

# NETWORK

## FACILITATION & DESIGN

At the Global Knowledge Initiative (GKI), we believe many of the world's most pressing challenges (food security, public health, education, etc.) are complex and require the engagement of individuals with diverse strengths, values, resources, and interests. We believe that addressing these challenges requires a networked approach to problem solving.

### The Value of Network Facilitation & Design

Networks – formal and informal structures of interlinked actors sharing common interest or values – hold immense potential for unlocking transformative change. Unlocking this potential takes facilitation and supporting structures. GKI's work designing and facilitating networks across the globe demonstrates that the most successful collaborations do not happen randomly. Instead, they are cultivated through a structured, facilitated process. When designed and facilitated well, networks present diverse actors with opportunities to effectively pursue shared ends. Network facilitators are essential for driving the alignment of interests, brokering new partnerships, and setting a course for strategy design. According to recent research, facilitators "help enable adaptive space by facilitating the generation and movement of ideas and information across a system, creating conditions for *emergence*. They do this by capitalizing on two network structures associated with idea generation and flow: brokerage and group cohesion."<sup>(1)</sup> Great network leaders build trust and a "common language" among actors for effective communication. USAID suggests "using a facilitative approach—one that focuses on indirect interventions at strategic points within a system to strengthen the system and align the interests of actors—can lead to more effective and sustainable development results."<sup>(2)</sup>

(1) Uhl-Bien, M., & Arena, M. 2017. *Complexity leadership: Enabling people and organizations for adaptability*. *Organizational Dynamics*, 46:1, pp. 9-20.

(2) USAID. 2017, April. Evidence Base for Collaborating, Learning and Adapting.



Global Knowledge Initiative

### Standard Approach to Problem Solving

- Dense, tedious, one sided discussion
- Disconnected actors and misaligned incentives
- Overlapping missions and duplicated efforts
- Biased, arbitrary power structures



### GKI's Approach to Network Facilitation and Design

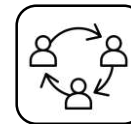
- Interactive, participatory, engaging convening
- Resources matched to needs and goals
- Clarified collaborative innovation strategies
- Negotiated relationships and mutual power

## How GKI Facilitates and Designs Networks

The networks we facilitate and design are:

- Locally-focused
- Facilitated
- Systems-oriented
- Flexible & iterative
- Collaborative and human-centered

### GKI offers the following services:



Facilitation of short network convenings



Analysis of network leverage points



Shared vision establishment



Strategy development for joint action



Collaborative innovation support



Ongoing network management



GKI has shaped networks in all regions of the world and across many sectors. We focus on tackling complex global challenges to maximize social impact.

HOW TO IDENTIFY YOUR NEED FOR NETWORK DESIGN & FACILITATION

Want to bring a group together around a shared vision?

Need to identify resources vital to addressing a challenge?

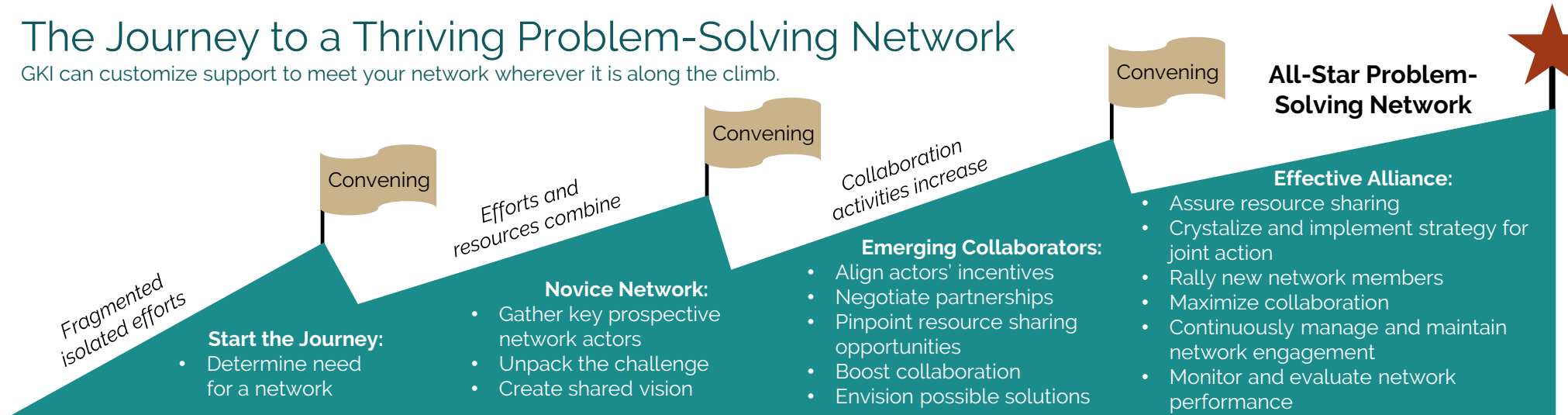
Want to develop a strategy for change?

Need help leveraging expertise of individuals?

Need help managing your network?

# The Journey to a Thriving Problem-Solving Network

GKI can customize support to meet your network wherever it is along the climb.



## FACILITATED CONVENING

### CASE STUDY: BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS (bTB)

Working with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and its implementing partners, GKI facilitated a convening to combat the global issue of bovine Tuberculosis (bTB). The group set out to clarify a bTB research agenda, record the challenges that impede bTB control, and develop strategies to accelerate bTB control in developing countries.

**Key outcomes:** (1) Convened 40 prominent bTB researchers spanning 16 countries; (2) Generated 155 challenges; and (3) Developed 6 integrated strategies to accelerate bTB control, prompting significant funding and programming decisions.

## NETWORK DESIGN & SUPPORT

### CASE STUDY: POSTHARVEST LOSS ALLIANCE FOR NUTRITION (PLAN)

2 billion people worldwide do not consume enough micronutrients critical for proper growth and development. In response, GKI helped the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition launch the PLAN Network. This global network aimed to (1) coordinate actions to reduce losses in perishable and nutritious food supply chains, and (2) increase access to these foods for key populations.

**Key outcomes:** (1) Articulated a Knowledge Management Strategy for PLAN; and (2) Designed, launched, grew, and continuously manage the PLAN Network platform.

A Few of GKI's Network Facilitation & Design Clients:



## INNOVATING THE FUTURE WITH GKI

Whether you are hosting a convening and need a facilitator, have a network that requires support, or want to design a network from scratch, we are here to help. Named one of the world's top 100 social innovations for the next century, GKI enthusiastically embraces opportunities to share our models and methods with others who are passionate about collaborative innovation and development.

Contact us by emailing GKI Chief Operating Officer, Sara Farley at [sara@gkinitiative.org](mailto:sara@gkinitiative.org).