

# Organizing for Next System movements

To explore these issues, we return to a selection from Mike Lewis's essay where he introduces *le Chantier de l'économie sociale*, a network of networks in Quebec and the architecture of La Via Campesina's organizing and federating strategy. Lewis examines the alignment of efforts at different levels that can be organized and federated to amplify our political capacity to leverage systems change.

## 8.1 Read Michael Lewis, "Navigating System Transition in a Volatile Century." pages 27-35 (12 minutes)

Lewis, Michael T. "Navigating System Transition in a Volatile Century," The Next System Project, March 2017. <https://thenextsystem.org/sites/default/files/2017-08/MichaelLewis.pdf>  
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Seikatsu in Japan, Reso in Montreal, and the social co-ops in Italy each shaped political strategies and organized around them to advance their goals. Building the politics of system change included establishing an eco-system of supports that enabled the diffusion of the model and the scaling of impacts.

This deliberate approach to connecting the dots is a pre-requisite if we are to identify and define mutual interests, recruit allies, and set common priorities and targets for change. This is what building a politics for systems change requires. How else can we organize the political capacity and clout necessary to set in place what Alperovitz refers to as the "irreversible conditions for systems change?"

Please do a quick review of the Lewis article as set out below. This will help you to prepare for the Module 8 exercise.

1. Read "Reso: Transformative Place Making" pages 11-14 (4 minutes). Pay special attention to Figures 3 and 4. Note how Figure 3 depicts small green and blue circles connected by the goal of "Organizing for Fair Low-carbon Economies." Figure 4 reveals the priorities that function at the heart of Reso's work to revitalize the five neighbourhoods that constituted its territory. Note the multi stakeholder structure, networking and partnership strategies, and support for collective enterprises adding diversity and strength to the movement for democratic enterprise at the local level. RESO is an organization that benefited from the work of the Chantier.
2. "Social Solidarity Cooperatives in Italy: Transforming the Social Care Sector" pages 14-17 (3 minutes). In Module 5 you were re-introduced to this model. Pay particular attention to Figure 5. It adds the critical component of consortia, an eco-system of support functions woven together with a common aim: to diffuse a proven model and to scale up its impacts.
3. Figure 8.1 builds on the previous figures. From the centre toward the outer part of the circle are graphic depictions of the many democratic alternatives you have already been exposed to in this course.

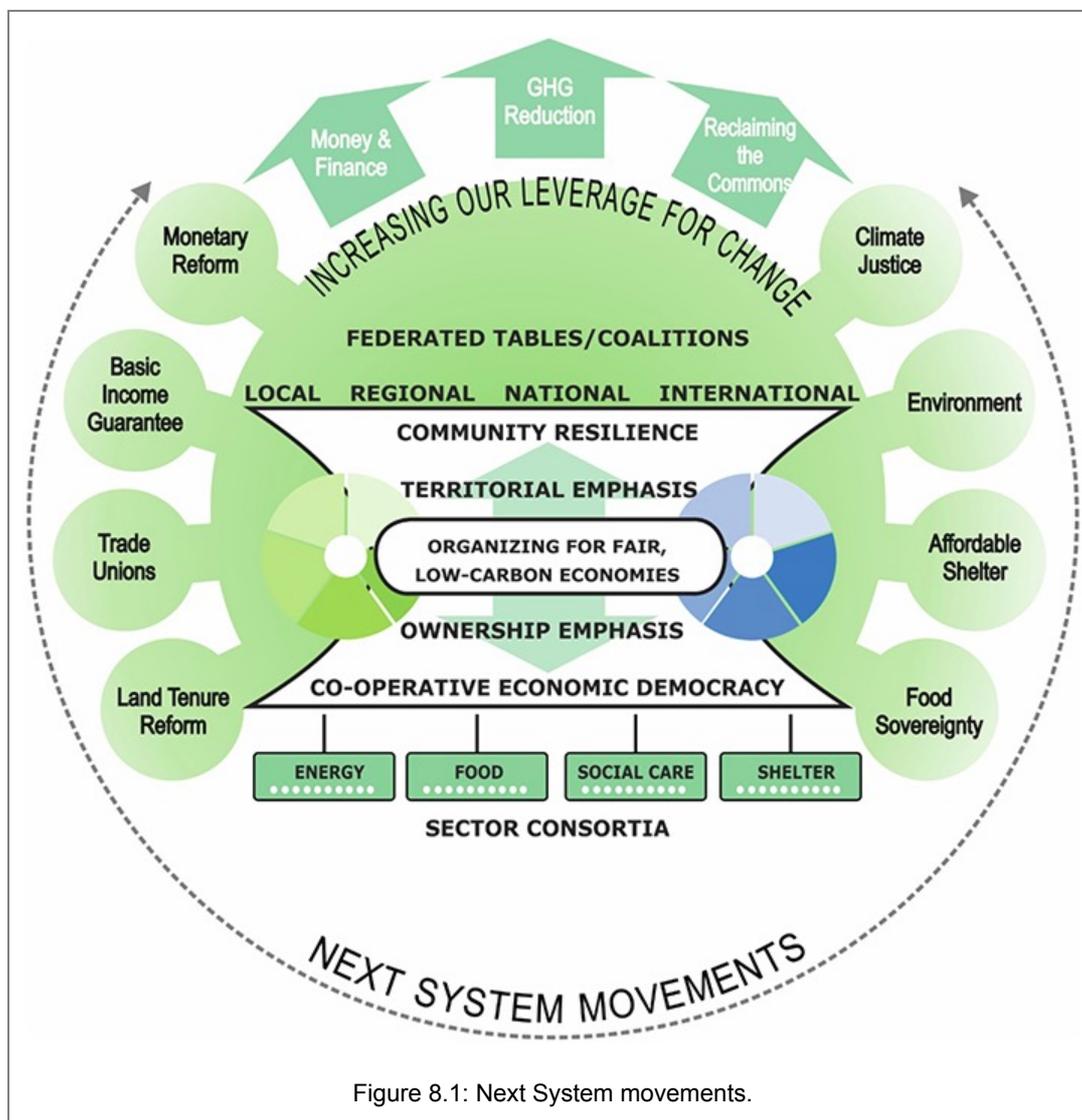


Figure 8.1: Next System movements.

This figure depicts the central importance of consciously federating our organizations so as to more powerfully advance co-operative economic democracy. Organizing a neighbourhood table of activists was the seed for the civic organizing that eventually led to the formation of RESO six years later, which in turn created the leadership base that over many more years led to a broad based coalition out of which the Chantier was born in Quebec.

At the international level, Via Campesina is perhaps the premier example of a movement that supports organized struggle from the local to the global, globalizing struggle, solidarity and hope among peasant movements. It is focused on building political capacity and leaders to transform the industrial agriculture food system, including radically changing the policy and rules of organizations such as the World Trade Organization and the World Bank and promoting the aims of agroecology and Food Sovereignty.