President's Report
Future Generations Boards of Trustees Meetings
16 & 17, May 2008
North Mountain Campus

This President's Report departs from my customary presentation with programmatic summaries.

Charge to the Trustees:
This meeting is structured to allow Trustees to ask questions. Therefore, please read the materials that accompany—and **come to the meeting June 16-17 with questions to ask** of the Country Directors, Dean of the Graduate School, and Principle Investigators of Institutional Research Projects. Each of these individuals is submitting their reports in writing in a standardized format, and so this is the way you are being provided with the programmatic summaries. These reports are all accompanying this President's Report. The intent is to maximize time for Trustee discussion with program leaders; hence the request that you read and come with questions.

Beyond the three central issues that occur at the May/June meeting each year: program reporting (Grad School, NGO, and Research Projects), approval of the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, and Nominating Committee action, this meeting has two major further objectives: separation of the two organizations and continued action clarifying the core message of institutional vision/mission.

Separation of the two organizations
Three charts accompany this President's Report: the organization's purpose program by program, and two parallel chart that lists the staff, one chart for the NGO and another for the Grad School.

At this meeting, per discussion and decision at the two prior meetings, Future Generations will separate the operations of the Future Generations NGO and the Graduate School. Separation must occur along two lines: 1) creating two autonomous Boards of Trustees where a majority on one board does not overlap with the other, and 2) separating the financial books and accounting. The challenge (as has been discussed before) is how to keep operations of the two organizations synergistic while keeping their legal and fiscal management separated.

Given discussions with our accrediting body (North Central Higher Learning Commission), it is the intent to conduct this next board meeting as one plenary discussion of both Boards of Trustees. As has been true with prior meetings, discussion can be by any persons present, including input from staff. When votes are to be taken, only those who sit on that governing board will vote.

At the conclusion of this meeting, further adjustments are expected in realigning membership on the two boards so that each board has a majority of trustees who are independent of the other. After consultation with the two board chairs (Bill Carmichael and Chris Cluett), plus the chair of the Nominating Committee (Pat Rosenfield), I make the following recommendation for separation of the two boards.

Graduate School	Nonprofit Organization
Chair: Chris Cluett	Chair: Bill Carmichael
Tom Acker	Jim Brasher
Bill Carmichael (ex-officio as NGO chair)	Chris Cluett (ex-officio as Grad School chair)
Peter Ide	Jim Hoggan
Pat Rosenfield	Mike Stranahan
David Schwimmer	Daniel Taylor
Daniel Taylor	Caroline Van

Note: Daniel Taylor sits not ex-officio as President, but with a regular seat as institutional founder

Per discussions at the last Board Meeting, a motion is needed to expand the Grad School Board from a ceiling limit of seven to a proposed eleven members to equal the NGO. (This By-Law amendment will not take effect until it is voted on at two consecutive board meetings; this meeting being the first.) I propose that in this meeting one set of notes be kept by the Secretary, and that these then be later separated into two sets of formal minutes delineating the discussion and decisions relevant to each organization.

Clarification of organizational purpose for communications

The last board meeting had a useful board discussion led by trustee Jim Hoggan on institutional communications. This discussion followed repeated earlier board discussions about the need to clarify institutional communications, particularly with a concern for effective "branding" that facilitates fund raising. A document accompanies that presents the Communications Plan—which outlines the need to develop a core message and narrative. Please read this plan and prepare for a discussion and a working group session on finalizing an organizational core message. What follows is background as to the direction I see most effective and in keeping with our mission.

Our Mission Statement is clear:
Future Generations teaches and enables a process for equitable community change that integrates environmental conservation with development. As an international school for communities, offering graduate degrees in applied community development and conservation, we provide training and higher education through on-site and distance learning. We support field-based research, promote successes that provide for rapid expansion and build partnerships with an evolving network of communities that are working together to improve their lives and the lives of generations yet to come.

Future Generations was formed with a dual charge from UNICEF: to evolve approaches of social change that go to scale and to evolve approaches that are sustainable. While these charges have never been formalized in our mission, they provide useful guidance. Over the last year, as President and chief fund raiser, I've found it useful to focus this around the theme of "reaching the unreached." This is a global population where others, by definition, have not been successful. Immediately we distinguish ourselves—and many of our most dramatic successes have been among this group. (Even the Green Long March, i.e. the students of China, were "unreached"

until our methodology was employed.) Being unreached is a function not just of poverty or geographic isolation.

Thus, I propose as the content focus for our communications the following: Future Generations, building from the four principles of Seed-Scale, is a **Global Alliance to Sustain the Well-being of All through Research, Demonstrations, and a Graduate School**.

For example, in India across the state of Arunachal Pradesh, people move toward locally-based integrated social change. In Peru, CLAS has been especially effective with the second and third quintile of the populations (I don't believe we've yet had much impact with the bottom quintile.) In China, youth who were isolated from practical environmental action are mobilizing practical solutions for the environment through the Green Long March, and in Tibet large integrated nature preserves are growing. In Afghanistan, men and women learn how to participate in community governance and also learn practical skills in literacy, health, and income generation. In Peru, communities are running their own health clinics. These are examples. Future Generations teaches this process through its Graduate School to reach already 19 countries.

Background:

Decades of efforts promoting poverty alleviation, public health, and international development have improved the lives of billions. But for one and a half billion people, a quarter of humanity, living conditions have become worse, and meanwhile gains in nature conservation, which have preserved sites of natural splendor from exploitation, appear disturbingly ineffectual in the face of global climate change and the headlong race for prosperity. Many groups work on parts of this challenge, but Future Generations through its methodology has the potential to bring these issues together—focusing on those groups where until now programs have had difficulty taking action. Our methodology is especially effective in finding and building from synergies between health, literacy, income generation, security, and the like; thereby mobilizing the energies internal within communities and gathering partnerships among top-down and outside-in groups.

At the core of our work is a process that brings together initiative from communities, impetus from nongovernment organizations, and policies and financing from governments and major international institutions to create equitable, transformative, and environmentally sustainable social change. Bringing these factors together is complex. The task is to find a simple way to communicate that. This is what we are learning and improving our abilities on.

Most modern development, foreign aid, and conservation initiatives have focused on providing funding, technology, or specialized expertise to solve these challenges. The problem with such approaches, however, is that they frame the social change process in terms of those elements of which the poor have the least and the rich the most, thus accentuating disparity and disadvantage. They suggest that only the rich can take action. Those whom projects do not help are termed the "unreached," forever waiting for effective assistance. But, these people are not victims—they have been very successfully surviving using supports from their communities. The Seed-Scale approach enables these communities to become increasingly more effective, using their resources and allied partners. Social change is worked through "million-people" plans rather than "billion-dollar" plans, resulting in action at a fraction the cost of other initiatives. One quarter of

humanity is no longer considered a helpless mass, the great “unreached” of traditional development, but are now a billion and a half people who can channel their energy into global systems to shape the world in which they wish to live.

This is the area of focus, in my judgment, where I proposed that Future Generations operate. It separates us from others. It is an area of very evident global need. Presented in this manner it fits better with donor priorities than does other approaches we’ve tried where what we say, donors agree to then respond by saying, “that’s outside our areas of interest.”

The accompanying reports from our Dean, Country Directors, and Research Directors outline in specific ways how this work is going forward. I urge the trustees to read these documents carefully—and to come to the meetings with questions that you wish to ask of our wonderful colleagues.

Thank you.