

# Systems Thinking

Cooperation in a World System

International Environment Forum

Youth Discourse - Systems2

# Cooperation

*“The supreme need of humanity is cooperation and reciprocity”*

*“The stronger the ties of fellowship and solidarity amongst men, the greater will be the power of constructiveness and accomplishment in all the planes of human activity.”*

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, quoted in The Universal House of Justice, to the Bahá’ís of Iran, 2 March 2013)

# Civilization from Cooperation

Cooperation is the principle that governs the functioning of [a] system.

...so can civilization be seen as the outcome of a set of interactions among closely integrated, diverse components which have transcended the narrow purpose of tending to their own existence.

(The Universal House of Justice, to the Bahá'ís of Iran, 2 March 2013)

# Cooperation

The individual, the community, and the institutions of society... have been locked in a struggle for power throughout time.

...the assumption that relations among them will inevitably conform to the dictates of competition, a notion that ignores the extraordinary potential of the human spirit, has been set aside in favour of the more likely premise that their **harmonious interactions can foster a civilization** befitting a mature humanity.

(The Universal House of Justice, to the Bahá'ís of Iran, 2 March 2013)

# Systematic Learning

As you continue to labour in your clusters, you will be drawn further and further into the life of the society around you and will be challenged to extend the process of systematic learning in which you are engaged to encompass a growing range of human endeavours. In the approaches you take, the methods you adopt, and the instruments you employ, you will need to achieve the same degree of coherence that characterizes the pattern of growth presently under way.

(Universal House of Justice, Ridvan 2008)

# Questions from Systems Science

What is important in a complex system is not just the number of different entities and their distinct qualities, but how they interact.

Will they simply fight until one comes out the winner?

Or do they have a common purpose, with complementary functions, each contributing to the well-being and productivity of the whole?

How do they communicate and share information?

Is the system more than the sum of the parts?

Has it evolved higher levels of complexity and efficiency?

# Places to intervene in a System

4th. the power to evolve or self-organize

3rd. the goals of the system

2nd. the paradigm of values out of which the system arises

1st. the power to transcend paradigms for a millennium, such as by founding a new religion

*(Donella Meadows, Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System, 1999)*

We need a values shift and paradigm change for our survival as a global system

# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 1

The **unity of the human race**, as envisaged by Bahá'u'lláh, implies the establishment of a **world commonwealth** in which all nations, races, creeds and classes are closely and permanently united, and in which the autonomy of its state members and the personal freedom and initiative of the individuals that compose them are definitely and completely safeguarded.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203-204)



# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 2

This commonwealth must, as far as we can visualize it, consist of a **world legislature**, whose members will, as the trustees of the whole of mankind, ultimately control the entire resources of all the component nations, and will enact such laws as shall be required to regulate the life, satisfy the needs and adjust the relationships of all races and peoples.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203-204)



Seat of the Universal House of Justice, Haifa

# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 3

**A world executive**, backed by an international Force, will carry out the decisions arrived at, and apply the laws enacted by, this world legislature, and will safeguard the organic unity of the whole commonwealth.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203-204)

# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 4

**A world tribunal** will adjudicate and deliver its compulsory and final verdict in all and any disputes that may arise between the various elements constituting this universal system.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203-204)

# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 5

A mechanism of **world intercommunication** will be devised, embracing the whole planet, freed from national hindrances and restrictions, and functioning with marvellous swiftness and perfect regularity.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203-204)

# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 6

**A world metropolis** will act as the nerve center of a world civilization, the focus towards which the unifying forces of life will converge and from which its energizing influences will radiate.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203-204)



# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 7

A **world language** will either be invented or chosen from among the existing languages and will be taught in the schools of all the federated nations as an auxiliary to their mother tongue. A world script, a world literature, a uniform and universal system of currency, of weights and measures, will simplify and facilitate intercourse and understanding among the nations and races of mankind.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203-204)

# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 8

In such a world society, **science and religion**, the two most potent forces in human life, will be reconciled, will cooperate, and will harmoniously develop.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203-204)



# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 9

The **press** will, under such a system, while giving full scope to the expression of the diversified views and convictions of mankind, cease to be mischievously manipulated by vested interests, whether private or public, and will be liberated from the influence of contending governments and peoples.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203-204)

# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 10

The **economic resources** of the world will be organized, its sources of **raw materials** will be tapped and fully utilized, its **markets** will be coordinated and developed, and the **distribution** of its products will be equitably regulated.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203-204)

# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 11

National rivalries, hatreds, and intrigues will cease, and racial animosity and prejudice will be replaced by **racial amity**, understanding and cooperation.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203-204)

# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 12

The causes of religious strife will be permanently removed, economic barriers and restrictions will be completely abolished, and the inordinate distinction between classes will be obliterated.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203-204)

# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 13

Destitution on the one hand, and gross accumulation of ownership on the other, will disappear.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203-204)

# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 14

The enormous energy dissipated and wasted on war, whether economic or political, will be consecrated to such ends as will extend the range of human inventions and technical development, to increase the productivity of mankind, to the extermination of disease, to the extension of scientific research, to the raising of the standard of physical health, to the sharpening and refinement of the human brain, to the exploitation of the unused and unsuspected resources of the planet, to the prolongation of human life, and to the furtherance of any other agency that can stimulate the intellectual, the moral, and spiritual life of the entire human race. (Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203-204)

# The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh - 15

A **world federal system**, ruling the whole earth and exercising unchallengeable authority over its **unimaginably vast resources**, blending and embodying the ideals of both the East and the West, liberated from the curse of war and its miseries, and bent on the exploitation of all the available sources of **energy** on the surface of the planet, a system in which Force is made the servant of Justice, whose life is sustained by its universal recognition of one God and by its allegiance to one common Revelation - such is the goal towards which humanity, impelled by the unifying forces of life, is moving.