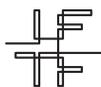


# CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

*Paths out of Poverty*

## Summary of an Experiment in Global Engagement

THE  
ROCKEFELLER  
FOUNDATION



INSTITUTE FOR THE FUTURE

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## ABOUT ...

### **INSTITUTE FOR THE FUTURE**

The Institute for the Future is an independent, nonprofit strategic research group celebrating more than 40 years of forecasting experience. The core of our work is identifying emerging trends and discontinuities that will transform global society and the global marketplace. We provide our members with insights into business strategy, design process, innovation, and social dilemmas. Our research spans a broad territory of deeply transformative trends, from health and health care to technology, the workplace, and human identity. The Institute for the Future is located in Palo Alto, California.

### **THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION**

The Rockefeller Foundation supports work that expands opportunity and strengthens resilience to social, economic, health and environmental challenges—affirming its pioneering philanthropic mission since 1913 to promote the well-being of humanity. The Foundation operates both within the United States and around the world. The Foundation's efforts are overseen by an independent Board of Trustees and managed by its president through a leadership team drawn from scholarly, scientific, and professional disciplines.

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# 1 | Introduction

On April 2-4, 2012, the Rockefeller Foundation collaborated with Institute for the Future (IFTF) to run a first-of-its-kind global forecasting game called *Catalysts for Change*. The goal of the online game was to convene people from all over the world to address the problems of poverty and specifically to identify innovative approaches to addressing those problems.

At the same time, IFTF convened a face-to-face gathering of approximately 75 thought leaders and social activists from Silicon Valley and the San Francisco Bay Area to engage in a conversation moderated by the Rockefeller Foundation's president, Dr. Judith Rodin. IFTF streamed this event to the web, and game players from around the world were able to join the conversation virtually and pose questions to Dr. Rodin and her panel of three guest speakers: Mitch Kapor (Level Playing Field Institute), Jane McGonigal (SuperBetter), and Shannon Spanhake (San Francisco Mayor's Office).

This report is a summary of the game objectives and design, the pre-game engagement by the global community, the important role of global game guides, and a preliminary analysis of the game play itself.



## 2 | Game Objectives and Game Design

A primary goal of the game was to disseminate the *Catalysts for Change* map developed by Institute for the Future. IFTF designed the visual map as a way to translate a two-year collection of newsletters from the Rockefeller Foundation's Searchlight Partners network into a tool for people around the world who are working at the frontlines of catalyzing change in the lives of poor or vulnerable communities.

The *Catalysts for Change* map ([searchlightcatalysts.org](http://searchlightcatalysts.org)) identifies four key catalysts: new **evidence**, new **capacities**, new **rules**, and new **stories**. For each of these catalysts, the map highlights several action zones and a core challenge, as well as signals of innovation and change drawn from the Searchlight newsletters. In converting this map into a game, the Rockefeller Foundation sought to support a worldwide conversation about the ways that the four catalysts could serve as a starting place for innovative practices in global development and social change.

Map provides a unique view of four key catalysts for change



The four catalysts form the basis for the game design, which is built on IFTF's Foresight Engine collaborative forecasting platform. The platform includes several key elements that use game mechanics to build engagement among large numbers of participants:

- An immersive video that introduces the players to the central challenge of the game and sets up the call to action: to be a *catalyst for change*.
- A simple interactive design in which participants play cards to share ideas: Positive Imagination and Critical Imagination cards, upon which players can build Momentum, Antagonism, Adaptation, and Investigation cards.
- A point system that incentivizes players to build on one another's cards in order to win points and a Leaderboard that tracks the ranking of players by points.
- A set of game guide controls that allow game guides to mark cards as Super Interesting, Common Knowledge, or Scenario Fail.
- A set of achievements that include seven levels of play from Inspired to Legend; a graph of the types of the cards participants play most often; and special awards designed specifically for the game.
- A dashboard that allows players to track the cards by several categories plus selectively follow individual players.
- Player profiles that show all the cards that an individual has played and tracked as well as achievement levels, points, and special awards.
- A game blog that presents players with missions and challenges in addition to synthesizing key themes and making award announcements in real time as the game progresses.

The *Catalysts for Change* game built on IFTF's Foresight Engine collaborative forecasting platform



Beyond this basic platform, the game design included the use of Twitter and Facebook as platforms for rallying the community, announcing missions and challenges, and providing an opportunity to communicate outside the constraints of the game platform. In particular, multilingual game guides maintained three Twitter accounts—in French, Spanish, and Chinese—as a way to engage non-English speakers.

In addition, some of the Searchlight Partners set up their own Facebook pages to promote and guide the game in their respective geographies. IFTF also provided a “live play” design for playing the game face-to-face, and some of the Searchlight Partners took advantage of this tool to run live versions of the game locally.



Twitter accounts in multiple languages to engage non-English speakers



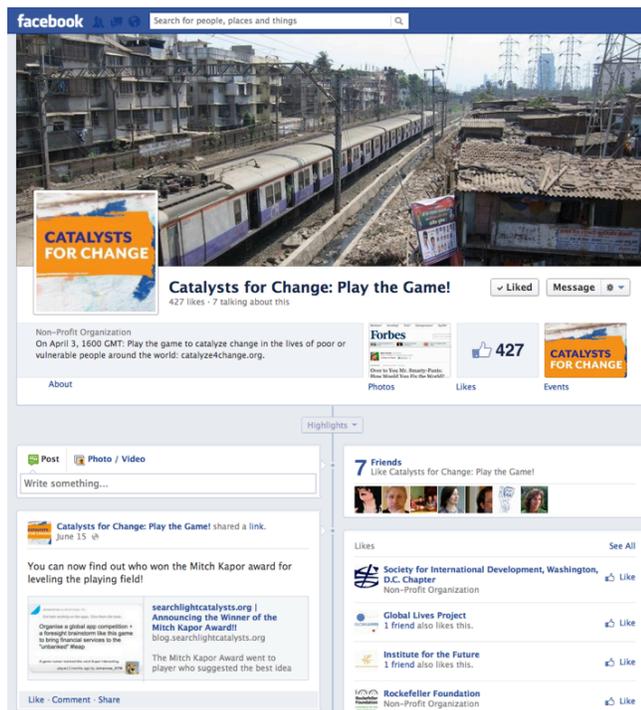
### 3 | Pre-Game Engagement: Building the Community

A key strategy for building the game community and inspiring participation in the global conversation is a well-defined pre-game plan using social media, online blogs and press coverage, endorsements by relevant community partners, a dynamic Facebook page, and well-curated Twitter accounts.

#### WHAT WE DID

Here's a brief summary of how we used each of these platforms:

**Facebook:** We used Facebook as a launching pad for the pre-game activities, starting about two weeks before the actual game date. Our page at [facebook.com/Catalyze4Change](https://facebook.com/Catalyze4Change) provided a platform for us to present a teaser video and pre-game missions and personal challenges. The pre-game missions were particularly valuable in building player enthusiasm and educating them about the online map, which launched at the same time. The Facebook page helped us recruit an initial base of players from our existing personal and professional networks and allowed us to highlight the Searchlight Partners and other community partners who could bring more players to the game. This Facebook page also helped us recruit a few last-minute global game guides.



*Catalysts for Change Facebook page launched at the same time as online map*

**Twitter:** Side-by-side with the Facebook page, we launched a Twitter account @catalyze4change. Like the Facebook page, this account allowed us to maintain a steady stream of news and motivational messages to build pre-game buzz and drive potential players to the registration site. We highlighted pre-game missions as they were posted to the Facebook page, and invited community celebrities like Jane McGonigal and Howard Rheingold to tweet about the game at critical junctures. We also worked with our multilingual game guides to launch Twitter accounts in three languages besides English:

- Spanish: @catalyze4csp
- French: @catalyze4cfr
- Chinese: @未来促进者 or [twitter.com/#!/Catalyze4C](https://twitter.com/#!/Catalyze4C)

**Pre-Registration Page and Game Blog:** From the time we first announced the game on our IFTF website and on the *Catalysts for Change* Facebook page, we had a live registration page where prospective players could register to play the game. Watching the steady build of game registrants helped us anticipate participation and augment our outreach strategy as needed. The Foresight Engine platform also includes a game blog, and we used this as the official information platform for the game, with much of the same information as the Facebook page in the pre-game period. This blog ensured that non-Facebook users had a go-to site for game information.

**Community Partners:** We engaged 18 community partners to help build a global community for the game. We provided these partners with a kit of messages and art to display on their own websites. In exchange, we highlighted them on our Facebook page with their organizational logos as well as on the game site itself. These community partners were invaluable to our social media outreach. They included:

- BoingBoing, *United States*
- Catalytic Communities, *Brazil*
- China Grassroots Women's Organization, *China*
- Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Chulalongkorn University, *Thailand*
- Foresight for Development, *South Africa*
- Future Challenges, *Germany*
- Global Openness Project, *United States*
- Global Lives Project, *International*
- Level Playing Field Institute, *United States*
- LinkTV, *United States*

- Masters of Rhythm, *South Africa*
- Meedan, *United States*
- Quest Alliance, *India*
- Shareable, *United States*
- Siam Intelligence Unit, *Thailand*
- SpringAGE, *South Africa*
- Trendnovation Southeast, *Thailand*
- ViewChange, *United States*

**Searchlight Partners:** A central strategy from the beginning of the project was to support the Searchlight Partners in engaging their individual networks and using the game as an opportunity to promote *Catalysts for Change* and their own foresight work in their regions. We invited all the Searchlight Partners to join us as game guides, and several accepted the invitation. As with our community partners, we also sent them a kit of materials for promoting the game on their websites and Facebook pages, which many of them did. Trendnovation, Thailand, in gave us an early pre-game boost in recruiting registrants in Asia by setting up their own *Catalysts for Change* Facebook page. We also provided a set of tips and guidelines for hosting live face-to-face groups to play the game, which at least four of the partners did.

**Dissemination and Outreach:** IFTF also used a press release entitled “1.2 Billion People Live in Poverty—The Rockefeller Foundation and Institute for the Future Invite 7 Billion People to Help Find Solutions” to engage the public before the game began. In addition, IFTF provided a media kit that included a community partner invitation, email templates for use by community partners and Searchlight Partners, game rally flyers, a *Catalysts for Change* fact sheet, and a *Catalysts for Change* media advisory (with spokespeople bios).

**Online Map Site:** At the same time as we announced the game, we also launched a website to share the *Catalysts for Change* map globally. A key goal of the game was to disseminate the information and framework in the map and drive viewers around the world to the map site. The map site is designed to provide a dynamic, public window into the map content as well as a portal to the Searchlight Signals database from which the map was created.

**Pre-Game Missions and Quests:** Pre-game missions and quests are critical elements to engaging the initial enthusiasm of potential players in the period between the game announcement and the actual game launch. Participation in pre-game missions also helps build the social media buzz. In addition, the pre-game activities were specifically designed to build a literacy in the language and concepts of *Catalysts for Change*, so that players could more easily enter the world of the game. We made a distinction between missions and quests. The missions focused on game objectives, like finding signals of possible catalysts for change in the world. The quests focused on personal self-discovery and personal network development. Here we used “personality types” to help people identify with one or more of the four catalysts types: evidence collector, capacity builder, rules architect, or storyteller—thus internalizing these abstract concepts.

Metric	Pre-Game	Final
Facebook likes	275	427
Twitter followers	170	218
Game registrants	1024	1616
Press reports	3 articles	21 articles

Social media and press/blog metrics, both pre- and post-game

### METRICS OF SUCCESS

The success of the pre-game engagement strategy is ultimately measured in registered players and actual engagement in the game play. Both far exceeded our targets and our historical experience with the Foresight Engine Platform. But the specific social media and press/blog report metrics also show the value of the pre-game efforts. See sidebar for the key statistics, both before and at the close of the game.

The total number of Twitter impressions (or views) after the first 24 hours of game play was 160,956, reaching an audience of 41,234 followers. The top 10 sources of impressions are shown in the sidebar to the left.

### EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS

The dissemination strategy, supported by community outreach, produced 8 articles in major publications, including *Forbes*, *Huffington Post*, *Fast Co-Exist*, *Evolution of Philanthropy*, *VentureBeat*, *RE: Philanthropy*, *Education Week*, and *BoingBoing*. In addition, the game was highlighted in such blogs and media outlets as Rosario Grosso’s blog, *The Viral Media Lab*, *Shareable*, *Science Blogs*, *Population Media Center*, *GastroGamer*, *Global Population Explosion*, *TurtleSense*, *The New School Changemakers*, *Mission to Learn*, and additional *Huffington Post* blogs.

Several organizations beyond the community partners also issued calls to action, including Learning Times, OSLN, and Council on Foundations.

Twitter Account	Impressions
1. iff:	54,042
2. nnenna:	20,864
3. deepamehta:	11,400
4. krash63:	9,268
5. basicincome:	7,935
6. tatitosi:	6,818
7. catalyze4change:	6,304
8. jacobcharold:	5,652
9. rfurlan:	5,248
10. heatherfleming:	4,842

Top 10 sources of Twitter impressions

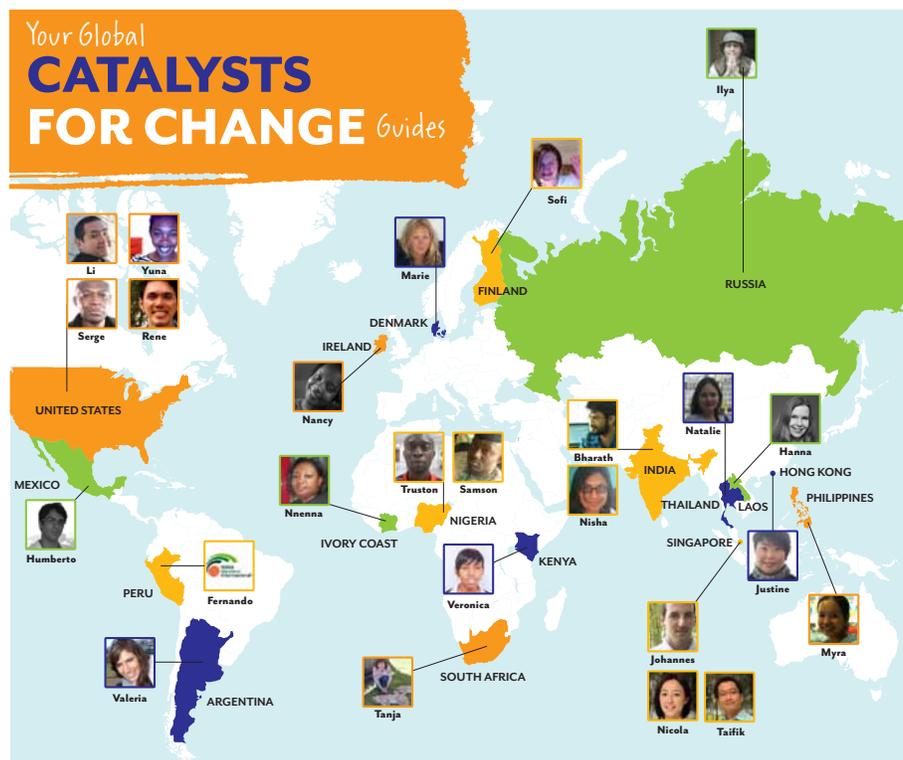
## 4 | Game Guides: The Game's Secret Sauce

Game guiding was a core strategy for engaging the global community in the *Catalysts for Change* game and for synthesizing the complex flow of information in real-time.

We had a total of 32 game guides from 16 countries. These guides were organized into three distinctive roles:

**Multilingual Game Guides:** These guides were recruited specifically to serve as translators during the game:

- Humberto Cervera, *Mexico (Spanish)*
- Valeria Caeiro, *Argentina (Spanish)*
- Li Shao, *USA (Chinese)*
- Serge N'djemba, *USA (French)*
- Yuna Ngai, *USA (French)*



Game guides from around the globe

**Searchlight Partners:** A number of the Searchlight Partners agreed to serve as game guides by marking cards and encouraging participation in their respective regions:

- Nnenna Nwakanma, ACET, *Ghana*
- Fernando Bazán, FORO International, *Peru*
- Tanja Hichert, SA Node of the Millenium Project, *South Africa*
- Johannes Loh, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, *Singapore*
- Nicola Pocock, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, *Singapore*
- Taufik Indrakesuma, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, *Singapore*

**Global Game Bloggers:** IFTF also recruited an extended set of game guides to encourage participation in all regions of the world, to represent diverse perspectives, and to assist in marking cards and developing posts for the game blog, synthesizing the key themes as they were emerging:

- Truston Allende, *Nigeria*
- Samson Itodo, *Nigeria*
- Justine JayTang, *Hong Kong*
- Sofi Kurki, *Finland*
- Hanna Lakkala, *Laos*
- Nancy Muigei, *Ireland*
- Veronica Nguti, *Kenya*
- Nnenna Nwakanma, ACET, *Ghana*
- Bharath Palavalli, *India*
- Marie Sakse, *Denmark*
- Myra Suarez, *The Philippines*
- Ilya Utekhin, *Russia*
- Rene Viquiera, *USA*

In addition, an IFTF team of game guides participated, including Brinda Dalal, Tessa Finlev, David Evan Harris, Ben Hamamoto, Rachel Hatch, Lyn Jeffery, Bradley Kreit, and Sara Skvirsky.

Together these game guides became champions of the game and the ideas embodied in *Catalysts for Change*.

Tessa Finlev organized and led the game guide community. Using webcasts and Powerpoint presentations to train the guides in individual and group sessions, she introduced them to both the *Catalysts for Change* map framework and the Foresight Engine platform, including its advanced game guide features. An enthusiastic advocate for inclusive foresight, Tessa built a strong sense of community even before the game began. This spirit is captured in the early morning emails of two game guides on the first day of the game:

---

*hi everyone!!!!*

*Valeria from Argentina*

*I can't believe THIS!!!!!! God bless the internet and this amazing chance we are having. It gives me the goosebumps to feel connected to ALL of you*

*I keep reading your emails and I know this is getting bigger and bigger.*

*LET'S ROCK!*

*We should ALL get together some day. That would be a dream come true!!!!*

*Have a great day !*

---

*Hi everyone,*

*3:37 PM Lagos, Nigeria. It's dark outside as the rain threatens. I am connected to everyone all over the world thanks to the internet.*

*We are all on different time zones and communicating in real-time.*

*Before the game starts we have already solved the problem of time travel.*

*Congrats.*

---

With an average of 378 cards played per hour over the course of 48 hours, it was essential to have a coordinated team of game guides. Their primary responsibilities were:

- To mark cards as Super Interesting, Common Knowledge, and Scenario Fail. The Super Interesting cards form a repository of 764 cards that rise to the top of the 18,000+ cards played during the game.
- To highlight themes that emerged from the cards in real-time, often commenting on long chains of conversation and sharing their own perspectives and stories from their regions. (These provide the basis for the summary thematic analysis below.)
- To probe the meaning of the cards and invite further development of conversations, especially through use of the Investigation cards.
- To sift through the cards/players, confer awards, and congratulate players on their wins.

The team used a Chatzy private chat room as the back channel for all game guide discussions and technical questions. This was a critical community support space for the guides throughout the 48 hours of gameplay.

### MULTILINGUAL GAMEPLAY

Even though the Foresight Engine is an English-only platform, a clear project goal was to engage people in their own languages as far as possible. Our approach to multilingual gameplay was twofold:

- First, we committed to translating all the major blog posts about missions and quests on the game blog and the game Facebook page into both French and Spanish. We also invited our multilingual game guides to write their own posts in their native language, and IFTF translated them into English as they were posted.
- Second, we commissioned the multilingual game guides to set up Twitter accounts for the game in French, Spanish, and Chinese.

As it turned out, the Spanish support for the game was particularly strong, and many players actually played their cards in Spanish, with the Spanish game guides translating.

## LOCAL, REAL-TIME PLAY

Some of the Searchlight Partners requested guidance on how to hold real-time, face-to-face live plays of the game. In response, IFTF provided tips on how play together to build a local group voice in the global game. These included possible discussion topics, suggestions for playing in teams, choosing *Catalyst for Change* identities, playing the missions, using the dashboard, and making local awards parallel to the online game awards.

Face-to-face games were played by the African Center for Economic Transformation in Ghana, the South Africa Node of the Millenium Project, Intellectap in India, and FORO National/International in Peru. Those groups have written their own reports of the experience, but we would like to highlight here the experience of ACET in Accra, as described in an email by Nnenna Nwakanma at the conclusion of the game:

---

*We are in Accra...and right on the GMT!! Plus we organise face to face sessions too. Tuesday we had an afternoon session to kick off. Wednesday we had a morning and an afternoon session. Today, we are having f2f from 10 to 1.*

*Every time the room is full and games are intertwined with heated debates. We have had all sorts of people come in to play. Then arrives the erstwhile ambassador of Ghana to the UK, who also happened to have been the personal assistant of Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah, the founding father of Ghana's Independence...and his personal Interpreter into French.*

*Imagine the anglo-franco thing that followed!*

*Then we close 'officially' in the evening and we find out nobody is leaving. Food is sitting outside waiting and people are sitting inside doing cards.*

*Accra really rocks!!*

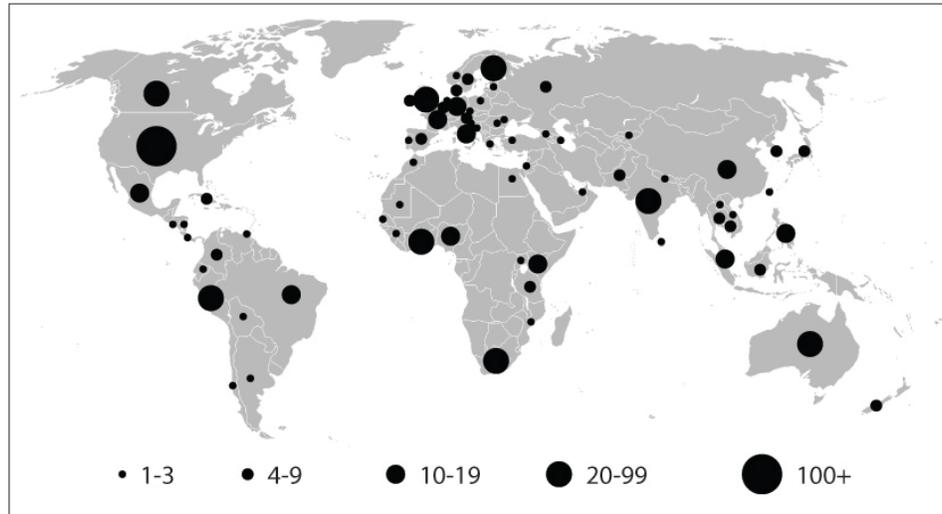
*Nnenna*

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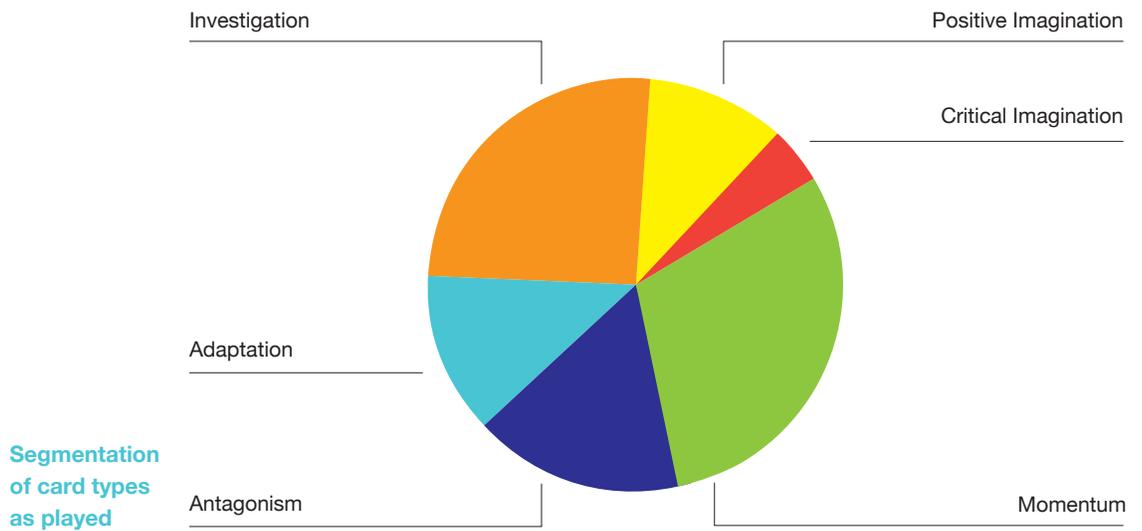
## 5 | Game Play: How It All Came Together

Over the 48 hours of *Catalysts for Change* game play, 1,616 players from 79 countries played 18,207 cards.



### TYPES OF CARDS PLAYED

By design, the cards fall into six categories: the two top-level categories of Positive Imagination and Critical Imagination, and four follow-on categories of Momentum, Antagonism, Adaptation, and Investigation. Of the cards played, 51% had follow-on cards. The group engaged in very positive dialogue, with more than twice as many Positive Imagination as Critical Imagination. Among the follow-on cards, Momentum cards, which build on idea cards, appeared more frequently than any other card type. Only about 18% of follow-on cards were Antagonism cards.



## CARD CHAINS

The large number of cards played and the high percentage of follow-on cards combined to create a highly conversational game in which people engaged in long chains of discussion of ideas. Of these chains, 1,400 had more than 10 cards; 102 had more than 100 cards. The longest validated chain was 240 cards. (Some card chains appear longer, but they may have been a result of manipulating gameplay.)

Often these chains unfold from an initial, seemingly simple idea to include one or more quite innovative ideas. For example, a long chain about the connection between criminal histories and poverty started with a simple observation and question:

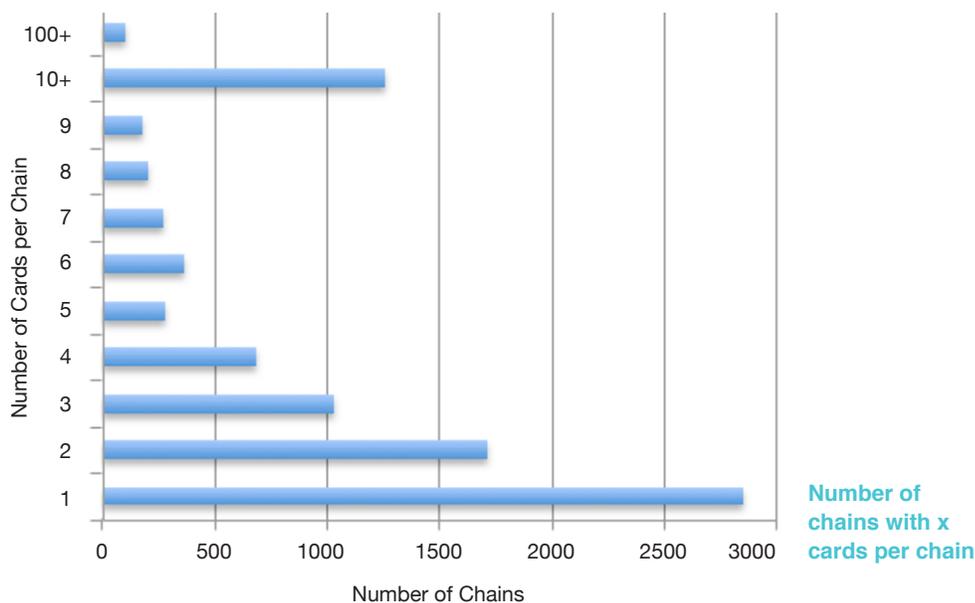
*Many in America who live in poverty cannot get jobs because of minor criminality. If they clean up, could they have their records sealed?*

This led to a report of the benefits of sports for lowering crime rates:

*Developing sports academies and incentives has proven to be a partial solution for lowering crime rates, as most inmates are very young.*

Further along the chain, someone turned the idea of the game on itself, with this suggestion:

*Depending on incarceration location, have inmates play games to solve local problems and gain a stake in the outcomes.*



Another chain focused on several New Evidence strategies:

*Create an internet hub for storage, analysis, and presentation of data related to anti-poverty. Which efforts work? Which don't?*

This led to a specific suggestion to:

*Get top universities in cooperation with orgs like TED to compete to feed data/presentations in the hub. Reward data with prestige*

Even more inventive was the suggestion to:

*Hold annual Gapminder Days with Presidents and Ministers to play with dynamic data & see the impact of tax & spend decision on the poor?*

Chain analysis is one of the most promising directions for further analysis of the game cards. Chains connect multiple ideas, topics, and issues together, suggesting the potential for new synergetic solutions. Many of the chains in the game also linked players from different countries and regions of the world. They offer an opportunity to compare the perspectives on similar issues from these different regions.

### TOP GAME THEMES

A thorough analysis of the themes from the 18,000+ cards played in the game is beyond the scope of this report. However, we can provide a high-level summary by doing basic word frequency analysis and also by reviewing the themes and cards presented in the game's blog, as these posts were explicitly meant to highlight some of the key ideas that game guides saw as they marked cards and played Investigation cards to encourage the players to go deeper.

A quick scan of the word cloud for those words that occur at least 30 times in the data set reveals many of the obvious themes we would expect in a game about poverty and social change (see Appendix A). Community, education, and work stand out as the headline topics.

However, going even a little distance down the word frequency list, we start to find more specific perspectives embodied in words like *creativity, currency, design, farming, foresight, funding, games, gender, government, health, homelessness, housing, social entrepreneurs, knowledge, language, local, making, media, mobile, open source, religion, slums, small-scale, standards, sustainability, tax, technology, tourism, transparency, and water*. These give a sense of the character of the global conversation that took place in the game.

When we delve into the transcript of the game blog, we find these themes echoed in specific cards that game guides chose to highlight. For example, regarding **creativity**, the blog singles out this card:

*Find the creatives in each community. Put 'em together. Give 'em chance/ time/resources. Sit back & watch. Support the 1s thinking different.*

Cards about **cities** and **urban planning** signal the importance of neighborhoods, participation in planning, and new modes of urban monitoring:

*Avoid slums demolition and removal, help slum inhabitants generate positive neighborhood effects #urban*

*Create networks of slum communities across cities and countries to defend their rights and speak up #capacities*

*#urban poverty and marginalization is supported by city planning errors discouraging people from interaction and responsibility*

*We need to establish a new planning culture. How could it look like?*

*City Pulse – deliver the pulse (sensor data) of a city to peoples smart phones showing a persons impact on the city #urban*

Several cards consider alternate **currencies** and bartering systems:

*New currencies 2 value longterm preservation of things not quantifiable eg love, culture, health, care etc which measures our other 'wealth'*

*Develop "Time Equity" banks where citizens invest time (labor) on local infrastructure projects in exchange for community services*

*Introducing a resource-based economy in which all goods and services are available without the use of money, barter or any type of debt*

*Build a parallel economic system that does not rely on large corporations/ financial institutions, but works to benefit all participants*

*Tapping into business to business bartering and opening to citizen to business and citizen to citizen bartering on the same platforms*

*Bartering systems – move away from financial transactions and move back toward bartering systems that trade in real goods/products/svcs*

*An orthogonal-Kiva idea, where borrowers choose from lenders*



South Asia Regional Viewpoint card from Catalysts for Change map



Southeast Asia Regional Viewpoint card from Catalysts for Change map

A perhaps unexpected topic that engendered a lot of discussion was the role of **empathy** in solving the problems of poverty:

*Our brains are wired to empathize only with those we can see. Either train ourselves for greater empathy or make the poor more visible*

*Jeremy Rifkin has written the book on this – “The Empathic Civilization”*

*Greater empathy unlocks social surplus: we are more likely to help, mentor, train someone living in poverty when we empathize with them*

*Raise awareness by creating augmented reality immersions of shadow city living so people can layer that reality over their own*

*I found Kony 2012 to be very unthinking and fascist in ways, because everybody let themselves be sheep, and controlled by emotion*

*Sensitize children to value and help each other through games that allow them to see the problems of the world*

While **education** was one of the top themes of the game, the gamers looked outside of traditional education structures for game-changing strategies:

*Train internet café operators to be content curators as well. Online content is highly untapped. Link café ops to university interns too*

*Provide, in addition to education, entrepreneurial education and funding to people to allow them to start businesses*

*# youth: Might be interesting to turn the education systems across the world upside down for a week: Let the students teach the teachers*

*Education erects barriers based on the power dynamics knowledge creates*

Not surprisingly, **foresight** figures prominently in the strategies of players to catalyze change:

*When people write the stories of their future selves, their hopes, goals, what their world could be like in 10 years, the journey begins*

*Better analysis of job demand for the next 50 years. Focused application of this foresight to maximization of opportunities for the poor*

*Involve people from slums in national foresight programs*

*Local foresight workshops to allow excluded communities to future-plan and negotiate with different actors in an ordered and coherent way*

*Storytelling mechanisms could make sure of foresight techniques to make use of lessons to build ideal futures, while monitoring challenges*

Discussion of **government** and **governance** focused especially on the dangers of installing bureaucratic procedures where informal processes are working to the advantage of poor people. Corruption was also a key concern:

*“Channels of corruption” can stifle poverty alleviation, so need to socially engineer ways around this*

*Malaysia long ago required all public employees to wear name tags, making it easier to report bribe takers*

Although the game blog noted that **health** as a topic was surprisingly under-represented in the discussion, the game guides highlighted a few health issues and strategies, such as:

*Poor personal hygiene and lack of sanitation is the leading cause of disease*

*Create learning networks for pregnant women delivering by phone  
fact-based practical lessons to decrease child mortality rates*

One chain featured in the blog raised the issue of endangered **languages**:

*In South America, preservation of native tongues can become an effective way for enhancing often tense government-citizen relations*

*An official UN “Endangered Language” list. Countries that take steps to protect native tongues get foreign aid bonus?*

*In Southern Thailand, Philippines, and China’s periphery, conflict and violence breaks out where government try to stamp out native tongues*

Issues of **sustainability** and **resilience** threaded the discussion, sometimes with more questions than conviction. For example:

*If certain groups are cash-poor but lead a sustainable and dependable lifestyle, should they be left alone?*

*Ecotourism could be a great complement to agro-tourism, especially for developing countries, boosting local economies*

*I would say eco-tourism has negatively affected local communities; it uses similar tools and logistics that mass tourism already use and is now an industry*

*Green teams out of unemployed and homeless. They’ll install all kind of green stuff (wind power generators, panel, solar, urban agriculture)*

*Install play pumps in schools so as kids play on the roundabout it pumps water up from the well or produces electricity to charge laptops*

*Sharing to eliminate waste. eg: the act of owning a chainsaw is ridiculously inefficient, but if we ALL owned the SAME chainsaw...?*



Africa Regional Viewpoint card from Catalysts for Change map

## 5 | Game Play: How It All Came Together



Latin America Regional Viewpoint card from Catalysts for Change map

While **sexuality** as a term did not rise to the 30+ threshold in the game, one blog post reported a heated debate in a face-to-face game play that ended up asking:

*Are countries that practice “free sex policy” not economically more advanced?*

In the arena of **taxation** and strategies of **redistribution**, gamers explored everything from the lottery to so-called sin taxes:

*For U.S. poverty: Mega Million Jackpot = 656 million. U.S. population = roughly 311,591,917. Give everyone 2 million and see what happens*

*Big corporations that make money with tobacco and alcohol drinks need to help sick and drugged people*

*Biggest consumers of cigarettes and alcohol are citizens in lower economic brackets. “Sin taxes” are just an additional tax on the poor.*

*Cross-border tax: Could we create a platform for the exchange of one person’s abundance for another’s scarcity?*

The need for **transparency** and accountability was deemed critical for progress in poverty alleviation:

*Build a world where we know where our money goes*

*Stronger paper trail for those who authorize decisions, backed up regularly and examined by a third party*

*Re: individual accountability w/i corporate infrastructure, what new rules will be required?*

Beyond these emergent themes, the project's focus on four catalysts for change provoked a lot of discussion around **Evidence** and **Stories**, in particular. The ideas represented in these cards clearly leverage the emerging ecology of **information and communication technology**:

*Visualize and popularize global data so people understand the interconnectedness and can take action*

*Build a dashboard using World Bank's OpenData*

*Create a national prize for the best (clearest) visualization & explanation of social data and its dynamics*

*People access more of their own physical, mental and spiritual beings through community maps*

*We have to map economic activity at the grassroots: who, what, where, when, how, why, how many etc.*

*Well, the way I see it, it's just like Google Earth is, only more powerful. You can zoom real-time where peoples' skills & time are needed*

*#evidence can help us create maps of resources and work on creating distribution lines we could establish based on matching need to ability*

*Make oral tradition #leap to the digital era. Adapt them to videogames, animations, webcomics. Promote interest in other cultures' needs*

*Mobile devices are ubiquitous, reaching the poorest areas. Empowering (young) people to create local digital content is a major opportunity*

*Interactive storytelling? Games in which people collaborate to tell stories together*

*Story-a-week on mobile devices. Examples of how people have climbed out of poverty. Chapter each day with details*

*Create networks of people all over the world based in the day they were born. You would relate to but also see how life differs*

*Increased ICT access will enable global youth to become storytellers and curators of on-the-ground problems and innovative solutions*

*Importance of films and games as tools*

*Focus on the hyper local – build small and utilize global networks to share/ scale the success stories more effectively. Coordination is key.*

*Local public libraries may in the future become focused repositories of community knowledge*

*YES local evidence then SCALE UP. But "coordination" must include intent, models, knowhow, resources, evaluation, learning...*

Finally, the very **concept of poverty** came into question, as players struggled to define poverty and the motivations of those who are trying to catalyze change. Here's a small sample of the many, many cards on this topic:

*I feel we often cause more problems trying to help certain people who do not want to live like us*

*Poverty is perpetuated by attitudes and beliefs which blinds people to the opportunities (scarce though they may be) to escape the cycle*

*Power is about loss of power over some aspect of one's life*

*People don't always want help, but they will gladly accept the removal of barriers they never knew were there*

*The poverty mindset is the biggest barrier! Poverty is a myth. It doesn't exist except in the minds of people.*

*We could have a global poverty survey asking people to self-assess where they feel impoverished and how they would like to help*

*In the end, one forward-looking player asked*

*Are neuroscientists studying brain's ability to grapple with big issues-global poverty vs small issues-poverty next door. How are we wired?*

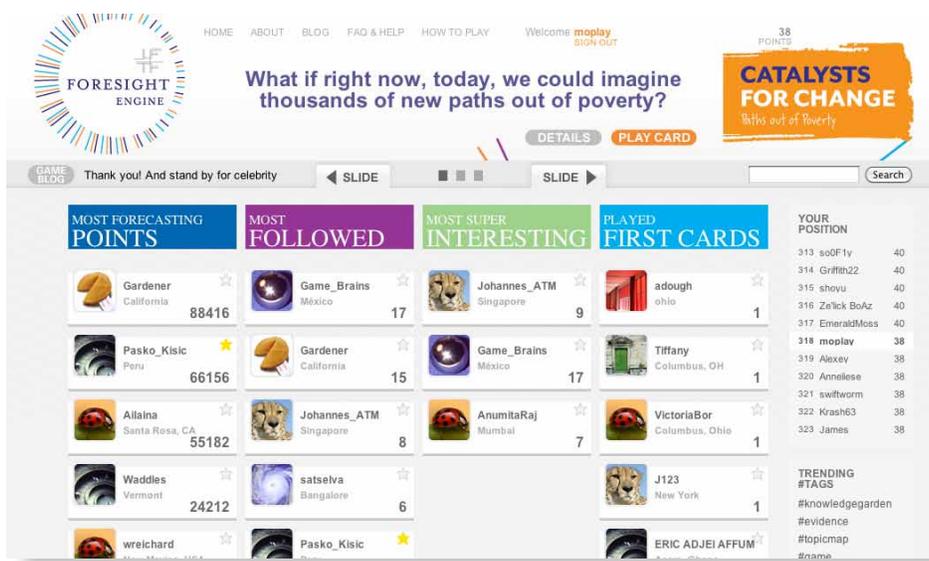
## THE WINNING PLAYERS

*Catalysts for Change* was a game, and as in all games there were winners. The game dashboard includes a leaderboard that shows the top 14 players at any given time. Players win points when others play cards that build on their ideas, so the game is simultaneously cooperative and competitive.

The top 14 players at the end of the game spanned the globe, with half from the United States, two from Mexico, and one each from Peru, Nicaragua, Norway, and Turkey. The top player was Gardener (who was an experienced Foresight Engine player from California, skilled in building followers); he achieved more than 88,416 points. The next highest position went to a young man from Peru, Pasko\_Kisic, who achieved 66,156 points.

In addition to points, players won awards that were designed to familiarize them with the four catalysts and the corresponding action zones. Players also competed for celebrity awards. In many cases, the game guides elected to make these awards to a chain of players rather than a player of a single card. A summary of these awards is shown in Appendix B.

Celebrity awards were also an important game design element. These not only draw fans of the celebrities to play the game, but also provide a “big win” to end the game experience. We worked with seven “celebrities” to select cards or card chains that they thought were winning ideas: Mitch Kapor, Nomsa Mazwai, Jane McGonigal, Tim O’Reilly, Howard Rheingold, Tiffany Shlain, and Shannon Spanhake. In addition, we also offered a special Rockefeller Foundation award. The winning players and cards are shown in Appendix C.



*Catalysts for Change* game leaderboard



## 6 | Next Steps: An Agenda for Change

The *Catalysts for Change* game produced tremendous interest and good will in a global community that probably extends far beyond the 1,616 people who actually registered to play the game. The 160,000 Twitter impressions likely provides a better sense of the scope of impact the game had. An obvious next step is to build on this exposure and experience—to share insights from the game, to test some of ideas that emerged from the game in the real world, and perhaps most importantly, to provide new opportunities for the community to continue the dialogue they've begun in more depth.

In analyzing a game like this, our first hope is always to find the top 100 truly innovative ideas. As experts in foresight or development, we bring a critical eye to each card, and say: Is this really novel? Is it viable? Will it make a difference? From that perspective, many of the cards might appear naïve or utopian. But as one of the global game guides wrote in a blog post: many of the things we take for granted today began as utopian ideas.

The body of ideas captured in this game represents a worldwide sharing, not only of ideas for innovation, but also of facts, research, and resources, both online and off. It is a conversation of possibilities, a sincere exchange of philosophies and values from perspectives as diverse as the world's continents. In this sense, it is more an agenda for innovation than a compendium of specific innovations to be implemented.

Much more work is needed to understand the full range of ideas, facts, and calls for action embedded in the cards that were played, and that analysis should proceed apace. But there is also a need to find ways to engage the community, perhaps in this very activity of analysis or perhaps in new forms of “playtesting” some of the ideas—to take a page from Jane McGonigal's work. In any case, it is clear that an enthusiastic community of change agents stands ready to continue the conversation in large and small ways:

**Three\_Jane:** I was so amped after an hour on this site, I had 3 event ideas and 2 fundraising ones for a meeting with a non-profit that I volunteer with

**Klaattu:** Too bad I am in Asia would love to enjoy tea, coffee beer? And spin the yarn with you Cheers

**Gardener:** What part of Asia? I've been to Malaysia, S. Korea, and Philippines. With Skype, we can do nearly any of the above.

**RigelChase:** We are the ones we've been waiting for. Let's form a network of virtual nonprofits after this game is over!

—The IFTF *Catalysts for Change* Team  
Kathi Vian, Tessa Finlev, David Evan Harris,  
Maureen Kirchner, Sara Skvirsky



## Appendix A | Word Cloud

Words that occurred more than 30 times in the game play:

ability able absolutely abt academic **access** accessible account achieve Act  
action actions activities activity actual actually adapt add address Adults affect  
afford affordable Africa African age **Agree** Agreed agreement agriculture aid  
alleviation allow allowing allows alternative alternatives amazing America answer  
APP apply approach approaches area **areas** arent art Asia ask Asking attention  
available avoid aware awareness away awesome b bad balance bank banks  
barrier barriers barter **based** basic BasicIncome basis bc begin belief believe  
benefit benefits **best** **better** big bigger biggest bit body books brain break  
Bring **build** building built business businesses buy called campaign **cant**  
capacity capital card cards care case cases cash cause causes centers certain  
certainly challenge challenges chance **change** changed changes changing  
Charge charity Cheap cheaper check child **children** china choice choose cities  
citizens city class classes clean clear collaborate collaboration college come  
comes common communication **communities** **community** compassion  
Competition completely complex computer concept Concern conditions connect  
connected connection connections consequences consider Consumption content  
context continue contribute control conversation convince cool cooperation  
corporations corrupt corruption cost costs **countries** country course  
**Create** created creates Creating creation Creative creativity credit crime critical  
crops cultural culture cultures currency current currently curriculum cycle D daily  
data day de deal debt decision decisions decrease define Definitely definition  
degree demand depends Design designed Develop developed **developing**  
**development** devices did didnt difference **different** differently difficult digital  
direct directly disagree discussion distribute distributed distribution diversity **does**  
doesnt doing donate donations donors **dont** drive early earn earth easier  
easily easy economic economies economy ed educate educated educating  
**education** educational effect effective efficiency efficient effort efforts  
elaborate electricity Eliminate empathy employment Empower empowering en enable  
**encourage** encouraged encouraging end energy engage engagement English  
ensure entire entrepreneurs Entrepreneurship environment environmental equal  
especially ESSENTIAL events Everybody evidence exactly **example** examples  
excellent exchange exist existing expand expensive experience experiences explain  
face Facebook facilitate fact failure fair families family far farm farmers farming  
fear feed feedback feel field fight finance financial Finding fit **focus** focused  
folks follow **food** force Foreign form forms forward foster foundation **free**  
freedom fun fund funded Funding funds Future gain **game** games Gender  
general generation gets getting given Gives Giving **global** globally goal goals  
goes going **good** goods Google got gov **government** governments gov  
grants **great** greater Greed green ground group groups grow growing growth  
guess hand hands happen happening happens happiness happy hard having

health healthcare healthy hear heard **help** Helping helps high higher hold  
 home homeless hope hours housing huge human humanity humans Id **idea**  
**ideas** Identify ill Im Imagine impact implement implementation implemented  
**important** impossible impoverished Improve improved incentive incentives include  
 including income increase increased Increasing India indigenous individual  
 individuals industry inequality influence info information infrastructure initiative  
 initiatives innovation innovative inspire **instead** institutions interested Interesting  
 interests international internet invest investment involved isnt issue issues items  
 itself Ive Jane job jobs join **Just** keeping key kids kind kinds **know**  
**Knowledge** knowledgewarden LA labor **Lack** land Language Languages large  
 larger law laws lead leaders leadership leading leads leap **Learn** learning leave  
 left legal lessons let Lets **level** levels leverage life **like** likely limit limited  
 line link linked links List Listen literacy little live lives living loan loans **local**  
 locally LOL long longer longterm look looking lose lot lots Love low Lower  
 main maintain Major **Make** makes Making man manage mandatory map  
 market markets mass material materials matter **Maybe** mean means Meant  
 measure measures mechanisms **media** medical meet men mental met method  
 Methods metrics Mexico micro Middle Military mind minds mindset Mobile model  
 models Momentum **money** movement moving multiple nation national nations  
 natural nature necessarily necessary **need** needed needs negative  
 Network networks **new** news NGO NGOs Nice number offer oh oil Ok old  
 ones online Open opensource opportunities opportunity option options order  
 organization organizations organize orgs outcomes outside overcome ownership paid  
 Parents participate particular parts past path paths pay paying  
**People** Peoples person personal perspective phone phones  
 physical place places plan planet planning plants platform platforms play played  
 players playing **point** points policies policy Political politicians Politics **poor**  
 poorest population populations positive possible Post potential **poverty**  
**power** powerful ppl practical practice practices present pressure pretty prevent  
 price prices private probably **problem** problems process produce production  
 profit program programs progress project projects promote Proper propose  
**Provide** provides providing Public push quality que question questions quite r  
 raise rates reach Read reading real reality realize really reason reduce reducing  
 region regional regions related relative relevant religion Religious replace require  
 required requires research Resource **resources** respect responsibility  
 responsible rest result results return Reward rewards rich right rights risk role  
 rules run rural safe said Save savings say saying scale scholarships **school**  
**schools** science Search sector seeds seen self sell sense serve service  
 services set share shared sharing shelter shift short shouldnt showing shows  
 similar simple simply single site situation situations skill skills slums small

Smaller smart **social** societies society solar solution solutions solve solving  
sorry sort sounds source sources South space speak specific spend spending  
spread standard Standards **start** started starting state states status stay step  
Stop stories story strong structure structures student **students** studies stuff  
succeed success successful suggest supply **support** sure survival sustainability  
sustainable **system** systems tackle taken takes taking talk talking target  
taught Tax taxes Teach teacher teachers teaching tech techniques technologies  
technology TED tell term terms Thank Thanks **thats** Theres theyre thing  
things **think** thinking thought thread **time** times today tool tools topic  
topicmap topics totally touch Tourism track trade traditional Train training  
transparency **true** truly TRUST try trying turn TV two type types u UN  
understand understanding universal universities university unless urban USA **use**  
**used** useful Using usually valuable **value** values various video view village  
violence virtual vision voice Volunteer volunteers vote vs w **want** wanted wants  
war waste water **way** ways wealth wealthy web West Whats willing win  
wish wo women wonder wont word **work** worked workers working works  
**world** worlds worldwide worth wouldnt wrong y year years **yes** young  
yours youth



## Appendix B | Mission-Based Game Awards\*

### BRIGHT LIGHT AWARD

5yearwinter, Philadelphia, USA

*Create a national prize for the best (clearest) visualization & explanation of social data and its dynamics*

### POWERHOUSE AWARD

karlvendell, Phillipines

*Train internet café operators to be content curators as well. Online content is highly untapped. Link café ops to university interns too*

### SUPER CITIZEN AWARD

nasrendinhoja, Beijing

*Use social media platforms to vote on best practice gov projects aimed at poverty alleviation—targeted communities included in voting*

### MASTER STORYTELLER AWARD

magnusi, New York, USA

agaraza, Texas, USA

Geci.KS, South Africa

*Focus on the hyper local – build small and utilize global networks to share/ scale the success stories more effectively. Coordination is key (Magnusi)*

*Local Public Libraries may in the future become focused repositories of knowledge (agaraza)*

*YES local evidence then SCALE UP. But ‘coordination’ must include intent, modles / knowhow, resources, evaluation, learning (Geci.KS)*

### MISSION 6: GREEN WORK AWARD

diegoruvalcaba, Mexico City

*“Green teams” out of unemployed and homeless. They’ll install all kind of green stuff (wind power generators, panel solar, urban agriculture)*

\*Note: Not all missions had awards

### **MISSION 7: CATALYZE WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AWARD**

MacIntyre, USA

*Yes! Sort of cooperative child care & everyone adds value. Women have choice re work vs. childcare. Protect shelters from male parasites*

### **MISSION 8: CATALYZE A DIGITAL LEAP AWARD**

Vexelius, Oaxaca, Mexico

*Make oral tradition #leap to the digital era. Adapt them to videogames, animations, webcomics. Promote interest in other cultures' needs*

### **MISSION 9: BE AN URBAN CHAMPION AWARD**

Ilya Utekhin, Russia

*#urban poverty and marginalization is supported by city planning errors discouraging people from interaction and responsibility*

### **MISSION 10: YOUTH SPIRIT AWARD**

LykkeAndersen, Bolivia

*#youth: Might be interesting to turn the education system upside down for a week: Let the students teach the teachers*

### **MISSION 12: CATALYZE RESILIENCE AWARD**

Crauscher, Maryland, USA

*Develop "Time Equity" banks where citizens invest time (labor) on local infrastructure projects in exchange for community services*

### **MISSION 13: CATALYZE INNOVATIVE CITIZENSHIP AWARD**

Plasko Kistic, Peru

open, Oakland

*In South America, preservation of native tongues can become an effective way for enhancing often tense government-citizen relations (Plasko\_Kistic)*

*An official UN 'Endangered Language' list. Countries that take steps to protect native tongues get foreign bonus (open)*

## Appendix C | Celebrity Awards

### THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION AWARD

The Rockefeller Foundation Award for the most inspiring approach to innovation in social change for the next century goes to nasredinhoja in Beijing:

*Use social media platforms to vote on best practice gov projects aimed at poverty alleviation - targetted communities included in voting*

**Rationale for this award:** This idea demonstrates a forward-looking and innovative perspective by showing how new technologies (social media) can be applied to broaden participation by communities in how critical resources are allocated. As the comments in the card chain indicate, this idea has relevance globally and locally, and it has the potential to be organized around different sectors, engage different constituencies, and address complex problems. This approach would provide real-time feedback and input to decision-makers in a way that would build new evidence, generate new capacities in communities, inform the creation of new rules, and potentially lead to new stories about how different sectors in society connect and interact with one another—highlighting the powerful intersection and relationship among the four catalysts for change. A truly winning idea!

### MITCH KAPOR AWARD

The Mitch Kapor Award for the best idea for leveling the playing field and spanning the digital divide goes to Johannes\_ATM in Singapore:

*Organise a global app competition + a foresight brainstorm like this game to bring financial services to the "unbanked" #leap*

**Rationale for this award from Mitch Kapor:** Bringing financial services to low income families is an important enabler for participation in the global economy and ascending the steps of the ladder to high income. There are many potential ways this can happen so the idea of harnessing collective brainpower is an appealing one.

## NOMSA MAZWAI AWARD

The Nomsa Mazwai Award for the best use of music or other art forms to catalyze positive social change goes to players Buchidavinci in Nigeria, and Binti Mwafrika in Kenya for their chain on how to work with pirates to help musicians earn a living wage:

*Kenyan Govt should consider working with pirates to* (Binit Mwafrika)

*Revolutionary! Perhaps They are, by allowing huge Somali acquisitions of property in down town Nairobi* (Buchidavinci)

*Was not talking about pirates in the seas but pirated films and software...* (Binit Mwafrika)

*Apparently the idea has multiple uses for multiple type of pirates.* (Buchidavinci)

*How can the Kenyan govt better leverage music and movie pirates?  
Perhaps to increase production and distribution at a lower cost?* (Buchidavinci)

*Would tax breaks be a way to go?* (Binit Mwafrika)

*Yes, if the overall value equation makes sense. I remember searching for a Jua Cali album for years without success. These pirates may help* (Buchidavinci)

**Rationale for this award from Nomsa Mazwai:** The digital era has made music and movie piracy incredibly easy and fast, which has made it increasingly challenging for musicians in many countries to make a living wage. In some countries this is even leading to an erosion of fundamental cultural entities, and an entire economic base. Finding a way to work with pirates and artists in order to protect cultural expression through the arts is crucial to ensure that all communities are able to maintain their identity and control their own futures. Our world is becoming polarized. We often do not think that there can be a solution that benefits all of us. This game shows us that the way to win, to live in a world of humanity is to connect with each other and find innovative ways to address our collective challenges! Harambe!

## JANE MCGONIGAL AWARD

The Jane McGonigal Award for the best use of game principles to change the landscape of poverty goes to player Long View in the USA:

*Depending on incarceration location, have inmates play games to solve local problems and gain stakes in outcomes.*

**Rationale for this award from Jane McGonigal:** Research presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Psychological Science this past week identified "relatedness" as the top psychological need for incarcerated individuals. Relatedness means feeling connected to others and a part of a community. A game that connects inmates to their community by allowing them to engage in local problem-solving—and potentially be viewed as heroes, rather than criminals—could serve as tremendously powerful rehabilitation and reduce suffering in the prisons. I particularly like that this card was played as an "adaptation" to the following idea: "shorten prison sentences based on achievements in academic learning and/or skill development on the part of the imprisoned." Together, these ideas make for a really powerful solution you could potentially test in small pilot programs. I love the idea of a game that, the better you do, the more time you can shave off your sentence. Particularly in the case of non-violent offenders, a major contributor to poverty (at least here in California!), is all the money we spend housing inmates at the expense of education and social programs. It seems like an adaptation of a game like EVOKE ([urgentevoke.com](http://urgentevoke.com)) could actually be a viable model here, particularly as EVOKE focused on "unlikely suspects" (young adults in sub-Saharan Africa) saving the rest of the world—London, Tokyo, Los Angeles, Rio.

## TIM O'REILLY AWARD

The Tim O'Reilly Award for the best use of open-source technology to create positive social change goes to ubik in the USA:

*Establish "Makers Without Borders" to create community hackerspaces and spread maker/code literacy*

**Rationale for this award from Tim O'Reilly:** Being illiterate will no longer be about the written word, but the ability to code and make the things we need ourselves. A lack of maker/coding literacy is the next phase of the digital divide. Creating spaces around the world to address the growing need for coding skills through hackerspaces is a necessary and exciting step.

### HOWARD RHEINGOLD AWARD

The Howard Rheingold Award for the best strategy for building network literacy in poor or vulnerable communities goes to player AdamMaikkula in the USA:

*Network literacy by getting all communities online w/ use of donated/ trade-in cellphones & computers on social sites. Use Kiva \$*

**Rationale for this award from Howard Rheingold:** This idea has the potential to provoke action by more people, with broad impact. I would donate old phones, computers, if I knew how (and if it was made easy for me). Using Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and other social sites also seems to me to have a lot of potential for kickstarting a robust movement.

### TIFFANY SHLAIN AWARD

The Tiffany Shlain Award for the best use of connection to change the lives of poor or vulnerable populations goes to player Pradu in Bucharest:

*Visualize and popularize global data so people understand the interconnectedness and can take action.*

**Rationale for this award from Tiffany Shlain:** The more we can see how interconnected we are, the more thoughtful we can be about the ripple effects of our actions.

### SHANNON SPANHAKE AWARD

The Shannon Spanhake Award for the best innovations in open government to engage poor or vulnerable populations goes to markburnett in London:

*Use time equity banks to prioritise community development projects by taking citizen invested labour trends into account in budget planning*

**Rationale for this award from Shannon Spanhake:** The “Time Equity bank” chain gets my award because it suggests that citizens should play a role in revitalizing their cities. An example is ImproveSF (improvesf.com), an online platform launched by Mayor Ed Lee that connects citizen problem-solvers to civic challenges, where citizens volunteer their time to work with city government and are rewarded with a neighborhood asset that they helped to create (along with fun prizes and rewards!). In places or times with constrained resources, citizen participation is paramount and can yield innovative solutions that might not have been previously considered.

## BONUS FUTRESSA AWARD

The Bonus Futressa Award, goes to Buddy.B in Ghanna, SteveBhyve in Australia, karlwendell in the Philippines, bd in the US, and snn.krc in Turkey.

*Lack of education. Education helps people to create their own enabling environment, or hold their governments to account for not doing so.*

(buddy.b)

*ok so how do you propose to deliver education to the poorest? cheap pcs?*

(steveBhyve)

*Build on the existing network of internet cafes nearby slum areas or rural communities. Or build a new chain if there are none.* (karivendell)

*Train internet cafe operators to be content curators as well. Online content is highly untapped. Link cafe ops to university interns too.* (karivendell)

*a certificated programme for online content editors?* (ann.krc)

**Rationale for this award from Gamemaster Tessa Finlev:** Their rapid and truly global collaboration turned a barrier into a solution in five short plays.