# Reconomy: Towards a Combination of Global Infrastructure and Local Empowerment - A New Approach to Economic Aid

Perhaps the most efficient and effective allocation of aid would be to create a self-sustaining global community of persons motivated and empowered to help build self-sustaining local communities of, by and for targeted populations such as refugees and displaced persons, slum dwellers, and poor rural communities. A description of the Reconomy strategy to accomplish this goal is presented, followed by a discussion of the organizational problem addressed by Reconomy.

The Reconomy strategy

The Reconomy strategy begins with aid to seed an online global network of mutual support that's sustained as a living library of valuable knowledge through persons trading that knowledge hour-for-hour.  Members join to access and to share this knowledge.  The inherent reward of satisfaction from mastery achieved through this activity is enhanced by earnings of time credit, and through gamification of the process, and through benefits attained by application of the knowledge and access to support from the network.

This global pool of living knowledge is all inclusive, and supplements existing resources with direct support, especially through increased access to the long tail of valuable local knowledge that communities are not able to conserve individually because of infrequent application in any one region, such as disaster reduction and response.  The pool also includes the administrative knowledge required to manage the global platform and to scale this platform and strategy to local communities for use as local, autonomous trading platforms.

The local platforms then engage local members in trade using local credit, which credit cannot leave the platform but has value denominated in units equivalent to national currency to facilitate its use together with national currency in trade of goods as well as services.  Interest in participation within these local platforms is generated by local demand for this credit, which demand is produced by using it to employ members in development of local renewable energy resources, and significantly discounting the energy produced when traded for local credit.

Development of these local trade circuits might initially require use of national currency to fund employment or supplementation with imported energy until local energy produced by the process is available at a discount. Thereafter, local credit will continuously circulate to further the development of energy and other local resources. And the members of the global and local platforms directing development and creating the credit thus have a continuous means to increase or reduce volume of currency in circulation to match demand through increasing or reducing employment in development of resources.

In addition to seeding the process with national currency or imported energy, local communities will need technology that might not be possible to produce locally, such as construction tools, mobiles, and small energy generating systems.  Access to the initial funding necessary might come from aid agencies and governments, and also from platform members who can individually or collaboratively purchase these with national currency through the global platform. In addition to using personal resources for these acquisitions, small contributions from all members are pooled and awarded to projects voted best by the membership.

Because imported energy and technology become part of the local public commons, the equivalent value of all contributions from members can be recorded as community credit in the personal accounts of individual contributor's within the trading platforms of their targeted communities. Purchase power parity (PPP) multiplies the buying power of this equivalent credit in emerging communities by as much as 500% when national currency originates from developed economies, thus providing a bonus that helps

members afford to contribute.  This PPP bonus also incentivizes contributions to development where it's needed most.

The goal of this strategy is a vertically and horizontally self-scaling system that impels and empowers persons and communities to develop and steward all their human and natural resources, beginning with local control of money and energy, and including development and conservation of water, food, sanitation, education, housing, arts, forests, administration, safety services, etc. - everything that can be accomplished locally with continuous access to energy, credit, and a global network of mutual support.

The scalable trading platform can be adapted from the Cyclos payment platform, which won the 2014 E-pay Innovation Award for innovative technological payment solutions serving developing economies.(1)

Discussion of the aid problem and Reconomy solution

A core problem with the existing structure of aid is that its top-down distribution of power tends to render illegible to the system both the structure and value of very-local natural and human systems, which are the foundation of eco-sustainability (ecologic and economic), and also the unique offerings and needs of each individual.  This circumstance of course suggests that full distribution of power to the individual at the most-local scale can maximize efficient use of natural and human resources.  However the inverse illegibility also occurs with bottom-up structure: illegibility of the aggregate to the individuals, interfering with useful synergy.

For instance, we as individuals experience all kinds of weather, wherever we are, such that global climate trends are very difficult to estimate based on any particular local experience. Consequently, the power that can be distributed to individuals to greatest effect is empowerment over the ground beneath their feet (e.g. development and conservation of local resources) because that is most legible at that scale; but the useful directing of that effort depends on top-down, global design and management of the infrastructure, such that all individuals and local communities function harmoniously and to best effect within the whole system, or, in other words, such that valuable knowledge is

transmitted well and innovations scale well in all directions. Put another way: with a global infrastructure such as the internet, collaborations can outperform institutions because they allow greatest inclusiveness, but we need a global structure that synergizes performance positively.

To summarize, we need a global infrastructure that functions as both an interface between global and local communities, such that we can exploit global economy-of-scale to provide ever-changing and evolving appropriate local technology, and functions also as an interface between local communities such that they are connected in a global web of mutual support for specifically local knowledge, for instance how to adapt local resources to changing local conditions. This is what's missing - indeed what has never existed - and the lack of which has made us dependent everywhere on supply from a global marketplace that is indifferent to the unique local value upon which all depends.

Now that our global climate has entered a transition state, and with vital global systems at increasing risk, we need this combination of global infrastructure and local empowerment more than ever to empower individuals to act locally to greatest effect.  Our advancing high-speed interconnectedness can serve as the foundation of the necessary infrastructure because it can transform person-to-person "weather reporting" into a high-speed global picture of "climate change" through the aggregation of local data, permitting global-scale response. However, to accomplish this response we also need a fundamentally new infrastructure that is a global network of mutual support for specifically-local solutions because small populations can sustain everyday wisdom but can't maintain all the specialized skills necessary to longterm sustainable local prosperity, such as how to produce habitat and tools that are appropriate to evolving climate using only local materials. Or, in other words, we need a global infrastructure to support the preservation of valuable local-maker knowledge of lasting components, and this infrastructure can be in the form of a global trading platform for a living library of local knowledge, traded person-to-person, hour-for-hour, because that local knowledge of how to make lasting components is everyday wisdom within the aggregate.

This global platform can also engage in the trade of knowledge of how to create/scale and maintain local trading platforms that develop and conserve local natural and human resources, which local marketplace structure is also something that has never existed; and these two new structures can be arranged as complementary, much as unique local ecosystems are part of the common global ecosystem: both trading platforms are autonomous but continuous, like a mobius strip: they use autonomous accounts - one for local trade within the local platform, especially trade of goods and services, and the other for global trade within the global platform of intangibles, especially knowledge - and each maker belongs to both platforms (their particular local and common global) and has one of each type of autonomous account.

Local and global ecosystems engage in trade, such as trade of water, with water transporting nutrients to the roots and then transpiring into the atmosphere for either local or global use.  Our local economic systems need to do likewise but instead now transpire value primarily into a global system that transports the value to where it's needed least - to the affluent - as if it rained only over oceans. In such an ecological mess, we'd need to find a way to keep water local without shutting down global systems. Likewise with our economy, we must keep value local to build prosperous local systems without shutting down the global system, otherwise the local systems will fail and the global system with it. Local moneyless trading systems scaled from a global moneyless knowledge commons is the Reconomy solution.

(1) http://www.cyclos.org/news/press-release-cyclos-wins-e-pay-innovation-award/