

Building Economically Cohesive Communities

in the Time of the Corona Pandemic

Jean Parker, PhD

Author and Instructor of Economics and Nonprofit Management

The Fundamentals of the Whole Economic Condition

When the love of God is established, everything else will be realized. This is the true foundation of all economics. Reflect upon it. Endeavor to become the cause of the attraction of souls rather than to enforce minds. Manifest true economics to the people. Show what love is, what kindness is, what true severance is and generosity.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, pp. 238-239)

From the Universal House of Justice

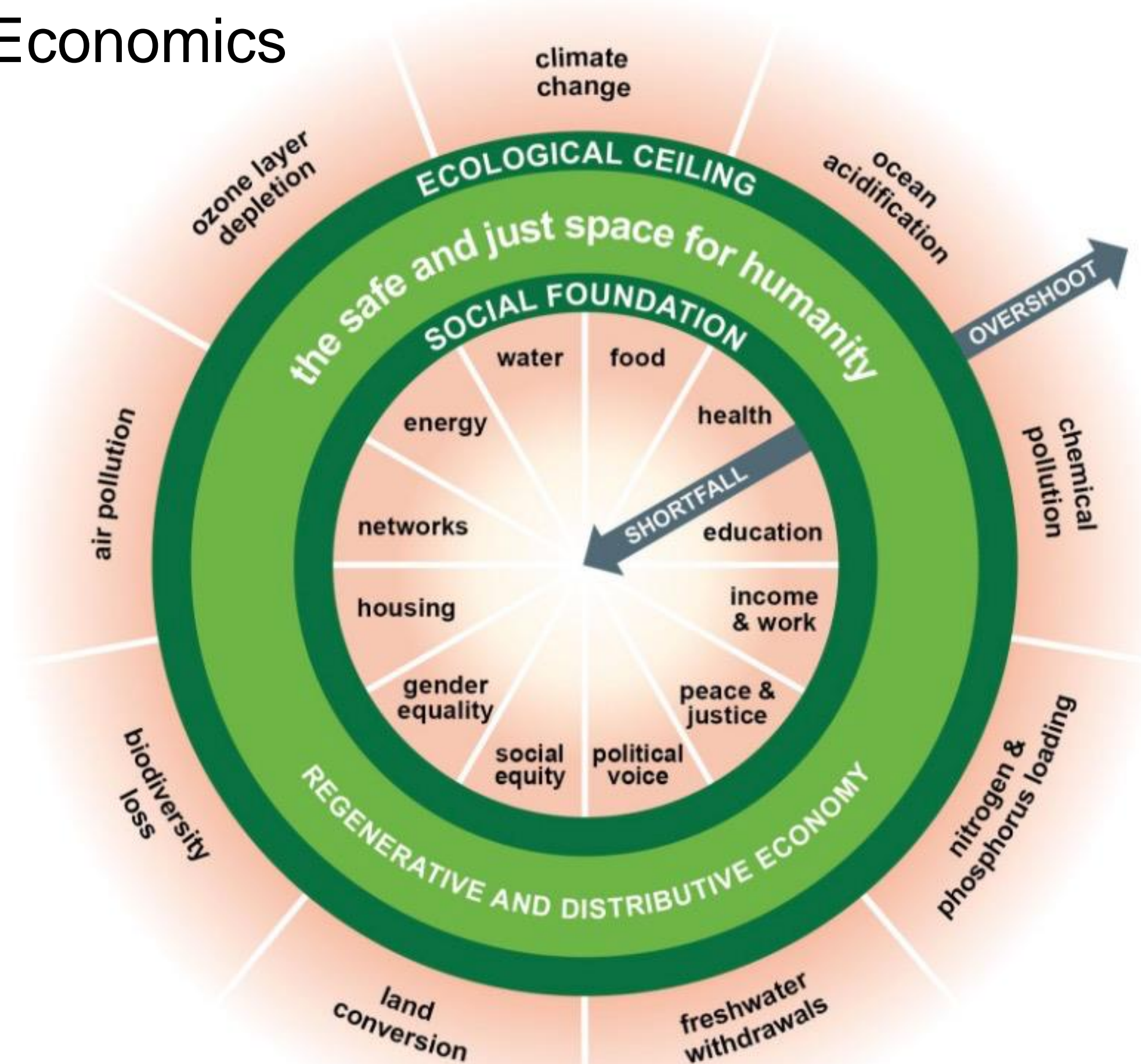
The welfare of any segment of humanity is inextricably bound up with the welfare of the whole. Humanity's collective life suffers when any one group thinks of its own well-being in isolation from that of its neighbours' or pursues economic gain without regard for how the natural environment, which provides sustenance for all, is affected. A stubborn obstruction, then, stands in the way of meaningful social progress: time and again, avarice and self-interest prevail at the expense of the common good.

(The Universal House of Justice, 1 March 2017)

Definitions

- **Economics:** The creation and responsible management of resources.
- **Prosperity:** The well-being of humanity and the planet.

Donut Economics



Practical Economic Suggestions for Everyday Use

- Look for opportunities to extend help to coworkers and competitors
- Resist the consumer mentality
- Be knowledgeable about advertising and read between the lines
- Spiritually justify every expenditure
- Avoid debt and create a habit of saving
- Spread the word about honest and fair businesses and professionals
- Don't buy the latest models if the old ones are in working condition
- Be truthful in filling out forms or tenders
- Give with a sense of sharing rather than with a sense of loss
- Spend as much energy in being detached from material possessions as you did in getting them
- Remind yourself of your spiritual destination while pursuing your financial goals

Economic Readjustment Begins with Justice

Justice is, in this day, bewailing its plight, and Equity groaneth beneath the yoke of oppression. The thick clouds of tyranny have darkened the face of the earth, and enveloped the peoples.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of
Bahá'u'lláh, p. 92)

“Never, never be afraid to do what’s right, especially if the well-being of a person or animal is at stake. Society’s punishments are small compared to the wounds we inflict on our soul when we look the other way.”

“He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it.”

“We will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Pledge

“At a public conference I won’t serve on a panel of two people or more unless there is at least one woman on the panel, not including the Chair.”

Owen Barder, Europe Director
Center for Global Development

<http://www.owen.org/pledge>

Attributes of Living Systems

- Self-created
- Diversity of parts
- Self-reflective
- Self-regulatory
- All component parts potentialized
- Communication among all parts
- Coordination of parts and functions
- Balance of interests are negotiated among parts
- Reciprocity of all parts in mutual contribution and assistance

Constructive Resilience

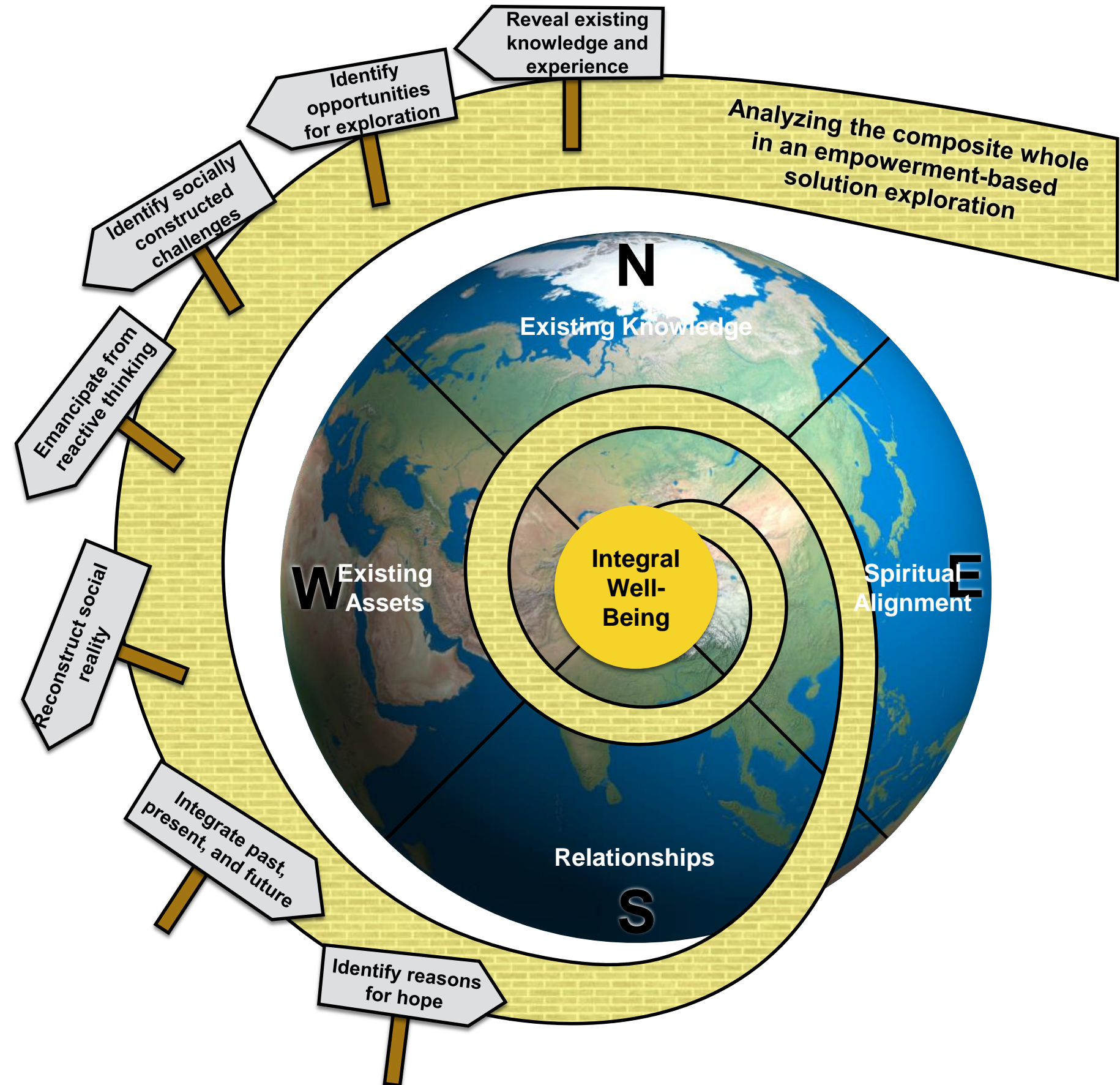
Proactively build new societal structures independent of existing oppressive or dysfunctional structures.

Individuals create strategies to thrive despite societal exclusion and discrimination. When the dominant practices are either too limiting or unworkable, these people devise alternative strategies to do their jobs and live their lives. People with disabilities are a prime example.

From a Bahai perspective, there is a fundamental spiritual context within which social change takes place. Unity is the primary force for progress, rather than something to be addressed after all the injustice is corrected. When unity prevails, spiritual forces are released that make advancement possible.

www.buildingresilience.global

An Intecritical Framework for Constructive Resilience: Planning for Community-Based Economic Sustainability





Women learning about agriculture at the Barli Development Institute for Rural Women in Indore, India

(Copyright © Bahá'í International Community)



An experimental agricultural plot at the University Center for Rural Well-Being in Jamundi-Robles, Colombia (Copyright © Bahá'í International Community)



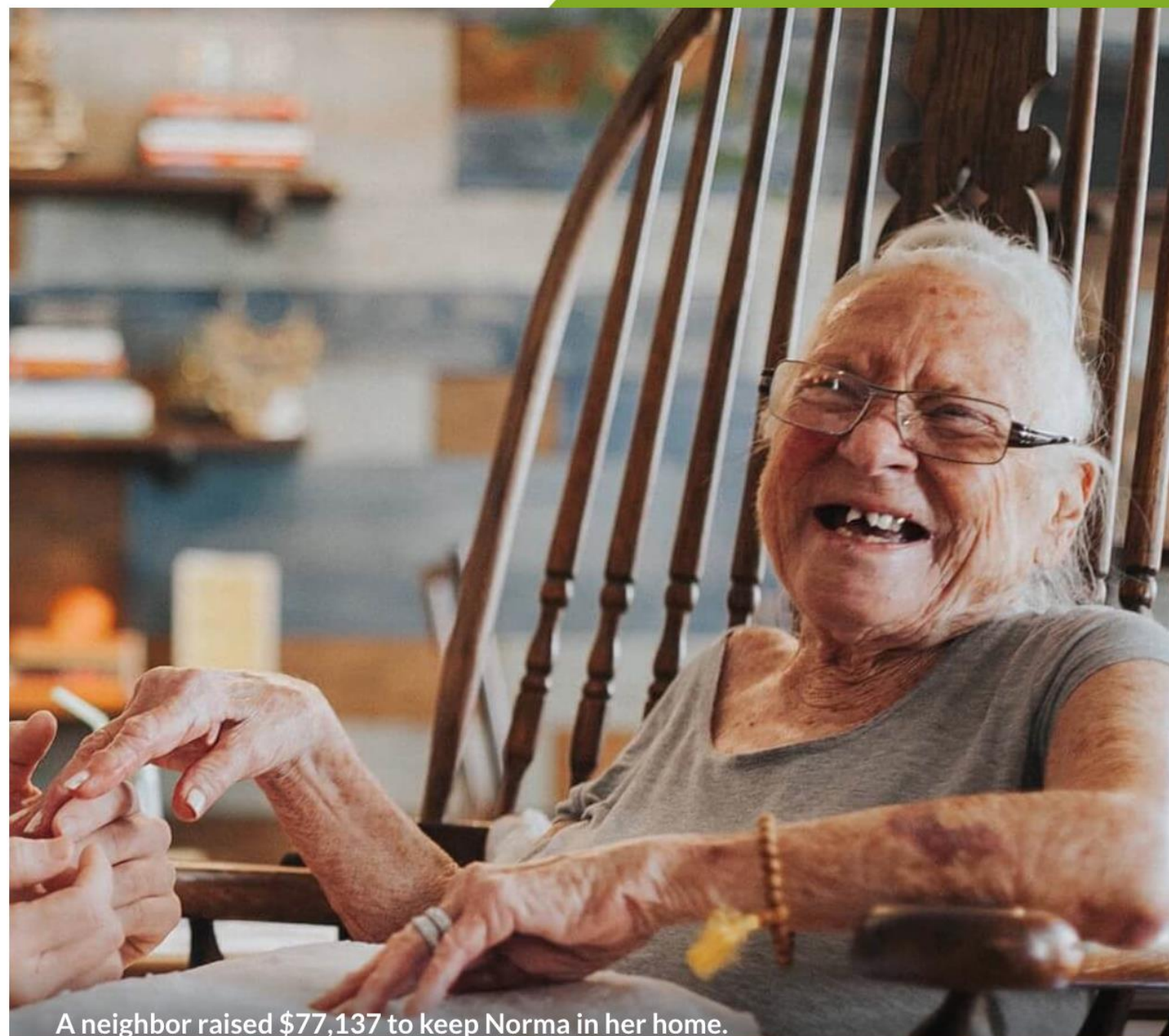
Community members learning about health in Tiriki West, Kenya
(Copyright © Bahá'í International Community)



A community banking project in Murun, Mongolia
(Copyright © Bahá'í International Community)

The #1 and most trusted free fundraising platform

Start a GoFundMe



A neighbor raised \$77,137 to keep Norma in her home.

The gofundme web site, where people around the world can start fundraising campaigns

(Image credit: gofundme.com)



Omari Mabula, driver of an ambulance taxi, rural Tanzania's "Uber for pregnant women"

(Image credit: Sala Lewis / Vodafone Foundation)



At repair cafés, volunteers help community members repair their broken possessions

(Image credit: repaircafe.org)



This tool library in Toronto, Canada loans tools and appliances to community members

(Image credit: torontotoollibrary.com)



SAME Café: So All May Eat

At this café in Denver, USA, patrons can pay for their meal by a donation or by volunteering in the kitchen (Image credit: Courtney Pankrat/civileats.com)

Lesley joins a time bank.



Lesley helps **Helga** with her shopping and earns 2 Time Dollars.



Lesley spends her Time Dollars having **Michael** teach her how to play the guitar.



Time Banking

?

Lesley spends her Time Dollars by having **Helga** help **Rasputin** with his reading.



Stanley spends a Time Dollar by attending yoga class led by **Lesley**.



New Economy Coalition

Mission: The New Economy Coalition (NEC) is a network of organizations imagining and building a future where people, communities, and ecosystems thrive. Together, we are creating deep change in our economy and politics—placing power in the hands of people and uprooting legacies of harm—so that a fundamentally new system can take root.

Vision: At the New Economy Coalition, we're driven by a belief that all our struggles—for racial, economic, and climate justice; for true democratic governance and community ownership; for prosperity rooted in interdependence with the earth's natural systems—are deeply interconnected. Rising to the challenge of building a better world demands that we fundamentally transform our economic and political systems.

<https://neweconomy.net/about>

Important Links

- Bahai Inspired Economics: www.badishams.net
- Better Life Index: www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/#/111111111111
- Sustainable Economic Development Assessment: www.bcg.com/en-us/publications/2019/seda-measuring-well-being.aspx
- Happy Planet Index: happyplanetindex.org
- United For A Fair Economy: www.faireconomy.org
- What Is Time Banking? timebanks.org/what-is-timebanking
- Shareable: www.shareable.net
- Post Growth Institute: www.postgrowth.org
- Doughnut Economics: www.kateraworth.com/doughnut
- My web site: www.buildingresilience.global

Never lose thy trust in God. Be thou ever hopeful, for the bounties of God never cease to flow upon man. If viewed from one perspective they seem to decrease, but from another they are full and complete. Man is under all conditions immersed in a sea of God's blessings. Therefore, be thou not hopeless under any circumstances, but rather be firm in thy hope.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, pp. 205-206)