

# CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

*Paths out of Poverty*

**Around the world—from the dense urban settlements of Kibera and Dharavi to the precarious freeholds of small farmers everywhere—billions of people are looking for a way out of poverty.**

Their paths are blocked by a lack of access to the very goods and services that could help them build secure and healthy futures. But human beings are resourceful, and if poverty were simply a matter of access to resources, we would have found its solution a hundred times over.

People with low incomes lead their lives in a world thickly layered with diverse economies—from local informal economies to regional economies with distinctive cultural and political imperatives, to a globally connected economy that combines tremendous wealth with growing inequity. To build resilient lives, people caught in poverty must leverage catalysts for change across this complex ecology of poverty and opportunity.

This map is a unique view of four key catalysts for change: new evidence, new capacities, new rules, and new stories. Seen through the eyes of people living and working across the world's continents, these four catalysts focus our attention on action zones that could produce lasting systemic change. Taken together, they point the way to a future of more equitable growth and more resilient households and communities worldwide.



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# The Searchlight Process

In 2009, the Rockefeller Foundation convened a unique global network of forward-looking organizations on four continents to scan the horizon of poverty and development. Their assignment: to identify new policies, technologies, and strategies for meaningful change in the lives of poor and vulnerable populations. From this starting point, the Searchlight process has emerged—a process that we invite you to join.

## The First Step: Horizon Scanning

The first step in the Searchlight process is horizon scanning—surveying the landscape of poverty alleviation for what's new, what's working, and what's not. The Rockefeller Foundation has engaged 11 Searchlight Partners to undertake this task. These local, on-the-ground organizations in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and North America have been systematically tracking emerging issues and solutions and reporting them in their own regional newsletters on a monthly basis for nearly two years now.

## From Horizon Scanning to Signal Identification

The second step in the Searchlight process is to identify cutting-edge signals: those local innovations or disruptions that are likely to grow in scale, geographic application, and importance. These signals point to the ways that people living in poverty can build more resilient lifestyles and achieve sustainable, equitable growth for themselves and their communities. We invite you to explore—and contribute to—our growing inventory of Searchlight Signals at [signals.searchlightcatalysts.org](http://signals.searchlightcatalysts.org).

## Mapping the Catalysts of Change

Complex systems have leverage points at which a little insight, action, or power can be amplified to make an outsized difference. These are catalysts for change, and the Searchlight process has identified four different types of catalysts from its bottom-up scan of signals. Each of these catalysts—new evidence, new capacities, new rules, and new stories—has the potential to transform the lives of those living in poverty. They focus efforts and resources on new action zones—and pivotal challenges—for the future.

## Taking Action: How to Use This Map

You can use this map to begin building new kinds of roadmaps for the next decade—at the individual level, the community level, the regional level, or the global level. Start by scanning the four catalysts on the map and the action zones for each of them—as well as the possible scenarios they suggest. Then explore the high-impact signals from today that point to these scenarios. Some examples are included in this map, but you can discover more in the online version at [map.searchlightcatalysts.org](http://map.searchlightcatalysts.org). You can also use the map with your communities and colleagues to invent new strategies, adapt the solutions and innovations in this map, and imagine a more resilient, equitable future. See the back of this map for some initial guidelines, and then explore the *Catalysts for Change Toolkit* to turn the map into a plan for action.



# Regional Viewpoints

This *Catalysts for Change* map tells the big story of the horizon of poverty alleviation, resilience, and equitable growth worldwide. But each region has its own history, its own unique challenges, and its own distinctive catalysts that make some strategies more appropriate than others. For example, while brain drain from the south to north is a global phenomenon that impacts communities and organizations throughout the developing world, Africa is seeing a growing competition for talent and experience across countries *within* the continent, leaving some communities more skill-impooverished than their neighbors next door. Meanwhile in Latin America, cross-border pension plans support the flow of trained workers across national boundaries within the region, building a safety net for a regional workforce.



**Explore distinctive questions and action zones in each region to understand the unique regional challenges—and the opportunities for learning across regions.**

The Searchlight process is designed to surface both the differences across regions and the opportunities for the regions to learn from one another. Each *Regional Viewpoint* highlights the unique action zones and critical questions for the region, as well as signals of what's working and what's not working in the region.

## Start with your own *Regional Viewpoint*:

- ✓ **Explore the big regional topics in the visual word cloud.** How do the big topics compare with your local community? What priorities do they suggest for you or your organization?
- ✓ **Consider the key questions for your region.** These are challenges that will determine the future of poverty for communities and organizations in your region. What unique resources does your community or institution bring to these challenges?
- ✓ **Check the action zones and signals for possible new directions.** The unique action zones for each region produce unique signals of issues and innovations. How do these signals compare with your own on-the-ground signals?

## Then compare your region to other regions:

- ✓ **Look for new opportunities that your region could leverage.** Each region is innovating in response to its unique situation. How might these innovations be adapted for your region?
- ✓ **Look for unexpected issues that your region could face.** Some regions may be confronting issues that have yet to emerge in your region. How would you respond to these issues if they arose?

Remember, this map is built from the insights of local foresight organizations around the world—organizations that stand ready to help you build your blueprint for transforming poverty. To get the most out of the map in your region, contact your nearest Searchlight Partner or the Research team at the Rockefeller Foundation at [www.rockefellerfoundation.org/what-we-do/research-records](http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/what-we-do/research-records).





**New kinds of evidence can play an outsized role in building more resilient lives as people around the world work to diminish poverty.** And a host of low-tech and high-tech innovations are providing new kinds of evidence: New ways of monitoring from the top down or the bottom up to provide real-time alerts about everything from weather to the risks of disease. New ways of mapping and modeling social, economic, and environmental conditions empower people to change those conditions. New indexes reframe the goals and therefore the very nature of development efforts. All these tools connect people with information and with one another, creating feedback loops that individuals, communities, and even entire regions can use to catalyze change in the ecologies of poverty and wealth.

Feedback—whether positive or negative, whether from market prices or social media—reshapes the ecologies of daily life.

New Evidence



**New capacities extend the ability of communities to meet familiar poverty-related challenges like health, education, employment, and shelter.**

They also create a rich ecosystem of resources, relationships, and infrastructures for responding to new stresses and, more importantly, for creating wealth out of poverty. These new capacities tend to have three distinctive characteristics: First, they change the scale of solutions, leveraging both very small and very large innovations. Second, they tap new digital infrastructures to make scarce resources more affordable and even abundant. And third, they create new relationships across the public and private sectors. Together, these innovations are building smarter communities, a stronger workforce, and more resilient environments—both built and natural.

New tools, new designs, and new ways of thinking combine local knowledge and global expertise in a networked world.

New Capacities



**New rules can catalyze rapid change,  
but new ways to make those rules often  
lead to even more lasting change.**

Today, communities, states, and regions around the world are experimenting with the systems of rules and rule-making that define their approach to governance. Sometimes these experiments are seemingly small, as in the use of digital voting machines to make voting and its results more accessible and reliable. But the most important innovations may be in the ways that governments are reorganizing themselves—from the way they interact with their constituents to the way they cooperate with one another and with other actors in the global economy. These new patterns of reorganizing the process of governance pose both new opportunities and new challenges for those who would change the landscape of poverty.

*Governance, at its best, secures a balance between  
order and freedom in all domains of enterprise,  
from the private to the public.*

New Rules





**The stories people tell about the world, their perceptions of reality, their very dreams—these are the lasting legacies that give shape to daily life, often over generations.**

So new stories that change the way people think about their lives can be among the most powerful catalysts for change. Often when people change their stories, they are empowered to change everything else: the evidence they collect, the capacities they work to build, and the rules under which they operate. From competing stories about ways of farming to alternative visions of providing energy for daily life, people throughout the developing world are rethinking the paradigms of development. From fundamental gender identities to new narratives about the role of poor people themselves in remaking their communities, the world is reinventing its guiding themes. And these themes will, in turn, reinvent the lives of poor people.

In a world of rapid change and uncertain outcomes, the ability to imagine a different future is the first step out of poverty.

New Stories

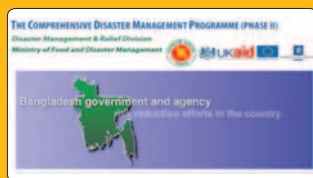


## INNOVATIVE TRACKING

From the global to the local, novel ways to monitor the environment provide new opportunities to respond to small problems before they become big challenges. Whether communities are trying to track maternal health or monitor the use of agricultural water from the Nile, new information catalyzes action.

### Mobile phone early warning

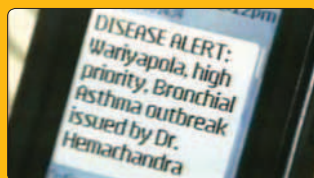
Bangladesh broadcasts flood and cyclone warnings by mobile phone



cdmp.org.bd

### Real-time epidemic detection

Health workers collect data with mobile phones in Sri Lanka and India



lirneasia.net

### SMS garbage complaints

Delhi uses SMS + Facebook to clean up city streets



letsdoidelhi.org

## PARTICIPATORY MAPS AND MODELS

Maps and models have the power to reveal hidden resources, document hidden patterns of behavior, or even define legal rights. From participatory mapping that lays claim to land held informally to GIS systems and new simulation models that link micro-behaviors of individuals to macro-economic trends, these tools provide evidence that is actionable and empowering.

### Participatory forest mapping

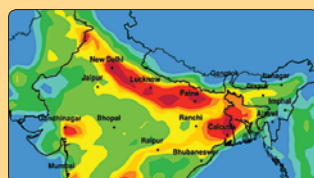
New tools and methods empower forest communities in the Congo



challenge.bri.org

### Air pollution forecasts

India's location-specific air quality data: real-time or forecasts



urbanemissions.info

### Agent-based trade modeling

Super-computing grid supports micro-economic modeling in the Philippines



eusagrid.org

## ALTERNATIVE INDEXES

For decades, wealth and poverty have been measured in terms of GDP, and governments have often been evaluated on how quickly they can grow GDP. But across the developing world, countries are experimenting with new kinds of metrics and indexes to set standards of well-being that go beyond these limited measures. These novel measures, in turn, point to new interventions.

### Good living objectives

Ecuador defines 12 measures of good living to guide policy



plan2009.senplades.gov.ec

### Measurement of poverty

New method goes beyond food to measure goods and services



planningcommission.nic.in

### Governance index

Ibrahim index uses 88 indicators to rank governance in Africa



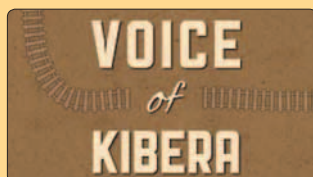
mozbrahinfoundation.org

## USER-GENERATED MEDIA

The new media of the last decade have given rise to new identities, communities, and strategies for organizing human enterprise. While these media can catalyze innovative economic behavior, they also change the power relations that often support inequality and the expansion of poverty. Bottom-up platforms give a fresh and strong voice to those who have typically been marginalized.

### SMS citizen reporting

Website uses SMS to give voice to slum dwellers in Kibera



voiceofkibera.org

### Personal political content

User-generated media politicizes identities in Thailand



trendsofthailand.org

### Bottom-up surveillance

Volunteer site mission: "Keep an eye on Kenyan Parliament"



mzalendo.com

## The Pivotal Challenge

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION UNDER THREAT

As powerful as new evidence is in catalyzing change, its potential is minimized if it is systematically suppressed or controlled. From Latin America to Africa and Asia, freedom of information—whether from traditional press or new media channels—is under attack from those who stand to lose wealth or power. A key challenge over the next decade will be securing the right to these new forms of evidence.

### Attacks on journalists

Press and Society Institute has emergency number for journalists



ips.org

### Restrictive information laws

OSISA blocked recent Angolan legislation to limit Internet freedoms



osisa.org

### Censorship strategies

FACT reports blocking of 500 websites a day in Thailand



en.wordpress.com/tag/internet-issues/

Feedback—whether positive or negative, whether from market prices or social media—reshapes the ecologies of daily life.

New Evidence





## SMART COMMUNITIES

Throughout the developing world, communities are building out their ICT infrastructures. These infrastructures are the starting place for catalyzing smart communities—those that tap everything from smart cards and mobile phones to new sharing platforms that can connect the dots between cutting-edge services and people who have traditionally been excluded from them.

**Mobile health for Bedouin women**  
SOHITCO connects women with doctors



fastcompany.com

**Smart card access**  
India uses smart cards for health insurance for 60 million poor



casissc.upenn.edu

**e-Books for education**  
Bangladeshi government provides free textbooks online



ebook.gov.bd

## UP-SKILLED WORKERS

From Africa to Asia to Latin America, a new generation will swell the ranks of an under-skilled and under-employed workforce, even as these same regions face critical shortfalls in skilled workers. From labor exports and training for green jobs to fresh strategies for connecting workers to jobs, building an up-skilled workforce will be a key action zone for promoting upward mobility.

**Mobile job-matching**  
Souktel application matches workers with jobs in Palestine in real time



souktel.org

**Functional literacy**  
Cuban "Yes I Can" method builds literacy across Latin America



juventudrabde.co.cu

**Digital workforce training**  
Nonprofit company builds IT skills in Laos and Cambodia



digitaldividedata.org

## RESILIENT CITIES

Even as cities struggle to accommodate massive in-migrations—with the consequent problems of smog, traffic jams, slums, and public health threats—the quest for urban resilience will redefine cityscapes throughout the developing world, with everything from so-called health cities that target the poor to new models of personal rapid transport.

**Dial 1298 for emergency**  
Mumbai for-profit organization provides low-fee ambulance service



lifeinthefastlane.com

**Gray solutions for aging citizens**  
Aging populations drive universal design for cities and villages alike



cambodiaretirementvillage.org

**India's health cities**  
Process efficiencies provide affordable care to poor

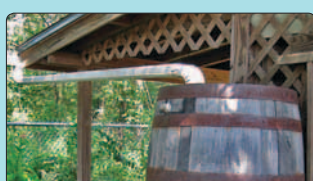


gujaratmoney.com

## NEW WATER ECOLOGIES

In the face of global water shortages, even innovations like micro-credit financing for water and sanitation may exclude the poorest households. While public-private partnerships may create new water infrastructures, key action zones for pro-poor innovation may be small-scale solutions that range from tea-bag water filters to composting waste bags.

**Rainwater harvesting**  
Pune aims to meet 21% of municipal demand with rainwater



vastbiuesy.com

**Local green sanitation**  
Biodegradable PeePoo Bag sanitizes human waste



peepoopie.com

**24/7 water supply**  
Nagpur demonstrates capacity of public-private partnership



veoliawater.com

## The Pivotal Challenge

## GROWING ECONOMIES OF VIOLENCE

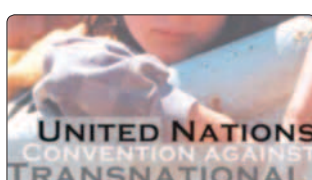
New capacities for economic improvement are, unfortunately, also building a shadow infrastructure for piracy, human and drug trafficking, and organized crime throughout the developing world—all fueled by growing inequality. These economies of violence will challenge both rich and poor over the coming decade.

**Somali pirate stock exchange**  
Pirates offer shares to finance their operations



eaglespeak.us/2009

**Growth of organized crime**  
Transnational networks threaten Latin America and other regions



undoc.org

**Human trafficking**  
African Union's AU.COMMIT combats human trafficking



afroonline.org

New tools, new designs, and new ways of thinking combine local knowledge and global expertise in a networked world.

New Capacities



## REINVENTION OF GOVERNANCE

Governance—and visions of what it should be—are in flux around the world. From continuing experiments with multi-party democracy in Africa to the new roles played by unexpected partnerships of civil society and corporations, governance is being transformed by new tools, processes, and ideas about how to provide the services that governments traditionally provide.

### Mobile governance

Indians can tap government services and pay taxes by phone



themobiindian.com

### Policy theater

Traveling theater groups engage women farmers in policy in East Africa



fannpan.org

### Civil enterprise

Civil society strengthens CSR by partnering with business in Lebanon



rebuildlebanon.gov.lb

## REGIONAL COORDINATION

From the creation of a regional currency for West Africa to an integration of stock markets in Colombia, Chile, and Peru, countries in the developing world are hoping a new regionalism will provide both economic advantage and a stronger voice in global politics. With this new regionalism comes a new mobility in both work and play, requiring innovative ways of thinking about old borders.

### Free movement

ECOWAS plans electronic visa for cross-border travel



regionswatch.blogspot.com

### Cross-border social security

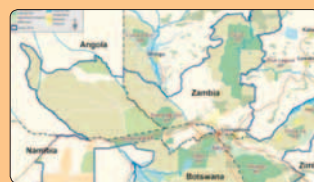
Unified pension tracks worker contributions across Mercosur countries



en.wikipedia.org

### Transborder parks

Transfrontier Conservation Areas promote stability in southern Africa



peacepartners.org

## PUBLIC-PRIVATE STATES

Governments in the developing world find themselves experimenting across the spectrum of public to private services. Even as many former government services are outsourced to private enterprises, some states are staking their own resource claims with state-owned petroleum and mining companies. These public-private experiments expand the ecology of solutions for the poor—but may also weaken key protections.

### Public-private partnerships

PPPs build new cross-boundary infrastructures for development



suip.org

### State-owned enterprises

State-owned oil and mining companies grow in Latin America



en.mercurypress.com

### Privatized security

Contracted security and local self-help policing grow in West Africa



Centre for Democracy and Development

## VIRTUAL NATIONS

Migration is the real game-changer in governance. With massive population movements around the world, the loyalties, rights, and responsibilities that define citizenship are no longer cleanly defined by where one lives. Instead, a world of virtual nations is emerging, where people are creating complex ecologies of rules to manage flows of everything from cash to brainpower to ethnic identity.

### Cross-border cash

ICBC platform eases cross-border cash management in Africa



shanghaiist.com

### China's virtual nation

China becomes a virtual nation in Southeast Asia and beyond



orangeadises.wordpress.com

### Youth diasporas

Somali youth build a global identity



fridaybulletin.com

## The Pivotal Challenge

### THE VANISHING RIGHT TO PLACE

Even as governance is becoming increasingly mobile, the right to citizenship remains largely tied to place—and poor people are often excluded from this basic right. From indigenous peoples whose lands and livelihoods are being disrupted by development to inhabitants of informal urban settlements with no official address to stake a claim, the right to place is becoming a key battleground in the war on poverty.

### Deforested habitat

The 16% deforestation in Ghana threatens women disproportionately



Centre for Democracy and Development

### Cash transfers

Maternity benefits are extended to women in Indian settlements



flickr user mckaysavage

### Limits on land holdings

A referendum in Brazil favors limits on land holdings



grassrootsonline.org

Governance, at its best, secures a balance between order and freedom in all domains of enterprise, from the private to the public.





## POST-INDUSTRIAL FARMING

Even as local science is inventing new hybrid forms of rice enriched with Vitamin A, farmers across the developing world are reconsidering the economic promise of industrial agriculture and reinventing practices that emphasize organic and ecologically sensitive methods at different scales. And for the many who have left their farms behind, urban farming is a new frontier.

### Organic alternatives

System of Rice Intensification increases yields, reduces water needs



crd.org.kh

### Urban farming

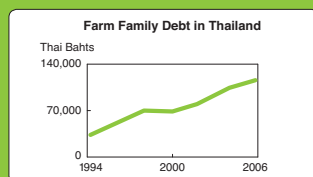
"Sack farming" boosts food and income for Kibera slum residents



borderjumper1.blogspot.com

### Farm debt

Thai farmers face increasing debt from industrial rice production



landreformthai.net

## PRO-POOR INNOVATION

Innovation by and for poor people—so-called pro-poor innovation—reinvents the paradigm for development. It rethinks the needs and capacities of poor people to create their own solutions and their own economies, with everything from micro-finance to new entrepreneurial structures like social enterprises. A key question: will these solutions integrate into the larger economy or will they form an alternative path?

### Scaled-up microfinance

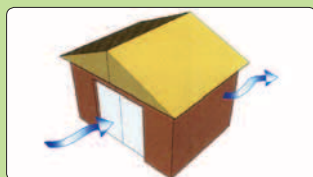
"The Great Leap" program helps scale-up micro-enterprises in Peru



aprenda.com.pe

### Migrant-focused models

Migrants help build their own housing in CentroMigrante's Philippine model



mti.edu

### Social enterprise networks

SENetwork grows the social enterprise sector in Asia



senetwork.asia

## NEXT-GENERATION WOMEN

The role of women in poverty is a story that has been told in lots of ways, inspiring all kinds of experiments—from new ways to access health, education, and money to new ways to manage reproduction. But behind all these experiments are fundamental shifts in what it will mean to be a woman in the decades ahead, and this reinvention of identity will be a source of both innovation and discord.

### Cash incentives

Malawi adolescent girls receive \$1 to \$5 monthly to stay in school



socialimag.com

### Women's empowerment

Pakistan provides cash transfers directly to tribal women



reporting.bisp.gov.pk

### Social marketing sex education

PSI Malawi promotes female condoms in hair salons



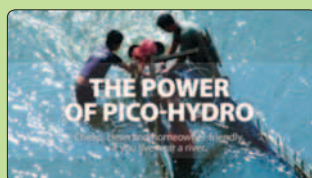
psi.org

## LEAPFROG ENERGY

As the world grapples with the challenges of a fossil fuel economy, two competing stories have pitted development of large-scale electric solutions against adoption of small-scale, distributed energy systems. However, a new narrative in the leapfrog nations of the south is redefining the options—including waste-to-energy conversion and subsidies that favor both renewables and poor people.

### Small-scale solutions

Pico-hydro systems produce low-cost, off-grid power



LKSP Asian Trends Monitoring Bulletin

### Waste-to-energy conversion

Methane capture converts palm oil waste to energy in Thailand



univarch.com

### Energy taxes for social development

Thai tariff reimburses communities hit by large power projects



eric.or.th

## The Pivotal Challenge

### THE COST OF SUSTAINABILITY

Developing nations face a resource curse: untapped oil, minerals, and forest lands promise new wealth as countries enter into global agreements for developing these resources. At the same time, extractive business is often a toxic business—and one that disrupts not only natural ecosystems but the communities that depend on them. Choosing sustainability will require a host of new solutions.

### Carbon credit strategies

Ecuador leaves oil reserves untapped in exchange for international funds



andes.info.ec

### Community-based sustainable management

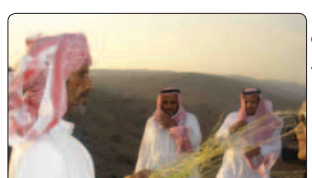
CBOs restore fisheries, promote equal access in Bangladesh



foodsecurity.ac.uk

### Traditional practices

*Al hima* is a traditional Muslim practice of "protected places"



blogs.nyu.edu

In a world of rapid change and uncertain outcomes, the ability to imagine a different future is the first step out of poverty.

# New Steps: Catalyzing Change

This map is a guide to catalysts for transforming the lives of poor and vulnerable people. It depicts a changing landscape of strategies, tools, and policies—an innovative set of building blocks that organizations, communities, and even regions can use to catalyze new levels of wealth and well-being. It's a tool you can use in your institution to jump-start the process of strategic planning and strategic intervention in the world of poverty.

## Three Steps to the Future:

### STEP 1: Create Your Own Action Checklist



Review the action zones and signals on the map. **You can begin to create an action checklist by marking the zones where your organization or community could have the biggest impact.** You may want to focus on one type of catalyst: for example, if your institution has expertise and knowledge of information technologies, you may want to focus most of your attention on New Evidence. Or you may want to think about the best way to use your resources across all four types of catalysts.

**You can work as a group.** Invite members to mark up their maps with their own ideas about the most important action zones for the group. Then compare across the group to see where members agree or disagree. Discuss the differences, and see if there is a common set of action items that everyone can support.

### STEP 2: Connect the Dots Across Solutions



The map has signals of solutions—specific ways that people are catalyzing change around the world. **Look at your action list and then survey the signals to find solutions that you might be able to apply or adapt in your community or organization.** You can circle them on the map and then think about the connections among them. Can you build several solutions to create a whole that is more than the sum of its parts? Is it better to scale up a solution or to combine several? Does one solution logically follow another? Some solutions form natural combinations and others can actually compete with each other. Find the set of signals that makes the most sense as an inspiration or starting place for your own strategy.

### STEP 3: Create Scenarios



**Once you have an action checklist and a set of solutions that you think you can build on, you're ready to create a scenario—a story that can become a guiding vision for your efforts.** You can tell your story in lots of ways, but one of the most compelling ways is to create an artifact from the future. This is a visual illustration or physical prototype of your story. For example, as an organization, you can integrate these stories into your strategic planning and vision over the coming years. As a community, you can broaden public engagement and invite further comment on the stories and illustrations that you produced. Even an individual can use this process to better understand their changing world. Whatever approach you use, give your story as many details as you can to make it seem both possible and plausible. **Your story may be the most important step toward a big change.**

