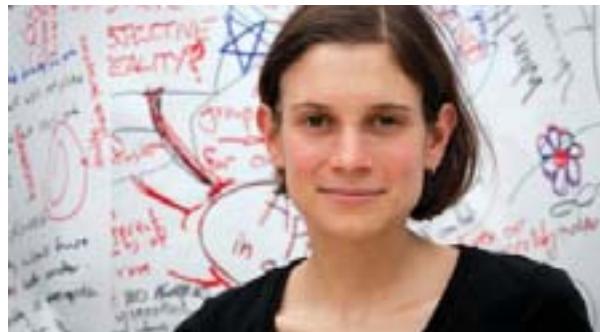


2. *Software firms and local development in Bolivia* by Claudia Ricaldez. This paper is based on her Master's thesis in the SEPT Program and was supervised by Prof. Utz Dornberger of Leipzig University. It contains research into the national competitiveness of the Bolivian software industry, with a special local focus on the cities Cochabamba, Santa Cruz and La Paz. Mrs Ricaldez used a systemic analysis framework and provided deeper insight into the current sector dynamics from a local and national perspective.





3. Experiences with seeking intervention in a complex system – Application of the viable system model (VSM) in a complex sugarcane production and supply system by Dr Sandra Hildbrand. Her research built on her PhD thesis from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Dr Hildbrand carried out this project during her time as postdoctoral research fellow at the same university, supervised by Prof. Dr Shamim Bodhani.



Two research projects are currently ongoing:

Evaluation of the efficiency of regional innovation systems and the effectiveness of the associative subsystems by Xabier Alberdi, Spain. This scholarship is sponsored by the SEPT Program of the University Leipzig. The study is based on a novel approach to measure the efficiency of regional innovation systems based on the identification of a set of relevant management, innovation and system gaps. With the support of the scholarship he asks how organisations at the meso level can work as catalysts of innovation and reduce these identified gaps. Xabier aims to generate practical and policy-relevant knowledge that can be exploited by key stakeholders in the regional innovation systems in the Basque country (among others). More efficient innovation systems may be relevant to bringing Southern European economies back on track. The supervisor of Xavier's research is Dr Mario Davide Parrilli, Senior Researcher at Orkestra – Basque Institute of Competitiveness.

In early 2014, Federica Nieri was awarded the 5th Jörg Meyer-Stamer Scholarship. Her supervisor is Professor Elisa Guilani from the Department of Economics and Management, University of Pisa in Italy, where Mrs. Nieri recently completed her MA in Marketing and Market Research. The title of her research project is Diffusion of sustainable practices in industrial clusters. In her project proposal she mentions that large megabrands and retailers are becoming increasingly concerned about their environmental and social reputation. They demand conformity with the corresponding codes and standards from their suppliers, but in reality both partners do not always comply with their self-established and self-imposed rules. While the behaviour of global players in international value chains had been researched



intensively, the human rights conduct of industrial cluster firms is a relatively unknown terrain.

In conclusion, during its first four years, the JMS Scholarship has evolved into a small, but relevant research instrument of excellence in economic development. All research projects are in line with Dr Meyer-Stamer's own research and practical work efforts and aim at helping to connect development debates in the northern and southern hemispheres. For Mesopartner it is a relevant communication tool between the company's practical development work and leading academic research.

**Dr Ulrich Harmes-Liedtke (uhl@mesopartner.com)**

# Mesopartner's strategic clients

## 2013/2014

Aluminium Federation, South Africa

Department of Science and Technology, South Africa  
EDA, Bosnia

Engeli Business Development, South Africa

GFA Green Skills Programme, South Africa

GIZ Capacity Strengthening for Private Sector  
Development, Myanmar

GIZ Promotion of the Green Economic Development  
Project (ProGED), The Philippines

GIZ Programme for Economic Growth, Namibia

GIZ Regional Economic Development (RED)  
Programme, Indonesia

GIZ SADC Finance and Investment Protocol (FIP)  
Programme

GIZ SADC Train for Trade Programme

Industrial Development Corporation – Agency Division,  
South Africa

International Labour Organization (ILO), Geneva,  
Switzerland

International Labour Organization (ILO), International  
Training Centre, Turin, Italy

International Labour Organization (ILO), Regional  
Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, Thailand

International Labour Organization (ILO), Business  
Opportunities and Support Services (BOSS) Project,  
Timor-Leste

International Technical Cooperation of the German  
Metrology Institute (Physikalisch-Technische  
Bundesanstalt (PTB)), Germany

Mekong Institute, Capacity Development for a More  
Inclusive and Equitable Growth, Greater Mekong  
Subregion (GMS) Project, Thailand

Multilateral Investment Funds (MIF), Inter-American  
Development Bank, Washington

National Foundry Technology Network, South Africa  
Practical Action, UK

Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), South Africa

Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa

Vaal University of Technology, South Africa

# Countries in which Mesopartner is currently active

2013

2014

Antigua and Barbuda	Costa Rica	Jordan	South Africa
Argentina	Croatia	Laos	Switzerland
Armenia	Egypt	Morocco	Thailand
Bolivia	Finland	Mexico	Timor-Leste
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Germany	Myanmar	Trinidad and Tobago
Brazil	Grenada	Mongolia	Tunisia
Burundi	Guatemala	Nepal	United Kingdom
Columbia	India	Peru	United States of America
	Indonesia	The Philippines	Vietnam



# The **Mesopartners**

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# SHAWN CUNNINGHAM

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Born 1973. PhD in Business Administration (North-West University, South Africa, 2009). Master's degree in Business Administration (North-West University, South Africa, 2001). Certificates in change management, project management and strategic management.

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#### **Main fields of expertise:**

Private sector development, including bottom-up policy improvement  
Innovation systems and technology transfer  
Local and regional economic development  
Cluster and value chain promotion  
Process design and process facilitation  
Expert development and coaching

#### **Working experience:**

2008 – current: Partner in Mesopartner  
2011 – current: Postdoctoral research fellow at Vaal University of Technology  
2010 – current: Research Associate at the Institute for Economic Research on Innovation, Tshwane University of Technology  
2003 – 2007: Senior expert in the GTZ South Africa Local Economic Development and Business Development Services Programme  
2001 – 2002: Worked in a South African development agency called NAMAC (National Manufacturing Advisory Centre Programme)  
1996 – 2001: Own business in the IT sector





## ZINI GODDEN

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Born 1966. Master's degree in Public and Development Management, University of the Witwatersrand, 2006.

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**Main fields of expertise:**

Local and Regional Economic Development  
Event and Process Facilitation  
Monitoring and Evaluation  
Leadership and Personal Development Training



**Working experience:**

Since 2013: Partner in Mesopartner  
2011 – 2013: Support for GIZ's Chamber and Advisory Network and Cooperation for Women Entrepreneurs (CHANCE)  
2011: Coordination of GIZ's Regional and Local Economic Development (RLED) and Trade Promotion programme  
2008 – 2010: Management of InWEnt's Locati (Local Competitive Advantage Training Initiative)  
2004 – 2009: Local Economic Development Consultant: MXA  
1996 – 2003: Programme Manager for the Netherlands-supported Youth Development Programme , Local Government Programme as well as the Gender Programme

## **ULRICH HARMES-LIEDTKE**

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### **Main fields of expertise:**

Local and regional economic development  
Cluster and value chain promotion  
Standards and quality infrastructure  
Coaching and methodology development

### **Working experience:**

Founding partner of Mesopartner (2003)  
1997 – 2002: ISA Consult GmbH, Bochum (Germany), senior consultant  
1996 – 1997: Foundation CIREM, Barcelona (Spain), junior consultant  
1991 – 1994: University of Bremen, research project on regional development in Europe, researcher.





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Born 1965. MA in economics (Munich, 1991).

**Main fields of expertise:**

Local and regional economic development  
Value chain and cluster development  
Business climate surveys and competitiveness rankings  
Pro-poor LED approaches  
Green economic development

**Working experience:**

Founding partner of Mesopartner (2003)  
2001 – 2002: Fraunhofer Gesellschaft e.V., Jakarta (Indonesia), PERISKOP project coordinator and senior consultant  
1999 – 2000: Fraunhofer Management GmbH, Munich (Germany), senior consultant  
1992 – 1999: Dorsch Consult Ingenieurgesellschaft mbH, Munich (Germany), consultant.

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Local and regional economic development  
Cluster and local innovation promotion  
Value chain promotion  
SME promotion  
Green economic development  
Bottom-up industrial policy

### **Working experience:**

Since 2004: partner in Mesopartner  
2003 – 2004: Private sector development specialist at GTZ headquarters, special focus south-east Europe  
2001 – 2003: Junior professional in GTZ private sector development programme in Honduras  
1999 – 2001: Researcher in joint INEF/IDS local cluster and global value chain project, Institute for Development and Peace, University of Duisburg



# The Mesopartner Administration



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Born 1974. Master's degree in Business Administration, North-West University, South Africa

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Annelien provides administrative and content support to Mesopartner. Her main tasks involve organising events such as the Summer Academy in Berlin, maintaining the website, managing the client database and customer communication. Her background in business enables her to provide content and fieldwork-related support to Mesopartner.

# The Mesopartner Associates in 2014



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Based in South Africa.

# Mesopartner publications 2012–2014

## CUNNINGHAM, S.

2012. Foundry Sector Slowly Starting to Respond to Localisation Signals. Magazine Article. Localisation for Africa. Johannesburg: On the Wire Media.

## CUNNINGHAM, S.

2012. The fundamentals of innovation system promotion for development practitioners. Leveraging a bottom-up understanding for better systemic interventions in innovation systems. Mesopartner Monograph 5. Mesopartner.

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## **CUNNINGHAM, S.**

2013. Using Social Network Analysis methods to assess the valve manufacturing sector in South Africa. VUT.

## **CUNNINGHAM, S. & JENAL, M.**

2013. Gaining systemic insight. Concept paper. Mesopartner.

## **CUNNINGHAM, S., WILLIAMS, G. & DE BEER, D.**

2014. Advanced manufacturing and jobs in South Africa: An examination of perceptions and trends. Conference Proceedings. International Conference on Manufacturing-led Growth for Employment and Equality. Johannesburg: DST.

## **HINDSON D.**

2014. LED and complex systems: Applying PACA and the Logical Framework in Burundi, April 2014, discussion paper for Mesopartner.

## **JENAL M. & CUNNINGHAM, S.**

2013. Gaining systemic insight to strengthen economic development initiatives: Drawing on systems thinking and complexity theories to improve developmental impact, Mesopartner Working Paper 16 Version 2, November.

## **MESOPARTNER. SISTME.**

2014. Thematic study of regional economic development in Latin America and the Caribbean – Evaluation of the interventions by the Multilateral Investment Fund and presentation of strategic guidelines, March 2014.

## **OSORIO-CORTES, L., JENAL, M. & BRAND, M.**

2013. Monitoring and measuring change in market systems: The systemic M&E principles in the context of the Kenya Markets Assistance Program. Case Study. The SEEP Network.

## **OSORIO-CORTES, L. & JENAL, M.**

2013. Monitoring and measuring change in market systems – Rethinking the current paradigm. Synthesis paper, 31 January 2013. The SEEP Network.

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