Another World is happening
Towards a Great Transition through a Global Citizens Movement

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“This dissertation may be made available to the general public for borrowing, photocopying
or consultation without the prior consent of the author.”
“We’ve become something of a bacterial species, and our fingerprints are everywhere. The planet is dying, and there is a need to reform or rethink or out-think the ways we’ve been thinking about the world and our relations to it. Today’s most pressing imperative is to turn to each other.”

Bayo Akomolafe
Abstract

This dissertation examines the potential and character of a global citizens movement to address a paradigm shift towards a just and sustainable planetary future, and the role development education can play in facilitating such a process. It argues that a “great transition” is necessary to move beyond the current anthropocentric and unsustainable growth, market, profit and competition based system, resulting in exploitation of people and planet. As planetary democratic mechanisms to address global challenges don’t exist, global civil society is the only force that can address such a profound change process. However, the NGO sector became largely co-opted by the system it claims to change. Relinking institutionalised civil society, in particular big NGOs, with social mobilisations and grassroots experimentation is crucial to build systems of influence that can address systemic change. A multi-layered, non-hierarchical and inclusive global citizens movement should move from a focus on policy change to nourishing radical alternatives and addressing values, discourse and culture that constitute the understanding of what is possible.

This research builds on 12 interviews with local movement organisers, international NGO leaders, global activists and development educators from 6 continents on the character, potential and challenges of a global citizens movement. Three essential elements for the advancement of a global citizens movement are identified: The acknowledgment of the need for a great transition, a changing role and practice of NGOs, and a focus on cultural transformation. It concludes that development education can play a crucial role in facilitating the re-appropriation of political change by citizens if focused on values, emancipation and social transformation. Through such a shift in concept and practice, and indeed the re-linking with its radical roots, development education can move from the margins to the centre of the development discourse and become a central force for transformational change.
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1. Introduction

While NGOs, business, politicians and officials battle it out over wordings to find the smallest common denominator in never-ending international negotiations on the planetary future, may it be addressing climate change or global poverty, citizens all over the world are mobilising in greater numbers to challenge a system that does not deliver on their aspirations (CIVICUS 2014). In an ever more interconnected world, any transformation towards a more just and sustainable future can’t be done without the citizens of this world.

This dissertation will argue that a global citizens movement (GCM) is a precondition to achieving such a transformation. While efforts to influence the institutions – the classical NGO advocacy and lobbying work around intergovernmental and UN negotiations – are not very likely to bring upon the systemic change they aspire to, as has shown, for example, the general failure to address the challenge of climate change (Narberhaus et.al. 2011, Baker 2014), a global citizens movement can help to facilitate such transformation through connecting radical experimentation manifesting in the niches of the current system, and through changing the dominant discourse and culture.

Moving away from a focus on changes in policies, a global citizens movement can re-conquer the sphere of politics. Paulo Freire, already back in 1970, argued that the conquest of political power of citizens is an essentially emancipatory and educational process: “People subjected to domination must fight for their emancipation. [...] The world [...] becomes the object of that transforming action by men and women which results in their humanization. [...] Only a revolutionary society can carry out this education in systematic terms” (Freire 2005:86).

Popular education, development education (DE), global learning or global citizenship are at the very heart of global movement building and “revolutionary”, systemic change. This is an opportunity for DE to reposition itself at the core of the process towards a transition for a better world. However, in order to do so, DE has to leave the field of the aid industry, where it is traditionally situated (Bourn 2008), and enter the core of the debate on the world we want to live in, based on a culture of learning, sharing and mutuality, that helps to scale up alternative and radical experiments that are already happening, and at the same time
reshapes discourses and culture, to overcome the false promises of mainstream ideas around economic growth, competition and consumerism. For this, DE needs to move away from an approach based on a triad of awareness – understanding – action, and the consequent assumption that knowledge of an issue like global poverty, climate change or illicit financial flows would somehow automatically lead to citizens action and change. Instead, DE has to move beyond teaching about topical concerns of the development sector, often implicitly linked with the aim to maintain or increase public support for development policies, including public spending on development aid, and rather address the core elements of citizenship: Emancipation and transformation of politics and social relations. Addressing a cultural transformation – the discourses, values and frames that shape our reality and determine what is perceived as possible – should be, I will argue, the primary concern of any transformational learning.

The systemic challenges we are facing as humanity are global. Hence, any emancipatory conception of citizenship has to have an essentially global dimension, and development education conceived as critical global citizenship education (Andreotti 2006), addressing the “life skills” (Krause 2010) of people in a globalised world, can make a central contribution in advancing towards a planetary society able to address common challenges and shape a joint future. However, while an increasing number of individuals describe themselves as “global citizens” (Schattle 2008a, Paehlke 2014), “we know comparatively little about the practices of global citizenship from the points of view of individuals around the world who now think of themselves as global citizens, as well as organisations that have linked the idea of global citizenship to their activities, programmes and strategies.” (Schattle 2008a:4). We know even less about individual views on how such global citizenship can link to collective action – a global citizens movement.

This research aims to explore the characteristics, potential and possible challenges for a global citizens movement to address systemic change. It builds on the experience of the international conference “Building a global citizens movement”, that took place in Johannesburg, S.A., on 10 and 11 November 2013, and was organised by CIVICUS (the “World Alliance for Citizen Participation”), GCAP (the “Global Call to Action against Poverty”)
and CONCORD (the European NGDO confederation), through the DEEEP project, which I manage. The conference aimed to create a space for exchange between European and global activists interested in reinforcing critical, active global citizenship, and thus overcoming a bi-polar “North-South” world view, and the historical divide between “development education here – development cooperation there”. This should contribute to a repositioning of development education from the margins of the aid industry to the centre of a global, transformational change agenda and movement. Interviews with twelve participants in this conference from six continents are at the heart of this research.

1.1. Personal background and motivation

In 2002, after obtaining my degree in communication at the Berlin University of the Arts, and feeling frustrated that these studies proved to be a drill facility for the German advertisement and marketing industry, I went to Ghana for three months as a volunteer, supposed to do an “AIDS awareness campaign with rural youth”\(^1\). My naïve motivation of “helping the poor” was soon deconstructed by the reality of these “poor” people: They knew a lot about AIDS, and they certainly weren’t sitting there waiting for a young German, demonstrating condom use with the help of a wooden penis, to address the complex social and political roots of poverty, of which health questions such as AIDS are only symptoms.

Through this “field experience”, I learned that social change doesn’t work in the linear manner of awareness – understanding – action, which is still a foundation of many definitions of development education, including that of CONCORD (the European Confederation of Development NGOs)\(^2\), where I work today. The encounter with the reality of the “aid industry” and it’s privileged, western implementers convinced me that fighting poverty and inequality cannot be achieved through paternalistic charity and aid programmes, but has to tackle the systemic root causes of the exploitation of people and planet, which are inherent in the neo-colonial, capitalistic economic and political structures that dominate the world today.

\(^1\) [www.akatsi.net](http://www.akatsi.net)
\(^2\) [www.concordeurope.org/civil-society/engaging-citizens](http://www.concordeurope.org/civil-society/engaging-citizens)
As a European, I realised that my primary responsibility is to contribute to addressing global challenges in Europe. I became a development educator, first in the frame of the Global Education Network of Young Europeans (GLEN\textsuperscript{3}), facilitating seminars for international volunteers, and in 2007 as advocacy officer of the DEEEP project\textsuperscript{4}. DEEEP is a support mechanism for the European development education sector, created in 2003 by the DARE Forum (Development Education & Awareness Raising working group of CONCORD). When DEEEP entered a new three-year project phase, I had the privilege to become project manager in 2013. DEEEP and the DARE Forum behind it significantly changed its approach to development education: Global citizenship, emancipatory learning and citizens action had to move from the margins of the development discourse back into the centre of concerns of actors committed to global justice (see DARE Forum position paper “Development needs Citizens”, DEEEP 2011).

This development is closely linked to a generalised crisis and questioning of the development and aid sector: the old “North – South”, “powerful giver – grateful receiver” approach is not acceptable anymore, and does not reflect a global reality where poverty and inequality, alongside the alarming degradation of nature and human rights violations, happen everywhere. Members of CONCORD started discussing weather they want to see themselves as “system improvers”, reduced to a technical and institutional role of implementing policies which they can barely influence, or “system changers”, alongside the people mobilising in popular uprisings all over the planet (Trócaire 2011, CIDSE 2013). From my understanding of development education, the choice was clear: Global learning had to rediscover it’s “radical roots”, as one participant in this research formulated it, and position itself as an emancipatory, transformational and in a Freirian sense utopian practice of critical thinking, that challenges dominant paradigms – both in society, and also within the development NGO sector itself. At DEEEP, we are trying to contribute to this re-radicalisation of development education, and the development sector in general, and the global

\textsuperscript{3} www.glen-europe.org
\textsuperscript{4} www.deeep.org
conferences on “Building a global citizens movement” are a central tool to contribute to this change in discourse and practice.

How can development NGOs become more effective agents for a just and sustainable world instead of settling for the role of cherished “stakeholders” in institutional consultation processes, implementers of aid programmes or multi-million global brands of the aid industry? After seven years in the heart of the European development NGO sector, this is still a central concern to me, along with many others who participate in the difficult struggle for redefining sense in NGO work. I am convinced that development education and global citizenship have to play a crucial role to play in this transformation process of the sector, and the degree it will be able to reconnect to citizens, their mobilisations and concerns will be decisive for its future. With this research I hope to make a useful contribution to this on-going debate.

1.2. Development Education and its role in the development discourse

This dissertation is written as part of my Master degree studies in development education at the Institute of Education, University of London. It is also the cumulation of a 12 year personal journey of understanding, questioning and re-conceptualising DE as an approach to social transformation.

The Institute’s website states that “development education needs to be a power house for ideas, creativity and new thinking about how people in society can be better equipped to create a world which is more just and equal, [...] and above all gives some skills and values base to enable people to create their own voices and forms of engagement to secure real social change.” The political manifestation of such engagement would be, I will argue, a global citizens movement. However, the reality of DE often compromises its ambition of social transformation by becoming a tool to increase public support for development cooperation and by following a donor-led agenda, which rather reinforces than questions the status quo (Bryan 2011, Troll and Skinner 2013). A lack of ambition in DE practice to

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5 www.ioe.ac.uk/study/PMM9_DED9IM.html
6 www.ioe.ac.uk/research/150.html
challenge the systemic causes of the multi-fold, economic, ecological, value and democratic crisis we are in as a planetary community is also reflected in an identity crisis of the development sector at large: “Nothing less than a fundamental turnaround of world development will be needed to open the road toward a sustainable development for all” say Sumner and Wiegmann (2012:2). Indeed, the traditional development discourse as a promise of continuous progress, increased wealth and domination of nature, delivered through lifting a “poor South” to the levels of, and by the help of, a “rich North”, is increasingly challenged (Shutt 2009, Fiedler 2011).

However, we cannot expect institutional actors such as aid agencies, governments, international organisations or established political parties to challenge this discourse, as they are the main proponents of the current growth and market based system we are living in: “They express concerns too narrow and outlooks too myopic for the task” (Raskin 2014:6).

Civil society and NGOs have a particular responsibility in addressing systemic change, but face an identity crisis themselves: “NGOs need to face a choice: to be agents of progressive social change, and in order to do this, transform themselves radically or, alternatively, continue to make modest efforts to ameliorate some of the least defensible aspects of the inequitable global capitalist system of which they are a part, but admitting that this does not really amount to progressive social change” (Shutt, 2009: 19).

Embracing its radical, critical and transformative foundations, a redefined approach to development education is well placed to contribute to thinking about fundamental structural changes needed to lead to a world of greater justice. The identity crises of the development sector provides a potential for new concepts and practices of DE to move from the margins of the development discourse to its very centre, building on its emancipatory roots and the potential to reconnect the development sector to citizens concerns and mobilisations towards a systemic transformation (Selby and Kagawa 2011, DEEEP 2011).

This research will take a broad look at the challenges “development” - understood as the quest to build a fair, sustainable and rights-based global society - is facing, and the contribution that citizens action and civil society can make to achieving this, through the facilitation of a global citizens movement. DE as emancipatory learning for transformational
change based on global citizenship is an essential tool to this endeavour. I hope this paper can enrich the discussion on the concepts and aims of DE, and thus contribute to building the “power house” of development education, so we - development educators, activists, scholars and anyone believing that another world is not only possible, but actually happening already today – are better equipped to live up to this ambition.

1.3. Research paradigm, aims, design and structure

This dissertation aims to investigate how representatives of different stakeholder groups in civil society define a global citizens movement, and where they see its pitfalls and potential. The methodological paradigm follows an advocacy, participatory and emancipatory worldview (Cresswell 2009), believing that research needs to be closely interlinked with a political agenda: “Advocacy research provides a voice for [...] participants, raising their consciousness or advancing an agenda for change” (Cresswell 2009:9). As the question of paradigm shift and transformation cannot be addressed through the terminology of the very system it aims to overcome (Krause 2014), the partly essay-style character of this text reflects the conviction that there is no objective truth, and reality is constructed in discourses and dialog. Research based on an advocacy worldview aims to reshape discourses and provides suggestions for a political change agenda. It is part of a dialogical process that is not limited to this paper, and concrete opportunities for continuing the conversation are already planned – in particular a second global conference on “Building a global citizens movement – learning from the grassroots” in Johannesburg from 19 to 21 November 2014. Ideally, this paper will help to form “a united voice for reform and change” (Cresswell 2009:9). The choice of an advocacy based research paradigm had consequences on the way the study was conducted:

- The analysis and interpretation of collected data and literature review leads to the proposition of three steps to advance towards a global citizens movement - an “agenda for change” (chapter 4.4.).
- The selection of the twelve participants in the interviews (see details below and in chapter 4.2.), was based on the assumption that these individuals could play a
prominent role within such a “united voice” towards the facilitation of a global citizens movement, and that participation in the research might encourage them to follow that path, by offering a platform for contribution to this debate, and by strengthening their link with the process of global conferences organised by DEEEP.

- The choice of research questions was not based on the idea of a neutral exploration of a global citizens movement as a social phenomenon, but followed the motivation to explore ways to advance and strengthen its emergence, and to formulate concrete recommendations in this sense.

Due to my deep and long standing involvement in civil society and the processes at discussion in this paper, an advocacy approach as research paradigm seemed to be the most authentic and useful choice to base this dissertation on.

The main research question for this dissertation is:

- How do various types of civil society activists from around the world (local movements, global activists, NGO leaders and development educators) see the potential of an emerging global citizens movement to contribute to systemic change?

Sub questions include:

- What are the ethical and political motivations of various types of civil society activists from around the world (local movements, global activists, NGO leaders and development educators) to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement?

- How do they define a global citizens movement?

- What do they see as obstacles and pitfalls in the establishment of a global citizens movement?

- How do they see the evolving role of development education in contributing to the emergence of a global citizens movement?

In order to address these questions, I will start with a review of concepts of transformational change (Raskin et. al. 2002, Narberhaus et.al. 2011, Krause 2014), before highlighting two
specific and closely interlinked change models with particular potential to help understanding the possible contribution of citizens mobilisation (and in consequence of a global citizens movement) in achieving such transformational change (Smart CSOs change model by Narberhaus 2014, Berkana model by Wheatley and Frieze 2006). Exploring elements of a global citizens movement, I will discuss literature on concepts of citizenship, global citizenship, global civil society, social movements and finally a global citizens movement, and how they relate to the change models introduced before: Osler & Starkey (2005) defend a concept of citizenship as status, feeling and practice - essential ingredients for a global citizens movement, as I will argue.

Based on writings by Schattle (2008a), Lalma (2008), Dower (2008) and Armstrong (2006), we will explore global citizenship as a complex transposition of citizenship to an international level. Regarding global civil society, there is a critical discussion of the relation between institutionalised civil society (NGOs) and collective change efforts by citizens. Kaldor (2012), Drainville (2008) and Petras (1999), among others, argue that international civil society organisations – big NGOs – are arguably increasingly dissociated from citizens mobilisations and co-opted by institutionalised lobbying processes that stabilise the system rather than challenging it: Global civil society in this respect is not (yet) a global citizens movement with the ambition to address systemic transformation. This leads to the question on how social movements, which evolved from self-interested battles for advantages or rights to open platforms of ideological critique and transformational experimentation (Della Porta & Diani 2009, Mayo 2005) can be reconciled with institutionalised civil society. The idea of a global citizens movement (George 2001, Kriegman 2006, Paehkle 2014) would need to reconnect the civil society establishment with social movements and grassroots mobilisation, changing the role of NGOs from topical, sectorial and self-referential advocacy organisations to enablers of citizens based change and mobilisation. In the last part of the literature discussion, I will argue that development education, based on the utopian and dialogical principles and practice of critical global citizenship education and popular education in a Freirian tradition (Freire 2005, Andreotti 2006, Kumar 2008) can provide the tools and
approaches for NGOs to become part of a citizen based global mobilisation for transformational change.

After this desk review, I will examine the viewpoints of participants in the conference “Building a global citizens movement”, which took place in Johannesburg, S.A., on 11 and 12 November 2013, as a crystallising moment of discussions around a global citizens movement. 520 people from all over the world, with a large variety of backgrounds (including NGO and popular movements or non-affiliated activists), applied to participate in this event, and 200 of them were selected. Based on the rationale of the conference, which aimed to create a space of exchange between NGO leaders, activists and development educators, I identified four stakeholder groups:

1. Participants involved in popular movements
2. Global Civil Society Activists
3. INGO leaders
4. Development Educators from Europe

Between May and July 2014, I conducted three interviews per stakeholder group, with a total of 12 participants (see overview of stakeholder groups and profiles of participants in chapter 4.2.). These individuals were identified based on my personal assessment of their profile, which is rooted in our encounter in the context of the Johannesburg conference (and at other occasions in some cases). Some had prominent roles in the conference (as speakers or facilitators), or in the preparation process, others turned out to be vocal and active participants with articulate views on the topic of a global citizens movement during or after the conference. While their main contributions to the discussion of a global citizens movement are used and documented in the body of this dissertation, I chose to include the full interview transcripts in annex 2 of this paper, as many statements, even if not directly linked to the question of a global citizens movement (and thus not used or quoted in the body of this paper) provide highly interesting insights into the motivations, concerns and practice to these engaged individuals, which might be interesting for some readers.

The interview questions where slightly adapted to each interviewee, but were based around the following main issues:
- What motivates you to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement?
- How do you define a global citizens movement?
- Do you think a global citizens movement is useful or necessary for the causes you are involved in? What are the implications of a global citizens movement in your particular country or region?
- What do you see as obstacles and pitfalls in the establishment of a global citizens movement?
- How do you see the potential of development education in the facilitation of a global citizens movement, and how does development education need to evolve in order to assume this role?

Based on the interviews, I try to identify key points and patterns for the definition of a GCM by stakeholder group, before attempting to create a typology of approaches, in relation to the discussed change models: The Smart CSOs model (Narberhaus 2014) emphasises the need for shifting attention from change on the regimes level (policy and institutions) to experimentation in niches and shifts in culture, whereas the model of the Berkana Institute (Wheatley and Freeze 2006) suggests naming, connecting, nourishing and illuminating change efforts towards transformational “systems of influence”. The degree to which these principles are embraced by the interviewees results in a threefold typology of a global citizens movement:

- “Participation revolution”: Local, topical mobilisations and grassroots experimentation should connect internationally to influence global policy making
- “Connected causes”: Joining forces in political battles around specific topics should be combined with systemic thinking and cultural change in order to achieve concrete political outcomes
- “Human movement”: Radical experimentation and new epistemologies are needed to achieve a paradigm shift towards systemic change; the focus on immediate changes on a policy or political level is counterproductive for a great transition
The interpretation of the findings from the interviews and the literature discussion results in the tentative formulation of three steps towards a global citizens movement. These essential ingredients are:

a. The acknowledgement of the need for a “great transition”

b. A new role for NGOs, moving from professionalised implementing agencies and advocacy groups to enablers of citizen participation

c. A focus on a cultural transformation, addressing worldviews, discourses, values and frames in order to let alternative paradigms emerge.

These three steps are closely linked to the objectives, practice and possible contribution of development education or global learning – or any emancipatory learning practice, no matter which adjective might be associated. These implications and the central role of learning in building a global citizens movement are discussed in the final chapter of this paper.

1.4. Ethical considerations

This research underwent the mandatory ethics review of the Institute of Education. Interviewees received an information sheet (see annex 1) before agreeing to participate. They received a full transcript of their interview for approval and/or corrections. As most of the interviewees are people who speak out publicly quite regularly on political issues, I suggested to them to keep their true names and biographical details, if they wished to. However, public political engagement also entails risks, and they could choose at any moment to remain anonymous, which one participant finally preferred to.

The conference took place in the frame of the DEEEP project\(^7\), and as project manager I was closely involved in conceptualising and organising the event. This research is the fruit of my engagement with this process. Being personally one of the central stakeholders in this process, which provided me with a privileged access to data and information, is an asset in terms of valorisation of the research results: They will, and do already at the point of writing this text, inform the planning of the two remaining follow-up conferences. However, the

\(^7\) www.deeep.org
unavoidable subjectivity of the researcher can in this case lead to perceived or real, intentional or unintentional instrumentalisation of the research results and arguments to sustain a certain direction of the further process, in which I am deeply involved, including with some decision making power. It is inevitable in any setup with close bonds between research and activity implementation, such as action research projects, that stakeholders have double roles and might not be perceived as “neutral”. The reader, in particular if involved with DEEEP and the global conferences process, is invited to critically assess the findings of this research and challenge any possible consequence for operationalization, if the conclusions are not convincing.
2. The quest for a “great transition”

The world is at risk. Entering an age of a “planetary society” and confronted with a permanent and multiple crisis situation (environmental, economic, social), “a dismal future of impoverished people, cultures and nature […] seems the most likely” perspective for mankind (Raskin et al. 2002:ix). Global scenario planning suggests that humanity, unable to establish alternatives to an economic system that does not consider planetary boundaries and increased inequalities, might well drive into the abyss of “barbarization” (Raskin et al. 2002:25), yet other, not more friendly futures such as a multipolar, divided world or, at best, a world in which environmental challenges are addressed but at a large social cost (Vaes and Huyse 2012).

Regarding the important challenges the world is confronted with today, the idea of a “great transition” (Raskin et al. 2002) – a transformation of our economic system which is currently based on marketization, consumerism and competition, but also of our cultural frames, social relations and systems of governance (Narberhaus 2014) – has left a sectarian or radical corner and is taken up increasingly by actors of or close to the political mainstream. In recent speeches (e.g. Ban Ki-moon 2013), the Secretary General of the UN underlines that humanity is in the middle of a profound change period, affecting global economics, development and politics, which he calls the “Great Transition”. Olivier De Schutter, until recently the UN special rapporteur on the right to food, states that “the transition towards sustainable societies will require the introduction of new forms of governance, encouraging social innovations and participatory democracy at all levels, combined with improved multi-level coordination to facilitate local experimentation” (De Schutter 2014:3). Kenneth Wilson of the EDGE Funders alliance, a large network of progressive foundations and philanthropists, insists that “the just transition is happening and it is taking place in the decomposing matter of a decaying system.” (EDGE Funders Alliance 2014:2).

While there seems to be an emerging consciousness that we are living in an area of “transition”, some consider this transition simply to be happening – a process we can witness and reactively try to control – whereas others emphasise the political project of a “great transition” as an alternative to currently dominating discourses and institutions. There is little
doubt however that the acceleration of global interconnectivity, may it be in terms of economy, communication, environment or culture, leads to a profound transformation of our societies. The vocation of a possibly emerging global citizens movement can’t be less than shaping this transformation in a way that considers well-being of people and planet over money and profit – a paradigm shift that can help to avoid a “barbarization” scenario. However, what characterises this “great transition” we are in, and which are the paradigms that lead to the current globalised crisis situation?

2.1. Transformational change: Crisis and turning point

Johannes Krause (2014), who examined several models of transformational system change, concludes that transformation, by its nature of redefining paradigms, cannot be planned or predicted: Processes leading to transformation make sense only from an ex-post examination. Various models of transformation have a “turning point” or a “crisis moment” as a common central element. This is a point where the old truths loose significance: the old thinking patterns, values, frames and certitudes don’t deliver meaning anymore. This crisis moment, when the old is fading, is characterised by irritation, confusion, depression or conflict: There is no transformation without crisis. This crisis is also result of the fact that the emerging new system cannot be predicted: By the very nature of a paradigm shift, we cannot anticipate the new paradigms, as we are still thinking in the categories of the old world.

Referring to Kant, constructivism and post-structuralism theory as well as quantum physics, Krause argues that “reality” as a structured, sense-making world is created only by the observer, through the act of observation and by the help of thinking patterns and frames that are culturally primed through the lived experience of everyone. Welzer (2011) calls this the “mental infrastructures”, referring to the normalisation of the growth concept, that shapes not only the economy, but also, and maybe more importantly, the self-conception of the modern man as entrepreneurial self, that seeks indefinite progress and self-improvement, based on concepts of individuality, biography and future – internalised to a point that we are not able to question them anymore. Krause identifies five elements of the “modern paradigm” that shape our thinking, and contribute to, if not drive, the multiple crisis based on system-imminent
need for growth, unlimited financial capitalism, and resulting in increasing degradation of nature and inequalities. Paradigms as the operating system of our thinking shape not only the economic and political system, but also impact the way civil society operates, and its ability to establish a transformational global citizens movement, outlined in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paradigm</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Question for GCM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Progress</td>
<td>Life as constant evolution towards self-perfection</td>
<td>Development is cyclical, not linear</td>
<td>Can a GCM move beyond a concept of development as measurable progress?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Future as projection for betterment</td>
<td>Unlimited growth is not sustainable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technological development and continuous wealth increase</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectivity</td>
<td>Assumption that objective facts exist</td>
<td>Objectivity is an illusion, reality always depends on the observer (cf. insights from quantum physics, psychology, neurology and discourse theory)</td>
<td>Can a GCM embrace a multitude of epistemologies and accept that there is not one truth or objective solution to a problem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human beings are able to &quot;objectively&quot; assess these facts and draw necessary conclusions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science creates objective truths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dualism</td>
<td>Binary categorisation of the world: man / woman, nature / culture, body / soul, right / wrong, we / the others</td>
<td>Binary oppositions are a construction that create a dualistic worldview</td>
<td>Can a GCM overcome established dualisms such as rich / poor, North / South, 99% / 1%, indigenous / non-indigenous, friend / enemy, that conveniently shape discourses and battles?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dualities carry a hierarchy and frame the elements in opposition to each other</td>
<td>Binaries stabilise hierarchies and power relations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mankind is regarded as distinct from nature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragmentation</td>
<td>Analysis as default mode for understanding and interpretation of the world: Phenomenon are deconstructed into elements (cells, individuals, nations…)</td>
<td>Things are not solely the sum of their parts: Relations, connections and unity are key characteristics of the world</td>
<td>Can a GCM reconcile the topical fragmentation of civil society?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Analytical mode leads to fragmentation, which reinforces individualism, nationalism, ethnocentrism and anthropocentrism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilitarianism</td>
<td><em>Homo economicus</em> acts to maximise own benefit</td>
<td>Does not consider interrelations in complex systems</td>
<td>Can a GCM emerge without the promise of immediate political outcome?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competition is default and ideal mode of relating</td>
<td>Legitimises instrumentalisation of others, nature etc. for own benefit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1: The modern paradigm (based on Krause 2014)*

Krause underlines that thinking about paradigm change is a difficult, if not impossible exercise. A world that is based on different paradigms cannot be thought out by the help of old paradigms: „It is a practical, if not logical impossibility to criticise a certain mode in which meaning is produced (in and through language and signs) without at the same time
employing this very mode and thereby contributing to its reproduction” says post-modern political scientist Matthias Albert (1998:59). Krause suggests, instead of seeking to plan and shape the “great transition”, that we “have to let happen” the on-going transformation, and contribute to an enabling environment for positive change, e.g. through intellectual openness towards different worldviews, non-dogmatic spirituality, experimentation with alternatives and “gentle dissidence” – elements which, as we will see in the following sections, are not only closely connected to models for transformational change, but also crucial to a certain critique of global learning and global citizenship education, such as formulated by Andreotti (2006, 2012, see also chapter 4.5.). In the following section, we will have a look at two models of transformational change, which will be used as an analytical framework for the examination of the possibility of a global citizens movement: The Berkana model helps to understand how social innovation takes place through “networks of relationships” (Wheatley and Frieze 2006) – an essential element to understand dynamics of social movement and change. The Smart CSOs model (Narberhaus 2014) builds on elements of the Berkana model and puts it in the context of transformational change at global level.
2.2. The Berkana Model

Margaret Wheatley and colleagues at the Berkana Institute, supporting communities in change efforts, have developed a model for system transformation that is based on “lifecycles” that cyclically emerge and decline (Wheatley and Frieze 2006).

While a system is still at its summit of influence, pioneers experiment with alternatives. Once identified, they might discover shared meaning and purpose with other initiatives, connect and form a network. These networks are loose – people move in or out easily – and based on self-interest: People join because they see benefit for their own practice. If “nourished”, both externally by the increasingly obvious decline of a system the pioneers provide alternatives, and internally through the inspiration of the proposed alternative practice, such networks can grow into communities of practice. In contrast to networks, communities of practice have stronger cohesion: They are based on a shared and intentional commitment to advance certain thinking and practice, and the benefit for the group as a whole is prioritised over individual needs. There is the intention to share discoveries with a broader audience, and to advance quickly on joint learning and innovation. At a point, they might become “systems of influence” and the new societal norm. This point is however difficult to predict, as systemic change such as in the fall of the Berlin Wall, the decline of the Soviet Union or the global domination of corporate power come into reality in a quick and unforeseen way. The
former pioneers become acknowledged leaders in their field, now recognised by the mainstream, and former sceptics turn into supporters.

An example of the move from pioneers to a network to a community of practice is the Transition Town Movement\(^8\), which aims to create resilient communities through implementing collective, local alternatives to an oil, growth and market obsessed economic reality, e.g. through local currencies, community gardens or “free markets”. Starting in 2005 in the small town of Totnes, England, it grew by 2011 to a global network of 714 initiatives in 31 countries, though with a strong concentration in Europe and North America (Taylor 2012). This process was facilitated, or “nourished” through a well-crafted “start-up manual” and peer support dynamics through the growing network itself. However, while the Transition Town movement is a beautiful example of community based alternatives, the “tipping point” to become the new norm for how cities and local communities are economically and socially organised has not been met: Cars and corporate retail stores still dominate the way of life in most towns. The Smart CSOs change model, outlined in the next section, describes the relations between experimentation in niches, shifts in culture and political change.

### 2.3. The Smart CSOs model

The Smart CSOs initiative\(^9\) was created through a European Union funded research project on the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) in enhancing sustainable consumption and production\(^10\), under the lead of WWF UK. The then produced “Smart CSOs report” (Narberhaus et.al. 2011) proposes five “leverage points” as “effective change strategies for the Great Transition”, in particular aiming to challenge practices and strategies of CSOs. These five approaches, identified through a number of workshops and consultations with people involved in CSOs, include:

- Embedding systems thinking in CSO practice
- Creation of a new narrative and work with cultural values
- Developing new models and supporting seeds of a new economy

\(^8\) [www.transitionnetwork.org](http://www.transitionnetwork.org)  
\(^9\) [www.smart-csos.org](http://www.smart-csos.org)  
\(^10\) [action-town.eu](http://action-town.eu)
- Overcoming fragmentation and facilitation of a new cross-sectorial global movement
- Engaging funders in CSO strategies towards the Great Transition

Since the publication of this first report, the “Smart CSO Lab” left WWF and became an independent, growing community of practice of a broad range of people involved with civil society (though mainly from Europe), including senior leadership from a range of big NGOs or CSO networks from a variety of sectors, such as environment, global justice, women’s rights or social rights. Regular workshops, meetings and seminars allow participants to exchange on the systemic questions and challenges CSOs need to address, beyond the daily business of management and policy work. Some joint initiatives, such as collective work on new narratives and storytelling, or peer support for organisational change, have emerged from the meetings.

One of the basic assumptions of the Smart CSO change model is that civil society organisations (CSOs) currently mainly act within the existing paradigms of markets and competitions (or utilitarianism, fragmentation and progress, as Krause [2014], put it), and apply intrinsic change strategies based on policy work and institutional lobbying. The Copenhagen climate summit is maybe the most prominent illustration of the limits of this approach.

As an alternative, the Smart CSOs Lab (Narberhaus 2014) proposes to move change efforts from the level of “regimes” (“where the dominant political, economic and social institutions of the old unsustainable economic system lie“) to the level of “niches” (spaces of radical experimentation “where the seeds of the new system emerge”) and the level of “culture” (where the dominant discourses, values and worldviews are situated).
Narberhaus et. al. (2011:34) identify a Global Citizens Movement as one of five “leverage points” to advance systemic change in order to overcome sectorial separation of civil society and “rise above the current politics of opposition”. However, referring to Brulle and Jenkins (2006), Narberhaus underlines that CSOs have evolved from participatory, democratic grassroots organisations into highly professionalised and hierarchical organisations, often embracing very much the same principles of growth, markets and competition in their institutional strategies as corporate actors in globalised capitalism. Furthermore, through a strong focus on specific and technical expertise and access to institutional negotiations, they have became co-opted by the system they intend to change, in particular in the eye of grassroots movements (Anderson and Rieff 2005, see also chapters 3.3 and 3.5.).

The Smart CSOs report takes inspiration from the Berkana model of social innovation introduced above (Wheatley and Frieze 2006) in the perspective of reconnecting CSOs with grassroots movements and across the topical silos or specific expertise and concern. Narberhaus (2011) names cross-sectorial cooperation, joint learning and action, and
reinforcing vertical and horizontal connectivity as three ingredients towards “systems of influence” for addressing systemic change.

As a result, a Global Citizens Movement, engaging masses of people, “nurturing values of human solidarity, ecological resilience and quality of life” is described as necessary and possible. This movement would “embrace diverse perspectives and movements as separate expressions of a common project” (Raskin 2010:3). The next section will explore what such a global citizens movement could look like.
3. From citizenship to a global citizens movement

So what is a global citizens movement? Does it exist already, and if not, what should it look like to bring upon the systemic change as an answer to a multi-fold and fundamental global crisis, as outlined above?

In order to approach this question, it seems useful to attempt to clarify the sometimes confusing or even contradictory concepts and terms related to it. First, we will explore elements of citizenship, which manifests mainly and historically at a national level. Global citizenship, a transposition of certain elements of national citizenship to a global level, often based on notions of a “global ethic” (Dower 2003), is a necessary, but not sufficient element for the emergence of a global citizens movement, which goes beyond the individual dimension of identification and has a collective, change-oriented and thus political component. Global civil society aims for international, political change, but literature often focuses on organisations (i.e. NGOs or CSOs), leaving the individual, citizenship component aside. Social movements in contrast are a space of mobilisations of individuals, and thus a manifestation of active citizenship, but often within geographic or topical limitations. A global citizens movement would be the reunification of an institutionalised global civil society with internationalised social grassroots movements.

3.1. Citizenship

The commonly accepted definition of citizenship is associated with formal rights and duties within a nation state, and based on the formal belonging to this state – the passport being the bureaucratic materialisation of national citizenship. Osler and Starkey (2005) suggest three dimensions of citizenship: status, which comes with the citizen’s duties such as paying taxes, and rights, such as the right to vote; feeling, which is the notion of belonging to a defined group of fellow citizens; and practice, the act of participation.

Status implies arguably the most commonly accepted element of citizenship, as it defines the relation between an individual and the state. Citizens contribute to the collective through duties such as paying taxes or military service, whereas the state provides legal protection, public services and political (voting) rights. The strong link between citizenship and
nationality excludes non-citizens from the exercise of certain rights or access to services - in particular undocumented individuals, who are not considered as citizens in a legal sense.

The feeling dimension of citizenship can be observed easily at international sporting events, when seemingly whole nations dress up in national colours in support of their team. It is strongly linked to a feeling of belonging, which is a "prerequisite of participative citizenship" (Osler & Starkey 2005:12). If this feeling of belonging cannot develop, through discrimination for example, the development of (national) citizenship is undermined, even if the legal provisions are in place. The increasing number of young German Muslims volunteering as Jihad-fighters in Syria11 shows in drastic form the lack of a feeling of belonging to the society they live in, even if they (and often even their parents) hold a German passport and have been born and living in Germany for their entire life. The question of belonging is also a crucial element for reflections on transnational citizenship, as revealed by the continuous difficulty to create an identity of European citizenship – despite a (limited) number of rights and duties at EU level – and the slow emergence of a European civil society (Frantz & Kolb 2009).

Citizenship as practice – or “active citizenship” – is closely linked to the awareness of and access to human rights. These rights go beyond the formally granted rights, which come with the citizen status: For example, achieving voting rights for women has not been sufficient to overcome inequality and gender based discrimination, and consequently has been followed by campaigns for real equality. Also, formal national citizenship is not a condition for the practice of citizenship: All human beings are entitled to rights such as freedom of assembly or freedom of expression and association, as granted by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights12. The space for enacting these rights collectively is often described as “civil society” – a broad variety of formal and non-formal voluntary and community organisations and networks. While rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship are typically defined

11 See recent publication by the German domestic intelligence service (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz): www.verfassungsschutz.de/embed/faltblatt-2014-07-jugend-und-jihad.pdf (accessed 8 August 2014)
nationally, the shift of political power to regional (e.g. European Union), transnational or global bodies (e.g. World Trade Organisation) and multi-national corporations as a consequence of globalisation, the enactment of citizenship reflects increasingly transnational concerns and action (Mayo 2005).

Citizenship goes far beyond the formally granted and legal status of nationality. Non-legal aspects such as the feeling of belonging to a group, and individual or collective active citizenship as political practice are constitutive elements of citizenship. The non-legal elements of citizenship such as collective identity and active participation are also key aspects for the discussion of non-nationally defined forms of citizenship, as we will see in the next paragraph.

3.2. Global citizenship

The concept of global citizenship is old: Already Socrates, 450 BC, claimed his land of origin to be the world, as did Diogenes a century later (NCDO 2012). Indeed, every person is born on this planet Earth, and as “earthlings” we are all, by default, global citizens. Schattle (2008a:3) underlines that an increasing number of individuals regard themselves as members of a formative global community, who “think and act locally and globally”, which relates to the aspect of belonging underlined as a key component of citizenship by Osler and Starkey (2005) as outlined previously. Proponents of cosmopolitanism and global citizenship such as Dower (2003) refer to a global ethic based on universal values and norms and a claim about trans-boundary obligations, and formulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which gives value, rights and responsibilities to every human being. Thus, “we are all global citizens” (Dower 2008). Osler and Starkey (2005) refer to the cosmopolitan founding vision of the United Nations and a rights based universality emerging from the period of Enlightenment, in particular the thinking of Immanuel Kant: A cosmopolitan citizen “views herself as a citizen of a world community based on common human values” (Anderson-Gold in Osler and Starkey 2005:20).
Another conception of global citizenship is based on neo-liberal economics and individualistic motivations rather than global ethics or societal change: The “consumer citizen”, for example promoted by the state in China (Hooper 2005) reduces citizenship practice to the realm of the market, leading to a de-politisation or “infantilization” (Lamla 2008) of citizenship. From such purely economic perspective, “the new global citizen is best viewed as the neoliberal’s ‘active citizen’, construed as a politically pliant consumer of goods and services rather than as someone embarked upon a project of political self-determination” (Armstrong 2006:353).

Schattle (2008a) worked with a database of thousands of articles and media items with reference to global citizenship. His empirical research finds both ethical and individualistic considerations of self-described global citizens. In 2000 and 2001, he interviewed more than 150 people who employed the term “global citizenship” in a public statement. His findings underline that for many individuals, the meaning of global citizenship is “not in international political campaigns or global governing institutions, but in face-to-face interaction among cultures in everyday life [...] They believe they are free to adopt global citizenship for themselves, simply by virtue of inhabiting this earth” (Schattle 2008a:164). While he identifies three “primary concepts” of global citizenship – awareness, responsibility and participation – which have a strong ethical and universalistic connotation, he underlines that not all self-described global citizens can be included under these concepts. The “secondary concepts” of cross-cultural empathy, achievement and international mobility have more individual than societal dimensions, such as personal relationships, professional mobility or economic competitiveness. Indeed, some of the global activists interviewed even boldly refused being referred to as global citizens, as the term “citizenship” would be too closely connoted with nationalism or participation in formal, institutionalised political processes, such as elections. For them “global citizenship” came with the implicit objective to set up a world government. As we will see, such critique was also formulated in some of the interviews documented in this paper, when it was suggested to replace the term “global citizens movement” with “world citizens movement” or simply “human movement”.
UNESCO (2014:14) distils from the discussion of different terms such as “planetary citizenship”, “citizens without borders” or “cosmopolitanism” a common understanding that global citizenship would not imply a legal status but rather a “a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity, promoting a ‘global gaze’ that links the local to the global.” In this sense, global citizenship is not opposing, but complementing national citizenship.

Both global and national citizenship manifests in individuals. This may be through access to and enacting of rights, such as formal participation rights like voting in elections, but also the general entitlement to human rights, without necessarily formalised participation mechanisms. But maybe more important are the dimensions of “feeling” and “practice” of citizenship (Osler and Starkey 2005), which are the basis of a conception of belonging and agency in social and political processes. Such processes have a collective dimension, which goes beyond the primarily individual conception of citizenship – they imply the constituency of collective actors as participants in the political space. In the following, we will explore the concepts of global civil society, social movements and the idea of a global citizens movement as possible manifestations of collective dimensions of citizenship, that facilitate the participation of citizens in political power dynamics.

### 3.3. Global Civil Society

Armstrong (2006:350) proposes three pillars of global citizenships: a universal system of individual rights, shared responsibilities and “an emerging world-wide democratic public sphere, or ‘global civil society.’” Such a world-wide political space seems to be a condition for collective, global political participation and action – the aspects of “feeling” and “practice” introduced by Osler and Starkey (2005). However, how can we describe this as “global civil society”?

In many recent publications on global civil society, in particular by authors close to or employed by NGOs, global civil society equals big, international NGOs, or NGO coalitions. Tujuan (2012) from the Philippines based international development NGO IBON equals
(global) civil society with civil society organisation (CSOs), which in return are in practice big or small development NGOs. Bob (2012:83) defines the “key actors in global civil society” as “NGOs, international organisations, media, and transnational networks”, whereas the article refers practically exclusively to NGOs, and the inclusion of media (which usually are private or public companies) and international organisations (which are based on intergovernmental agreements) as “key actors” of global civil society remains unfounded.

Looking back on a decade of publication of the “Global Civil Society Yearbook”13, issued between 2001 and 2012 by the London School of Economics, Mary Kaldor admits the problematic “dominant associational notion of global civil society that is often equated with international NGOs” (Kaldor 2012), underlining that the number of international NGOs has dramatically increased from 20,000 in 1989 to almost 55,000 in 2010 (Kaldor, Moore & Selchow 2012). Already in the opening chapter of the 2004 edition of the Global Civil Society Yearbook, Anderson and Rieff (2005:1.2) raise doubts about “the claim that transnational or international NGOs constitute ‘global civil society’”, as INGOs, being undemocratic due to their institutional set-up, cannot claim to represent the people or to speak on their behalf. However, the recognition of INGOs as “global civil society” through formal participation mechanisms such as consultations with intergovernmental organizations like the World Bank or accreditation in one of the “UN Major Groups” legitimizes not only the undemocratic institutions they are engaging with, but also provide legitimacy, access, and status as the people’s representatives in global governance to these NGOs.

According to Munck (2002:355), INGOs have been “co-opted as the ‘social’ wing of neoliberal global capitalism”, and Drainville (2008:235) points to the interest of institutions like the IMF or the World Bank to gain legitimacy for a neo-liberal, capitalist and corporate agenda through assembling “an apolitical global civil society” to legitimate “the new world order” – a phenomenon described by Armstrong (2006, referring to Jacqueline Best) as “embedded liberalism”. The danger of co-optation is substantiated by the CIVICUS (2014) State of Civil Society report, which underlines that institutions might privilege less challenging

13 www.lse.ac.uk/internationalDevelopment/research/CSHS/civilSociety/yearBook/contentsPages/2012.aspx
stakeholder groups, who are more likely to make a deal, and leave out more radical, but less well-resourced grassroots organisations.

The perception of INGOs being co-opted by institutions and legitimising the very agenda of capitalist exploitation comes together with the fact that by far most of the big NGOs are European or North-American, both in their leadership and funding, even if some are attempting to shift away from a Euro-centric approach: ActionAid for example has moved its headquarters to Johannesburg, Oxfam or Greenpeace have appointed African directors – which, however, might be perceived as a fig leaf approach. For critics like James Petras (1999:434), international NGOs are driving a “Northern” agenda “in the service of imperialism” and “foster a new type of cultural and economic colonialism – under the guise of a new internationalism”. They are not allies of social movements, but compete with them on influence, media attention and money, and are instrumentalised by institutions for “demobilizing popular movements, thus undermining resistance” (Petras 1999:431).

Of course it is not that big or small NGOs are per se obsessed by power and self-interest – it is the very logic of the market and competition based environment we live in that creates dynamics that lead to growth oriented, uncritical, blinkered management and strategies (see reflections on the “modern paradigm” and the difficulty to think differently in chapter 1.1.). “Child sponsorship is a premium product” said the CEO of a big child rights NGO at the 2013 “Global Perspectives” conference of the International Civil Society Centre 14. With such market-focused considerations, it could be difficult to engage that particular NGO, or at least its leader, in a transformational change agenda.

Nevertheless, the ethical question on how to bring upon positive and, in the sense of a “great transition”, radical change is a core reflection and challenge for many INGOs today. The Irish development NGO Trócaire (2011) argues in its Leading Edge 2020 report that development NGOs must engage far more with power and politics instead of positioning themselves as service providers of donor defined aid projects, if they want to remain relevant and make a

14 icscentre.org/area/global-perspectives
meaningful contribution to global justice (Troll and Skinner 2013). Indeed, discussions on the post-2015 development agenda, which are addressing issues of sustainability, inequality and ‘one world’ development (Fiedler 2011), as well as reactions to the financial crisis in Europe have prompted many development NGOs to question current growth and development paradigms and consider whether their change agendas are radical enough to deal with the systemic causes underpinning the issues they address (Shutt 2009).

So what is “Global Civil Society” in the end? Dissociating global civil society and NGOs, Anderson & Rieff (2005:1.2) propose to understand a global civil society movement “as the bearer of universal values, both operating in the teeth of globalisation and yet simultaneously using globalisation as its vehicle for disseminating universal values.” This perspective does not exclude INGOs from global civil society, but maintains its guard against the danger of co-optation. Armstrong (2006:349) shares an aspirational conception of global civil society as a vehicle for “global, democratic citizens politics”. In order to achieve such broad ambitions, Thörn and Moksnes (2012:4) propose to focus on learning processes to advance transnational democracy: “Global Civil Society is […] self-organisation of transnational social spaces”. These broad conceptions require a radical re-consideration of INGO’s roles in global civil society, and opens a space to reconcile institutionalised civil society with global citizenship and, as we will see in the following section, social movements which are a manifestation of citizenship, nationally and globally. Referring to the very heart of global citizenship – rights, values and participation - we can conceive global civil society as learning for and practice of transnational democracy.

3.4. Social movements

Whereas “civil society”, global or not, tends to be understood as the formalised engagement of stakeholder groups such as NGOs in social (e.g. through service delivery) or political processes (e.g. advocacy, consultations), social movements are usually confrontational and involve the public mobilisation of citizens. The 20th and early 21st century has seen a multiplication of social mobilisations, political citizen action and grassroots experimentation
challenging societal mainstream to a point, that it is no longer possible to describe social movements and protest as “unconventional”, which leads Della Porta & Diani (2009:2) to propose the term of a “movement society”. “Traditional social movements” act in the context of nation states and labour rights, and appeal to the self-interested access to rights or services by the actors involved (such as the worker’s movement and it’s institutionalised counterpart which are the trade unions), and embrace a more reformist agenda aiming for concrete legislative changes within the established political system.

In contrast, “new social movements”, starting from the 1960s, involve an ideological critique of the modern paradigms such as progress or utilitarianism (Krause 2014), and materialise not only in political demands, but also in alternative practices of organisation and social norms – to a point that sometimes concrete political demands might not even be clearly defined, which is a widespread critique of the “Indignados” or “Occupy” mobilisations (Della Porta & Diani 2009). In this sense, social movement activism is following needs and desires that drive from values and norms: Action is not necessarily rational, in particular in the sense of economic interests, but reasonable (Della Porta & Diana 2009 referring to Pierre Bourdieu).

The dichotomy, although not always clear-cut, between “traditional” and “new” social movements is reflected in two schools of thought proposed by Mayo (2005): The ‘rational actor’ approach builds on North American debates, and explains participation in social movements by individual self-interest, and is thus close to neoliberal conceptions of citizens as rational actors and consumers in the market (Lamla 2008). In contrast, the ‘new social movements’ approach has a focus on transformation, both in terms of societal change but also through experimentation with more participatory forms of organisation and the development of new identities.

According to Della Porta & Diani (2009) four dimensions of social movements can be considered in order to understand their dynamics:

- social change and conflicts: What is the cause or the aspired change that constitutes the movement, and who is the opponent to this change?
- **Identity**: what is the “collective we” that proposes a collective identification with the cause and the praxis of the movement?

- **Culture**: which values, ideas and interests are reflected in the movement, and how do they consolidate into joint efforts to implement social change?

- **Dynamics & impact**: What are the concrete actions, tactics and strategies, which are implemented, and how do they change over time?

One can see an interesting parallel with the four dimensions to social change proposed by the Berkana Institute (Wheatley & Frieze 2006, see chapter 2.2.): Name, connect, nourish, illuminate. First, a cause and its pioneers have to be identified; second, connecting these actors and dialogically sharpening and identifying the proposed alternative creates a “collective we”; third, “nourishing” the movement will lead to a collective culture and reinforce the values and ideology of the movement, towards the establishment of “systems of influence”, and finally, collective action would lead to transformation and mainstreaming of the propositions by the movement.

The difference between organisations and social movements lies in its dynamic: social movements are processes, based on action, or participation – even if this individual action is limited to “clicktivism” like signing an online petition (Mayo 2005). In contrast to civil society organisations, “social movements do not have members but participants” (Della Porta & Diani in Mayo 2005:56) – that’s why trade unions, parties or NGOs are not social movements *per se*, though they might participate in mobilisations. Mayo also underlines that social movements are not “inherently progressive” (Mayo 2005:55). There is no normative leftist or anti-capitalist value base for social movements: The recent anti-gay-rights mobilisation in France for example achieved massive public visibility over months, with large scale demonstrations. Although it did not lead to the abandonment of the gay marriage project, it did achieve much more restrictive measures in terms of gay parenthood than initially foreseen (Baruch & Vienel 2013). The movement reinforced a “collective we” through values and cultural identity towards important dynamics and impact. How to deal with populist movements, who also challenge the dominant paradigm, or the “colonisation” of social life by the dominant values of markets such as globalisation, competition, self-interest or growth
(Della Porta & Diana 2009 refering to Jürgen Habermas and Alberto Melucci) is also a recurrent issue related to the question of a global citizens movement, as we will see in chapter 4.

As mentioned above, the borderline between traditional social movements which mainly appeal to the (often economic) self-interest of stakeholders (e.g. traditional workers movement) and the “new social movements” with a transformational agenda and practice, linked to a cause which goes beyond individual benefit or impact on one’s personal life, is not always clear cut, and movement practice and dynamics can differ significantly depending on the context – even when underlying issues are similar. For example in the Spanish “Indignados” movement, austerity measures by the government and massive cuts in public services were key mobilisation elements, but the movement deliberately disengaged from formal party politics and the political establishment. Hence the 2011 elections led to the victory of the conservative Popular Party, and hence consolidating a structural adjustment agenda. More than “rational” and self-interested policy change, the creation of links between citizens touched by the crisis and a re-creation of Spanish civil society through collective experimentation and spin-off initiatives was a goal of the movement (Castañeda 2012), which is impressively illustrated in the diagram below: a tentative and incomplete overview of initiatives, processes and experiments which emerged from the 15 May movement:
In Greece in contrast, which saw the highest anti-austerity mobilisation rates in Europe (30% of the population engaged in some kind of protest in 2010 according to Rüdig and Karyotis 2014), the movement was less motivated by transformational ideals and systemic change, but by a “deprivation-stimulus” appealing to the self-interest and material needs of the citizens. In consequence, traditional actors such as trade unions and political parties played a more central role. The anti-WTO protests in Seattle in 1999, by many regarded as a starting point for the anti-globalisation movement with a cross-sectorial, global, transformative and system-challenging agenda, still had elements of an “old” social movement that seeks reforms at the level of nation states rather than a qualitative shift in social organisation: “Many of those at Seattle were clearly still aiming at reform rather than more fundamental […] transformation” (Mayo 2005:28).

The distinction between traditional, “rational” and self-interested movements, and new, “reasonable” and transformational ones is an important analytical tool for the examination of the possibility of a global citizens movement: As proposed by Wheatley and Frieze (2006) in the Berkana change model (see chapter 2.2.), moving from networks, based on self-interest,
to communities of practice with a commitment to change that goes beyond the individual and initially considered concerns is a crucial step towards transformational change. “New social movements” also constitute a crucial building block for a global citizens movement, as we will see in the next section.

3.5. Global Citizens Movement

In the aftermath of the WTO protests in Seattle, which is considered by many as a first public manifestation of what became known as the “anti-globalisation” movement, a number of authors point to the political character of a global citizens movement, going beyond specific policy demands and instead promoting transformational and global change in response to an ever accelerating phasing of values and discourses under a neo-liberal economy, market and growth obsessed paradigm (see e.g. McFarlane & Hay 2003). Susan George underlines the cross-sectorial and transformational “political project” of the movement: “It is concerned with the world: omnipresence of corporate rule, the rampages of financial markets, ecological destruction, maldistribution of wealth and power, international institutions constantly overstepping their mandates and lack of international democracy.” (George 2001:3). The “coalescence” of such broad and various concerns resulted in the materialisation of a “genuine international movement with its own identity, values and agenda” (George 2001:1), in its essence operating beyond self-interest and rational considerations that could be addressed only through policy changes at national or even global level. Kriegman (2006:6) believes in “the co-recognition and internalization of others’ struggles as our own in a global community of fate” as the key to build a GCM towards a “great transition” – essential ingredients towards the establishment of “systems of influence” as discussed in chapter 2.3., based on the Berkana change model (Wheatley & Frieze 2006).

However, there is an inherent conceptual tension between a GCM as composed of individual global citizens or their movements, and the operating mode of institutionalised civil society such as international NGOs, who struggle to identify a common agenda (Narberhaus et.al. 2011) or even legitimise the current system through co-optation (Armstrong 2006, see also
chapter 3.3.). Paehlke (2014) points out that, despite the urgency of tasks ahead, a GCM can’t become a centralised command-control style organisation with an institutional structure or central administration, in the image of global campaigning NGOs like, for example, Greenpeace International, and pleads for a multi-layered, amorphous and organic movement, based on inclusiveness, radical democracy and multiple interfaces to connect. Encouraged by the examples of the American civil rights movement and the environmental movement, he argues that a multitude of approaches and actors make a GCM “more decentralized, more unplanned, more possible, and less threatening” (Paehlke 2014:3). Experience also tells us that attempts to unite the great diversity of people, initiatives and organisations motivated by the frustration of exclusion in the current economic and political global (and national) decision-making, and the will “to make the world a better place” are doomed to fail. Already in the rather homogenous realm of international civil society organisations (INGOs) such as Amnesty International, Doctors without Borders or Oxfam (examples set by Paehlke), a joint political agenda is far from an immediate possibility, not to mention the often topical and/or geographically limited popular struggles and movements such as the Arab spring, Indignados, Occupy Wallstreet or Gezi Park protests. However, active citizenship is evolving, and even if the multiple popular uprisings and mobilisations often have a topical and/or geographical limited starting point, the issues they tackle are of global concern and are often mirrored in uprisings elsewhere on the planet (CIVICUS 2014). And the identification of individuals as “global citizens” who believe that many local struggles have a global dimension, and that global challenges require global answers has never been higher (Schattle 2008b). This link between local struggles and a global policy agenda, often gets lost however, due to a lack of accountability and questionable representativeness of the acknowledged representatives of global civil society – international, mainly western based large NGOs – who are disconnected from grassroots movements, especially in non-Western countries, argues Batliwala (2002). She proposes that the internationalisation of grassroots movements, and the creation of global coordination
structures such as Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI\textsuperscript{15} - “A global network of the urban poor”), Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO\textsuperscript{16}) or the International Peasants Movement Via Campesina\textsuperscript{17} presents an opportunity to democratise and strengthen global civil society. In contrast to INGOs they have been created by the people affected locally - they don't need to mobilize a constituency, the constituents created them.

This call to reconnect CSOs with grassroots movements is echoed in a recent open letter by Jay Naidoo, chair of the global civil society alliance CIVICUS’ advisory board, and other civil society leaders to “fellow activists around the globe” in the perspective of building “a broad united front of social movements, labour, faith-based and CSO alliances” (Sriskandarajah, Houghton, Naidoo, Hodgson, Tørres, Heywood, O’Brien-Onyeka and Mthati 2014). The letter, signed by senior staff of major NGOs such as Greenpeace, Amnesty International or Oxfam, remarkably states that CSOs are “part of the problem”, and that only “re-balancing power dynamics towards the less resourced sections of civil society and away from large international civil society organisations” could build a global movement able to challenge the status quo and bring upon transformational change.

Reconnecting formalised, trans-national grassroots movements with NGOs in the global civil society and local mass mobilisations could be a way forward in terms of fostering a global citizens movement. However, in order to make this happen concepts of radical inclusiveness and a cross-topical and cross-sectorial rationale, which goes beyond the potentially co-opted engagement in formal policy processes and is rooted both in transformational practice and a work on alternative values and discourses, must be taken into careful consideration (Paehkle 2014).

In the following section, we will explore these issues, based on statements by people who identify themselves as being part of a global citizens movement.

\textsuperscript{15} www.sdinet.org
\textsuperscript{16} wiego.org
\textsuperscript{17} viacampesina.org
4. Building a Global Citizens Movement

After having discussed literature on the concept and change models related to transformational change in chapter 2, and the outline of a global citizens movement, based on reflections on citizenship, civil society and social movements in chapter 3, we will now have a look at the primary data collected in this research: The interviews with 12 global change makers and activists, and their views on the potential and challenges of a global citizens movement. I will systematise their views in a tentative typology of a global citizens movement, in relation to the discussed change models and literature, and attempt to distil three essential steps towards the establishment of a broad, transformational global citizens movement, before discussing implications for development education.

4.1. The Johannesburg conference: background

In November 2013, a global conference “Building a global Citizens Movement” was co-organised by CONCORD, the European Confederation of Development NGOs, the World Alliance for Citizen Participation CIVICUS, and the Global Call for Action against Poverty, GCAP, through the European Union funded DEEEP4 project. DEEEP is a support mechanism to the development education sector in Europe, initiated by the development education working group of CONCORD back in 2003. In its fourth three-year project cycle, DEEEP includes for the first time a “global dimension” in the discussion of development education: It’s objective is “to provide European leadership on citizens’ empowerment for social change as part of a global movement towards a more just and sustainable world.”

The conference was the first of three “global conferences”, which aim to create spaces for exchange between European and global activists who are interested in reinforcing critical, active global citizenship, and thus help overcome the historical divide between “development education here - development cooperation there”. This should contribute to a repositioning of the development education from the margins of the “aid industry” to a central role in shaping a more just and sustainable future for people and planet. The ambitious, even daring title of

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18 www.deeep.org
the first global conference was “Building a Global Citizens Movement”. More than 500 individuals from 123 different countries applied to participate in this meeting, which underlines the appeal of the opportunity to reflect on a global citizens movement. 200 people from 82 countries finally gathered in Johannesburg on 11 and 12 November 2013, under the overall aim to “initiate a global coalition for citizen’s empowerment for change”. The conference had three objectives:

a. Vision: Exchange, and possibly agree, on a joint narrative of the world we want, and the world we don’t want;

b. Linking: Establish and reinforce cross-continental networks towards a global movement of citizens for change;

c. Learning: share approaches and practices on emancipatory campaigning and learning.19

However, the clear diversity (geographic, ideological, organisational) of the 200 participants that were brought together showed that a western-style, objectives and outcome based strategy setting had strong limits. In consequence, the participants in this conference challenged the initial idea of a joint final “declaration”, and instead adopted a more open “Johannesburg Compass: Questions and Orientations”: “Together, in humility, we started a journey of transformation and developed a common vision that we believe will drive a fundamental shift in our world, the way we work in our organisations, and within our societies. In humility, we know that we don’t have all the answers, but that we have many questions. And that we are aware that we should find new ways of expressing our politics and therefore this is not a Declaration but a Question we pose to ourselves and the world.”20

Through its open and inclusive methodology, the Johannesburg conference has inspired a range of people and organisations. For example, it has informed the currently planned global Action/2015 campaign, that wants to “provide a powerful opportunity for collective and decentralised large-scale, public-facing actions” to address inequality and sustainability in


2015 around the post-MDG discussions and the Paris climate summit, to be both “radical and radically inclusive”\textsuperscript{21}, in the spirit of the Johannesburg conference and its outcome document.

\section*{4.2. Stakeholder groups and participants in the research interviews}

In the frame of this research, I had conversations with twelve individuals from four different stakeholder groups, who all participated in the Johannesburg conference on “Building a global citizens movement”. The groups were identified following the basic assumption of the conference, that spaces for connecting various, but isolated change actors at a global level (NGOs, activists, social movements, development educators) could lead to the emergence of a cross-sectorial and transformational change movement. The selection of interviewees followed a logic of representativeness (regional, gender, stakeholder groups), but was also largely subjective, based on personal encounters and my knowledge of and experience with individuals engaged with the questions addressed through this research (great transformation, citizens movements, global civil society, development education). Twelve individual views are certainly not enough to have a representative picture on the perspective of the four vaguely defined groups. Nevertheless, their considerations provide useful insights in the understanding, potential and challenges of a global citizens movement.

The stakeholder groups and participants were:

1. **Popular movements**: activists who are mainly engaged in local or national struggles, or whose primary motivation was a local and/or topical mobilisation. Participants in this group included:

   a. Aya Chebbi, 26 year old blogger\textsuperscript{22} from Tunisia, who was involved in the quest for freedom of speech and democracy in Tunisia in the context of the “Arab Spring”, and who’s engagement in these issues led to a broader engagement on human rights, women’s rights and peace questions.

\textsuperscript{22} aya-chebbi.blogspot.be (accessed 20 August 2014)
b. N.N. (the only participant in this research who opted for anonymity), 25 year old female journalist from Chile who was one of the leaders of the student protests for accessible and quality education in Chile.

c. Angeline Greensill\(^{23}\), 66 year old Māori political rights and environment campaigner in New Zealand.

2. **Global Activists**: People with a long standing involvement in questions of a global transformation towards a more just and sustainable future, beyond a specific topical focus, including:

   a. Adebayo ("Bayo") Akomolafe, 30 year old lecturer, clinical psychologist, poet and just recently appointed as the global coordinator of the International Alliance for Localisation\(^ {24}\) from Nigeria. He was also keynote speaker at the Johannesburg Conference on “Building a Global Citizens Movement”

   b. Gustavo Marín\(^ {25}\), 64 year old Chilean academic and activist on questions of global governance, one of the founders of the World Social Forum and director of the world-governance think tank “Forum for a New World Governance”

   c. Marta Benavides\(^ {26}\), 70 year old popular educator and human rights defender from El Salvador, and one of the co-chairs of the Global Call for Action against Poverty (GCAP).

3. **NGO leaders**: leaders of internationally active formal civil society organisations:

   a. Olivier Consolo, 48 years old former director of CONCORD (2003 – 2013), the European confederation of development NGOs, now self-proclaimed “freelance activist”, but still in formal NGO leadership role when the Johannesburg conference took place.

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\(^{25}\) [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustavo_Mar%C3%ADn](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustavo_Mar%C3%ADn) (accessed 20 August 2014)

\(^{26}\) [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marta_Benavides](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marta_Benavides) (accessed 20 August 2014)
b. Dhananjayan ("Danny") Sriskandarajah\textsuperscript{27}, 38, secretary general of the Johannesburg based “world alliance for citizen participation” CIVICUS, a global network for CSOs.

c. Mark Randazzo, director of the EDGE Funders Alliance\textsuperscript{28} (“Engaged Donors for Global Equity”), a network of “funders and donors committed to global social change philanthropy”.

4. Development Educators: professionals in the European development education/global learning sector, all members of the “DARE Forum”, the development education working group of CONCORD, the European Confederation of Development NGOs:

   a. Bobby McCormack, 40, co-founder and director of the Irish development education NGO Development Perspectives\textsuperscript{29}.

   b. Rene Suša, 30 year old global education practitioner and researcher from Slovenia.

   c. Marina Sarli, 39 year old Italian living and working in Greece, president of Fair Trade Hellas and member of the board of CONCORD, the European NGDO confederation.

Their viewpoints showed a strong convergence along certain aspects of a global citizens movement, but also a great variety of angles on how to address the issue, as we will see in the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{27} en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dhananjayan_Sriskandarajah (accessed 20 August 2014)
\textsuperscript{28} www.edgefunders.org (accessed 20 August 2014)
\textsuperscript{29} www.developmentperspectives.ie (accessed 20 August 2014)
4.3. **Key findings**

The data collected in this research shows that connecting local mobilisations and grassroots experimentation have to play a central role in forming a global citizens movement, which is considered crucial to address systemic challenges humanity is facing today. However, there is a degree of divergence between the need to address direct political change, or rather focus on cultural transformation and emergence of new or alternative epistemologies. Big NGOs, criticised as meaningless or even counter-productive for transformational change by the participants in this research, have to move towards a role of facilitation instead of agenda setting. Development education, if re-considered as critical global citizenship education, focussing on values, emancipation and transformational change, can play a crucial role in the process of facilitating a great transition. The analysis and interpretation of collected insights will detail these central findings.

4.3.1. **What is a global citizens movement?**

Before trying to systematise different takes on the question of a global citizens movement by the help of the Smart CSO change model (Narberhaus 2014, see chapter 2.3.), we will have a look at the findings by stakeholder group, trying to outline trends or contradictions within each of them. While there are no clear cut patterns corresponding to the attributed stakeholder groups when it comes to the question of what a global citizens movement is, or should be, the interviews enabled an identification of recurrent aspects, which include questions of inclusiveness, mutual support and systemic change, all emphasised to various degrees by the different respondents.

**Popular movements**

From the interviews, there is a tendency to emphasise the connectivity of local struggles and creation of a stronger, cross-topical and international support mechanism especially from people involved in local mobilisations and popular movements.
Aya Chebbi, young Tunisian blogger engaged in the democratic revolution in her country, underlined the importance of mutual learning and creation of support spaces for local movements, based on inclusion and joint values ("culture"):

“A global citizens movement is an inclusive movement for everybody in the world, regardless of any discrimination on any basis, gender etc. etc. It’s more of a collaborative and supportive movement. It’s like a support system to each other.”

N.N. from Chile insists on the connection of local, topical mobilisations, in particular in the field of education – her main battle – to create a global mobilisation:

“Maybe from this movement of education in Chile or also in Mexico or elsewhere, it’s possible to make a big social education movement, and maybe that could be a global citizens movement.”

The question of connectivity is also central to Angeline Greensill, who builds on a holistic, indigenous world view that goes beyond the nation state and beyond anthropocentrism, and is able to build bridges between topical concerns like environment and state surveillance. This is illustrated by a coalition of the “Internet Party”, concerned with information rights, and the Maōri movement in national elections in New Zealand, and based on an opposition to failing institutions and corporate power.

Not surprisingly, there seems to be a general tendency from the people interviewed associated with popular movements to focus on national concerns, and the idea of a global movement has either a more topical focus, reflecting the cause at stake at home (for example N.N. on education), or to emphasise the idea of mutual learning, support and encouragement ("Our movement could inspire other countries to do the same" – Aya Chebbi), when it comes to international mobilisation. The national mobilisation is highly politicised, aiming at concrete political change at national level (including through running for elections like Angeline Greensill in New Zealand, or formulation of policy proposals on education as N.N. in Chile), and less focused on alternative practices within civil society or movements.
In contrast, there is scepticism about strong levels of organisation or governance mechanisms, in particular at international level: “Tunisia’s revolution had no leadership. [...] It was a totally spontaneous movement – and it worked. [...] The movements that are rising now are sick of leadership” (Aya Chebbi). Two out of the three interviewed activists (Aya Chebbi and Angeline Greensill) however emphasised that beyond a common cause, a global movement would require some kind of new narrative, a “common culture” (Aya Chebbi), which implies joint values and a post-colonial reconsideration of human connectivity (“the idea that we are global citizens of the world would become normal” – Angeline Greensill).

**Global activists**

In contrast with the strong focus on political change at the level of regimes (Narberhaus 2014, see chapter 2.3. on the Smart CSO change model) underlined by individuals involved in social movements at national level, members of the “global activists” group placed much less emphasis on direct political change. For Bayo Akomolafe, the connectivity between local citizens practice for change, combined with a transformational shift in world views, away from a market-based, corporate mindset founded on profits and competition is the key aspect of a global citizens movement:

"The most powerful, the most potent prospect or potential for a global citizens movement in my view is a radical bottom-wide think-present social actors base that changes or shifts attention away from giant corporations and profit mechanisms to people, ordinary people, who work in local spaces to rejuvenate the ways of life and connect the people again. [...] A global citizens movement is the opportunity to ask new questions, totally new questions.

The valorisation of alternative local practices, and in consequence a shift in values and world views at a global level, is also strongly underlined by Marta Benavides, who emphasised the importance of overcoming separation between peoples, and between humans and nature:

“I think that a global citizens movement is about consciousness really, about the consciousness that there is only oneness, not only in the whole of the planet, but in the whole of the universe. [...] We must be solidarious, meaning one with everybody, with the care of the planet, and we must accompany people.”
While Bayo Akomolafe’s central point is the creation of new epistemologies ("new systems of thinking, new paradigms, new platforms upon which we can generate new ways of life"), which omits completely the regimes level of institutions (governmental or not) as a playing field for meaningful change, Marta Benavides also takes institutions into consideration, in particular at UN level, as necessary interlocutors for a global citizens movement: “Even UNESCO can be very good about that if we take it seriously."

Gustova Marin, from his experience with the World Social Forum and its “failure”, has a very disillusioned take on the possibility of a global citizens movement:

“There are a lot of initiatives, more or less regional, more or less global, more or less on different issues, but the problem is that we don’t know how to crystalize it, we don’t know what will be the shape of a global citizens movement. It’s a bottleneck in theory and in history.”

He pleads to move beyond civil society mobilisation in “counter summits”, which carry the danger of co-optation, and to experiment with new methodologies, new practices and new forms of organisations which go beyond local activism and global fairs such as the World Social Forum, which is in his opinion corrupted by “sectarian visions” and quests for power and leadership. As Bayo Akomolafe, he admits that there are no answers to the question on how a global citizens movement should shape and become a real change agent (in line with Krause 2014, who suggests that transformational change is not predictable), but in contrast sees this journey through darkness more as a risk, considering the urgent “need to invent and implement new global structures for global governance.”

A possible common point of the “global activists” interviewed in this research is a strong plead to question old paradigms, both in terms of dominant values and frames, and the practices of global civil society, which so far have not lead to transformational change. The connection between local practice and a global change in worldviews is important, especially for Bayo Akomolafe and Marta Benavides, whereas policy changes at the level of regimes are considered either currently impossible (Gustavo Marin), or not relevant at this stage (Bayo Akomolafe).
INGO leaders

Surprisingly enough, all interviewed INGO leaders had a highly critical take on the contributions of INGOs to a global citizens movement: Danny Sriskandarajah, Secretary General of the global civil society platform CIVICUS, underlines the organic and people based character of citizens mobilisation, and the changing role of big NGOs in formulating messages and strategies:

“Because of the rising aspirations of people all around the world, especially young people, to participate and have their voice heard, you’ve got this potential for a more chaotic, or more democratic way in which citizens movements can be built. It’s going to be crazy and chaotic, but that’s good in my view [...] The comms department of the NGOs can’t control the messaging in the way that people have wanted to do sometimes. [...] We can’t rely on the NGOs to solve the world’s problems. We never could, and we certainly no longer can.”

For Olivier Consolo, former director of CONCORD, the European Development NGO confederation with members such as Oxfam International or Save the Children, NGOs and other institutional actors have failed to address global challenges like climate change or inequalities through a top-down approach that disconnected them from local movements and concerns. Because of the institutional connotation of the term “global”, he prefers to talk about a “world-wide” citizens movement that should be

“an internationalisation of local, popular movements [...] to reinvent the institutions they believe we need to better regulate and lead the world today. [...] We [NGOs] should tell them: Guys, we understand that we failed. [...] Let’s build that strategy not from our old organisations, but with those new actors, putting all the resources and the capacity that we have [...] for them to create whatever they want to create. And this means abandoning power from ourselves.”

Both see local mobilisations, and the building of “political space at regional, upper level” (Olivier Consolo) as the foundation of a global citizens movement, and a redistribution of power and resources from big NGOs to local, citizen-based mobilisations would be key for that. Danny Sriskandarajah calls this a “participation revolution”.
Mark Randazzo supports such a vision:

“For a movement to be a movement, it has to be coming up organically – of course it has to be organised, it is not just going to appear naturally – but it has to involve people where they live, people in their communities who are part of it, and feel it.”

He gives the debate on migration in the US as an example of the counterproductive role NGOs and their established advocacy practices have in terms of bringing about real change:

“Hundreds of thousands of people marched in the streets demanding immigration reform. But instead of that building into a sustained movement, a lot of the energy to get legislation passed then went to institutions and professional advocacy organisations in Washington D.C. The kind of ‘movement’ element, the citizens engagement element, died out and it was left to the professional NGO types to pass legislation, and nothing ever happened.”

In line with Bayo Akomolafe, he emphasised the importance of a transformation in culture and worldviews, and highlighted systems thinking as crucial as opposed to a focus on policy work for technical solutions:

“A global citizens movement, if it’s going to be anything more than reactive or defensive, has to be thinking about and addressing the root causes of the systemic crisis. [It] starts from that question of what kind of society we want to live in as human beings on this planet, interacting with all the other beings here. [...] That’s a very different way into the question than how do we solve the climate crisis, how do we solve the water crisis, how do we solve the problem of feeding people on the planet, which then can be seen as a technical problem to be solved.”

All three INGO representatives where fiercely critical about the strategies of big CSOs which are focused on topical campaigns and advocacy processes, and plead for a reshuffling of resources and power to local movements in order to create enabling environments for these mobilisations to grow, rather than compete for political space and resources.

**Development Educators**

The group of development educators was the only set of exclusively European participants, due to the fact that development education, and consequently a corresponding professional
profile, is very much a European or “Western” concept. Not surprisingly, the question of citizenship, the emancipation of individuals to become conscious, political actors, was a key concern in all three interviews of this stakeholder group. Global citizenship was considered a key element for a global citizens movement, something given conceptually (“Wherever you are, you are a global citizen”, as Marina Sarli put it), but also very difficult to put into practice (“I don’t think the majority of people feel like global citizens, and I think there is political will not to feel like global citizens”, Marina Sarli; “Theory [on global citizenship] is actually miles ahead of practice”, Rene Suša).

The context of the economic crisis in all countries of the interviewees (Ireland, Slovenia and Greece) however would provide an opportunity to point to the global, structural dimensions of what is perceived as a failing system. Rene Suša believes that people “who think that the existing story can provide answers, that we just have to wait, and the crisis will go away, and we have the problems and solutions already figured out” are in a minority, and he suggests that a global citizens movement should be a “human movement” with no one at the centre, as a space to explore

“ideas and concepts from [...] different knowledge production systems to actually meet among each other [...] and maybe to discuss solutions or ideas that were beyond the scope of what was possible before.”

With his call for “epistemological justice” and an open quest for “exploration of the possibilities of radically different worldviews meeting on an equal ground”, he echoes the radical questioning also formulated by Bayo Akomolafe, Mark Randazzo and Gustavo Marin.

Bobby McCormack, development educator from Ireland, while still emphasising the need for systemic thinking and work on values and frames (Darnton & Kirk 2011, the level of “culture” in the Smart CSO change model, Narberhaus 2014), nevertheless believes that its possible to define a joint vision or goal, but sees the difficulty in identifying it in working together in a cross-sectorial and global manner:
"The idea of a citizen’s movement is something where there are people from many different perspectives, and many different views, who have got some kind of shared vision and shared goal […] There is a lot of strength in trying to cross over those, say, silos type movements into a much more joint up network […] The potential of this global citizens movement, this overarching cross-sectorial idea is that possibly it achieves more at a far deeper level in the long run."

Marina Sarli, focused more on concrete political issues such as public debt and its system immanent causes (connecting for example the situation in Greece and Argentina), and local mobilisation and practice ("wide learning and sharing from the grassroots"), is closer to the vision of reinventing “participatory democracy” – a global citizens movement as globalisation of local experimentation, activism and mobilisation – also formulated by Olivier Consolo, Danny Sriskandarajah and N.N.

It is noteworthy that none of the interviewees consider the established, international or global campaign and advocacy work with concrete policy demands and professional campaigners in big NGOs (albeit possibly backed-up by citizens through organised protest such as demonstrations or petitions) to be at the core of a global citizens movement – echoing the concerns about “global civil society” and INGOs outlined in chapter 3.3.

Due to the limited and non-representative number of interviews, there are no clear cut patterns of viewpoints corresponding with the stakeholder groups. However, there are different scopes and conceptions of a global citizens movement, which I try in the following section to systematise into three rough but distinct approaches to a global citizens movement, with the help of the Smart CSO change model.
4.3.2. Attempt at a typology

We can use the three layers of the Smart CSO model to distinguish the main focus of concern in the conception of a global citizens movement by the participants in the interviews: Four participants strongly highlight elements connected to the “niches” level in the Smart CSO model, which should directly impact on the “regimes” level: local causes, mobilisations and experimentation are considered as the foundation of a global citizens movement, with a strong political dimension in terms of concrete change in institutions. A global citizens movement would be the world wide, cross-sectorial and cross-topical connectivity of local struggles. In the words of Danny Sriskandarajah, I would call this the “participatory revolution”.

A second group had a similar take on the importance of local, citizen's mobilisations and spontaneous, often informal social movements, but placed more emphasis on the aspect of changes in culture, discourses and worldviews: A new, joint narrative that can create a feeling of global belonging, that goes beyond possible links between topical mobilisations and creates connectivity across causes, and not only between them, but still with the ambition to have direct impact on policy processes at national, regional or global level, for example through the UN system. I propose to call this perspective “connected causes”.

The third, most radical view on a global citizens movement almost completely omitted the dimension of policy work and engagement with formalised political processes, or had very critical views on such engagement – either because of demonstrated ineffectiveness and danger of co-optation (Gustavo Marin, Mark Randazzo), or because of epistemological considerations that a new world cannot be built with the modes of thinking and mechanisms of the old one (Rene Suša, Bayo Akomolafe). This is what I call with Rene Suša the “human movement” approach to a global citizens movement.

The distribution of the participants according to stakeholder group and movement typology in relation to the Smart CSO change model is illustrated in the diagram below.
Of course, as every schematisation, this can be contested, and participants might not agree on their positioning. However, while there is certainly a degree of subjectivity in this line-up, I believe that the tendency of these three approaches exist, and it becomes a relevant thinking model if we cross-link the scheme with the Berkana change model on “networks”, “communities of practice” and “systems of influence”, as well as with the four steps leading to change, which are name-connect-nourish-illuminate.

Diagram 5 shows how the “participatory revolution” vision of a global citizens movement corresponds with the connected networks of pioneers, experimenting in their niches or topical mobilisations, and linked mainly by curiosity and self-interest. “Nourished”, they might become a more cohesive international or global “community of practice” around common and “connected causes” and joint commitment to an alternative worldview (“culture”), but still with an aspiration to achieve change through formal political mechanisms or processes, which are part of the old and failing system. Finally, a “human movement” would leave the sphere of regimes, would emancipate itself from an externally defined agenda and dive deeply into the exploration of a new culture, new ways of thinking, knowing, and acting through a more consequent building up of practical alternatives, becoming a “system of influence” that eventually builds up to alternative “regimes” – a new system.
The following table sums up the suggested typology of three different identified approaches to a global citizens movement, in relation to the Smart CSOs and Berkana change models:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main points</th>
<th>Smart CSOs</th>
<th>Berkana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Participatory revolution** | Creating links between local / national, topical mobilisations:  
Sharing & learning  
Mutual support  
Concrete political outcome | Focus on local/national mobilisation and experimentation (niches) and consequently change at regimes level | Naming and connecting pioneers through networks |
| **Connected causes** | Connections across local / national, topical mobilisations, defining joint objectives & strategies towards political change, systems thinking, identification of joint, common values & culture | Experimentation / mobilisation in niches & culture change should have results on regimes level | Towards a Community of practice through nourishing the networks |
| **Human movement** | Experimentation with new practices at local & global movement level  
Paradigm shift  
Great transformation  
New epistemologies  
Concrete political outcome is not planned and not primary focus | Focus on local experiments & alternatives with strong connection to creating a paradigm shift, less focus on outcome at regimes level | New paradigms reach out into society (illuminating), Systems of influence create transformation |
4.4. Interpretation: Steps towards a global citizens movement

Despite the diverse backgrounds and viewpoints of the participants in this research, we could distil a number of common concerns, in particular the broad acknowledgement of a need for building an alternative to the current political and economic system, at local, national and global level. Furthermore, the sole focus on policy changes, the Smart CSOs “regimes level”, was not considered sufficient to bring upon such systemic transformation. There were different views on the scope of a global citizens movement in terms of where, and to what extent, it should focus its attention and aspired outcomes – at the level of local or national mobilisations and experimentation (“niches”), at the level of institutional change and policy (“regimes”), or the level of discourse and values (“culture”). I tried to capture these different views in the tentative typology above.

From the interviews, the endeavour for building a global citizens movement can be crystallised around a number of challenges: The recognition of the need for radical and systemic change, the questionable role of big NGOs and the need to experiment with new form of leadership in order to assure inclusion, and the profound shift in culture and values that is necessary to help the emergence of new paradigms.

4.4.1. Acknowledge the need for a “great transition”

There was a strong feeling by most of the participants that working towards a global citizens movement is necessary as a means for “the reconstituting of human agency around the pressing needs of today” (Bayo Akomolafe), in order to address the “financial, economical but also social and values crisis that is going on” (Marina Sarli), and to counter the paradigms of a “global economy dominated by corporations and corporate interests, whose primary concern is to promote growth and consumption” (Mark Randazzo).

In order to do so, Mark Randazzo calls upon “a global citizens movement, if it’s going to be anything more than reactive or defensive, […] to be thinking about and addressing the root causes of the systemic crisis.” This should lead to the discussion “of solutions or ideas that were beyond the scope of what was possible before” (Rene Suša) and achieve change at a “far deeper level in the long run” (Bobby McCormack). This should be achieved through a
deep change in consciousness, as Marta Benavides put it: "A global citizens movement is about consciousness [...] that there is only oneness, not only in the whole of the planet, but in the whole of the universe."

There is acknowledgement of the need for a “great transition” that questions the dominant system paradigms of progress, objectivity, dualism, fragmentation and utilitarianism as described by Krause (2014, see chapter 2.1.). However, "we are living in a period of history where we know that we are still in a world as it has to be seen, but we don’t have the glasses to see the new one" said Gustavo Marin, and this echoes the ontological impossibility to conceive a new world while still being part of the old one (Krause 2014). A permanent questioning of world views, pointing to the failures of the current, “old” system and a critical assessment of possibly well-meaning, but not effective change strategies, is essential to advance the critical consciousness or conscientization encouraged by Paulo Freire (2005), of the need for systemic change beyond the niches of dreamers, radicals and punctual, topical mobilisations. Cultivation of mental freedom, gentle dissidence and living alternatives as proposed by Krause (2014) can be approaches to nourish the emergence of systems of influence to advance a transformation of paradigms. As we have seen in chapter 2, the limits of the current growth and market based paradigms are becoming increasingly obvious, and the idea of a “great transition” is gaining ground, even among mainstream actors. Spreading this idea with decision makers within civil society, business and politics, and consequently the integration of this idea into the strategies and discourses of change actors is an essential element for the materialisation of a global citizens movement that goes beyond topical mobilisations. As Mark Randazzo put it:

"I don’t think we are very far from that. I think confronted with the social and economic and ecological crisis, a lot of people who tend to be cynical or who are not very politised, in the back of their minds they are very aware that the system we have now cannot hold, that something fundamental has to change. It can either change in a very grim and scary way, or it can change in a hopeful way. And we have to work for that hopeful and democratic way. In absence of a democratic global citizens movement, we are going to have a right wing global citizens movement. "
4.4.2. A new role for NGOs

Burkhard Gnärig, head of the International Civil Society Centre, points out in a recent interview that big NGOs experienced growth rates of up to 440 per cent in little more than a decade, leading to yearly turnover of more than a billion Euro for some of them (Great Transition Initiative 2014). However, the management models which are adopted to run such large organisations come from the corporate world and reproduce the very paradigms of growth, profit and competition that are at the heart of the problems the world is facing today. Large NGOs are being criticised for reproducing neo-colonial imperialism (Petras 1999), co-optation by global capitalism (Munck 2002) or giving legitimacy to neo-liberal institutions like the IMF or the World Bank (Drainville 2008), as I outlined in chapter 3.3. The participants in this research largely reflect this critical view on organised and institutionalised civil society.

Interestingly, all “NGO leaders” interviewed strongly plead for a reconsideration of roles and power distribution between big NGOs and grassroots movements. Olivier Consolo points out that “professional civil society organisations […] face difficulties to understand that we are in a new time, and that our resources need to shift from the traditional business model that we have followed forever, which is mainly to help people in the south”, and adopt a new role as a facilitator of local change, rather than trying to implement aid programmes that are defined by donors.

There was large agreement in the interviews that movement building has to be rooted locally. The challenge would be to build on the local mobilisations and translate that to power at the national and global level. As Mark Randazzo put it: NGOs would need to “zoom out” from “our silos of philanthropy, […] our specific campaigns” in order “to see the bigger picture”. The role of NGOs should be that of a facilitator, rather than shaping the agenda:

“The role of professional organisers and institutions is to help to create the spaces for interactions and sharing and learning and exchanges, to help to provide the connectivity between all of them, so people can learn from each other and be inspired from each other. And hopefully build a bigger and deeper movement together. […] You have to develop, you have to build analysis, build constituencies, provide popular education, and organise, 
especially organise, so when the next wave of a potential global citizens movement arrives, more and more constituencies can feed into it."

If global civil society becomes the sum of international “charity business” or NGO service providers in a donor shaped “aid industry”, as outlined as one perspective in Trócaire’s (2011) Leading Edge 2020 report, NGOs are not anymore the ones striving for social change, but for doing big business. As Danny Sriskandarajah (2014) put it in a recent article for the Guardian:

“We must fight corporatism in our own ranks, recognise the power of informal networks, tap into the wisdom of the street and re-balance our resources. We must promote and protect civic spaces, and strive to build global people-to-people solidarity from the grassroots up. And this should not be about abandoning the civil society organisations we have created, but rather we must evolve these NGOs to be more open, agile and accountable to those they seek to serve.”

The corporate functioning of big NGOs cannot deliver on systemic transformation, as it reproduces the very principles of global capitalism instead of demonstrating alternatives. Paehlke (2014:11) argues that “a movement committed to expanded democracy, equity, and human rights must itself, in practice, be inclusive, equitable, and scrupulously democratic. […] The movement must be a model of democracy and inclusiveness to demonstrate the possibility of such democracy on a global scale.” This can only be achieved if organised civil society moves from having a programme or strategy-implementation role to a facilitation role, that provides interfaces for political action and contributes to the emancipation of citizens – that nourishes the feeling and practice of citizenship (Osler & Starkey 2005), both at local and global level. For Gustavo Marín, “people they are aware that the local issues have a local dimension, a national dimension, a regional dimension and also a world dimension. […] People know they have to link the local issue with the global issue, and everything is global and local at the same time, more or less.”

However, the problem would be that there are no interfaces or established structures where the global dimension of problems can be addressed through citizen’s action or participation: “The problem is at a political level. The only tool they find is political parties and elections.” –
which have proved not to deliver the results citizens hope for, and social mobilisations can be easily co-opted for power politics by populist parties. The multiplication of small and big NGOs, which arguably form “global civil society” (see chapter 3.3.), are not considered as being part of a “global citizens movement”, especially by people directly involved in national or local mobilisations, such as the participants from the “popular movements” stakeholder group: “Today a global citizens movement does not exist, at least not a big one. I think that now there are a lot of local social movements”, said N.N., leader of the student protests in Chile. However, Olivier Consolo pointed out that "all of the relevant new movements from the local level that emerged in Europe over the last five, ten years brought a strong international and/or European dimension. [We should] ask them to reinvent the institutions they believe we need to better regulate and lead the world today. I would hope that those people would not build institutions but political space, at regional, upper levels, that are really spaces of assembly for politics and political debate and political decision".

Danny Sriskandarajah insists that "we need to redraw the political map, or the power map, even within civil society [...]. The political relationships have to reflect a sense of equality and shared dignity and common purpose that need to underpin that." NGOs should, according to Mark Randazzo, take “the role of professional organisers and institutions [...] to help to create the spaces for interactions and sharing and learning and exchanges, to help to provide the connectivity [...] so people can learn from each other and be inspired from each other. And hopefully build a bigger and deeper movement together." This learning element, which we can call critical global citizenship education, has nothing to do with the instrumentalisation of citizens as donors (in the style of “save lives: £25 could drill three wells”, advertised by Oxfam30) or as campaign cattle for signing online petitions. NGOs have “to go beyond the whole kind of clicktivism movement like Avaaz [which] seems to me more about playing on the consumerist tendencies of making you feel good because you are involved in this saving of a particular tree, or whatever it might be” (Mark Randazzo).

The experience from the Johannesburg conference underlines that a re-connection of NGOs with local mobilisations through a global, systemic perspective, and learning from the grassroots and their “pluralistic epistemologies” (Rene Suša) is an alternative to sectorial, policy focused, top-down campaigning, that not only does not consider the universal character of the challenges humanity is facing, but also simply doesn't deliver the transformation towards alternatives models of co-existence between peoples and planet.

4.4.3. Addressing cultural transformation

The Smart CSOs model underlines the fundamental role of change at the level of culture – the discourses, values and frames that shape our lives and decisions. The problem with this change agenda is that we don’t have the language, the references and the thinking mode to conceptualise the “new culture”, being primed by what is considered as normality through our mental infrastructures (Welzer 2011). As Gustavo Marin said, we don’t have the ability yet to see the new world. Bayo Akomolafe insists that the established institutions cannot provide a space for this dialogue, which has to emerge from the people themselves:

“What is critical about a global citizens movement is that the agenda is totally outside the conversation, outside the realm of nation states and parties. It's about people. For once in the history of modern civilisation, we are beginning to shift the conversation from governments and corporations to the people themselves: The agenda is you and me, it’s our grandmothers, it’s our small children.”

The role of creating community and joint identification in the emergence of a global citizens movement is central, and the experience of the Johannesburg conference confirms this assumption. Linking people, their struggles and beliefs and facilitating the emergence of new cultural references works first of all through creating a joint language and identification, which is a pre-condition for joint action (yet strategy). The work of the Common Cause group on values and frames (Crompton 2010, Darnton & Kirk 2011) clearly outlines the power of values and joint narratives in order to create bonds between people through alternative “values such as justice, modesty, participation and diversity instead of money, standardisation, efficiency and consumption” (Johannesburg conference concept note).
Karlberg (2014) argues that only a “semiotic transformation” can render a great transition “sensible, desirable, and possible”: A “global system of meaning within which global citizenship” becomes meaningful. The creation and transformations of meaning has been the role of religions, in the etymologic sense of binding and linking people. A global citizens movement needs to create meaning and identification through addressing the values and frames, which are priming most of the people today, and create a new space of sense and possibility. Such conscientization can prepare the ground for fundamental change on the level of regimes, but cannot be achieved only through discourse praxis alone: It has to be rooted in the practice of alternative experimentation, both by citizens and organisations, which try out alternatives forms of organising. Mark Randazzo believes that

"a big part of the job of a global citizens movement is to be preparing and building consciousness and developing expertise when we are in a ‘stick moment’ as we seemingly are now. It is really important building awareness, building consciousness, experimenting with alternatives, building our expertise, building connections, so when we reach that next ‘slip’ moment, when something kicks off and inspires in one part of the world or another, we can all more fully take advantage of that and jump in. When you have that moment of an Occupy kind of spark, or the things that happened in the 60s, people get back to a collective feeling that this is not the time of cynicism, that is a time when we can create our future."

The acknowledgement of the need for a great transition, a changing role and practice of institutionalised civil society from policy actors and social service implementers to movement facilitators, and a deep shift in the cultural values and frames, are key ingredients for a global citizens movement to emerge and to bring upon transformational change. Development education, understood as critical global citizenship education (Andreotti 2006), can be the central tool to advance this agenda.
4.5. The role of development education

The term “development”, and consequently the term “development education” is considered problematic: Denounced as progressivist and obsessed by purely economic thinking since the publication of “The Limits to Growth” by the Club of Rome back in 1972 (Meadows et.al. 1972), “development” holds up the promise of accumulation of wealth, domination of nature and technical advancement, based on the growth paradigm of modernity (Krause 2014, Welzer 2011). However, Storey (2003:35) points out that “the real purpose of the development exercise […] is to discipline and dominate.” The main objective of the development discourse would be to legitimise and reinforce its own existence, including a multitude of institutions, programmes, projects and jobs in the aid industry, still largely dominated by former colonial powers. According to this view, development is not a solution, but part of a problem created by its very own discourse. Danny Sriskanadrajah asks “whether something called development education should survive in the decades to come […]. You might call it global citizenship, and I know in some countries it’s already happening, or citizenship with a global dimension to it.”

The purpose of such learning would be to enhance human freedom and responsibility (i.e. the freedom to act consciously and politically in a responsible way) – a pedagogy of liberation and emancipation (Freire 2005). Kumar (2008) emphasises “freedom, autonomy and responsibility” as cornerstones of development education, considering participatory democracy and genuine dialogue as central elements: “dialogue […] is the primary thinking skill, reconceptualised as ‘learning to learn’, with all other thinking skills following from this induction.” (Kumar 2008:45). This dialogue has to address questions of power, language and interest, including a critical self-reflection and deconstructing of assumptions on the side of the learner (Andreotti 2006). These are key elements to address the dialogical learning on a cultural transformation that is needed to form an inclusive, cross-sectorial and global citizens movement. Olivier Consolo emphasised the role of citizenship in such a learning process: “The core of a new education should be citizenship. Helping people to understand who they are, where they come from, what are their rights, their duties, the way things work and how to influence them and how to use their environment with opportunities and limitations to build
the life they want, in respect of course of basic rules which are the rules of living together, of common goods, and then you can go up until a kind of consciousness of being one humanity, one planet, one future.”

Such reconceptualization of development education would have important consequences for learning practice and approaches: Instead of focusing on issues or causes, such as global poverty (situated politically at the level of “regimes”), and supposing that awareness and understanding of these causes lead more of less automatically to action and “change”, we might need to understand development education along a new triad of values, empowerment and transformation: Not the knowledge (learning) is the starting point, but the values (identity), based on the assumption that identities constructed on the basis of intrinsic values lead to fair, sustainable, solidary and empowering acts (including self-directed learning), no matter how many people actually know about global and other “bigger-then-self” issues: Addressing values - the level of discourse and culture – and through that the rights and responsibilities associated with global citizenship, people can emancipate themselves from being objects (as consumers, labour force, tokenistic voters) of seemingly stone solid regimes. The practice of citizenship results in emancipation from these regimes, through self-determined mobilisation, experimentation and creation of alternatives in niches. Nourished and illuminated, they eventually connect to systems of influence towards systemic transformation.

The emancipation of citizens in the Freirian sense of strengthening social agency to shape their own lives is at the heart of such “new development education”, which after all is simply about rediscovering the “radical roots” of development education, as Bobby McCormack put it. Through such processes, people should be able “to realise that our own problems are our own problems, and we can address them by asking new questions all together. We have the resources with us. [...] We have the gifts, we have the tools, we have the stories, we have the means to create worlds that work for us.” (Bayo Akomolafe). Resolutely addressing values, emancipation and transformation, development education can be a powerful tool for systemic and collective change, both within civil society and in the world society we are witnessing emerging.
5. Conclusion

Looking back at almost two decades since the presentation of the Global Scenario Group’s framework on the long-term planetary future, which introduced a “great transition”, alongside with “barbarisation” and “conventional worlds” as possible scenarios, Paul Raskin (2014) admits that all three possibilities are still evolving alongside each other: While the system tries to embrace the promise of ‘qualitative growth’ through technological developments and concepts like ‘green economy’, “Barbarization scenarios, the evil cousins of Conventional Worlds” (Raskin 2014:2) manifest as multi-fold, uncontrollable events, such as climate related disasters, global food price fluctuations, trans-national terrorism or migration flows towards an increasingly fortified Europe.

However, an increasing number of individuals, organisations and even institutions acknowledge that business as usual is not an option anymore, and embrace the idea of a profound transformation of the paradigms that shape our social, economic and political relations. A growing body of literature and the participants in this research suggest that a global citizens movement, as a condensation of global citizenship into a system of influence based on a shared feeling of belonging and participation, can become the agent to address this transformational change. Such a movement has to emerge through the consolidation of alternative values and joint narratives, in order to create identity and new semiotics. The emergence of such new worldviews is an open and dialogical process, based on mutuality, creation of trust and radical inclusiveness, as Paehlke (2014) points out. Emancipatory learning, including a re-radicalisation of development education, can facilitate this process. This implies a change in focus from strategy formulation to discourse shaping, from resourcing aspired policy change to nurturing radical experimentation and niches, and from working through hierarchical organisations to weaving wider and thicker networks. Modern, western paradigms have to cede space for multiple worldviews that allow us to see the world through other eyes (Andreotti & De Souza 2008). “A global citizens movement has to move beyond the hubris of western projects of building a new society, and has to somehow – and I’m again not good at this, I have to move beyond my own hubris – address the fact that different cultures, different communities, different experiences are in fact different. We have
to build a global citizens movement that has to encompass all that”, said Mark Randazzo in one of the interviews for this research.

This paper has shown that despite the difficult task, a growing community of activists and scholars are exploring ways to unite the world’s citizenry to take back control of their future. The findings of this research, in particular the importance of continuous questioning and redefining of the role of NGOs and the key aspect of transformation of culture and discourse, will hopefully inform the ongoing debate within development NGOS, and certainly contribute to shaping the upcoming DEEEP conferences on “Building a Global Citizens Movement”.

However, this dissertation only touched on questions of structure and organisation of a global citizens movement, whereas leadership, hierarchy and inclusiveness are recurrent concerns by scholars and activities. A systematic analysis of previous attempts and manifestations of a global citizens movement (e.g. international workers movement, 1960’s uprisings, World Social Forum or most recently the missed opportunity of “The Widening Circle”31 to institutionalise a global citizens movement) from a historical and social psychologist perspective could help to draw lessons for the consolidation and structure of a worldwide, transformational human movement.

In the meantime, other worlds are happening already, driven by “pragmatic hope, for it keeps alive the promise of the future” (Raskin 2014:4). The question is, if they will escalate to alternative, global paradigms able to bring upon a “great transition”. Through this research I have learned that this won’t be possible without connecting grassroots mobilisation and re-invented global civil society organisations to an inclusive, democratic and multi-layered global citizens movement for transformational change.

31 www.wideningcircle.org/archive.htm
Bibliography


Annexes

Annex 1: Information sheet for interviewees

**Popular movements, global civil society and a new role for development education:**
Towards a global citizen’s movement?

A research project
April to August 2014

Information for potential interviewees

*Please will you help with my research?*

My name is Tobias Troll. Besides my work as DEEEP project manager, through which I was intensively involved in the organisation of the conference “Building a Global Citizens Movement”, in which you participated last year, I am currently a student of a MA in Development Education at the Institute of Education/University of London. As part of my master dissertation, I’m currently researching about the possibility and potential of a Global Citizens Movement.

This leaflet tells you about my/our research.

I hope the leaflet will be useful, and I would be pleased to answer any questions you have.

Why is this research being done?
While there is a growing academic literature on global citizenship and movements, there is little evidence about the practices of global citizenship from the point of view of individuals. This research aims to investigate how representatives of different stakeholder groups – local popular movements, global civil society activists, international NGO leaders and development educators – define a global citizens movement, and where they see its pitfalls and potential. It will also inform the further work of DEEEP and the CONCORD DARE Forum, and will contribute to shaping the upcoming two follow-up global conferences, which will be organised by DEEEP.

Who will be in the project?
Besides a desk study of relevant literature, the research will analyse the answers and profiles of 520 applicants to the conference “Building a Global Citizens Movement”. Furthermore, around 12 individuals – representatives of different stakeholder groups (popular movements, global civil society activists, international NGO leaders and development educators) – will be interviewed in May and June 2014. I would be happy if you would agree to be one of these.
What will happen during the research?
The interviews will be held by phone or Skype in May and June 2014. Each interview session should take around 30 minutes. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed for further analysis. You might choose or not to remain anonymous. Part of the research might be presented at the general conference of the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes on 26 June 2014. After completion of the dissertation (deadline 1 September 2014), the paper will be published (possibly through DEEEP or other channels) and inform the organisation of further DEEEP global conferences. You will have the possibility to double check the use of the quotes or information you have provided before publication.

What questions will be asked?
The questions will be based around the following topics, but might be adapted in relation to individual profiles or interests:
- What motivates you to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement?
- How do you define a global citizens movement?
- Do you think a global citizens movement is useful or necessary for the causes you are involved in? What are the implications of a global citizens movement in your particular country or region?
- What do you see as obstacles and pitfalls in the establishment of a global citizens movement?
- How do you see the potential of development education in the facilitation of a global citizens movement, and how does development education need to evolve in order to assume this role?

What will happen to you if you take part?
If you agree, I will tape record some of the sessions and type them up later. I am not looking for right or wrong answers, only for what everyone really thinks.

Could there be problems for you if you take part?
I hope you will enjoy talking to me. Some people may feel upset when talking about some topics. If they want to stop talking, we will stop. While I would appreciate to attribute quotes to individuals (and provide their names and background), you can chose to remain anonymous, and you can restrain from a possible prior agreement to real name attribution at any moment. This might be particular relevant for people who are active in potentially oppressive contexts.

If you have any problems with the project, please tell me (tobias.troll@concordeurope.org).

Will doing the research help you?
I hope you will enjoy helping me. The research will collect ideas to help global and local civil society to organise a global citizens movement, and will have direct impact on the organisation of two more global conferences (like the one you have participated in).

Who will know that you have been in the research?
If you chose to remain anonymous, only my tutor (Nicole Blum from the Institute of Education) and myself will know that you have participated, and will treat this information strictly confidential. If for whatever reason we have to consider disclosing your identity to someone else, we will talk to you first about the best thing to do. I will keep recordings and notes in a safe place, and, in case you chose to remain anonymous, will change all the names in my report, as well as other details that might related to you personally, so that no one knows who said what.

**Do you have to take part?**
You decide if you want to take part and, even if you say ‘yes’, you can drop out at any time or say that you don’t want to answer some questions.

You can tell me that you will take part by signing the consent form.

**Will you be able to review the information you provided, and how will you know about the research results?**
After the interviews, I will send you a full transcript of the conversation, and you will be able to make changes in case I didn’t record correctly what you said, or if you think specific parts should not be used for the research. In case you agreed on non-anonymous treatment of the information, you can also specify that you would like certain parts of the interview to be anonymised. In any case, anything you would not like to be published will be excluded from the transcript and thus not be used and published in the final report.

The dissertation will be public after assessment by my supervisor, and will be shared with all people involved in the research.

**Who is funding the research?**
This research and my studies at the Institute of Education are my private endeavour, but as they are closely linked with my work at DEEEP, some of the work (in particular the interviews) might take place during my working time.

The project has been reviewed by the team of the MA Development Education at the Institute of Education.

23 May 2014

**Thank you for reading this leaflet.**

Tobias Troll
DEEEP Project Manager
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Annex 2: Transcript of interviews

Aya Chebbi
2 June 2014
APPROVED BY EMAIL ON 7 JUNE 2014

Aya Chebbi agreed non-anonymous use of the interview.

TT: Could you briefly present yourself – name, age, occupation and a little bit of your profile, what you are doing, in particular your links with popular movements?

AC: My name is Aya Chebbi, and I’m 26 years old. What I’m doing right now as a job is Africa Youth coordinator for World Peace Initiative Foundation. In terms of social movements, I’m a blogger at “Proudly Tunisian” (http://aya-chebbi.blogspot.be)

TT: You have been involved in the mobilisation, which happened in Tunisia over the last two, three years?

AC: The mobilisation actually started before, but I was so young in 2006/2007, when a mini revolution happened in the central region of Tunisia with the mining industry, but then it was hacked, and a lot of people just got jailed, killed and nobody heard about them. And then in 2010 some bloggers started a kind of movement against censorship, because we didn’t have YouTube or DailyMotion, and other websites were censored, and many blogs were hacked. You know when you have censorship, a 404 [error message] appears to you. So this kind of campaign was called “404”. And that was maybe the first act taken against censorship. Nothing happened. But then the revolution started, with I think was an accumulation of many things that happened in Tunisia, but mostly sparked from Sidi Bouzid, which is the most marginalised region in Tunisia, and that self-immolation act of that fruit vendor etc. But mostly people really got angry when the first person was killed. So it wasn’t really the protest or the self-immolation act, but when the first person was killed by police, that people, you know, got really angry and realised how we are a police state, and how police can kill people. Now the blogger and the blog-sphere was mobilised at the time because there was no media coverage. And our pictures and videos got picked up by international media. At some point even the social media helped inside Tunisia, because we didn’t know what’s going on in that central region, and we were in the capital, most of the activists. So a lot of activists moved to that region to cover everything, but also sharing what was happening there helped us too, you know, translated into French or English, trying to write blogs about it. Then the international community kind of, because of no coverage, at first thought that there is some trouble making going on as the regime presented, just a couple of trouble makers. And even at the time the French government kind of made some statement that we can support you and can send some forces to control the situation you know. But I think our role as mobilisers and bloggers was to tell the international community: It’s people rising up for their rights, and it’s not about making order. And then a lot of presidents from around the world made statements like “we support the movement going on”, even before the president fled the country. Yes, and I think when he fled the country, the work really started... because I think if we compare to Egypt, we didn’t really celebrate the revolution after Ben Ali fled the country. We really started to mobilise more, because we felt the system is still there, and it’s just one of the heads, you know, left. But the whole system is there. So we started kind of a war through the social mobilisation, because some people tried to hack the revolution, old regime was trying to escape, and make things going back to normal, and then the activist sphere tried to push for alternatives to that regime.
TT: You have been to the global conference on “Building a global citizens movement” in Johannesburg. What motivates you to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement?

AC: I think because when we did that in Tunisia, I felt we were disconnected from the world. And even people wouldn’t know where is Tunisia on the map, or what is happening in the country. I felt we needed some international support, but not on a state basis, not on a state intervention, what we don’t really support, but on a civil society basis. A kind of unity, kind of civil society coming together, NGOs supporting each other, advocating, campaigning… I think some of the issues we are facing now, it’s not anymore a grassroots or local or national issue, it’s an international issue. And we are kind of affected by each other. So if you take climate change it’s not about only my country, you know, solving this or making regulation. If my neighbouring country doesn’t do that, we are not reaching anywhere. And even many of the things that happened after Tunisia’s revolution made me realise… I never believed I could, or our movement could inspire other countries to do the same. So when that happened it also felt like we can learn from each other, we can inspire each other to do something positive, like the leaders inspire each other to oppress people more. So than I became more involved in international level, in global issues, because if I’m doing something in Tunisia, I would prefer if my Italian friend, or my friend from Belgium who can access many things could support that. I think on a civil society basis we are like that. Governments are so connected, they meet a lot, they talk a lot, they connect a lot... we are civil society, we are separated and everyone working by themselves. But we really share a lot of common things and we can really work together. And it’s better if we work together, because we have different experiences and trainings, that helps.

TT: How do you define a global citizens movement? This is a little bit of an abstract term – what is it to you precisely?

AC: Actually it is very ideal. When I went to Johannesburg I liked the idea but still it is very ideal, and I always feel we are not representing everybody there, in every corner on earth, still we are not there yet. But I think we can start a small new movement… For me a global citizens movement is an inclusive movement for everybody in the world, regardless of any discrimination on any basis, gender etc. etc. It’s more of a collaborative and supportive movement. It’s like a support system to each other. Sometimes we might not use it, but it’s good to have it, because you never know when you are going to use it, or when it’s going to be impactful.

TT: So you rather see it as a learning space, or a space for mutual support for a variety of causes, rather than a joint global action toward a common goal or something like this?

AC: I think it’s both. I think first, in order to take action together we have all to be on a same page, and it’s hard on a global level, because even on a local level we sometimes don’t reach that. To be all on the same understanding will take some time, to have a basic understanding on everything together. But as a first step I think it should be a support system where I feel I have a backup. I feel that I have that movement behind me and I just go for it, whatever cause you have, you can just go for it and you have that backup of expertise, of training, of people, of networks… and then I think next step would be after the understanding of those issues on the same level, we can take action together on different issues, on human rights issues, on climate change and many other issues. So I see both, and I think the reward of it, or the fruit of it is the common action we are taking.

TT: Do you think that a global citizens movement is useful or necessary for the causes you are involved in, such as censorship, or democracy in Tunisia?
AC: Definitely! We need it, that’s why I’m looking for it. That’s why I went to Johannesburg. I think it’s very useful, and I’m still in touch with the people I met in Johannesburg, and we are still exchanging ideas and trying to find a common ground. It is definitely useful. Sometimes we don’t know how and when, but it comes naturally. Just we need to make some mechanisms and structures and how to build that connection sustainably, you know. Sometimes you meet people but you never talk again or meet again. But to make it really a global citizens movement, we have to find a structure where we can get really people engaged on a regular basis. And how to connect those people who have the same concerns together.

TT: So do you think there should be some kind of formalised structure or even governance, or you see it more like a loose, self-organised network?

AC: I would say, based on my experience, for example Tunisia’s revolution had no leadership, so I see things to be more successful when they don’t have leadership. It was a totally spontaneous movement – and it worked. But on a long term: Yes, we have to organise ourself to continue, to be doing that. So as a start, it can be spontaneous, with no structure, but I think to be sustainable it has to have structure, otherwise we will need instant inspiration and instant mobilisation, regular one. But I think it should shape to some structure. But maybe with new mechanisms, than having a ruling group… because I think the movements that are rising now are sick of leadership, bad leadership, or dictatorship. We are just sick of one ruling person or one ruling group, or class. So if we do the same, we’re just repeating the same mistakes we are fighting against. But I don’t have the answer. We have to figure that out together, and how to structure it. But definitely it should be shaped to have a kind of really fast impact. Because if it will remain spontaneous it will take longer before we take any action.

TT: If you think of Tunisia, what is the relevance, or the implication of a global citizens movement, in your particular country or region? Do the people like your friends, or the people who mobilised, feel like part of a global citizens movement? Is this of any relevance, or is this more a local, national frame and concern mainly?

AC: It depends on the involvement, because in Tunisia we are still raising awareness on active citizenship. So if you are in a country that is at that stage of raising active citizenship and having everybody involved, not everybody would see them as global citizens, and maybe some people wouldn’t see it until they meet somebody different from them. So if you don’t travel from your village, until you get married there, and you live there your whole live, you won’t see yourself connecting with anybody outside that circle. So it depends. The movement, the people who are involved in the movement now, especially a lot of conference have taken place in Tunesia, a lot for forums and things like that, so in my surrounding, in the blog sphere or NGO sphere, we see ourselves part of a global citizens movement, that we don’t know, we can’t define it. But we, especially in Tunisia we are open to partnerships, we are part of Africa, we are part of Middle East, we are part of Europe, Euromed, you know, we have this complex but nice identity and openness for all the collaboration and exchange and we are not very suspicious about any foreigner coming in Tunisia. That’s a point why we are excited to be global citizens.

TT: What do you see as obstacles or pitfalls or difficulties in the establishment of a global citizens movement?

AC: Many obstacles. As I said finding a common understanding, a common ground with diversity of people. The first thing we should do is to define a culture for everybody for that movement. What is our culture, we are working together toward common action? Building
that culture and respecting it and checking that culture constantly is a hard task. And the sustainability of the movement. I think it’s fine also if many other movements arise from that movement. But I think what we try to do now is to combine all the movements around the world into one movement. Those already existing. And I think if we start from those – you know like the movement in Tunisia, the movement in Turkey, the movement in Brasil, many countries now have build their own movements. So connecting those and starting with those, because they had a kind of spontaneous experience on what they started. The obstacle will be the common understanding and the agreement towards a common goal to do the different action that we will agree on, and also the sustainability, and how to bring a new spirit to that movement, to be inclusive, and not to be ruled by the same people. To be constantly inclusive of different people.

TT: This aspect of culture is very interesting. What do you mean with a common culture for a global citizens movement?

AC: So for example if we agree on tolerance, if we agree on respect of sexual orientation, or any other thing we agree on as our common culture, we don’t care about what culture I come from, we would build our own culture, if we agree on it. We have to check on it every now and then, because if some problems, conflicts, tensions arise, then we have to check if they respect the culture or not. And that would be our common basis that I respond to something I’m not gonna be a person to comment, I would be referring to our culture we agreed on since the beginning.

TT: So a culture of common values?

AC: Common values and understanding, yes.

TT: How do you see the potential of development education or global learning or popular education, however you want to call it, in the facilitation of a global citizens movement, and how does global learning need to evolve in order to assume such a role?

AC: So you mean formal or informal learning?

TT: Can be both, its like non-formal, informal, formal, but basically the idea of development education like connecting the local with the global, education on global justice, on sustainable development, all these things. So what is the role of this learning approach in the facilitation of a global citizens movement?

AC: I think I could imagine a global citizens movement working with each other, combining all the expertise. Not only the own expertise like as a lawyer, or whatever, but coming with all their background from different countries, democratic, undemocratic, with very intellectual high developed countries, and very developing, still struggling to have access even to some resources is a great combination, and I think what could arise from that, not only a learning process while doing it, but also a kind of combining a new toolkit or something new for the world to use. And I see that whenever I meet people from different parts of the world, and that ideas can combine – it’s amazing. I think the only real struggle and frustration for me every time is time, and even in Johannesburg, I would have continued this discussion for a week! But the time really is frustrating. So I see very much potential in doing that, and I think maybe we are failing around the world, trying hard on sustainable development as a learning process, because we are not doing as much exchange as possible, as much collaboration as possible, including as much as possible different understandings of our different background. So I see a lot of potential in a global movement.

TT: Thank you. Is there anything you would like to add?

AC: I hope in ten years from now we are talking about this to be happening!
N. N. preferred anonymous use of the interview.

TT: Could you please present yourself with your name, age, occupation and also the causes you are involved in?

NN: My name is N. N. I am 25 years old. Last year I finished my studies at university. I studied journalism, so now I’m a journalist. Next week I will start working at a newspaper. This is my first job in the politics section of a newspaper. Before that in the university I participated in a lot of student organisations. In 2011 I was the president of my student council at the faculty of journalism. And then the next year, that was 2012, I was in the federation of students that is an organisation representing all students of my university, Universidad Católica de Chile. I participated in that organisation for all that year, and that year I didn’t study because we did a lot of things inside the university and outside. In 2011 there was a big, big student movement in Chile, because we don’t have a good education, we have one of the most expensive education in the world, with low quality, so we were in the streets, trying to fight, because we want a good education. I participated in another organisation, which is called Confederación de Estudiantes de Chile (CONFECh) because my federation is part of that big organization. CONFECh is a big student council of all universities of Chile. In that place we tried to make a lot of projects to present to the government and to the congress, because we wanted to change the system of education in Chile. In that two years, me and six more people, we were the leadership of the students in our university. This was very important because it was a big student movement. We were trying to scream, and trying to change this system. In that years I participated in a political movement, Nueva Acción Universitaria, an organisation present only in my university, without any support from political parties, because it’s only a movement. Now I’m helping the new leadership of my university with my experience. Because now in Chile we have a big government project, they are trying to change the education system, so the students now have a bigger voice and are very important. Me and other leaders are trying to help the new leadership. We have a new President, Michelle Bachelet, and she proposed in her government program an ambitious educational reform. So the student leaders must be prepared to criticize and bring help in that important project that will change the education in Chile.

TT: This is a very interesting experience on local and national level. So let’s go to the question of this global citizens movement. You have participated in this conference in Johannesburg last year. What motivates you to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement?

NN: Because I think that here in Chile or in other countries, people have the same, big problems like education, health, democracy, people don’t participate in the elections... So for me it was very important to participate in a big conference like the one in Johannesburg last year, because I want to learn about other movements that are trying to change this kind of problems. There are a lot of different problems, but people are trying to fight to change this kind of things with different forms. So that was my interest to participate in that event, because you have to learn. We can change things, if we educate people. If we have people with good education, to answer questions, to do something, maybe we can change the problems that we have in the different places of the world. I believe that the way to change
things and to resolve problems is by education. I think that is one of the things that can make change happen. We have to learn about the others. I met a lot of people who are trying to do things through different ways, like education, like participation with peoples from different places, for example in Australia with the aboriginal people that live there. We have to exchange to try to change. We have to move the people, and that is the reason why I think we can make this big social movement of the world. It’s like the example of Facebook or other kinds of social networks: That we have a space that people can change their opinion and exchange on the ways they see the world. This is a good place to exchange opinions I think.

TT: You insist a lot on this mutual learning, exchange, networking aspect of a global citizens movement. How would you define it for you? What does it mean “global citizens movement”? Does it exist, or if not, should it exist, and how should it look like?

NN: Today a global citizens movement does not exist, at least not a big one. I think that now there are a lot of local social movements. Here for example in Chile, there is this big movement about education. But now in Spain we have this big movement fighting not to have this monarchy and this king, and they want to have more jobs and good rights, but there is something we have in common. People are not happy with the political and economic system. I think that is one of the things that we can share about these different kinds of movements. But I think that we can have a big social movement in the world, because I think we have the same problems. Poor people don’t have the support of the government, while rich people have everything. There is something that we can share. Here in South America, with Europe or Australia or with other places, and I think that it’s like a big project that we have to work on. Because it’s important to share the things I told you. We can share projects or the ways to resolve this kind of problems. I think that that is the big idea that we can share. But I don’t know if we can say that now there exists this big, big movement in the world.

TT: You are very much engaged in a topical and geographical limited mobilisation: Education in Chile. But you say that with other movements or other people who are involved in different causes, there is some kind of connection or a common cause somehow. What is the common cause, or what is the connection between these sometimes very different topics?

NN: I was travelling in Europe, and I saw different cultures, people, places, and I think that people are not very happy with the political or economic system. Now in the world we have democracy in almost all the countries, but people now don’t want to participate in anything. So when there is a big problem like here in Chile, because all the families have this kind of credit to pay to the bank to study, everybody decided to start a fight for free education and good education. So there was a problem everybody was unhappy with, and they started fighting and going to the street, and they sent letters to the government and so on and started a big explosion around this problem. That is an example, but I think it’s the same in Spain: They don’t have work or jobs, they are starting to participate in this big movement and trying to change that kind of problem. I think that the lack of opportunities is the connection between the different topics. And people’s unhappiness is the result of that. I think that we have this unhappy system, because everybody is not happy like in the North of Europe, where they have everything. We have these similar things we can share, that is this economical system. I think the people on Facebook and Twitter and so, there are a lot of people saying what they want. Also here in Chile, if there is a big manifestation, there are a lot of people saying what they don’t like. We have different kinds of manifestations, because of the problems, but these problems exist. I think that now we have to try to share in this kind
of congresses or other kind of places, where people can participate, in order to share what kind of answers we can give to that kind of problems.

TT: If you think of the causes you are involved in, the things which are important to you, do you think that a global citizens movement is useful or necessary?

NN: Yes, I think that now, we have answers. Now, three years later, because in 2011 there was a big manifestation all the year, but now we have answers to that problems. Me and other leaders, we shared a lot of experiences with other leaders in Europe, in Canada, in USA, in other countries, where they are trying to do the same. We went to a big education congress in Quebec, and the leadership in that place was in the same situation: Education was very expensive, with bad quality and so on. I think in that big movement we can share answers to resolve these problems. Not only by Facebook or so, no, but in real spaces to participate and to try to talk with somebody, who is trying to change the same things as we. We have to change the answers to these big problems. Maybe that is an important thing that we did in these years. The global citizens movement is necessary because you can use that energy and the experience of others to solve the problems of a place. And to make pressure to the governments.

TT: We are talking a lot about the leadership, because you are involved as a leader of course. But if you think more broadly about the people who mobilised, who participated in that particular cause in Chile, do you think that they are aware of these global connections, or a global citizens movement? Do they somehow feel like global citizens, and do they make the connections with other causes in other parts of the world, and how this is possibly connected to the Chile situation?

NN: I was telling you that these big movements started in 2006, but in 2011 and 2012 it was very important, and all the years there were a lot of activities related with the movement. I think that this movement has a lot of connections with other kinds of student movements, also in Argentina, in Quebec, with the universities in Mexico, where they have the same problems because it’s very expensive and the quality of the institutions is very bad. In that year, in 2011, there was the Indignados movement in Spain. In that year there were a lot of different kinds of movements all over the world. There were a lot of connections of the problems, also in the field of education. So in that year, the leadership of the CONFECH, the big council of all the students in Chile, invited a lot of leaders of other universities with the same problems, and there was a big congress like the one in Johannesburg, but only on education. In that place we exchanged a lot on the problems and the projects they were trying to present to the governments, and the pressure they tried to do to the mass media and everything. So there were a lot of connections and we exchanged a lot of experiences. I think that was one of the big factors that pushed to that big student movement in Chile. Because here in Chile it was a problem we had all the time since the 1990ies. 20 or 30 years with the same problem! So in that year we saw this same problem in other countries, and the people here in Chile in that year woke up. They saw that this was a problem that we don’t have to have all our life. Yes, we have a big connection with these other countries, so maybe that is a representation of a global citizens movement, or a big global citizens mobilisation on this education problem. I think that maybe we can call it like that, because it was the same problem in different countries. In Johannesburg last year I talked with a lot of people that are from other organisations, me and my partner, Sebastian [Vielmas]. We told the people which kind of problems we have and why we are in Johannesburg. For example there was a guy from Peru, and he told us that they have the same problem... Finally we have something that is this big thing that is education, where we have the same problems in different countries.
They maybe don't have the same kind of big movement, but they have the same problems and we can share this experience, so maybe they can make a change in their countries.

TT: So you say that this international context of 2012 with the Indignados and so on was even a factor to start or enable the student protests in Chile?

NN: Yes, and also there are a lot of people making research on this big movement in Chile, because it had a lot of inputs. Many things happened in that year that have connections with other processes in the world. Because in that year was the Indignados in Spain, a lot of problems in politics here in Chile and in other parts of South America. There are a lot of connections between my country and our neighbourhood, but also other continents. Maybe there is a big connection, and a reason to say that this could be a global citizens movement.

TT: You were mentioning an education congress – where did this take place?

NN: That year we invited people to Chile. This organisation Confederación de Estudiantes de Chile, CONFECH, this big council of the students of universities, had a lot of meetings, like two meetings in a month, so we invited people from other countries. One of these meetings we called congress for education, and we invited people, not only students, but also a lot of experts on education. After that meeting, in 2011, there were connections between our leadership and leadership of other countries. We started to establish the connection with the other leaderships. It was a meeting of the CONFECH, and after that we invited a lot of people, not only of the other countries, also people from this country, conservative people, and people from more liberal background and everything, because we have to listen to everybody. I think that is a good place to exchange opinions.

TT: What do you think are the main obstacles or difficulties in the establishment of a global citizens movement?

NN: I think the different problems we are facing is the difficulty that could have this global citizens movement. Because it is very difficult to say we have a global citizens movement – people now have a lot of different activities, and they participate in activities in different places, but they have different problems. So this is one difficulty to form this global citizens movement. The second one is that I believe in a movement, we need leadership, or that people can vote for their leaders, and be represented by a person. Maybe that is one of the difficulties, because it is difficult to vote for somebody if it is a big global citizens movement. Or maybe it could be like a organisation, like a little government. But I think that is one other difficulty. And maybe to coordinate this big movement is very difficult. That three things are very difficult, because we can have this movement with people that participate, but people are very different, so maybe somebody wants to have one leader, and another one wants to have ten, so how can we vote or organise elections? That could be a problem. I don't know how we could do it, because we have to coordinate. I think that is very difficult.

TT: You said in the beginning that a global citizens movement for you would be mainly a place to share, to learn, to exchange, these kind of things. So in this case, why do you think still there would be a need for elected leadership for example? Because if it’s only about sharing and learning and so on, we don’t need a leader, if it is not about join political action for example.

NN: Maybe not political leadership, but somebody who can coordinate or work to make this activity possible, so people can share experience. It’s like in Johannesburg I think: There is a organisation, there is DEEEP, you and your partners, you have to try to organise, you have to put a lot of work in this activity, because if you don’t have this place, with the time, with the space and everything, you don’t have the people to share experience. If we want something
like a big global citizens movement, we want more democracy – and that I want – or more
rights for everybody, I think that we need somebody, or a group of people that work on that,
and make this activity possible. Not necessarily in a political way, but simply in the
organisation.

TT: How do you see the role and the potential of education and particular what we call in
Europe development education, or global citizenship education, or global education, or
popular education in the Latin American context, so what is the role of these progressive
educations in the facilitation of a global citizens movement? Do you see any role for
education in making this possible, and if yes, how does education need to evolve in order to
assume this role?

NN: This is like a dream I think, but I think that education is one of the most important things
in a country, in a place or maybe in the world. If we have people that are educated we will
have a good world. I think that if we fight for this right, because I think that education is a
right, we can change other kind of things. Now, here in Chile, we are forgetting that things.
Maybe if we have a good movement for education, that represents this kind of respect,
responsibility, democracy, the right that people have to know to live, we can have good
global citizens, because I think that is the centre to resolve other problems. But this is a
dream, I don’t know if it’s possible. It we educate the population with a good education as a
right for all the people, I think that we can have change in the system that we now have.
In another way I think that maybe from this movement of education in Chile or also in Mexico or
elsewhere, it's possible to make a big social education movement, and maybe that could be
a global citizens movement. It's difficult to form or to create this global citizens movement,
but in a way we have global citizens already, but in education. Because we have the same
problems and we are trying to do the same things to change that. But it's very far from one
place to another. So we have the connections by the networks, but not with the persons
directly. So that could be a possibility, to start with the education.

TT: Is there anything you would like to add?

NN: Now we are lucky, because we have the communication connections between Chile and
England and everywhere, so I think we can do more than we just did. We can start with the
education, because if we resolve the problem with the education with the expensive courses
and everything we can make a change.
Angeline Greensill agreed non-anonymous use of the interview.

TT: Could you briefly present yourself – name, age if you like, occupation, and what are the causes you are involved in?

AG: My name is Angeline Greensill. I'm from the Tainui hapū, or tribe, of the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand. I have been involved in a number of issues over the past 40 years, dating from the 1980's, when we had anti-apartheid Springboks tour demonstrations here in New Zealand against the visit of the South African rugby team. We managed to stop a rugby game, the only one in the whole of the nation. I moved on from that issue to occupying lands to highlight land rights issues throughout the country. Those actions influenced law changes in New Zealand. And recently I've been involved in fighting against deep-sea oil companies coming to drill in New Zealand waters, especially on the west coast. We recently won a case against TTR [Trans-Tasman Resources, a mining company] extracting 50 million tonnes of iron sand in our area, however they have appealed, so it's still on-going. This illustrates the exploitation of resources being undertaken by corporate companies.

The other thing is, I've recently been named a candidate in the National elections in New Zealand that are taking place on 20 September. I've been involved in politics for the last 40 years, both on the streets in movements as well as within the system to change laws. I am an environmentalist, the spokes person of my tribe for environmental matters, and am trying to stop pollution in water ways, and save the Maui's dolphin which is endangered in the world... there are a whole lot of issues that I'm involved with.

TT: You have been at this conference in Johannesburg last year “Building a global citizens movement”. What motivates you to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement?

AG: I see increasing disparities in our country, and the sharing of solutions to issues that are happening around the world, which we empathise with. We are all isolated in our own little corners of the world. I think collectively we can make change, and that can be seen. I guess by mobilising the masses in our countries about issues affecting others, voicing our opposition to what is happening in Gaza for example, we can influence our government to take action with others around the world. We find out faster through social media and the Internet. It's a powerful tool that informs us about issues that affect us and others globally. I have noticed that by debating, educating and litigating issues such as GE - genetic engineering - we help change the thinking and goals of different organisations involving people around the world. Collectively I think we can make change, we need to make change, because at the moment the whole world is becoming totally corporatized. Corporations now are certainly responsible, along with governments, for the huge disparities between the rich and the poor. We have more and more people living in poverty - at least 285,000 children in NZ. It's good to discuss and learn from other people who empathise with issues we are concerned about. Travelling to South Africa was just by a chance conversation with Betsan, who said it would be good to go, and I actually enjoyed meeting others and hearing about

32 http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/new-zealanders-protest-against-springbok-rugby-tour-1981
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what they are doing in their countries to mobilise citizens to challenge their own governments actions.

TT: How do you define a global citizens movement? What is it for you, conceptually?

AG: To me it’s a movement of people who critically think. They are activists who are concerned and not afraid to engage in political battles, for human rights and against the injustices in the world we are living in. I think increasingly countries are becoming more corporatized, very hard to nail down, and human rights are diminishing, to the point that we have collectively come together to express our opposition. Also we are becoming more surveyed and watched by our governments, and that’s a totally uncomfortable feeling, when you have your own governments living in fear of their populations. It’s a movement of people who act in solidarity, are not afraid, but are actually brave enough to challenge these things globally.

TT: So you see it more manifesting locally, or also at a global scale? How do you see the relation between the local and the global level in a global citizens movement?

AG: I think the citizen’s movement raises awareness on issues occurring in the world, everywhere. I guess that’s where I see the focus. Most of the issues I’m dealing with are local, regional or national to our country. But increasingly you get into issues like food sovereignty, human rights abuses, transnational mineral companies, oil companies coming in… We are drawing attention to issues – and we are having some success – but we are also watching what other citizens are doing to actually challenge the same sorts of things we are facing now. New Zealand is probably behind a lot of countries. The French some years ago had issues about GE, and farmers went out to the streets protecting their agriculture, and in the same way we here in the last few years have been engaged in the same sort of thing. I think it’s quite useful to actually have a movement, and the Internet is a great tool to connect those movements together, so we can actually see what everyone is doing and learn from each other. What we are seeing of course are the state and other forces coming out against the citizens of a country, their own people. It’s not a great time to be looking at the Internet actually, as there are examples of abuse everywhere and citizens paying the ultimate price for standing up for their rights.

TT: Is a global citizens movement more about connecting local movements, in order to learn and network and inspire each other, or should it be more a kind of a global organisation, with also some kind of structure, which acts also on a global level, and not only takes inspiration from local battles?

AG: I guess from my experience, when we look at the United Nations, this was seen to be a global movement supposedly set up as a meeting place for all nations. But I’m not sure if it has been captured in some ways by the countries, which are part of it. It certainly doesn’t seem to be a citizen’s movement, although we presume that it would be. And so if we are to have a global citizens movement, I think we need to try to find a way that people put faith in that type of movement again, because we’ve lost faith really. The United Nations was seen to be an organisation that connected the entire world, and put out charters and governance on all sorts of things, but in reality the implementation on these things haven’t been really great on the ground.

TT: Do you think that a global citizens movement is useful or necessary for the causes you are involved in, like environmental causes, or indigenous rights?

AG: I think exposure globally actually helps raise awareness about issues we are involved in, like deep sea oil drilling, saving the endangered Maui Dolphin, Greenpeace’s Save the
Whales, ‘Occupy’ and 350 climate change. All of these issues affect us as global citizens, so I think it would be useful. If there was mass support from the 99% of global citizens it would certainly keep our own governments in check, and allow more real democracy in terms of having a say about what is good for our environment and ourselves.

TT: If you think of New Zealand, what are the implications of a global citizens movement there? Do people somehow identify with this idea – do they feel like global citizens in any way in New Zealand?

AG: I’m not so sure that it’s a wide spread idea here. People do participate in different things around the world, e.g. UN led conventions like the one in Rio, but nationally I don’t think that it’s one of the issues people have dwelled on. At the moment what we are trying to do within one of our political movements is to incorporate economic and political literacy into the school curriculum, so people understand what it means to be a citizen, because that is lacking in the New Zealand system today... At the moment we are about to go into elections. Many people don’t know how to vote, they don’t know what voting means, they don’t participate, and it suits the government having people not participating, because then they stay in power. Increasingly over the years more people are not bothering to vote, so there is less and less democracy or rule by the people being actually seen. So at the moment I think we are more focussed on national issues, trying to educate people on what it is to be a citizen in the own country.

TT: If you think of your own engagement – you mentioned this involvement with movements on the one side, and also party politics on the other side – do you see a complementary role there, or is there an inherent tension between getting involved with formal politics and at the same time mobilising in the streets and the communities?

AG: It's fascinating in New Zealand at the moment, because I belong to a party called the Mana Movement. It’s considered a political party for election purposes within New Zealand, but really it’s a movement of people that includes those who stand for parliament, but also in between elections are active in communities and on the streets raising awareness about real issues like feeding the 285,000 children that live in poverty in New Zealand. So MANA members encourage people and also pressure the government to make policies that feed children in schools by providing lunch and breakfast, because we know that you can’t learn unless you are fed. The government has over the last six years been forced through constant pressure been forced to make those changes. That pressure from outside has been from the Mana Movement and other socialist organisations and individuals concerned about child poverty in New Zealand. We have one Mana Movement politician in the house. He is a long-standing and, well-known activist - Hone Harawira. At the moment we are going through a rather interesting election process, because we have a person called Kim Dotcom, who’s from Germany. He arrived in New Zealand, and was allowed residency by the government, because they allow wealthy millionaires to buy their way into the country. Stories have emerged about arrangements being made to extradite him to the USA to face copyright charges, but so far he has won every case and is still here. Many New Zealanders have supported him. In a spirit of reciprocity he funded the setting up of a party called the Internet Party. It's made up of youth, with the leader being about 44 years old. They are very switched on regarding the Internet, how it works, how to create new businesses etc.

Mana, representing marginalised people, the movers, shakers, activists and others who have been to prison fighting for rights and transparency, has formed an alliance with this Internet Party founded by Kim. Together we can make a difference. It's a very interesting and exciting development in New Zealand politics at the moment. The Mana Movement is raising awareness and winning support amongst the youth, (who are the majority in our
country). We are encouraging them to actually get enrolled, get out and vote and take back the country. It’s a phenomenal thing. It has certainly got people excited for the first time in a long time. And so it will be interesting to watch all the socialists, the Maori activists and the Internet party, young people, and not so young joining together in solidarity to actually go in there and basically change this government. Because we are not getting the change that we need. We want free education for our youth instead of trapping them in debt, so they can use the ideas and the innovation in their minds to actually build a better life and a better place. It’s fascinating where we have moved in terms of politics. I am uncomfortable standing for parliament, as I am sure other activists are. Hone Harawira has now been there for 9 years. He’s first an activist. He’s the only politician who has ever been arrested for standing in front of houses so people weren’t made homeless. We need to somehow risk taking the power; we need to take it using people power and in our case this year using the ballot. So people are standing for parliament, in a very fascinating New Zealand election.

TT: Very interesting. I heard about this Kim Dotcom person, but I didn’t know that he is now funding good causes!

AG: It’s interesting because the wealthy brought him here, but then they told lies about him, which resulted in his arrest on trumped up charges, so he challenged them, and when he set up another business within a very short time he made another 200 Million in this new business, and created employment for about 50 or 60 people. He’s an entrepreneur, he’s intelligent and he managed actually to travel throughout New Zealand and get people to listen and think about their futures. So a lot of people are actually very intrigued. It’s fascinating to see the very wealthy being afraid of another wealthy person backing the poor. It’s an interesting development.

TT: What do you see as obstacles and pitfalls in the establishment of a global citizens movement? Like you talked about the 99% connecting globally – why is this not happening yet?

AG: There is a lack of knowledge that it is possible. How could it actually work? How would it be organised? Given the fact that there is no civic education currently available in our schools. People learn from experiences that happen to them rather than from going to school. From the age of 5 or 6 children should be learning about their place, rights and responsibilities. There is really a lack of knowledge because it is not in the school curriculum. There are a diversity of cultures, such as indigenous peoples who are often the most incarcerated, unemployed, discriminated people around, in our land anyway and in America and Canada and Australia. Because of these sorts of issues we can’t engage fully globally. We are busy trying to survive in our own lands. The support of the local people is needed before you can engage a nation in a global movement. You need to actually wake up the local to understand the connections between us, that we are global citizens, that we all, in our situations, are struggling to survive in our own lands and struggling to hold on to what we have. At the moment, 70% of our waterways are so polluted we cannot swim in them – This is the clean, green New Zealand!

So we are busy trying to deal with local issues, and focussing on that, rather then further outside. It’s about having the time to contemplate a global citizens movement, getting together and setting some guidelines (from the people) about how it should work, and identifying the people that could actually lead that. People who have been successfully leading movements locally perhaps. People who have a broader view of the world, who have travelled the world seen other places and other movements, and connecting them all together.
TT: So you see mainly education, or civic consciousness as a missing brick, first at a local level, in order to achieve this globally?

AG: I think so. Our children here don’t really look at theorists, like Foucault and all these people who understand things about power, we don’t see that until university students at the age of about 18. Understanding and applying theories should be coming a lot earlier - in New Zealand' education system anyway, so students can critically think about these issues as they are growing up. So by the time they are adults and about to vote, they are sort of global citizens who have a broader outlook on the world, and understand why things happen.

TT: You have been a teacher as well. How do you see the potential of popular education or global learning in the facilitation of a global citizens movement, and how does education need to evolve in order to assume this role?

AG: Each nation state needs to initiate programs themselves in their education system. They need to encourage people to see the world as your oyster. We are increasingly very close together. It shouldn’t be a problem for people to get together as a citizens movement. We should be teaching people to think critically about issues of power and other types of concepts that they will come up against as adults, and their place in the world. We should be doing that a lot earlier than we are. And by doing it the development would become normalised – the idea that we are global citizens of the world would become normal. On the other side, the stuff that we see here is probably a one world order, which is again something people have absolutely rallied against, and that's because it has been imposed from a corporate world view rather then a citizens perspective. It’s interesting to look at the change of emphasis and focus that citizens take back the world, and have a real say about what happens to this planet that we are occupying.

TT: Coming from a, in terms of global discourse, rather peripheral island state like New Zealand – do people link up very much with this island identity?

AG: There are two different things: One, the Maori people of New Zealand, who see themselves as very much a part of the Pacific, which is a sea of islands, which is in a vast expanse of Marine space. It is not that we need a landmass to tell us that we come from a huge space, that we explore amongst ourselves, and that’s great. So we don’t see the barriers or boundaries, but see the sea as a small global space, that is now being discovered for exploitation of mineral wealth and oil – the last drop of the world’s oil will be out of the Pacific! But there are probably two sorts of schools of thought. We were colonised by the British, so we belong to the British Commonwealth of Nations. We actually compete in the Commonwealth Games and we play Rugby with South Africa and Australia… so these global connections are there in sport,. While successive governments have seen New Zealand as a western nation, Maori people are related to the peoples of the Pacific, and actually recognise those connections. So we have two views, and they do clash often, in terms of how we use our environment, our space, our rights and everything else. New Zealand as a nation has a bi-cultural foundation based on a treaty signed between the British Crown and chiefs representing Maori tribes. Maori people, who are the people of the land, are still pushing for the fact that this is our country and we deserve to be recognised in it. I guess that's the same in Canada, US or Australia who were all colonised by Britain, and are still facing the same struggle of being recognised in their own space. I don’t think that we have the luxury to push for a global citizens movement while these matters remain unresolved. . There is the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which is something a lot of indigenous nations looked to for rights to be recognised by governments. That is an important piece of legislation, but the implementation of it is very slow. That may influence
how we see a global citizens movement. We do trade globally, and we join in with other indigenous peoples. We did that for this particular UN Declaration.

TT: Thank you very much. Is there anything you would like to add to our conversation?

AG: The fact that a global citizens movement is probably useful for us at the moment. We are a country that belongs to the “Five Eyes” spy program. It’s run by the US, and increasingly we are under surveillance by our government here. I guess they fear the loss of power, and so one of the things our elections will decide is who’s going to be in government. If the Internet party, the MANA Movement and other opposition manage to oust the government on the 20th September, then we are hoping to throw that spy program out of our country, and to make a few other changes that are going to be beneficial to people locally. Surveillance that happens here actually is used against citizens. The drone attacks that are happening overseas – information comes out of our own spy networks. That’s a huge issue here that I think globally citizens around the world should be concerned about and should consider mobilising to come together to protect ourselves and our rights. We hope that change in our government will lead to one that cares about people in poverty and that manages close the gaps that have been created by the wealthy corporations who are faceless and who have basically taken over many assets in the last 30 years in New Zealand. There’s a lot of work to do, but I think it’s fascinating what is happening in New Zealand. You can work on the streets as well as within the halls of parliament, but you can’t dismantle a system using the tools of the master. So we are trying to be more innovative.
Bayo Akomolafe agreed non-anonymous use of the interview.

TT: Could you please present yourself briefly with your name, age, occupation and causes you are involved in, or your activist profile if you would like to call it like this, what are the things you are working for in life?

BA: My name is Dr. Adebayo Akomolafe, I'm 30 years old and I am a lecturer, a clinical psychologist, working in the department of psychology in Covenant University in Nigeria. My work and passion is closely tied to what I explored in my doctorate research, which is indigenous healing systems. As a clinical psychologist I was trained in a particular way in orthodox traditional systems, ways of healing that were important in the West, so to speak. For my doctorate work, I decided to explore local indigenous ways we heal each other, local indigenous ways we understand mental illness, and local indigenous ways we think of recovery. And what I discovered is that there is so much that has been buried under the paradigm of correctness, under the paradigm of Eurocentrism. We need to start claiming indigenous systems once again. So that work inspired me to explore new frontiers in thinking about economy, about modern civilisation, about money and health, and ecosystems, climate change. What are these today, and what are new ways to ask new questions about the world, and the way the world works. If I would speak about an activist profile, I would probably say that I've been doing a lot of international speaking, raising awareness about new stories that have been buried under the paradigms that are exploiting the world today, and the need for new systems of thinking, new paradigms, new platforms upon which we can generate new ways of life.

TT: You have participated and contributed with a central keynote speech, which set the tone in a way, to this conference “Building a global citizens movement” in Johannesburg last November. What motivates you to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement? Why did you accept this assignment, and in more general terms, what is the appealing thing of a global citizens movement for you?

BA: I think I was really excited to get that invitation, because it’s credibly clear now to most people, experts, even in the field in traditional institutions, big corporations, it is becoming increasingly clear that we cannot continue the business as usual approach to the world. We cannot continue the ways we have been running the world so to speak. There is this talk about the Anthropocene, which is a term in geology, which refers to an age of man, that is signified by increasing levels of activity on the planet. We’ve become something of a bacterial species, and our fingerprints are everywhere. The planet is dying, and there is a need to reform or rethink, or out-think the ways we’ve been thinking about the world and our relations to it. So when I got the invitation, and got to learn about the concept of a global citizens movement, it tied beautifully with what I think is today’s most pressing imperative - which is to turn to each other. Today’s crisis, from the perspective of persons like Charles Eisenstein, who believes that the story of separation, or the myth of scarcity, - someone else might call it the idea of dualism - has really made a very, very critical mark in the ways that we learn to see each other, learn to see ourselves, learn to see the world. We now live in a modern civilisation that believes, or that forces and compels us to believe, that we are isolated, consumptive units of a global rational machine, and our job is to go to school, go to the shopping mall, and do stuff, and buy stuff and don’t question anything. And that’s how
we’ve been living our lives. Except that that story does not work out anymore. Because we now understand that we can no longer see ourselves as separate. And not only because the world is dying, but because there are now advances in science that are showing us that we are interconnected. And that the idea that we are separate is an illusion. So the idea of a global citizens movement lies in beautifully with today’s needs to bring people together, to address the critical impasses of modern civilisation. There is need for people to turn to each other again, to start to re-engineer the expectations on what it means to be human, to return to what we’ve once objectified as nature, or as natural resource. And to reclaim our space, our humble space in the circle of life, which our modern civilisation absolutely denies. So the idea of a global citizens movement is contested, yes. Many people have different ideas on what it could mean, how it could run, what it’s suggests, and what kind of work such a movement would do. But I feel there is the seed of an idea, which is that we cannot perpetuate the same paradigms that pushed us into these problems. We need to start talking to each other again. We need to have new conversations about what it means to be human. We need to turn to each other. And we need to heal the metabolic rift, that is separating us from each other, that is separating us from our children, separating us from the present, separating us from nature, separating us from the vast possibilities that are waiting for us.

TT: You have already mentioned a lot of elements, which constitute as seeds or in an emerging way a global citizens movement. How would you define a global citizens movement?

BA: I’m not the one for easy or convenient definitions, but thinking about a global citizens movement evokes a biological metaphor that I quite like. There is something called “imaginal cells”. I don’t quite have the terms right, but biologists tell us that when a caterpillar wants to turn into a butterfly, it wraps a cocoon around itself, and technically speaking actually dissolves. It dissolves into that cocoon and becomes a kind of soupy organism. Now what makes it into the beautiful butterfly that breaks out of the cocoon is a community of cells that are called the imaginal cells. And the imaginal cells come together to tell a new story. A new story that becomes the butterfly. So thinking about the global citizens movement evokes those memories, those pictures, those metaphors for me. It’s the reconstituting of human agency around pressing needs of today. It’s the galvanising of different voices. The reclamation of human space. Or our humble affinity with nature and with all the universe. That’s one way I could put it. But a much more technical way to define a global citizens movement is a political response to the deep problems that modern civilisations present us with. That’s one way I could define it.

TT: There are different elements that are mentioned regularly by different people when it comes to a global citizens movement, like the horizontal connection of citizens or people at a global scale, but there is also the vertical dimension of organisation, like how a global citizens movement has to organise. This organisational aspect is something do didn’t mention. Should the global citizens movement be organised, should it be self-organised, or should it be un-organised? And then the third element is the relation to nature. It’s not only about humans, it’s also about relating to the planet in a way.

BA: I understand the need for persons to think of the global citizens movement in terms of a gigantic organisation with a central website and things like that, but sometimes I think that this is an industrial hangover. We like to think that change is happening only when it is organised hierarchically, when it’s organised vertically, when there is a top-down institution that controls the outcomes. But I feel that one of the aspect that we may not be pressing in the conversations today, into the discourse today, or we may not be emphasising it enough is the fact that it challenges the normative theory of change. I was at Johannesburg recently,
and I remember speaking with someone from UNESCO, and he said something that struck me. He said that we are now in the age of improvisation. We need to change the theories of change, the idea that change can only happen when giant corporations or big spenders or big funding or memos are part of the equations. We need to change that paradigm. We need to start looking at artists, mystics, people at the fringes, cultural hackers, poets, people who probably may not appeal to the centre, because its actually at the edges that change happens. There is an aspect of the global citizens movement that definitely ties into the quest to create central organising agencies that can do some good work. Say, I think that’s part of the equation. We cannot rule that out. But I think that there’s a much more lively, festive idea behind the notion of a global citizens movement. We need festive, radical bottom up… maybe I should rephrase that: Not bottom up, but bottom-wide. It doesn’t go from the bottom to the top, it’s not a linear relationship, it’s spreading new networks of information, creating new knowledge, and emphasising the fact that the new social actors are not big corporations but ordinary people like you and I. So the most powerful, the most potent prospect or potential for a global citizens movement in my view is a radical bottom-wide think-present social actors base that changes or shifts attention away from giant corporations and profit mechanisms to people, ordinary people, who in work in local spaces to rejuvenate the ways of life and connect the people again.

TT: Do you think a global citizens movement is useful or necessary for the causes you are involved in?

BA: If you think of the global citizens movement as an organisation, as another central top-down organisation, than there is probably some use, but I think the influence is going to be largely negative, in the sense that it actually hampers what can emerge at this time. And what could emerge in terms of people acting up from their own small spaces, and then connecting with other people and sharing their wisdoms. To add a little texture to what I’ve been talking about: There’s a quote about the emerging of industrialisation and capitalism. Most people have the idea that a group of Caucasian men met in a single room one day and decided: Let’s come up with this thing called a capitalist system, and then they planned every aspect of the capitalist system, the financial systems, the money matrix, the global finance, they planned everything. But it doesn’t actually work that way. It didn’t work that way either. The capitalist system is multi dimensional, it is not monotonous, it is not a single system. It’s cascading layers of many systems interacting with each other. We simply gave it the name capitalism. In the same way I don’t think that our response to the crisis of today can be monotonous or singular or come from a singular organisation or a single set of objectives. The Occupy Wall Street movement is a good example of the kind of ambiguity we are facing today. Most people would criticise Occupy Wall Street by saying: Hey, they don’t have any set of demands. Where is the list of demands, what are the objectives, who is the leader? But that’s the kind of emergence that is happening today. People are moving away from those traditional notions of organisation or social coherence, and moving beyond those leadership systems. Everyone is becoming a guru, and that’s the amazing thing today. I would say that a global citizens movement would be useful if it valorises, if it speaks to the heart of the need today, for people to emerge and probably emerge outside institutions, outside hegemonic systems, outside the normal leadership dynamics of following a leader and having goals and outcomes and measurable statistics and stuff like that. Yes, in that way it is useful for the things I’m doing.

TT: If you think more locally, and you insisted also on the local circles, locality of citizenship and people, if you think of your particular country or region, for example Nigeria, what are the
implications for a global citizens movement in this particular geographic or regional context? Is it something meaningful? People refer to it, or even are aware of a possible connection?

BA: I think the language that you and I privilege as a convenient notion, and it has the benefit of giving us some kind of platform on what we can raise new conversations and attract people to our circle – the idea of a global citizens movement I think is largely missing in my context here in Nigeria. The language is not popular. But that doesn’t mean the disenchantment is not present as well. I could refer to the Chibok girls. You definitely have heard of the Chibok girls crisis and what people are facing in the country today. If you would walk on the streets of Lagos or anywhere in the country, most probably if you meet any person in Nigeria, except in Chibok or the parents of the girls themselves, it’s not alarming anymore. The most alarming thing about this crisis with the girls is that it’s no longer alarming with Nigerians. We are taking it as: They are there, it’s normal. It’s a pity, we pray for them to return, but there is nothing really we can do. And that is the cynicism, the deep disenchantment and the wounds we suffered in giving our hopes to traditional systems of change and the normal institutions that most people would give power to. The nation state of Nigeria is crumbling. The leaders are no longer able to provide answers to the people. The senators are just there, the house of representatives do not actually represent the people they are supposed to represent. So in some small measure people are rising, and emerging to challenge the system, or challenge the inaptitude of these systems, not the systems themselves. Most people still think of the world in terms of: We need nation states, we need higher education institutions, we need fiat currency, there is no way we can do without them. They are beginning to see that we cannot continue with the same systems. So we have beautiful groups that are emerging, that are challenging the inaptitude of the systems. I think that’s a good step forward in the right direction, in a direction I would like to see. So groups are coming up, challenging these systems, we have young people gathering in the national stadiums in Nigeria and calling for new kinds of leadership and using the internet in beautiful ways, and connecting with Twitter and Facebook and talking about the things that Nigeria could be. And I think it’s a beautiful thing that is unfolding. However, I think that because it’s too framed in the language of the status quo, there will be some disappointment. There is a need for us to take it away from the status quo and begin to engage each other in new ways, ways that totally sidestep the status quo. Ways that attempt to side step the status quo.

The global citizens movement gives us a new hope. The implications for such a movement in all its glorious potency is a new way of reframing the questions that we have long sought answers for: How do we live our lives? The status quo answer is: Look to the government. If you ask someone in the street in Nigeria: What can we do about these bad roads? They say: Blame the government! What do we do about this? Blame the government! Everything is on the government. We’ve kind of disempowered ourselves and then constituted all the power in this central agency called the government. But the implications of a global citizens movement are so profound that if we were to settle it in its glorious form in Nigeria and in countries across Africa like Nigeria, I believe that we would see a real shift, a total transformational shift in the way we frame the questions and the possibilities that have been denied us. So in short, the implications are profound. The global citizens movement represents a need for us to shift from central agencies to heterodox agencies, to many people working together.

TT: Let me just insist one second on this point. This disenchantment with the ruling political system, what is called democracy or elections, that’s something that we can observe widely, and in Europe for example with the recent parliament elections. We have there a rise in what is called populist parties. They have often a racist or chauvinist connotation, but the language they use is very close to the left language as well, like critique of the system, critique of
globalisation, critique of the ruling class, re-empowerment the citizens and so on. But obviously it’s very national or nationalistic. In the context of this disillusionment, that the system is not delivering to the people anymore, to which extent does this imply then a kind of global citizenry? Because you can be against the system and be nationalistic, or chauvinistic, or racist, or against the outer world at the same time...

BA: The difference between a populist movement, or populist agenda, and what is emerging right now has no name. We call it a global citizens movement. Other people call it a shift, or an awakening, there are many ways to call it. The difference between a populist type party, or political organisation, and this is that the agenda is different. The agenda for a populist party is nationalistic basically. To install people who are deemed people friendly into positions of power. But what is critical about a global citizens movement is that the agenda is totally outside the conversation, outside the realm of nation states and parties. It’s about people. For once in the history of modern civilisation, we are beginning to shift the conversation from governments and corporations to the people themselves: The agenda is you and me, it’s our grandmothers, it’s our small children.

TT: So such human centred citizens movement has an essentially global dimension?

BA: When you look at the history of the nation states, and how they feed into the dynamics of big money, you might understand why people begin to think of a planetary movement, something that doesn’t touch on borders or political zones. It sticks to something much more vibrant than borders or zones or tribes or stuff like that. So people are beginning to see themselves as a planetary species, and I think it’s a very compelling position. I’ve tried to point out the shadows of thinking that way, but I think it’s a very compelling stance to take. All the problems and the crisis of the Anthropocene we are facing today around the world is bringing us together, making us a bit smaller, and making us realise that we cannot from our little boxes, our little state boxes, continue to address questions, issues and challenges, that are basically planetary, and basically existential. The failure of traditional systems of traditional responses – I think the Copenhagen convention, the climate change conferences are a very good point to make about the failure of the status quo. The MDG programmes, and how they almost promised a utopia, and the way the UN is looking into Post-2105 dynamics right now, it just shows that we have run out of answers. Probably it is not because the questions are too hard, but because we ask the wrong questions. A global citizens movement is the opportunity to ask new questions, totally new questions.

TT: What do you see as obstacles or pitfalls in the establishment of a global citizens movement?

BA: Ironically, I think the greatest obstacle in the establishment of a global citizens movement from my perspective, is the idea of an establishment, is the notion that we need to build something. Let me refer to the story in Genesis, in the Bible, the story of Nimrod who was a great warrior in old Judaic myth. He challenged the gods, and he decided that he needed to save mankind from an impending flood. The flood had just taken place, and they needed to reconstitute themselves, and they said: We have a single language, let’s build the tower of Babel. And they built this tower of Babel, and the gods were displeased with this and they came down and they scattered the people. I think in a sense against the literal and metaphorical floods of crisis that we are facing in recent times, and not so recent times, we are beginning to see that we cannot stay in our houses any longer, and we need to come together. The issue is not that we need to build a new tower of Babel, because that’s like perpetuating the same tyranny that we are trying to exit from. I think the greatest challenges for a global citizens movement, a beautiful citizens movement, powered by people, ordinary people, is the idea that is doesn’t exist already. One of the greatest realisations we can make
today is that a global citizens movement – probably not in that name – already exists. It is already there. People are connecting with each other. The greatest imperative today is not to form an organisation, is not to form a set of objectives that everyone can agree with. That’s just institutionalising the responses, or the possibilities. The greatest opportunity today is to make space for plurality of responses to emerge. Even though these responses are contradictory. Most times institutional imperatives motivate us to come up with single answers, harmonious responses and outcomes that everyone can agree with. And that’s the shadow side of organisations, however advantageous an organisation might be. But a global citizens movement allows us to side step those imperatives. We are already acting in beautiful ways. The challenge of today is not to build an organisation, or to install a new leader of the people, it’s to bring people to each other, it’s to tell the stories of people how are already connecting with each other, and to create a space for people to continue to exist, from a dying system, a system that can no longer address our needs. That’s the critical challenge.

TT: How do you see the potential of development education as we call it here in Europe, or global learning or popular education if you like, in the facilitation of a global citizens movement, and how does development education or global learning need to evolve in order to assume this role?

BA: I think it’s already evolving. I just spoke a while back about being back in Johannesburg, I was supposed to give another keynote as well, to speak about the future of Africa. And I was to meet with futurist, people who are experts on trend analysis and scenario planning and all that, but I was really surprised to meet a bunch of people who no longer believe in the future. Who are challenging the premises of civilisation, who are challenging the assumption of progress. So I feel there is a shift that is already happening, and it’s already an evolution in the kinds of meetings that we are having. But I think what can be amplified, what can be emphasised is workshops or outreaches that are not designed to tell people what to do, but are designed to listen to people, and listen to how they are doing what they want to do. We need to reverse the trend. In Nigeria any time when a top leader comes into the country, we celebrate it, we through hands up in the air and we say: Great! We do that all the time. And we always expect that these people come into the country, foreigners come into the country, to tell us what to do, to tell us how to solve our problems. And this is the critical challenge of today. To realise that our own problems are our own problems, and we can address them by asking new questions all together. We have the resources with us, and I’m not talking about the natural resources, or the way we think about human resources. We have the gifts, we have the tools, we have the stories, we have the means to create worlds that work for us. I’m not to fund of the term of development because of its baggage, but I think that development education can shift today from a paradigm of telling to a paradigm of listening. So that it’s much more about going to people and learning about how they respond to the crisis of today, or even what the crisis of today are. So I think in a nutshell development education needs to shift paradigm. We need to start emphasising how people are doing their work, how people are addressing their own critical problems, and we really need to change the text books, move any from this unilateral, linear approach to learning and learn from plural means, learn from indigenous traditions how these traditions gift us with different ways of framing our life. I would be pleased to be part of anything that has that as part of its design or its DNA.

TT: Is there anything you would like to add to what you have been explaining?

BA: I think I’m really excited about this conversation that we’ve had and the series of conversations that we’ve been having, and that these conversations are not just restricted to Tobias and Bayo, or a group of people who gather yearly at Johannesburg or wherever we
gather, but the conversation is spreading, and people are beginning to realise we cannot continue in the way we have, we cannot solve the problems we have with the same kind of thinking mentality that created them in the first place – quoting Einstein here. And that is the magic of these moments, that we can reconstitute our life. I was speaking with a professor today, who read the speech “The World Alethea Dreamed of”, the keynote from Johannesburg, and he was really blown away by it. He called me – I never met him before – and he asked me how did you get involved with these consciousness movements - that’s what he calls them - what’s your take on them? And I brought in the interpretation from quantum physics, and I told him how science tells us that the world is interconnected and everything is one, so to speak – I know it has a lot of new age connotation to it, but it has a lot of potency as well. And I told him about quantum physics and stuff like that, and he was really blown away. I really like to share this with everyone possible: The world is not as we think it to be. Not because it’s any different, but because we have constituted it in a particular way, and we have the liberty to reconstitute it, to retell our stories. That’s my final thought.
Gustavo Marin
27 June 2014
APPROVED BY EMAIL ON 2 JULY 2014

Gustavo Marin agreed non-anonymous use of the interview.

TT: Could you please present yourself, your name, your age if you like, your occupation and also your activism and causes which you have been connected to in your life so far?

GM: There is a Wikipedia presentation [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustavo_Mar%C3%ADn] is sent to you last year. In my opinion this is the best summary of my background, because in just one page, starting in the 60ties until today. So it's a very simple way – you just pick from the Wikipedia page all that is important for you. Because otherwise it could be too long! The very starting point of my social, political activity was when I was 16 or 17 years old – this means 50 years from now. But it was very important in my life when I decided to stop my studies at the university in Chile and move to the South to live with the Mapuche people and to fight for land and for justice. And that was the beginning of the story. I will be 65 years old next year, so maybe it's time for me to change my life, because a new period of my life will start as I will retire. It's a transition situation for me, this year and the next one. I'm going to change my professional status and I have to see what will happen. But in anyway, the Forum for a New World Governance, where I am working now will continue, because it's a global network of people all over the world, working in a very flexible and horizontal way. So we will continue to work on this question of global governance, social movements, geopolitical opportunities for social movement and civil society and for society as a whole to face the challenge of the world today.

TT: Maybe you can just say a word on the Forum for the new World Governance? You are currently director of it?

GM: Yes, I'm currently director, but in fact it is a network of people, in a very flexible manner. Because it depends of the project we have to do. For instance, last year we wrote a dictionary. The title is “Dictionary of the World Power”. So we were eight people working on that. We had to write the definition of each word. There are 110 words. We were eight, one in the United States, one in Argentina, in France, in Chile, in China, in the Netherlands and in Palestine. We wrote that, we shared the paper, then we found a publisher and then we disseminated it in Latin American newspapers for instance. That's the kind of work we do. We do also what we call the proposal paper series. We identify a network, or a group, or a person, who knows very well a certain issue, and we ask him or her to write a paper, and then we organise seminars with him or with her, and then we publish it in several languages, in English, French, Spanish, Chinese, sometimes in Arabic… We work mostly on the level of ideas and proposals. But each one of us is deeply involved and engaged in some local, nationally oriented networks, where we disseminate the ideas and papers we write.

TT: You have participated in this conference in Johannesburg “Building a global citizens movement”. What motivated you to engage with the conference, but also more in general terms to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement?

GM: The question of building a global citizens movement, I would say for people working on global governances and engaged in social movements in local, national or international level like me – I was part of the World Social Forum process from the very beginning – the question of building a global citizens movement, or a world citizens movement is a very important issue, it is a every day question I would say. In the Forum for a New World Governance we have written a proposal paper on a World Social Movement, too. One of our
team members wrote a paper on that – he was in Johannesburg, too – Jean Rossiaud. He asked us to work on that, so we wrote this proposal paper related to historical processes in this period of history of building a global movement. When I knew by Nicolas Krausz that Johannesburg was on the road I said I would like to go there of course! Because I saw there were people from different parts of the world working on mostly the same issues. Especially after 2007, when I was at the international council of the World Social Forum, I realised that the World Social Forum was not able to move beyond the World Social Forum methodology and structure. And after the crisis of 2008, how to build a world social movement had become a very important issue. I think we don’t know really well how to do it, and what will happen in the next years. So we have to be very curious to share and to reflect with other partners in the world. That’s why Johannesburg was a good opportunity for me.

TT: From your experience and perspective – and you insist that this is a very important element – how would you define a world citizen’s movement?

GM: In fact, there is no global citizens movement in the world today. You can define it in a theoretical way, what it should be. The problem we have is that there is no world citizen’s movement in the world today. We all know that there are a lot of initiatives, more or less regional, more or less global, more or less on different issues, but the problem is that we don’t know how to crystalize it, we don’t know what will be the shape of a global citizens movement. It’s a bottleneck in theory and in history. We are living in a period of globalisation, and there is a need to invent and implement new global structures for global governance. You can say that we need a global citizens movement. At the same time you can say that, even if we live in a globalisation period of history, a global citizens movement is very difficult to implement, and maybe it won’t be! There will be several groups or movements on the world, and we don’t know how this global movement will be able to change the history. Maybe they won’t be able! They will just we separated and the globalisation system we are living in today, which is a capitalism with different faces and different political and economic structures and systems in different parts of the world I would say – the capitalism in China is different from the capitalism in USA, or in France, or in Chile, everywhere… I think even if this capitalism will change one day, I don’t know when, maybe in one or two centuries, we don’t know if a global movement will be able to change this capitalism. There will be different causes, different elements, different processes that will change the system today, and we don’t know when and how and if a global movement will change it. In history, in my opinion, the social movements are important, but they don’t change only by themselves the political and historical system. They are part of it, but they don’t change it only by themselves.

TT: So you say a global citizens movement does not exist today. If you describe it more from an aspirational angle – how would you ideally like to see it? How should it look like?

GM: Ideally, one and only one global citizens movement, with diversity and unity, with horizontal and organic way of acting, is what we need. At the same time you can say: This is just an idea. It won’t be possible in the historical context of the world today, and maybe in the next decade. You can very easily imagine one world citizen’s movement. You can even write and design and draw the principles and the structure and the organisation of it. And you can say it should be able to share diversity and unity, be responsible, plural, multi lingual, all over the world and so on. But maybe it’s just a dream.

TT: But you see it as an organisation, or rather as something more organic, a network and place for identification?

GM: It should be, from an idealistic point of view, at the same time a network, but with a kind of organisation, but we don’t know how. Because all the movements and social structures,
you have always the both sides of the coin. From one side you have to have diversity, horizontality, networking and so on, but at the same time you need a kind of international organisation. But we don’t know which one. Because the only – and it was not all over the world – the only experience we had as an attempt to organise the trade union movement, and especially the workers movement at a political level, was the attempt launched by Marx and Engels, when they wrote the manifest of the communist party, and then it was taken up by Lenin, and from one side by Stalin, from the other side by Trotsky, and then Mao. They wanted to organise a global citizens movement led by the communist party, and they coordinated all the communist parties in the world. But we know what happened with it: That kind of organisation, even if it was extremely strong, the failure of this experience was extremely strong, too, and it was extremely dangerous for society and history of humanity. So we know that that kind of organisation, very organic, with a clear vision and ideology and structure is extremely dangerous and it won’t work. So we say now we should avoid this kind of authoritarian vision of a global movement. People say we should keep in a horizontal way, sharing experiences, global vision, global values, but not be organised because the world has changed and so on and so forth. But at the same time we don’t know what kind of organisation a world citizen’s movement should have in the world today. Because a kind of global organisation is needed. Of course it has to be not authoritarian as the communist international was. But we don’t know how.

TT: I understand the main cause you are involved in through your work in particular is reflecting on the world governance question, and you insisted a lot that a global citizens movement will be necessary for moving in that direction. Why is it necessary of useful to establish a system of world governance how you image it?

GM: Because of the level where things matter, because we are living in a period of globalisation. Everything is connected. Every country, every state, every movement, every part of the economy is connected in the world today at a global level, in a very complex system. Always talking not in singular, but in plural. Maybe that is different from the world we were living in until now. Let’s say from in an empire like the Chinese dynasties, the world was not global, it was just about a part of the world. Whereas today the challenges and the threads are global, especially the social, political and ecological problems. So the important level is not local, it’s global. So you need to act at a global level. We all now know we have to go beyond the boundaries of states or companies, even the big corporations know they have to work on a global level. From the side of the social movements, people realise that the world level is the relevant one. But as we are still living in a world ruled by the notion of a state and the coordination of the state, we will not invent the new institutions able to go beyond the state, and, at the political level, the political parties. As far as we are not able to invent new institutions beyond the states and the political parties, we will remain in a vision of the world which is not adapted to the level which is the relevant one, the global, the world wide level. It is more or less like when Albert Einstein wrote a paper on the relativity theory. At that time, at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, physicians had a vision of what was physics and relation of time and space, and they thought that the world was surrounded by aether. They realised that something was not exactly that way, that physics and the way time and space were organised was not that way, but they looked for it, they organised seminars. Einstein was only 25 years old when a friend at this seminar that was held in Switzerland, one of them was a director of a scientific magazine, and he asked Einstein to write an article for his magazine. And Einstein wrote several, four or five, and he didn’t even realise that in the fourth one he wrote the equation E=mc². A friend of him from Britain, when he met him in another seminar, said: Great, you found it! And Einstein said: “What?” – “The key! You opened the window to go beyond aether, you opened the way to
quantum physics and you were able to see what happens.” It’s the same what happened to Galileo Galilei in the 15th century. We are living in a period of history where we know that we are still in a world as it has to be seen, but we don’t have the glasses to see the new one. And we are looking for these glasses, we organise seminars and conferences, and write papers and articles, and you will write your dissertation, which will be very important, and maybe in your dissertation you will find the key – who knows!

TT: Well, this would be an interesting surprise, but you never know as you say!

GM: Maybe we have already written it, maybe we have already found the key. But maybe there will be several keys, and maybe we have already written part of it, but we still don’t know… The period of the World Social Forum is very interesting from that point of view, because it was an attempt to move beyond, but we were not able to do so.

TT: And why?

GM: Because we didn’t find the key! We had a key that we thought will open the door, but it was not the good key. I mean the methodology and the principles… Especially the methodology that is in the Porto Alegre declaration we wrote in April 2001. If you read again the Porto Alegre declaration chapter, we say that we have to open an alternative to neoliberalism, and we knew that we had to go beyond the crisis of neoliberalism. We even had foreseen the crisis of 2008 more or less. We knew we had to be ready to open an alternative model. But the methodology we implemented was a forum – the World Social Forum, which means that you organise a big conference with people from some parts of the world – not all the world, people from China or Russia almost never came to our World Social Forum, or very few of them, or from central Asia or other parts of Asia… But a lot of people gathered there, sharing experiences and organising campaigns, trying to connect on several issues. We said we should not have a final declaration, because it was impossible, we should be independent from political parties and should not allow them in the World Social Forum, we were very reluctant to have the presence of governments there. So this model, this methodology was unable to face the challenge. And little by little the sectarian practices, people from different ideologies, some from the Christian movement, some from the Trotskyist movement, tried to take the lead. And the Brazilian group was unable to take the leadership. So I would say from 2007/8/9 it was over. This methodology was unable to face the challenge to go beyond neoliberalism. And that’s why in 2008, when the new financial crisis broke out, we were aware of it, but we were not ready to take the lead. All the proposals we had discussed in our social forums, how can we implement them? How can we realise them at local, national and world levels? We were lacking this part of capacity.

TT: So you think a world citizens movement should be equipped or organise itself in order to operationalize these ideas for alternative systems?

GM: Yes, of course! It should be. That would be much better. The problem is we don’t know how! Until now I haven’t read, or I haven’t participated in a meeting or conference or in a group of people that have found the way. The last were I participated was with the WTC [The Widening Circles] group, the GTI [Great Transition Initiative] group organised by Paul Raskin from Boston. He invited me to participate in the first group, we met near San Francisco in September 2010, and we tried to launch a group there, and nothing happened! I went there with Cândido Grzybowski from Brazil. I invited Candido to attend. We tried to implement the methodology of the “widening circle”, where different circles interconnect. But there was no circle, so we couldn’t interconnect the circles. The idea was good. But unfortunately Paul asked Uchita de Zoysa to organise the group, and I don’t know what happened, but it just
stopped, and they said we are not going to keep this group and this methodology of the widening circle, so the methodology remained written in the paper, but is was not a reality.

TT: So why did it fail, this particular example?

GM: I don't know. I ask myself. I asked Michael Narberhaus because he participated in this meeting. He came to this group after, and he doesn't know either. Maybe the group was having a clear vision from an anthropological, even philosophical or theoretical point of view about the great transition, but from the local and political and social, methodological side, it was not able to connect this idea of a great transition with the social movements. They kept working in English, only with very few people. I asked them to organise regional meetings with people in different parts of the world, in different languages. Not a bottom up, but a middle up or bottom/middle up dynamics in order to spread the idea. But Paul and the others Americans didn't have the social and political experience to go beyond. In the World Social Forum I was one of the first to say the World Social Forum should go beyond. I was one of the organisers of the World Social Forum in Mumbai in 2004, and then I said let's keep moving. Ok, we went back to Porto Alegre in 2005, and I said let's go beyond! And I tried to do it in the Maghreb region, in Morocco, but we couldn't do that in 2006, because the people from the Polisario movement and from South Africa, the leader of the trade union movement from South Africa said I would not do that in Morocco, so we had to do it in Caracas, Bamako and Karachi. But I realised something was going wrong, and I left a little bit the international council. I was in touch with other members of the international council, but I realised that something was wrong at that time. Sectarian visions are very dangerous. Sectarian visions of reality, when people want to take the leadership of a movement, that is extremely difficult to face.

TT: What are the implications of a global citizens movement in local or national contexts?

GM: I was last week in a meeting with a lot of people here in France who work on the preparation of the COP21 in 2015, next year, in France. In my opinion the problem is at the level of the political system. Because in Chile, in France, the NGOs, the political parties, the networks and social movements, young people they are aware that the local issues have a local dimension, a national dimension, a regional dimension and also a world dimension. People are aware of that, especially what is related to climate change. But also what is related to social inequality, poverty and so on. People know they have to link what is the local issue with the global issue, and everything is global and local at the same time, more or less. So people organise local protests, or they defend their land or their village from what are doing for instance transnational corporations in the mines in the Andean mountains and so on. People are doing that. But the problem is at a political level, the only tool they find is political parties and elections. Where there is a democratic system, which is not the case in China or the Middle East for instance. The only tool they can find there is political parties and media. But the political parties and media are obsolete. They were important tools some years ago, or some centuries ago, but they are not the main tool to express the vision or the will of the citizens. But we don't know how to replace them, because political parties are very important. We should be very careful to say: "No more political parties!" Those who have said "Que se vayan todos!", which means "all of them out of it!". All are corrupted! You don't know how to replace them with participatory tools. You may go to a very dangerous issue. Or to a bottleneck, so you have to find a way, but we don't know where. But we think that networks are important, like Internet, Twitter and so on. It helps, but it's not enough. A network by itself is not a political tool able to face the challenge in a more consistent and permanent way. It can be very important for a global transformation, for a short transformation, for a big movement, a protest to connect people, but it's not able to go to a political level. It's very
complex. We have the same problem in Chile. We know in Chile we have to change the constitution. Because the constitution in Chile is still the one written by Pinochet. Be have to change the system of the political parties, we have to change the way the parliament works. We have to the change the way the regions of the country participate in the national level. And we know we have to go beyond the national boundaries of the state to take into account what is happening in Bolivia, in Peru, and even in the South of Chile with the Mapuche people. We know all that. But haven’t found a way. We don’t know how to change that.

TT: What about the role of what we call in Europe global learning, or global citizenship education, development education or maybe popular education as it is named in Latin American contexts. Could this have a potential in overcoming the difficulties you just outlined?

GM: Education is a very vast process. You know better than me, but I would say that popular education in Latin America was extremely important, to help not just people who went to the school or university, but to help social movements, grassroots movements, local communities to understand what’s going on, and what are the problems there. And this is important to understand what is going on. But education by itself is not the only answer. You have to take into account the structural way to organise. When you are aware of what is going on, if you are just a small farmer or factory worker, and you participate in a group in your neighbourhood on what is going on the world, or you just read an important news in a newspaper, you realise what is going on. People are aware of it. The problem is that then you don’t know how to organise yourself. So maybe you start in your neighbourhood, try to do something, or at national level, or you participate sometime in global conferences, and then – what will happen next? And the next, and how you keep moving – now we don’t know. What is happening in my opinion is what we were trying to do in the 90ies last century. We try to organise meetings at the same time as the UN agenda. We have summits parallel to the official summits. That we are doing now with the COP20 and the COP21. But then we don’t know what happens next. And with the World Social Forum we tried to have an autonomous session. But now we don’t have at the world level any autonomous session. We are just going behind the official agenda. And only related to climate change. So we are in a very bad position. We are not moving back, but we are not moving on. Education helps of course. Education is extremely important. But better education and more popular education, the way media educate people, the way the regular system educates people, like schools, is extremely important. It will help, but that’s all.

TT: You talked about these parallel counter summits, which are organised by civil society organisations. So you would suggest that this organised civil society should emancipate itself from these externally set agendas?

GM: Yes. Yes. Absolutely. It would be the first step. Otherwise we will just be at the counter summit. We have to be able organise a summit, where the governments and corporations come for a counter summit. When we reach that level, we will be strong enough to challenge at a level and with a proposal that needs to be put forward. Otherwise we will only lobby from time to time. This is what will happen in Peru and in Paris, I assume. People will come to these meetings, and some will say: Let’s try to write the best declaration, and to lobby, and to change a paragraph or two of the official declaration. And other people will say: It’s useless! Because we know that governance and corporations are unable to change. The problem is that then people might ask: What should be done? And as we don’t know either, we are just in the middle. 0-0. What we tried to do with the World Social Forum was that – an autonomous agenda. Even if it we met at the same time like Davos, we were trying to have an autonomous civil society agenda. But now we have lost that. What you did in
Johannesburg, and the next meeting you are going to organise is an attempt to have an autonomous date and place.
TT: Could you briefly present yourself – name, age, occupation and also your activist profile, what you are doing in life to make this world a better place, or trying to do so.

MB: My name is Marta Benavides. I am 70 years old, from El Salvador in Central America. I am, and have been working all my life on futurist possibilities for a world of sustainable, not sustained peace, a new world order for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. I was born and raised in that country and I am living there. My commitment is based on the education that my mum especially gave me, but my father also. They told us that we are here on earth for the enjoyment of life that education is really for having a good life. I was educated from the time I was a young girl, to know that we are here not to suffer but to be happy. And then when we see that humans are still suffering, especially in a country like El Salvador, my mom and dad always told me, especially my mum, that this is something that humans create. And that instead we have to work collectively so that everybody can enjoy life, even in spite of difficulties. The mayor purpose is the enjoyment of life that means meaningful, caring and useful existence. I’ve been taught that and that’s what I’m doing, really. I have formal, academic education, and one of my degrees in college was in science because I was thinking of becoming a doctor, so I could work with people to be healthy, but then I came to realise that medicine as it is, and being a doctor was not really about the enjoyment of life, but taking care of people who were not able for whatever reasons to be healthy. So for me it’s really that: Working on the wholeness of life, which is to me being able to live not necessarily about having a lot of things, but especially, not about having a lot of things, and being able to work and to live together with others, so we can be about purposeful living, which, again is about the enjoyment of life. Amongst other things, I am working on processes, monitoring and accompaniment of the UN. This is a major concern, this is one of the entities that has been created for the purpose of working on the principles my mum and dad thought for good and meaningful living. The UN is responding in ways that are really not big enough, in a very shallow, and narrow way, because peace is not only about no shooting, it is really about having the possibilities that one can follow one’s life without being worried about the very basic things in life. Also I am doing a lot of accompaniment for peoples movements in my country, especially rural people and peasants so that in a way together can create the kind of world and future that is needed, so we can take care of humans and the planet, now and in the future. This is not an easy thing, but it’s really what I know we got to do, and be the qualitative difference. I hope one of these days enough people will understand that and will be able to free themselves, from all the meaningless practices, from all the “Coca Cola Light” kind of living, and come to the best understanding, to know that we are part of the creation, and not the other way around. This understanding, changes one’s life 360 degrees.

TT: Concerning this biographic or occupational aspect: You are also co-chairing GCAP. What are the formal roles you have?

MB: I have always been involved in movements, people’s movements, not so much creating NGOs, but being part of movements. When I was in the US I was very much part of César Chávez, the Chicano/Mexican peasant person that led the struggles for the rights of farm workers because I, even though I was a student, I was identifying myself to the causes of the
people from my country, with the impoverished people how were are the large majority in my country, so, I decided to work with farmworkers in the USA, to learn and work with them, and learned about their issues. Walking in accompaniment to them, really helped me to understand the purpose and meaning of having a movement for justice and liberation and human fulfilment. I was also very much involved with the various ecumenical processes of the National Council of Churches, issues of economic justice, equality and peace, liberation at all levels. We don’t appreciate being called activists in our country, because it is not about just being active, we really commit to accompany to carry out transformational processes, this is a call that later on I learned from Monsignor Romero, to put it in his own words: we must be solidarious, meaning one with everybody, with the care of the planet, and we must be willing to accompany people’s movements for their rights, justice, peace. And so I put my education and my experience and my commitment to that service. Activism is not a very good word in Latin America in general. If one is called an activist, it’s usually used for someone who is not actively committed to work on something for real transformation, so it is not a very good way to refer to you. Working intentionally for social transformation is what has been my life, and I hope that I do it until the end of my life. I am now 70 years old, and I am very pleased that I made the choices I have made, and I plan now working in intercultural and intergenerational alliance of hope, and I hope we will work together on the issues we must work on, like mining, water, land, First nations’ and peasant rights, the relationship between the older and younger adults to create a sustainable world and future. This is internationalism in practice, global citizenship, and building and international movement of for Global citizenship. In co-chairing GCAP besides the usual and formal roles, it is my intention to create conditions for peoples movements to be about governing their lives, and those their nations, and the world, for sustainable practices for today and the future: the care of peoples and planet.

TT: Thank you. You have been participating in this conference a “Building a global citizens movement” in Johannesburg, even as a speaker. What motivated you, or motivates you still I hope to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement?

MB: Well, I was educated from the time I was little that live is much more than about individuality. I am the oldest of four daughters and I was taught to be caring about the family. And you know in my family my mum and dad were always very much involved in supporting people. I saw people coming for all kinds of support including health issues, or moral, social and political issues. I was taught to be very inclusive and respectful of people who have come from diverse backgrounds, and especially people who have difficult economic situations. I remember that when we were young my mum and my dad would take us for the weekend to work on a small piece of land and throughout the process of getting there, -- we had to walk there-- , we had to get up at 4:30 in the morning, we have been educated to pay attention...that is what my mum called “miramiento”, which comes from the word to look – “mirar” , to really pay attention, to see through and in depth, so that one can understand. Then at that time, 4:30 in the morning many impoverished people were already working hard. My mom would point out: Why do you think these people are not sleeping? They are working! They are making their living, so we have to respect them and not think that they are people who are irresponsible or lazy. Many times people think that people are in poverty because they are lazy, but they are in this condition because of historical situations, of inequalities, exploitation, oppression and repression. All that I was exposed to from the time I was very, very little, way before I was seven years old. And so I was taught to think that I should leave the world better than when I was born, so I could enjoy life. So to me this is a major aspect to my life and think it’s a crucial aspect. This is what I live for. This is what we understand living as a global citizen, so I can be a very good local citizen and vice versa –
The local and global always go hand in hand. Especially now as we have all the technology, and the information, yet also the financial-economic crisis, and all the crises, the food, energy, climate change, we must be about it as global citizens, and I think that education, it must prepare to be that kind of citizen, today's world demands it. That's why I was so happy to be part of that event, to figure out the practices and how to educate people for that purpose.

TT: You make a very clear connection between local citizenship and the global citizenship, and the role of education in achieving it. Maybe more concrete or in a nutshell, how do you define a global citizens movement?

MB: I think there are two things: We need a global citizens movement for the caring of life. I hear many people saying, let's to this or that, so we can save the planet – we cannot save the planet! It's what we have done up to now as humans that has put our own life in the planet in peril. We as people, and people of consciousness are the ones who are in peril. Human practices, the production and consumption practices, put in danger the life of human and other plants and animal species here on this beautiful and caring planet. So I think in order to really be about wholeness, the unity between planet and people, and people and planet, that consciousness that we must have, we have to educate in a very intentional way about this mindfulness. All that I have learned on what makes the qualitative difference here on earth, I have learned from the continuous accompaniment to peoples' movements. I know, that even though it seems very difficult, because people are kind of distracted especially because of these smart phones. that the time will come that people will come to understand what it means to have a meaningful life. Having a life that is useful and caring and meaningful. And so I think that we have all have to understand that we have to work on two aspects: On how do we create a global citizens movement that is about this, about what is really important in life, and educating people for that purpose. Even UNESCO can be very good about that if we take it seriously. You know UNESCO has had the decade of education for sustainability. Sustainability means and comes from the word sustenance that is what gives and nourishment from within. But people didn't really work on it. Sustainability they think is about sustaining, kind of holding together, like maintenance. Sustaining is different from sustainability. Sustenance is different from maintenance, because the world as it is can be sustained, maintained for a while, but that is not sustainable. The day will come that it cannot hold any longer. So we have to, as Martin Luther King said, keep the eyes on the prize, and the eyes on the prize, is doing things that really make a difference. For the self and others, because it doesn't make any sense, it doesn't give you meaning in life just to do things for your own individual need and fulfilment that is just for the moment. When one sees the life one can create together with others, that is really meaningful and it gives a lot of energy, to keep working and doing the work.

TT: So if you think of the causes or struggles or processes you are involved in, you are fighting for, you want to promote, in which sense is a global citizens movement useful or necessary for these things you are doing?

MB: Yes. Yes. It's very necessary and urgently needed. I think that a global citizens movement is about consciousness really, about the consciousness that there is only oneness, not only in the whole of the planet, but in the whole of the universe. We are one with the universe, and we have to be appreciative about that and live in that way. The work that I'm doing globally is really very much based on the work that I'm doing at home. So for example, in one of the consultation for the MDGs in our country, that we documented, in many ways, we heard the people say, and they expressed themselves, that people need to be persons. This means that people need to be present in their lives, knowing how to make
choices that make a qualitative difference in the life, as persons, but also to their families, and the community, the country. So a lot of the work that we did was part of the processes of the UN, because we work for the rights of youth so they can live a life of meaning. And we also work for peace as a mayor aspect. You know the MGDs never present about peace as key aspect, even though all aspects should work together and be resolved for the enjoyment of peace. However, in our country, because there is such violence everybody was talking about peace as they were consulted on the MDGs, we can drop everything else, but unless we are able to have peace and are able to work everyday about these things that are needed to experience real peace as real security, we can not enjoy the wholeness of life. So in these SDGs, the Sustainability Development Goals, being created right now, there is a goal on peace, as a result of peoples' insisting on that need. But peace should not be seen as merely an “aspect” for sustainability. We understand that the UN was created for the purpose of securing and guaranteeing peace.

TT: If you think of your country, El Salvador, what are the implications of a global citizens movement, in your particular country or region? You made very strongly this connection in the beginning between the local and global citizenship. What does it mean for El Salvador? Do people consider this? Is it important? Are there any implications of a global citizens movement as you defined it, for the El Salvadorian context?

MB: We are working very hard on the interrelationship of the intergenerational and intercultural alliances, working together with rural, peasant and urban people, students and non-formally educated people and universities and creating ways that we can help the people or support the people to understand how we can work together to be the solutions that we would like to see. And so all the time, it’s about understanding how the local is connected to the state, to the national, to the sub regional (because in our country being in an isthmus this mindfulness it’s very key), to the global, to avoid problems that are created by not taking care of things properly in one country or the other. For everything we are doing, always we use the principles of paying attention and seeing why this is happening and how can we do it in a way that we prevent damage instead of letting things happen. Making sure that we don’t create problems. This understanding is related to another principle, which is the one of the seventh generation. Whatever we do, we got to think it through – and that I learned from my parents too – we have to think of the implications. Not only immediate, but up to the seventh generation. And that means how do we live so we don’t create problems for the children, grand children, great grand children, and then we see how that particular situation has an impact globally. Because if we do this or that in our locality or country, we create the conditions for that to be, in other parts of the world. Then we are in the mindfulness, that therefore we also need a world at peace in a healthy environment, because we need to make sure that these realities also trickles down to the localities. Right now the UN is going through what they call the Second Dialogues. This is a process that has to do with what they call the localisation. The localisation of the MGDs and SDGs. I think they use the word localisation maybe wrongly, because localisation often means looking for something. But the UN is working on how this work on sustainability and this work on the MGDs and SDGs can really be a reality at the local level. El Salvador, because of the work we have done, has been chosen as one of the three countries where these processes are starting so the experience can be used as an example and a frame of reference for what ever else is done to localise, that is to implement at the local level. Implementation only makes sense, it must make sense at a local, y very, very local level. We are starting that work right now, and in this intergenerational, intercultural alliance we are doing it, we are working collaboratively with UNDP doing these SDGs consultations from that perspective. The understanding of how the person and the future are really interconnected, on the
mindfulness that all we do now have direct implications in the immediate and far away future. This is most important to keep in mind. Education should not be to learn how to sell your stuff to the one who pays you the most, but education is for the purpose of guiding one to evolve in one’s ways to live in a coherent way, in one’s principles, and to make choices that are more for life than for money. This does not mean that we don’t pay attention to money, but live is not about money.

TT: If you think of the difficulties, the obstacles or pitfalls in the establishment of a global citizens movement, you have been around for a while, so from your experience what are the mayor threads or obstacles to move further in that direction?

MB: When people stop paying attention, they come corrupted, and corruption is not only about money, it’s also about getting lost, not being willing to pay the price that is needed. I think that is a mayor problem. A friend told me recently that this great singer, Harry Belafonte, was saying that when he was young (he’s about 80 now), the youth were very much involved in caring and giving to the society. And now people look much more into what they can get instead of what they can give. This is a problem. There are these credit cards, they are a mayor problem, because almost anybody have them, and thus they can go and get whatever they want, especially this is a reality in industrialised nations. They are not thinking in terms of how to figure out how this impacts everybody and quality life now and in the future. All this indebtedness that they have created is a burden because later on they got to work to pay, so they prostitute themselves in order to pay. Thus this education is not about understanding, but about being able to acquire. A lot of young people are very discouraged and sad. There’s a young man in the US, who planned all year to kill people, especially women, because they look down on him. He hated blonde young women, because they were looking down on him! Where do we have these ideas from, you know that this is important. All the propaganda and the advertisement, is educating people to look and see in the wrong way. That is very concerning to me, because I don’t see people paying attention to the crises in a principled way. Do we really need all those cars? Do we really need to pay less for fuels, where we would have good transportation for everybody that is good for the environment? Education is about being able to sell one’s self.

TT: What you just described is very much related to an individual level in terms of obstacles to a global citizens movement. So you would say it’s more about individual values and attitudes, or do you also see questions of institutions or structural questions in terms of coalition building for example between different organisations? What you just described was very much related to the citizens themselves. But there is also the question of how to organise it.

MB: The problem is that it used to be that we – and I have always been in people’s movements – we started not because there was money, but because we understood that we have to come together. We had to do a lot of lobbying to reach out to people personally, to get them involved and committed. Now movements are most often defined if there is money or not to create it, or the coalitions are formed by people that have a lot of money, entities that have a lot of money, but a lot of them might come from foundations – but how do they get all their money anyway? – or from governments, that have special positions on the rights of children, the rights of nature, because of that they might go for “green economies” but we know that the green economies are depending a lot from biofuels! .. but often biofuels are used the fertile lands of non industrialized countries to grow the plantations for that purpose. There is a structural thinking that is wrong, these are structural entities and structural processes that are very faulty. You have contradictions such as the “sustainable debt”. I think the first thing is not to be on debt! I don’t want to get indebted because I don’t want to owe
my life to anybody, I want to be able to maybe do less, or take principled positions, but not being defined by a big debt that I have to pay. Now for example, especially in industrialised nations, education is so expensive, so people are going for the most expensive education, thinking that’s a way to guarantee the big and well paying job. This is a major problem. The big international organisations that have developed are basically corrupt in their principles and in their understanding, take the money and run with it they say, regardless of how the money is made by the “donors”. Then for me part of building a global civil society movement has to have the clarity that it is about taking responsibility and figuring out how to carry it, regardless of money. It doesn’t mean that we don’t go and look for money. But it cannot mean that we say: Oh, it doesn’t matter who gives it to you. I think that’s very wrong. And I see that very much in those processes, where people are not paying attention, that they become very dependent on money, and in the end they start compromising, and then they will not go as far and depths as needed.

TT: How do you see the potential of development education or global learning or popular education, as you call it in Latin American context, in the facilitation of a global citizens movement, and how does global learning need to evolve in order to assume such a role?

MB: I think the major problem is that through doing development education it becomes professionalised. Development is very much linked with money. The other day, some people in an NGO were talking about development, and I told them: what are you talking about? Development is about getting money. In my country, they talk about “developing an area”, and there they are cutting the trees, building houses, and selling them very expensively… this is ridiculous. The word development is really related to “evolving”. The Brazilians have a good way of talking about development. In Spanish it is “desarrollo”, but they talk about “desenvolvimento”, like “unwrapping”. And this is really what we have to be about. Education is about what the young people are struggling for, to have an education that is free, available to all, but is not for preparing you to sell yourself, but to prepare you to be part of a society, that is really a caring society. And that does not mean welfare, because welfare can be very negative, if it’s only to keep you in your place and so they can use you whenever they want, as cheap labour. I think that we really have to pay attention on education, and if its real education it has to be about evolving, about development, the unwrapping of the self, and the commons. To talk about development, it is to talk about being sustainable. That is, if it is not sustainable it is not development. Even like theology of liberation – Monsignor Romero and I also used to affirm, that if theology is not about liberation, it is not theology. We got to really think development through. But its important to do it seriously: How are we going to create the conditions that we bring about possibilities for people to be able to see and be about the wholeness of life at the local, personal, family levels, and then seeing themselves as part of a nation that is one that is giving support to bring out the best of the people everywhere, that is, globally too. We have to work on the highest possible denominator, instead of the lowest common denominator, and education must be a very important way to be about it.. this education has to be free of charge, for all, and it must be about values that are about the well-being of peoples and care of Mother Earth.

TT: Thank you.
Olivier Consolo agreed non-anonymous use of the interview.

TT: Please present yourself – name, age, occupation - and also like what is your activist profile, in relation to this research?

OC: Olivier Consolo, 48, former director of CONCORD from 2003 – 2013. Since recently “freelance activist”, and I would present myself as a network broker. I do believe that we need special skills to address the silos between sectors, but also the silos between levels – local to global. And that’s what I modestly believe what I can contribute.

TT: You have participated to this conference on “Building a global citizens movement”. What motivated you, or what still motivates you to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement?

OC: What motivates me is, back to my deep convictions - a kind of building block in my day-by-day life - is the feeling to belong to one single humanity with one single future on one single planet. And this is really my inspiration to think worldwide, in one humanity and one future, but I feel increasingly sceptically with the “global” approach and concept. I am very convinced of the need to build a worldwide movement, but I’m not sure that this is global as we understand it usually.

TT: So this “one humanity – one world” idea was very clearly outlined on your motivation. Now the second question you can go more in detail on your critique on the word “global” for example, because the question is: How do you define a global citizens movement, or how would you redefine it, or alternatively define it or name it if you think the name is not appropriate?

OC: I see two movements, or two initiatives, two tracks that are not meeting each other for the moment. There are, because of the history, of our postcolonial reality, some organisations, people, leaders, intellectuals, institutes and academics who started their thinking from an international perspective. This has been the first take for a global vision of the state of the world, and this is a very Northern driven, traditional kind of thinking. You look global, you think global, you want to act global and you want to build some global institutions, global policies, global governance etc. And this is a trend that is now 40 years old, and that has been the engine, the fuel of the traditional international actors today. Including some UN agencies that have been mainly set up by western countries and democracies. And on the other side you have more South based, but increasingly North and South based local movements, that try to change their local reality and that discover by their practice and praxis of the change locally, that they cannot achieve the change they aim to because of upper level blockers. So they build there in a way their international engagement – it’s not global – from the conviction and the reality that you cannot resolve everything from the local level.

But in a way, if they engage at a global level, it’s more to solve local problems, than to build a kind of global, whatever, government, governance, policies. In a way those two movements are from my perspective and experience partly right and partly wrong. Both of them are
missing something critical to really achieve changes which are relevant for the local level, and relevant for the global level.

TT: So you define basically two global citizens movements from two different motivations and two different historical evolutions. When it comes back to the term, because you were critical in the beginning toward a “global citizens movement” – how should it be called alternatively?

OC: From these first trends, which have build thinking, strategies and organisations like international NGOs, from a “global” agenda, there is in a way a projection from global actors – I think we are global actors, like multi-nationals, able to project ourselves world wide, like NGOs, some academics... By the way academics has been experimenting a kind of global dimension of the work they do for centuries because of the nature of the academic work, and the fact that it’s supposed to be universal in the academic sense of the word, so the three actors “academics”, “private multinationals” and “big INGOs” have decided in a way to propose and to create from the top a kind of global reality, institutionally, politically, conceptually, policy wise, which from my perspective does not reflect at all what is building from citizenship. Because their starting point as a strategy is to see the world as a big market, or the world as a big humanity without borders, or the world as a field of experiment for academics... Those actors I believe started from the wrong ‘side’, to build something from the top. And this is exactly what most of the social actors, or social movements are reproaching us, and also political actors, not only social movements. The strongest criticism on what we are doing in this category, having led CONCORD – and INGO, the European confederation, I am part of that sector – and what the others are reproaching us is to have started everything from a global perspective. And then, we forgot two things, which are basic, and that’s why I don’t like the “global” approach: There is no global political space, and there is no global democracy. So whatever you build at/from a global level is apolitical and not democratic, and this is the big problem of almost everything that has been build so far at international level. That’s why whatever institution we create at international level, they are either economic driven, because of the global market approach I described, or expert oriented, because we are talking about global policies, but never about politics.

And a way to bring a little bit of politics has been to build after the second world war, the so-called United Nations, on a inter-governmental setting, which is decision makers within the UN system which are governments. Those governments coming together through their intergovernmental institutions represent the last democratic level that we have today in the world. A group of “Nations-States” who are supposed to bring legitimate political, potentially democratic building blocks all together to talk about an international state of the art.

But at no time we have been able yet to build democracy and build on politics to the upper level. And this is why social movements are so much critical about INGOs reinforcing the illegitimate institutions set up at global level.

TT: You described a lot the shortcomings now, but how should a global citizens movement look like? What would you hope to see, alternatively?

OC: The big challenge we face now, those days, since the end of the 90ies, is that most of the actors – States, social movements, NGOs and intellectuals etc. – do not believe anymore that so-called global institutions will solve anything in their real life. And this can even be applied to the lower level, which is the European level. The last elections showed that people do not feel anymore that even this “regional” level, which was the first intent to create on the top of the Nation-State something that would be supra-national, has mostly failed. For exactly the same reasons: Lack of politics, lack of democracy. And a space that has been build
again, as for the international level earlier, from the experts, from the institutions, from the market, and from the inter-governmental setting. Those are the four wrong solutions, to build an upper level: market, expertise, institutions and inter-governmental. This is what put the world in the state it is. So what we need to do, I believe, is to convince the local actors, that are active everywhere in the world – I always feel that we should be able in the world we are, open, which a lot of technologies, to name and number who are those actors, I estimate myself it's millions and millions and perhaps hundreds of millions of people and initiatives across the globe that try to find solutions locally to the problems we face. And I think this is the seed to new, worldwide rules of the game. I don't want to talk about institutions, but these should be the seeds to discuss new rules of the game at international level. And the problem is that we don't engage those seeds into an international political space. Not just into international agenda, because we used to instrumentalise these local leaders, invite them in our processes, asking them in a way to validate what we have already decided at an upper level.

Here I am talking about something really different: building from those leaders a totally different international agenda that we have no idea what it would look like. If it's a world assembly, if it's just big supra-regions in the world that will then be this kind of multi-polar world we talk about, if it will be a more political kind of thing, or chambers at a world level from different actors, including local authorities, which are increasingly projecting themselves in a without border world...

So we don't know at all what local/grass roots leaders would propose, but we never provide them with the space and the power and the resources to build from local to international, a kind of new alternative to the global agenda as it is. And the risk finally is, if we don't do that quickly, those local actors, in this time of threats and fears and economic crisis, will remain increasingly local, but local defensively. And you already see that I our very daily life: some movements are pushing for re-localisation of trading, producing, etc., that we present as alternative movement for the great transition. But if we don't bring them into international discussions they could also be the ones that could decide to build new borders at local level, and in a way much more attached to far right movements that try to protect themselves, than to be the building blocks of an open, international movement, that is locally rooted, but without fear for the upper levels, because they feel ownership, power and capacity to influence it. I believe we are very close to see a lot of today still progressist grassroots movements falling de facto into a much more far-right nationalist, localist, regionalist approach than an internationalist approach that we defend and promote.

TT: So your aspiration for a global citizens movement would be an internationalisation of local, popular movements?

OC: And to ask them to reinvent the institutions they believe we need to better regulate and lead the world today. I would hope that those people would not build institutions but political space, at regional, upper levels, that are really spaces of assembly for politics and political debate and political decision than just going on with institutions, which are technical, expert oriented, led by diplomats and just illegitimate in the political sense of the word.

TT: Is this a dream or do you already see at least seeds or potential for such a global citizens movement to emerge?
OC: I think for the moment those people are telling us, and we have difficulties to hear it, they are telling us: We don’t believe in your “global” institutions anymore. We don’t feel that you offer us resources and space to do something else. So what we will do is to act locally the best we can to create the world we want. And I will illustrate it easily with “Alternatiba” (http://alternatiba.eu), which is this new, emerging movement, a few months ago in France, that came from the ashes of Copenhagen negotiations, where civil society has just been destroyed by a new failure of the international climate negotiations. And some – not all – of those leaders, engaged in the climate talks for decades, decided to drop the institutional agenda, to stop to do advocacy work, to stop talking with institutions and governments, and to go back to society, the real society, which is by definition local, and to say: Guys, don’t wait for the government to agree on international, global targets, but let’s convince people that we all, and each of us, should commit to our own individual targets. And if we, citizens and society, decrease on our own initiative by 20, 40 per cent our consumption of energy, then we do Kyoto, without any “global” agreement!

The same happens in the US with some local states or municipalities that say: they cannot agree on federal level on any Kyoto agreement – let’s commit ourselves as local authorities!

But I have the feeling that they are not yet at all convinced that they should build an alternative international setting. They just say: this does not work anymore, and we do at local level something that could be useful for this unique planet and humanity we are in.

So I think we should use the time to stop to bring in every time at the table the international agenda as a starting point. We should just observe, be curious, build trust with these new actors that are not yet the “localists” that just protect with new borders the local space, that just still from the local level believe that they contribute to an international better future for all. We should tell them: Guys, we understand that we failed. That’s not a self-criticism like: What we did was wrong. It’s just an observation that what we did, did not work, which is a totally different starting point. We might historically been right to try that road, which was the one of incremental change, from within the system, with institutions, on pushing them, putting pressure, trying to be part of the decision making process, trying to challenge from within the system the dominant narrative etc. But we just have to acknowledge, once and for all, as soon as possible, that this didn’t work. Not that we were wrong, just that it didn’t get the impact we wanted.

Based on such shared diagnostic (which is not yet the case) we have the obligation therefore to go for and explore another strategy.

And let build that strategy not from our old organisations, but with those new actors, putting all the resources and the capacity that we have developed for decades to engage with the kind of international discussions, for them to create whatever they want to create. And this means abandoning power from ourselves. Because today we (International NGOs and Civil Society Organisations) are a dominant force in the international negotiations and talks. We feel important because we talk with governments and institutions, and this is the cultural change our organisations need to engage through, which is to be much more modest, to understand that it’s much more interesting to talk with a local leader, who is doing something much more concrete and tangible at a local level, than with a head of state, who is totally blocked by the power struggles of the dominant thinking.

TT: Do you think a global citizens movement, probably defined like an internationalisation, or cosmopolitisation of local movements as you just described, is useful or necessary for the causes you are involved in?
It remains obvious – and this is also a mistake of the European Union, that “global levels & actors” that pretend to intervene in all aspects of people's lives result to be the wrong approach. The EU is a good example of it. The EU might have been more “popular” if it would have limited its scope and competences to few KEY aspects where to concentrate European capacity, resources and power on: like human rights, solidarity (between generations, regions and citizens across borders), environment and sustainable production & consumption patterns, diplomacy linked to peace keeping and security issues, international trade negotiations, supra-regional European infrastructures, food sovereignty & security at EU level, mobility across Europe, etc.

In other words an international agenda shouldn’t be deciding how the diversity of humanity should behave. It should really focus on the few fields where there is no way to address local problems without an international / supranational vision and approach.

And there are two issues that the world should take seriously at international level: environment and climate change. Two fields where without a strong collaboration and fair rules at international level, all local and national efforts and initiatives are undermined. The borders that human societies have created are just irrelevant for forests, for oceans, for air, etc. This broad environmental agenda must be by definition international, cosmopolitan, global.

There is also the sensitive question of human rights because this international agenda has been built with 90 countries 60 years ago, and all the rest of the countries have been asked to endorse something that was not really discussed and politically owned. Therefore we can observe today all the resistances and threats against what we (western societies) consider as the non-negotiable human rights agenda. Without re-opening negotiations on Human rights conventions, charters and standards a permanent work should be done by the UN with ALL political parties and actors from ALL countries and regions of the world to strengthen the consensus on the Human rights agenda. These processes and deliberations should build from those local actors, cultures and values that embody and protect the fact that dignity of human beings is a shared & universal aspiration.

With the so-called Security agenda I’m not convinced that it is very useful to get it mainly at international level. I think strong regional mechanisms could be better than international ones. By the way the international Security Council is much more the expression of the struggles and tensions among regional super-powers than a truly international agenda.

If we keep the idea that the international agenda should remain focussed then other area need to be further reassessed. For example Trade was an international aspiration and the WTO was supposed to build it but the state of the art is that this agenda is almost dead today and being re-emplaced by bilateral talks and free trade negotiations... Here again the non-democratic dimension of this international trade agenda has very quickly weakened its legitimacy. So this old vision of multi-nationals firms ruling their businesses within one single framework seems to me almost "has-been".

But perhaps we need more international universal mechanisms for justice, when we citizens or local communities feel threatened by multi-nationals. It would be then a totally opposite approach. We might stop globalising the trade's rules, but we certainly need to globalise the right for any citizen to call for global justice when they feel threatened by a global actors like a multi-national. This international approach would bring a sense of justice and protection for
citizens and this should pave the way of an international agenda. This is the kind of political discussion we should have with local leaders and movements on the international agenda.

But the challenge remains to find the right scope for a new international agenda. The risk being than the broader it is, the most difficult it will be for citizens across the globe to buy in. There is certainly a fair fear from people that “we” try to build a kind of big brother that will come into every aspect of their life with global standards. And this is what happens already too much and result to be counterproductive.

TT: What are the implications of a global citizens movement in your particular country or region – Belgium, France, Europe, up to you to define what is your country or region. What are the implications, what does it mean for a more local or regional context?

OC: What it means from my experience is to go back to the roots of what education is supposed to be. Education is supposed to be the tools for human emancipation and human capacity to decide the future we want. That’s how I define education, before even thinking about common goods or global public goods, “Intérêt Général”, etc. Education is primary a tool that you provide to people to be in capacity to be an actor in your own life.

And I think that education today follows two tracks: the progressist/traditional one, and the modern/neo-liberal one, and both are wrong from my perspective. The progressist, old fashioned approach consists at looking at education as the main way to give “savoir et connaissance”. In Europe we still learn things as it was the case 100 years ago, while the amount of knowledge has been multiplied by 1000. And we still expect education to provide a kind of ‘universalist/encyclopaedist’ knowledge. Children and students still learn languages, dates and events from history, mathematics and whatever other disciplines as if technologies would not exist yet. Most of the knowledge is reported and accessible through internet nowadays. New education shouldn’t focus so much on ‘knowledge’ but on ‘understanding’ and analysis. Those two skills are much more important than ‘knowing facts and figures’. In that regards History remains a key discipline because you cannot build a better future if we don’t understand where we and our societies come from.

Education should focus on giving tools to understand our environments (social, political, nature, philosophical, etc.) allowing us to be an actor of it: an active citizen! Not just citizen, but an active person in your family environment, in your friendship environment or social environment. Those skills development are mostly absent from the educational curriculums, when they should be the core.

And that includes necessarily tools to understand the way our families, friends, social networks, organisations, firms, opinion leaders, but also cities, regions, countries and the world work, the way institutions and politics (la chose publique) are influencing important decisions that have concrete consequences on our own lives.

So for me global education is about educating people about the way the world is working and giving the tools to be active citizens from local to global. For me this would be enough to transform the world in a better place for 7 billion people living together on a single planet!!

On the other side, I was talking about the modern, so-called neo-liberal approach that wants education mainly to be a preparation for a job, which is for me the other wrong approach. Education was not supposed to prepare people to get a job and to be in a way just an
investment for the enterprise or whatever organisation you work with. That should be the responsibility of the organisation and firms to develop your competences for the economic sphere.

So in a way the core of a new education should be citizenship. Helping people to understand who they are, where they come from, what are their rights, their duties, the way things work and how to influence them and how to use their environment with opportunities and limitations to build the life they want, in respect of course of basic rules which are the rules of living together, of common goods, and then you can go up until a kind of consciousness of being one humanity, one planet, one future. This is enough!

TT: The last question will be indeed about education, but what I asked was about implications in Europe, and maybe to make it more concrete like if you think about popular movements, if you think of Indignados in Europe for example. Does it relate to a global agenda, to a global citizens movement?

OC: Yes, I think all of them; all of the relevant new movements from the local level that emerged in Europe over the last five, ten years brought a strong international and/or European dimension. So if you think about the Greek movement: It was about a citizens resistance to decisions that from their perspective was not democratic at all, that was imposed on them. It was a reaction to a global dimension, which is at that stage a European one mainly, and beyond. If you take the Indignados, it was also a resistance and a reaction to of unemployed young people challenging the fact that we are all asked to pay for the global crisis provoked by global financial actors. And they were very conscious about that. No need to explain them where it was coming from. When you look at Alternatibas, I told you, this was coming from the climate failure negotiations. If you look at the German recent movement around the transatlantic trade negotiations between the US and the EU, there is clearly an international dimension. If you take mobilisation recently around the CAP reform, everything you can see, there is an international dimension. Today there are very few massive social movement that are strictly local. If it’s massive and just local, then normally it’s enough by its weight to solve the problem at local level with local actors. So it lasts longer, or it becomes more complex and spreading out beyond the borders of the first circle of resistance, when its linked to something else, because, exactly where we started the discussion, you cannot solve it locally only.

So these movements start doing “boule de neige”. And this is how Alternatiba that started in Pays Basque is becoming a French movement, but also starting now in Switzerland, in Belgium, and it might be in a couple of years an international movement again.

TT: Next question was on the obstacles and pitfalls, but you mentioned already the danger of right wing, isolationist approach.

OC: This is the main risk. Because if we don’t offer any space politically, institutionally, with resources for these new actors to engage at the upper level, what they certainly aspire, then we make them becoming more defensive and protecting themselves, and more far-right compatible, and I’m sure the far right movement in France and in Europe will try to build on those very local, new responses - already now, perhaps without waiting for them to be threatened.
On the other side, the other risk might be the “historical” actor, the professional civil society organisations which face difficulties to understand that we are in a new time, and that our resources need to shift from the traditional business model that we have followed forever, which is mainly to help people in the south. Professional international NGOs need to accept that our current behaviour which concentrate 80% of the resources is reinforcing the feeling from local & progresists actors, as well as far-right wing actors, that the problem are the so-called “global” actors – including when it comes to civil society organisations. In other words, the global level becomes the problem, and not at all the solution, including for CSOs.

TT: How do you see the potential of development education and global learning the facilitation of a global citizens movement, and how does development education or global learning need to evolve in order to assume this role?

OC: There two things that currently I don’t see happening, so I will be a little bit critical again. I think that the two ways to have really impact with global development education actors, is either to come back to the roots of the popular education, the old fashioned social movements from churches or non-churches movements that tried 60 years ago to provide a value-based framework for each kid in society. It was about a comprehensive approach providing to our youth during their ‘free-time’: popular education, sport and ludic activities, sharing, values sharing, all contributing to build a kind of progresist and humanist consciousness. On this line we should have the ambition to go back to something that really trickles down in society. With the ambition to touch a critical mass of each young generation because if we want active citizens that build a different society and world then we need a critical mass... In a way, I dare to say that we need to reinvent all those old social movements (integrating new ways of participation and communication as social media – but not as the core of the approach). That is one way. Unfortunately it seems that especially progressive organisations have forgotten and dropped this ambition.

And on the other side I think the solution is to reinforce the work on curriculum change within the FORMAL education systems. Because the strongest tool for change is and remains the official education. So to shift the focus, to put all our advocacy capacity on a radical shift in the official educational systems in order to put at the core of our formal education the development of tools, capacities and capabilities to be active people and citizens in society and in our real lives.

So whatever we do in between those two trends seems to me a little bit of “bricolage” with low impact.

TT: Last question: Anything you would like to add? Anything else you would like to say?

OC: I believe that this is something we need to build over the next 20 years: To check a few of these hypotheses, to outreach, to build a new nexus among sectors and levels and to experiment new ways of doing. I disagree with people who say that there is always an emergency. With an emergency approach you just build short-term responses, and I think this has been part of the problem of the previous generation, to always, even with the most progressist and clever people, build things five years by five years, and then to rebuild everything, because it didn’t work.

So I would prefer now that we take the time to share the diagnosis. What I’m proposing here is shared by almost no one from the traditional INGO sector yet, or by very few. So we need
to take the time for this diagnosis, and then, whatever response we want to build, should be a generational shift. I don’t believe that you can achieve anything in a shorter term than a generational change, which is 20 years.
TT: Could you briefly present yourself with name, age, occupation and causes you are involved in, or activist profile if you would like to call it like this.

DS: I’m Danny Sriskandarajah, I’m secretary general of CIVICUS, I’m 38, I suppose I am at the professional end of the civil society, that is I have a salaried job in an NGO. I believe that comes with the downside that I work for an NGO. I spend most of my time in management meetings and trying to balance budgets and fundraise and things like that. But my heart is an activist heart, and I believe in this job. I’m excited by this job, because I believe in the right of everyone, every citizen, every person around the world to express themselves and to be active in their own communities; to shape the world in the way they want to shape it, and to embark in collective action. I’m not an individualistic liberal in that sense. I believe in communities and collective action. When I say civil society that’s what I really mean. In some cases of course civil society manifests itself as formal organisations and things like that, and that's the bit of civil society that CIVICUS tends to deal with. But I’m interested in the broad spectrum of community activism and engagement.

TT: You have participated of course, as one of the speakers even, in this conference we organised in Johannesburg “Building a global citizens movement”. CIVICUS was even one of the co-organisers of it. What motivates you personally to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement?

DS: This is a sort of tentative thesis. I think when it comes to solidarity across peoples, globalisation has been relatively slow. If you take capital flows, or the flows in goods and services, or the flow in information, we see a radical globalisation in terms of these flows, right. But when it comes to what people are mobilising around, the issues still tend to be around local or national interests. So when people sign petitions or hit the streets in protest, they protest generally speaking on issues that matter to them and their own communities. Of course, you have examples of international solidarity, and the apartheid solidarity movement was probably the best example in recent history of big true global solidarity. You could argue that the protests against the war in Iraq were about trying to change domestic policymakers behaviour, but at their heart they were internationalist and expressed solidarity. But one of my personal motivations or interests is to close that gap so that we start to see a citizens’ movement that can also connect the dots and build the linkages and solidarity across people and civil society formations. We can then start addressing the sort of global challenges that we face. There are a lot of reasons, some instrumental, some inherent for why global citizens movements or connected sets of citizens’ movements around the world would make sense. My main starting point is that we are behind capital flows or trade flows when it comes to the globalisation of political movements.

TT: How would you define a global citizens movement? What is it, or what should it be?

DS: Maybe the building blocks would be more and better knowledge of the issues and concerns of people in other parts of the world. When you are mobilising or organising on issues that matters to you that you are also aware of what’s going on in other parts of the world. I think the sharing of strategies is happening anyway. People are now using the Internet and social media to learn tactics, to see what mobilisation strategies could work, but a global citizens movement might share a more than just tactics. And then the third one
would be around building momentum and a shared sense of, or a common purpose around global challenges. Climate change is a good example, where we as a humanity have to come together to take action, and everyone has to play a part in some way or the other. We need to connect our own citizen mobilisation on an issue like this in more concrete ways. And finally, coming back to a sort of geopolitical nature of this, we need to redraw the political map, or the power map, even within civil society and social movements around who’s calling the shots in a way. Mandeep Tiwana, CIVICUS Head of Policy and Research, and I have a piece coming out in *Sur* the journal of Conectas [the Brazil-based human rights organisation] where we argue that for one reason or another, even when it comes to, say, human rights discourse, the activists in the global South are just not visible - because they don’t have the resources, or because they are so worried about their national issues, or they are under threat, or they don’t have the time to engage in the international or global human rights challenges. And in that space we see Human Rights Watch, or Amnesty, or other well-resourced organisations, and so you end up with this very skewed picture of who’s running campaigns around human rights issues. Mandeep put it wonderfully by saying that Swedish civil society activists are more worried about human rights abuses in Swasiland than activists in South Africa! The solidarity that we need, the South/South relationships that we need are not developed. So when you say global citizens movement, the political relationships have to reflect a sense of equality and shared dignity and common purpose that need to underpin that.

TT: From the beginning, when you started talking about that, I sense this global citizen movement as a space for networking, connecting different struggles, mutual learning and so on, but now last couple of minutes you were talking very much as well of power relations and institutional structures within civil society or these citizen mobilisations. How do you see the relation between those two? Is it just an open space for learning and networking, or do we also have to challenge existing power relations to a certain extend, and then maybe even create alternative institutions or organisations on the side the of the citizens or civil society, as we see – you made this analogy in the beginning – in the world of economic globalisation, where of course you have the World Trade Organisation, you have the World Bank, you have the Davos Forum and so on.

DS: My Marxist philosophy is rusty but it reminds me of “class in itself” and “class for itself”. In a way we have got to become conscious of the power dynamics within any sort of movement of this nature, but also to ensure that when we act, we act challenging externally. So this is a sort of internal/external dynamics of what’s going on. When you say global citizens movement, I am interested because this will help us challenge the power dynamics that exist externally, like those institutions you mentioned, or the sort of injustices that are driving the discontent around the world, or solving global challenges like climate change or inequality. But I’m also interested in the internal dynamics of that, and building a movement that is reflective of the world we want, and not a legacy of past power imbalances.

TT: How do you think then a global citizens movement is useful or necessary you are involved in?

DS: I think if we unpack or simplify a bit, the global networking or the global mobilisation aspect of it is incredibly important for the things we are working on at the moment. So if you take the intergovernmental negotiations next year on the post-MGDs and the sustainable development goal framework, the post-MDG, post-Rio processes, these are global goals that will be agreed by intergovernmental processes, and therefore I think to be effective we need to have better coordinated global mobilisations by citizens to demand more ambitious and transformative commitments. Because the drivers or the characteristics of what we are
aiming at is so global, I think we need to mobilise in a more sensitive way. We need to mobilise in a more effectively global way. Climate change again: This is a problem that faces all humanity. But our politicians show once again that they are good at the “divide and rule” stuff. We can’t get climate agreements, because national self-interest, as determined or defined by bureaucrats and diplomats stop us from getting truly transformative agreements. But if we as citizens can negotiate some of those differences... if people from the global South and people from the global North come together and build common understandings and common positions, then we can effectively challenge, or more effectively challenge the excuses that leaders are giving us, why we are not in a more advanced state of agreement. These are two instrumental reasons why global networking and global mobilisation from a civil society point of view is important. Another observation maybe worth pointing out, and this is more a reflection on the challenges within the movement, is that so much of the public agenda around these issues has until know been controlled by large non-governmental organisations. When we hear about the post-2015 framework or whatever, we know about what Oxfam is saying, or Save the Children is saying, because these guys have large, professional paid staff to go and mobilise on some of these things. And there too, we not only need a global citizens movement, we need a different sort of movement building than what we have seen in the past, or in recent times. That will also help civil society itself, because we need to get better on this. We can’t rely on the NGOs to solve the world’s problems. We never could, and we certainly no longer can.

TT: How should this alternative global citizens movement look like? Is it the citizens themselves, is it local NGOs, is it popular uprisings, which should be part of it?

DS: It’s all of that! The NGOs have become the locus of activity in an unhealthy way. I start calling it the participation revolution, I don’t know if that’s the right phrase, or if it’s actually a thing or not. Largely through information and communication technologies, but also because of the rising aspirations of people all around the world, especially young people, to participate and have their voice heard, you’ve got this potential for a more chaotic, or more democratic way in which citizens movements can be built. It’s going to be crazy and chaotic, but that’s good in my view, and it might mean that the next big global campaign comes about, because one individual somewhere in the world has started a petition, or done an act of civic resistance, or in the case of Tunisia unfortunately self-immolated, and we have this sort of trigger mechanism. We have the means by which we can scale that up and amplify those concerns in a way. None of this is going to be predictable; it cannot be controlled by anyone. The comms department of the NGOs can’t control the messaging in the way that people have wanted to do sometimes. This is going to be necessarily creative and chaotic.

TT: If you think more locally, like what are the implications of a global citizens movement in your particular country or region, if you think of South Africa for example, do you think this is relevant for people at a local level? What are the implications for this big idea in a more local context or national context?

DS: I think it is important. South Africa reflects some of the challenges we see. I’m struck by how sometimes insular activists here have been. They are really passionate about this local issue, or that public service delivery issue, or this aspect of corruption, but there hasn’t been a sort of engagement with what else is going on around the world, how their scene locally might be in part a manifestation of a global phenomenon, and that’s why these linkages are important. It would strengthen their own cause, but it would also help to be mutually reinforcing. Let me give you a more practical example: There is a bunch of human rights organisations in South Africa, who work on whatever issues that concerns them. But recently the South African government in the Human Rights Council in Geneva, and in the UN in New
York, tried to introduce a series of amendments to water down a human rights resolution on behalf of the Africa group. What they were trying to do, and luckily they failed, I believe went against the constitutional characteristics of South Africa or indeed the public will of South Africans. But for many South African human rights organisations, who are too busy unfortunately, because they are struggling for resources all time, fighting their own battles, this sort of thing didn’t hit their radar or their agenda. We need to join the dots a bit more between the local and the global, because these two spheres are related in so many ways, and activists also have to be aware of these linkages. Let me give you another example, a more practical example from what we are doing around the DataShift project: If you take corruption, or campaigning against corruption, we found 20 different examples where local civil society organisations have created platforms for citizens to report incidences of corruption – usually bribery. And the best example is www.ipaidabribe.com in India. That’s great! That’s exactly how it should happen: Bottom up, citizens led initiatives to monitor corruption. But the problem is, if you think about it from a global point of view, we can’t aggregate the data they are collecting. Because they all started doing this on their own, they use different platforms, different definitions, different spatial units, whatever else it is. So although fighting corruption is a global goal and should be part of a global movement, the evidence that we are gathering, and the engagement that we are doing is still happening almost exclusively at a local or national level, because people are fighting corruption in India, or in Zimbabwe, or in South Africa, and not necessarily trying to join the dots. There are great organisations like Transparency International who are trying to join the dots and connect people, but for me, - and this is where the post-2015 framework is interesting, because it’s a global framework - we should do better to make sure that local activism is connected better to global activism, and that the flow is both ways. We don’t want to run an abstract global campaign that has no relevance to people at a local level or doesn’t relate to their experiences, but we need to make sure that the flows of information, the flows of passion and energy are both ways.

TT: What do you see as the main obstacles or pitfalls towards the establishment of a global citizens movement?

DS: I think there are some obvious ones around: Resourcing. If we are relying on people to be paid to do that stuff, we have to rely on resources, and to my experience it is hard to raise resources for this sort of stuff. Again, if you take corruption, you can run a campaign at the local level, and you might get community support or find a grant maker to give you funding to run a local or national campaign. But when you then go and say “Can you give us a little bit of extra money or resources to make sure that we can plug in to the global networks”, that’s harder to justify or to fund. The resourcing question then leads to the sort of “bandwidth issue”. So many activists, in particular from the global South, are so busy just to fight their own fight that doing something more related to the rest of the world is just difficult. There is a sort of time issue. Also, I suppose in the global South there is also this, even within civil society, that we got this concern around non-intervention, or sovereignty. As you know, governments in the global South have long deployed this argument that they are not neo-imperialist, that they respect sovereignty, and that they will not interfere in the affairs of other states. And in a funny way, there is a sort of reflection in civil society as well. You might be a very progressive activist on some issues in your own country, but you’re reluctant almost to speak out on what you might see happening elsewhere. In the global North generally this might not be happening, because people believe in universality of rights, or they are more self-confident about expressing their concerns. So there is an obstacle there perhaps about people taking part in something that is globally focussed as well. And then I suppose there is the fact that civil society is not a coherent set of actors with coherent set of views, and that’s
it’s beauty! Maybe it’s going to be lots of global citizens movements, which focus on their own issues or goals or aspirations or demands, but may actually be contrary to what others are saying. And that’s great! That’s part of the joy being in civil society. And we see that very clearly. We try and build some solidarity between African civil society organisations on the anti-homosexuality bill in Uganda recently. So we wanted to write a letter to Museveni and urging him not to sign the bill. And when we were inviting other African based civil society organisations to join us. And we did all right. We got 25 or so signatories to the letter. But that little example showed how difficult it was to get our colleagues in the rest of Africa to buy into this. Some of them just politically do not want to talk about sexuality and sexual rights, because they feel their members or their constituencies are not ready to talk about this. Or they disagree entirely on the politics of this. Some of them say that’s not an issue they want to get involved in, because it’s an issue of Uganda, and let Ugandans sort it out, so this sort of non-intervention stuff. And some of them are reluctant to engage of this issue, because it’s part of a neo-liberal conspiracy by the global North to promote homosexuality. Or even if they agree that the bill is bad, they don’t want to mobilise because they’re so burned by the past politics of how these sorts of mobilisations have worked. So there is a bunch of political reasons why this building a global movement ain’t gonna be easy. And you all know that.

TT: Maybe a good transition to the next and last question. How do you see the potential of development education or global learning in the facilitation of a global citizens movement, and how does global learning or development education need to evolve in order to assume this role? Global learning and development education, as a footnote, are very much European or Northern concepts, but of course you have also outside Europe practices like popular education or so, which are very close concepts, so you can consider this as well in your answer.

DS: I’m an internationalist, and I hope that every education system, everywhere in the world, at least opens up internationalist horizons for everyone. So I can understand that the manifestation of internationalism through development education, especially in Europe, is a positive thing. I can understand that, I think it’s important, and I think that western European governments commitments to aid and development flows is in part bolstered by what’s happening from a young age to people to help think about these issues. But I would set it in a context of promoting internationalism more broadly, and that would be a universal concept. Maybe I’m naïve and idealistic, but I think more should be done everywhere in the world -to expose people, especially young people to the global aspects of challenges like climate change or inequality or trade or whatever to make them feel that they are obviously citizens of sovereign states, but equally citizens of the world as well. And that’s important. So I think there’s obviously got to be an investment in these sorts of things. But just to be honest and frank, whether something called development education should survive in the decades to come I’m not so sure, because if the development framework itself, and the development landscape - someone called it the “aidscape” the other day - if the ‘aidscape’ itself is going to change so dramatically - the idea of a donor will change, it will be about cooperation and partnership, the flows are less important - then the idea of educating especially young people about global development challenges and calling it that might seem a little bit odd. So you might call it global citizenship, and I know in some countries it’s already happening, or citizenship with a global dimension to it. That’s probably more in line with what I think we need.

TT: Thanks a lot.
Mark Randazzo agreed non-anonymous use of the interview.

TT: Could you please present yourself, with your name, your age if you like, your occupation and also your activist profile or the causes you have been involved in?

MR: My name is Mark Randazzo, I’m 58 years old. I was born in the US, but I’ve lived a good deal of my life outside of the US, both as a child with my father who was working for the US government, and then on my own afterwards. I spent over 20 years working in international development with various international NGOs and grant making organisations, in Asia and Africa mostly. In terms of my politics, I guess I’d use the word left-progressive internationalist.

TT: You have participated in this conference we organised in Johannesburg “Building a global citizens movement”. What motivated you to go there, and in general terms, what motivates you to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement?

MR: I’m the director of a network of foundations, foundation programme officers, family foundation members and some individual donors which is engaged in these issues [the EDGE funders alliance, www.edgefunders.org]. It’s a values-based network that brings together grant makers in the US and in Europe mostly, who fund in different areas, from women’s movements and around gender justice, to agro-ecology and farm-workers, around trade, around climate… what brings them together are a series of shared values, and an understanding of the importance of maintaining a global perspective in the work (even at local and national levels), of having a systemic analysis and critique, and in being committed to ensuring that grassroots community-based organisations, networks and their NGO allies are centrally involved in efforts to move forward a progressive agenda. So my interest in the conference, the gathering in Johannesburg and the work on a global citizens movement stems from that, both a professional and a personal interest. And much of our work of the last few years, influenced in part by both grass roots movements in the US, and civil society movements in Europe, has been around this notion of a Great Transition, or a Just Transition. So the Johannesburg conference came out of our involvement in those conversations and those activities. And we wanted to be there both to be able to get a sense how these discussions are unfolding around the world, and also to see specifically what DEEEP and comrades in Europe are doing in these areas.

TT: Building on this, how would you define a world citizen’s movement? You mentioned elements like grassroots NGOs, Great Transition… how does this come together to a concept of a global citizens movement?

MR: A global citizens movement, like social movements in general, should be seen as something that ebbs and flows. There are times when it feels like the various actors and institutions are moving independently, doing work in all of their own specific areas. But then there are times, fairly rare in history, when for a variety of reasons a social movement seems to be taking hold. That’s a very different feeling, when a social movement is building much more broadly across society. This then becomes a clarifying opportunity, in which whatever area of work one is engaged in, or whichever constituency one is helping to defend or to promote - it becomes clearer that the main goal to help put forward or push for a larger social movement. In other words, when there is no real social movement, everybody is trying to do their work, and a lot of this tends to be more reactive or defensive, dealing with the symptoms of the various crises we are facing.
When there is a sense that a proactive social movement is gaining momentum though, such as in the period following the Seattle WTO Ministerial 15 years ago, coming out of and uniting various constituencies in various parts of the world, it becomes clear, whether you work on it from a trade angle, from a climate angle, from an agro-ecology/food angle, as a student movement or whatever, that your role really is to help to push that forward, to push that larger Seattle movement forward. But at other times it seems more disparate and more disconnected. So just going back to the notion of the global citizens movement: I think that in a way what we are doing is not just marking time, but building. You have to develop, you have to build analysis, build constituencies, provide popular education, and organise, especially organise, so when the next wave of a potential global citizens movement arrives, more and more constituencies can feed into it. So I think of a global citizens movement not as a static thing, but more something that can come in waves. There are times when the global citizens movement can feel very vibrant and alive as a global movement perhaps – it’s never going to be totally global, but it can feel like that – and then there are times when the picture is more confused in the sense that there is not one linear movement with a unified purpose. Probably the last time it felt like there might be the beginning of a global citizens movement was at the time of the Arab Spring movements, the Indignados in Spain, the Occupy activities in the US and beyond, the Chilean students movement, and what was happening in Canada with the students’ movement there… There was the beginning of a sense that maybe something was building, that citizens in at least some key areas around the world were forming into some kind of a movement. But these things are fairly rare. So a lot of the work is building the elements for when a next wave comes.

TT: In the previous interviews, two kind of view points could be crystallised: One saying that we really have to build on this local and topical social movements like Occupy, Indignados, Arab Spring and basically to connect them to have some kind of organic citizens network with mutual learning, support mechanisms and so on. And then of course you have also what people could describe as global civil society, which is much more based on the organised, global, international NGOs and so on. How do you think these two spheres relate within the concept of a global citizens movement. Should both be part of it, or would you prioritise one over the other? What is the role of these different actors?

MR: Both are part of it. The problem perhaps of a more orchestrated or less organic type of civil society movement especially at global level would be that for the most part it’s going to represent a certain category of groups. Professional NGOs, or professional activists or in any case people who are engaged on a day to day basis, can reinforce a tendency of a more professional civil society network, rather then a movement. I think for a movement to be a movement, it has to be coming up organically – of course it has to be organised, it is not just going to appear naturally – but it has to involve people where they live, people in their communities who are part of it, and feel it. It doesn’t mean that global social movements are not going to have leadership, or leading institutions, or leading organisations and networks especially, but if it is just at the level of institutionalized civil society organisations, it’s going to miss that crucial element.

One of the things we are seeing in the US for example, just in terms of trying to move social policy in an important way, whether it’s around immigration reform, or on climate, or any other number of issues, is that it’s only real when what we call the grassroots organising sector - community-based organisations and their networks - are also involved. Then you really get stronger momentum. One example from the US a few years ago, were huge massive mobilisations of immigrant groups and allies across the country. Hundreds of thousands of people marched in the streets demanding immigration reform. But instead of
that building into a sustained movement, a lot of the energy to get legislation passed then went to institutions and professional advocacy organisations in Washington D.C. The kind of "movement" element, the citizens engagement element, died out and it was left to the professional NGO types to pass legislation, and nothing ever happened. We are still fighting about immigration today.

Similarly with climate. There was a lot of energy, and a lot of money, a huge amount of money from foundations trying to push climate legislation about four years ago in the US Congress. And most of the energy and focus went to professional D.C. based strategies to move members of congress, and there was no real building of organic movement through support to grassroots groups that were organising around a climate justice agenda throughout the country. The legislation never passed, and we even saw higher numbers of people beginning to question whether climate change was really happening. So in that sense you can't do so much if you don't have a grassroots organising sector engage, and I would tend to think that building on the organic movements as they are coming up in different places, like Indignados etc., and connecting them, is important. I think the role of professional organisers and institutions is to help to create the spaces for interactions and sharing and learning and exchanges, to help to provide the connectivity between all of them, so people can learn from each other and be inspired from each other. And hopefully build a bigger and deeper movement together.

TT: When you think of the causes you are involved in, and maybe in particular the big cause of a just or great transition, in which sense a global citizens movement is useful or necessary for this?

MR: This is where I think it's crucial. A global citizens movement captures a core element that is often missing: A lot of the work that is being done, both by activists, and NGOs, and institutions and foundations, tends to be organised around a specific issue, often with kind of a technical approach. There is a lot of technical expertise involved, and the work is very focused. There are all kind of reasons for that and it makes perfect sense. But the problem is that you can't really build a citizens movement around a single issue or around a single solution to an issue. I guess in a way you could say, there are efforts to build a global citizens movement towards agro-ecology and food sovereignty, but even that is much broader than just food and farming. So one of the constraints is that we all tend to operate at a very focused, micro level.

I like the analogy of a mapping app on your cell phone: A lot of our work necessarily is zoomed in. When you want to see what's happening concretely on the ground, when you want to find a restaurant for example or any specific place, you have to zoom in with your mapping app. You have to look very clearly at the detailed space in front of you to find the things you want to find. And that's where we tend to operate. We have our expertise, we have our silos within philanthropy, we have our specific campaigns that tend to be very "zoomed in" in that sense. But then of course when you want to see the bigger picture, when you want to see the further contours and shape, and see beyond the horizon, you need to "zoom out" with your mapping app. If you want to see the distance between Amsterdam and San Francisco, you can't be zoomed in, you have to zoom out to see that bigger picture. So a lot of our work necessarily is zoomed in, in the sense that there is a particular expertise involved, particular issues that we know well, particular sets of groups or organisations, and organising work that is done locally. But that prevents you from having a movement, because a movement can't be just about one specific thing. A movement by its very nature, and in particular a "global citizens movement," has to be something that is broad and encompasses a larger view. So this notion of zooming in and zooming out at the same time becomes an
analogy of what we need to be doing. And to really promote a global citizens movement, in a way one has to go beyond specific expertise and even specific interests in one single issue, and see how that issue connects more broadly.

We talk a lot these days about a social crisis, which is also a crisis of democracy and a crisis of governance. There is an ecological crisis, a crisis of climate and water, a whole series of issues, fisheries etc., and there is an economic crisis. But actually all of these crises, the social, the economic and the ecological crisis are linked, and in fact we’re confronted with a systemic crisis. So I think that zooming out process allows us to see the systemic process and allows operating at that level. And again going back to what we were talking about earlier: You can often see a difference between professional NGOs and community based organisations in this sense, around issues of trade for example. The NGOs and the experts would start with the WTO and the component parts of the trade agreements, and talk about the need to block work on TRIPS, the intellectual property rights component, to block or change the Services agreement, etc. But the community based movements or their representatives, they might be La Via Campesina, for example, would say in these debates: Yes, the WTO is important and problematic, and we work on that. But so is the IMF, and so is the World Bank, and so are corporations, and so are our governments. And then they’d say: Why don’t we start with what kind of community we want to have, which kind of society do we want to build?

So wrapping all this back together, I think a global citizens movement starts from that question of what kind of society we want to live in as human beings on this planet, interacting with all the other beings here. And when you start with what kind of society you want to build – that’s a very different way into the question than how do we solve the climate crisis, how do we solve the water crisis, how do we solve the problem of feeding people on the planet, which then can be seen as a technical problem to be solved. But when you step back you can say, we need to build a broader movement, that encompasses all of these crisis that are in fact part of a wider systemic crisis. So it’s a very different way of coming at the issue of social change.

TT: If you think of your local context, say USA, what are the implications of a global citizens movement in your particular country or region, for example if you think of community based activists – do they identify with this idea, do they feel like global citizens somehow?

MR: In the San Francisco Bay Area, we just had our annual conference, whose theme was "Towards an ecological and socially just transition to the next economy." The conference brought together around 160 funders and donors, and about 70 activists from around the world. And from within the Bay Area, there is actually a lot of interesting work being done by grassroots groups around this notion of a just transition, that hits on a lot of the things we’ve been talking about. There are two ways to approach all of this: You can approach the crises we are facing from a policy perspective, from an institutional perspective, and you can try to resolve them one by one. But a lot of these grassroots groups find that first of all these kind of approaches leave out the most vulnerable members of society. They tend to be technological fixes that work for the more powerful groups in society, but not for everyone, and they don’t really resolve the questions on a deeper level.

So there is a lot of experimentation going on in the Bay Area that links a lot of things, local organising and local alternatives that are linked to global level organizing in a way, to global policies and global rules that rule the global economy. They know those have to be taken into account, because those rules at the global and national level impact local conditions. There is a whole push for power locally, but then to translate that to power at the national and global level. So it’s not just “let’s build our alternatives locally and forget about the rest of the
world. All of these things are linked. The Bay Area is obviously very linked to other countries and other communities just through the number of immigrants that are there, and in fact much of these immigrant groups are much more aware of the ecological and social and economic crises than other Californians are. So that whole mix of trying to build local alternatives, but very much in the context of being aware of how these problems are playing out systemically, nationally and internationally, is very much part of the conversation. Which doesn't mean that 95% of the groups and organisations aren't still dealing with the effects of the crises, and providing services, and fighting against gentrification, housing... But I think there is a growing recognition, because it is a systemic crisis, that we, in addition to pushing back again the symptoms of the crisis, also need to be looking at the root causes.

The idea of a global citizens movement has to encompass both of the things. The way we talk about it at EDGE Funders is to say that we have to support the necessary fights of today for more equity, more justice, more sustainability within the system as it is, but we also have to be thinking about the deeper systemic problems, and trying to address the root causes of these problems as well. So a global citizens movement, if it's going to be anything more than reactive or defensive, has to be thinking about and addressing the root causes of the systemic crisis.

TT: What do you think are the main obstacles and pitfalls in the establishment of a global citizens movement?

MR: One is hegemony: Who is the citizen's movement? Who sets the frame for it? Can it be really democratic, and can it really encompass the diversity of understandings and wisdoms and knowledges out there? One of the things I have come to acknowledge more recently, is that the project of replacing the system that we have now, which cold be described as a neo-liberal, globalised, financialised capitalism, the project of replacing that modal isn't necessarily replacing it with another model. It's maybe replacing it with a diversity of models. The diversity of models is going to be unified by common values one hopes, but whatever it is we put in place, whatever the citizens movements build, is probably going to look different in the Andes than it's going to look like in the Mekong Delta, than it's going to like in Northern Europe. So one of the constraints or cautions is about hegemony. A "global citizens movement" probably needs to have an “s” at the end of it. Or at least if there is going to be a global citizens movement, a single movement, it's going to have a diversity of intended outcomes.

The other constraint we are starting to run up against now is how do you build a citizens movement with its inherent contradictions around constraints on carbon and travel. You can’t just use internet tools. People need to know each other, see each other. One of the great and useful aspects of the World Social Forum is that over a period of twelve years, many 1000s of activists from different movements from different parts of the world got to know each other and be familiarised with each other through the Forum processes. As we are moving forward, with more constraints on the amount of travel we should all be doing, and time and energy we can all put into that by building locally, that's going to be in tension. That’s something that has to be figured out somehow.

And a third area of constraint to building a global citizens movement is that we are up against some pretty strong and powerful interests, that have a stake in the status quo, or at least in a global economy dominated by corporations and corporate interests, whose primary concern is to promote growth and consumption. So a global citizens movement has to build something to counter having as the main motor of human society maximising profit based on maximising consumption. There is going to be some real constraints there, and some fights. It’s not going to be easy to see how you build up the alternatives in ways that can really go
very far, facing economic interests that are pushing to pour out every last drop of oil, taking out every bit of coal and just pushing for the model that we've had for the last 100 years or so.

TT: You talked a bit about historical examples as well, from recent history like Seattle, and you just said again that it should be a multiple movement with different objectives possibly for different local contexts, and earlier you also said that it couldn't be around a single issue. If you think of what happened in the late 60ies: Could this somehow be described as a global citizens movement – not entirely global of course, but certainly international. It seems there was a lot of interconnectiveness, but without a hierarchical structure, and with different outcomes and objectives in different countries, and at the same time a kind of global momentum, which was created around anti-Vietnam in US, in Germany overcoming Nazi-history, Paris, Japan, wherever. Do you think that this can provide some inspiration, or can be a way to look at this global citizens movement?

MR: I was a young teenager in the late 60's, but I was conscious enough. There was something that was fairly unique there that I maybe felt a bit after Seattle, but that was really strong during that earlier period, a feeling that things were shifting and changing, whether in Eastern Europe, or across Europe, in the US, or in other parts of the world. The thing that was really strong and fairly unique at that time, and I as a 13, 14 year old kid, I really felt it too, was that there was a very strong feeling that things were going to change. It was reflected in the culture, in the music, in politics. There was this strong sense that this world we had inherited from the 40s, 50s generation, from our parents, had to change, and was going to change. It was a very hopeful and aspiring time. You felt like this generation was going to create a new world. Now we have been very disappointed on many fronts. But I think that if there is anything that I would see as an indicator of a global citizens movement, it would be when once again young people – because it's always going to be young people – across the globe in their various ways are really feeling that things can change, and they are going to make this change happen. That we need to change, and there will be no more business as usual.

There are lots of reasons why this now is harder in some ways, even if communication is so much easier and quicker. Counter hegemonic attitudes can be shared and spread, but things can also get co-opted much more quickly and much more easily. The 60s eventually got co-opted, too. Now there is the danger that this is happening very quickly.

There is a little analogy that I like from an article I read a few weeks ago, about tectonic plates and earthquakes. The stick-slip theory of friction. Tectonic plates, when they are moving across each other, at some point stick, and it seems that these masses are immovable, that they are sticking even harder and nothing is going to change. And then all of a sudden it builds up to a point that the slip happens. So in a way you can look back at moments in history, when things seem to be so much under the control of powerful status quo interests, and such a "slip" can happen. And I think a big part of the job of a global citizens movement is to be preparing and building consciousness and developing expertise when we are in a "stick moment," as we seemingly are now. It is really important building awareness, building consciousness, experimenting with alternatives, building our expertise, building connections, so when we reach that next "slip" moment, when something kicks off and inspires in one part of the world or another, we can all more fully take advantage of that and jump in. When you have that moment of an Occupy kind of spark, or the things that happened in the 60s, people get back to a collective feeling that this is not the time of cynicism, that is a time when we can create our future.
And I don’t think we are very far from that. I think confronted with the social and economic and ecological crisis, a lot of people who tend to be cynical or who are not very politicised, in the back of their minds they are very aware that the system we have now cannot hold, that something fundamental has to change. It can either change in a very grim and scary way, or it can change in a hopeful way. And we have to work for that hopeful and democratic way. In absence of a democratic global citizens movement, we are going to have a right wing global citizens movement. I saw on CNN this morning reports about the problems in the US with immigration, with young kids coming across the borders. I heard about demonstrations in Southern California, in San Diego, and I automatically assumed that these were immigrant rights groups, the Dreamers and affiliated groups, demonstrating to let these children out of the camps. But then as the story went on I realised that it wasn’t that, it was Tea Party types demonstrating against immigration, shouting “USA, USA, USA”. And we just saw the elections in Europe and all of that, so there are probably two global citizens movements. One that is pretty scary, and one we want to help and to support.

TT: You already mentioned several times the necessity of learning and of popular education. How do you see the potential of global learning or global education in the facilitation of a global citizens movement, and how does education need to evolve in order to assume this role?

MR: That’s a big and complicated question. I would say that we need the "popularising" of inspirational stories, helping people to see the multitude of alternatives and experiments and creative and innovative things happening around the world. There are a lot of things happening in every society everywhere, but one does not tend to hear about them. So ventilating all that, getting that out more in popular consciousness and imagination is important. And as I discussed at the beginning, zooming in and zooming out, the importance of helping people see the bigger picture, having a larger frame of analysis, understanding the systemic nature of what we are dealing with. To go beyond the whole kind of clicktivism movement like Avaaz, which can go in the direction that people care about a particular issue, most famously Koni in Uganda, or what ever it may be. But I’m not convinced, I haven’t seen ways in which getting people to care passionately about one particular issue then helps to connect them to a larger critical analysis. It seems to me more about playing on the consumerist tendencies of making you feel good because you are involved in this saving of a particular tree, or whatever it might be. So a lot of the role of citizen’s movement education is to help people see things in movement terms, in the broader scope and complexity. Not that they can’t have their particular interests and passions, but they have to see how this is connected. It’s not enough to be passionate about one aspect of the problem because the problem is systemic.

TT: Anything else you would like to mention?

MR: One thing: One of our board members is doing a lot of work with cultural biodiversity. I’m not that good at this, because I come more out of a classical, left, background, so I tend to be very Western in my approach to these issues. But I’m beginning to appreciate that different cultures around the world will conceive of a very different type of a global citizens movement. So how we are going to incorporate that aspect, that there are very different ways of seeing the world, engaging with the world, understanding reality, that are not in the western tradition? Someone recently talked to me about Gandhi’s discuss of the “last man” approach, which today we probably would translate to a “last girl” theory. It’s that notion that if you construct a society that is good and useful for a good middle class American or a good middle class German, so that it works for him, then you leave out a lot of people. But if you construct a society which works for the most vulnerable members of society, and this
probably would be a young girl because of historical sexism, patriarchy and so on, then it works for everybody. A global citizens movement has to move beyond the hubris of western projects of building a new society, and has to somehow – and I’m again not good at this, I have to move beyond my own hubris – address the fact that different cultures, different communities, different experiences are in fact different. We have to build a global citizens movement that has to encompass all that.
Bobby McCormack

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Bobby McCormack agreed non-anonymous use of the interview.

TT: Could you please present yourself - name, age if you like, occupation and maybe also what would be your activist profile if you would like to call it like this, or what are the causes you are involved in?

BM: Bobby McCormack is my name. I am nearly 40 years of age, which scares me deeply. My occupation is two things: I consider myself as an educator, and I do that in two ways. One is in Development Perspectives. I am the co-funder and current director of Development Perspectives, which is a development education NGO in Ireland. And I also work part time as a lecturer in development studies in university here in Ireland, called Dundalk Institute of Technology. So that would be the occupation. And I suppose in terms of activism: Adult education in particular, especially in the non-formal field would be the area I’m most passionate about, but adults in general, weather that would be formal or non-formal education, and the more closely it is to development, the more passionately involved I am. Our work doesn’t just involve work in Ireland, we work with partners in different countries around the world, in Tanzania, Liberia, Zambia, Uganda, and hopefully in India at the end of this year. And then of course we are active in different smaller projects.

TT: You have been in Johannesburg at this conference “Building a global citizens movement”. You were also involved in setting up this whole process and conference through being member of the steering group of the CONCORD DARE Forum as well. What motivates you to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement?

BM: I was very excited because I became involved with the DARE Forum through two previous activities that predated this big project: The summer school in 2011 and then in 2012. There were many people talking about what was possible in DEEEP4 at that stage, and I was fascinated about the potential what something like that could offer. I think citizenship is at the core of development education, and the more there was discussion and talk about a global citizens movement, the more excited I became, and it coincided than with the possibility to become the Dochas representative in the DARE Forum, and it was because what I thought was coming down the road really, really motivated me trying to go for that representation. Why was I motivated? I think that is something that’s missing from a lot of development education, but as I said I think that’s something at the core of, say, positive development education. And not just local citizenship in terms of activism, but the global dimension. Because of that, when I became more active in the DARE Forum, I just became more interested in, and I still it is something that is very positive, something that has a huge potential.

TT: How would you define a global citizens movement?

BM: That becomes a bit trickier I think. For me I suppose the idea of a citizen’s movement is something where there are people from many different perspectives, and many different views, who have got some kind of shared vision and shared goal, and I think that’s where it becomes more different from development education. Normally I would consider movements as part of something with an easily definable goal or vision or mission. I think in the global citizens movement we are involved in, it’s less easy to identify what exactly the movement is trying to achieve. And that maybe makes it that little bit more difficult to bring people involved, and to spread the word of what we are trying to do. Whereas struggles let’s say,
political struggles or struggles on human rights issues, they are easier to tell people what they are about. Because you have got something much more bite sized that you can explain very easily. So to define this particular global citizens movement is a bit more difficult, but I do think having something in common, a shared goal or vision with people actively involved and moving towards that from all over the world is a global citizens movement.

TT: So what are the elements of this vision? Is this identifiable?

BM: In terms of our own global citizens movement?

TT: What do you mean with “our own global citizens movement”?

BM: I would see that the Johannesburg process and the DARE Forum and DEEEP, they are involved in a particular type of a global citizens movement. But I think that others have existed. But again they have a different dimension to it. Let’s say in environmental organisations, the likes of Greenpeace or Amnesty International, I think that you could argue in a way they are part of global citizens movements already. I think that the movement we became involved in is something that is a bit more exciting because of the cross-sectorial nature to it. That it’s not only looking at human rights or environmental issues, but realising that there is a lot of strength in trying to cross over those, say, silos type movements into a much more joint up network if you like. I do see there’s something a little bit different to previous attempts of global citizens movements.

TT: And why is this cross-sectorial element important?

BM: Two recent things that have happened that I would be aware of. One is the whole values and frames idea, and I think that often these movements have similar values or the same values, but they are operating maybe in a different sphere of influence, or in a different space. But by coming together, there is a joint up sense of solidarity. A realising that maybe we need to change things at a deeper level. We can stand much more together with other movements let’s say, and we can consolidate our efforts, and we can learn from each other’s attempts to try to change existing systems. And the other thing is around systems thinking. I think in terms of effectiveness, the idea of a more traditional approach in terms of separating organisations into sectorial areas, like environmental issues, human rights, gender based issues… they have their place, but I also think they are limited in what they can do. So I think there is the potential of this global citizens movement, this overarching cross-sectorial idea that possibly achieves more at a far deeper level in the long run. But I do think that it would take quite a bit of time to embed it and really achieve what we all hope it can do, because I do think it takes some explaining, and it takes organisations and people to get there.

TT: You started talking in the very beginning on citizenship as an important element. So maybe one more question on the definition. How do you see the relation between global citizenship, which is also discussed now at a UN level in the context of post-MDG discussions and around terms like global citizenship education and so on, and a global citizens movement? Because when I read the documents from UNESCO for example on global citizenship education, this is not necessarily or explicitly about movement building. It’s about skills, competences, values maybe and so on. But we are talking here about a global citizens movement.

BM: I think the skills and knowledge and competencies, that is a good direction. Moving from the MDGs, where the focus was much more on access to education, I do think it’s a progressive step to look into citizenship education, and looking at quality and these things, which are important. I see it as a step in a journey. It maybe not perfect how they look at it, but these are organisations that are maybe a bit more mechanistic in style and history. So I
do think that our expectations of what they could do needs to be kind of watered down a bit. I would see that a global citizens movement is being much more progressive than that. It is much further down the road in thinking about these things in terms of concepts, ideas and formulations. The global citizens movement can really enrich the promotion of global citizenship education. And even having a global citizenship education from UN or UNESCO or whatever the bodies or institutions might be, will really add weight to our efforts to build a global citizens movement. I think they will mutually reinforce each other. I don’t think that we should be afraid that either exist. They might be at times slightly separate in their actions, but I do think they would be mutually reinforcing. But I would see the movement be a bit further down the road in thinking of these things. Some of the discussion papers I have read around global citizenship education, it is almost like if DEEEP and the DARE Forum and other parts of the movements where having some of these discussions two, three years ago. And I think that’s credit to the DARE Forum, to DEEEP and to the global citizens movement.

TT: Do you think a global citizens movement as you defined it now, is useful or necessary for the causes you are involved in, and if yes, in which way?

BM: I would say definitely yes. I found it directly beneficial here in Ireland, because I am able to point to a couple of examples that are real, that exist, and where is activity happening on, and we can link our work to. So I have used some of what was happening in the global citizens movement as part of funding applications. I pointed to the fact that the Joburg conference happened, I pointed to the fact that there’s another one happening. I pointed to the fact of the leadership cycle. It gives a little bit of legitimacy to some of the efforts of our organisations within local contexts. So I have seen the direct benefit of having this citizen’s movement, and having it exist, and pointing towards that fact that this is a direction where many actors are going. It adds legitimacy to many of the arguments that we are trying to make locally. That’s been really beneficial. And I would also argue that within the national development context here in Ireland, pointing to our involvement in it gives weight to some of the arguments that we are trying to introduce all the time in the development discourse: that citizenship should be part of more mainstream development activities, that development education should be more mainstream development activities. That has been positive and really helpful.

TT: The next question would indeed be about the implications of a global citizens movement in your particular country or region. You answered this partly already, but maybe if we look a little bit broader as well, beyond the sphere of development education or even development, if you look at citizens in Ireland, the crisis context and so on, the public discussions and mobilisations that might have taken place. Are there any implications of this global dimension there? Do people relate in Ireland to a global citizens movement? Do they feel part of it, or is it in any way relevant for them?

BM: I think at the moment I would probably say not as much as I would hope for or like. Maybe especially in the economic and political crisis in the last years in Ireland, there has been a distancing from a global side of things let’s say. Even in terms of attitudes towards EU institutions and towards EU in general, there is a public distancing from these things, sadly, and I think that’s because of certain fears that the general public would have in Ireland. However here are attempts of more national citizens movements here in Ireland. We have tried to highlight some things that are going on globally in order to give them some solace and some realisation that there are other attempts going on outside of Ireland that maybe they can become more aware of in order to see that they are not on their own, but that there are other actions happening both organised and not around the world, that they can look towards for inspiration and hope and possibly get involved in. Those citizen’s
movements in Ireland are quite new, they are not really anything formal, they are much more outside of the formal institutional networks, they are not even organisations, they are very much just activists coming together, looking to get involved in things, but a little bit unsure on where do they go. So I think there are two things going on. One is that generally there is a distancing from and mistrust to more global institutions, and secondly I think there is a real need for citizen’s movements here in Ireland to become more aware of other efforts to learn from and add to.

TT: Where do you think this insular mentality or re-concentration on the national context comes from?

BM: There are different factors. One is that really Ireland economy and many other aspects of institutional life in Ireland collapsed almost. We had almost a perfect storm. Our banking system collapsed. The Catholic Church in Ireland had a terrific time in terms of reputational damage because of some of the activities they were involved in, in relation to things like child abuse. Our police services have gone through what can only be described as a tsunami of mistrust because of the things they have been involved in. And there has been a lot of political corruption in Ireland in the last 5 to 10 years. And then when the IMF and the EU and the Troika got more hands on involved in Ireland, there was a real backlash in the general public against what was perceived as outside interference in our affairs. Some of that interference, some would say, was very positive, but I think in general the perception is that we’ve had enough. Publically there seems to be a distancing away from lot of areas where traditionally we would have a proud record in. Maybe five, ten, fifteen years ago, many development agencies in Ireland would have found it very easy to get public support for their activities. Now there is a really strong sceptical view on why we are getting involved in a lot of different activities around the world, when people are hungry in Ireland, when homelessness is on the increase, when addiction issues are going through the roof, when suicide is increasing, when home repossessions are daily, when unemployment is increasing… “Let’s focus on our own much more!”

TT: So this means that there is no or little consciousness about the fact that increasing poverty or the multiple crisis you just described is linked to similar structural, global and international, institutional mechanisms and ideologies, which have similar effects elsewhere?

BM: That’s exactly right. It provides almost an ideal opportunity for many of us in terms of what we do, in terms of trying to be much more global citizens, involved from a development education point of view, to explain what our work is, and why it’s important, and that there are structural reasons. So people can relate much more to what is going on. The difficulty with that though, if I’m being absolutely honest, is that simultaneously there has been a collapse in support for those NGOs or organisations who are involved in that sphere. So what you got is a funding storm that faced organisations actively involved in doing this kind of work. So many efforts have finished at exactly the time what it was needed most. And this has been a sad incident within Ireland. If you look at the traditional ways of revenue to do this kind of work, it has been squeezed and squeezed and squeezed… at exactly the time when maybe it’s more relevant than ever before. Even previously we would argue that it’s relevant anyway, but from a public perception point of view, people can more easily and readily attach themselves to the discussions that we are having, because instead of talking about unemployment in Ethiopia, we could talk about unemployment in Ireland and Ethiopia, and what they have got in common.

TT: You are talking about public funding, or donations as well?

BM: Both! But particularly public funding.
TT: In terms of donations, you think this is connected to a general mistrust of institutions, including NGOs or civil society organisations?

BM: Sadly 2014 has been a bad year for civil society actors in Ireland, and there have been two big scandals in terms of how they are regarded as charities. The public don’t differentiate. They see them as civil society actors that were found to be quite corrupt in nature, receiving lots of money from the public, and there’s been a backlash almost against every other civil society actor. There is a new regulator in place in Ireland, that’s trying to standardise and putting strong governance into organisations. The traditional development sector in Ireland has been very strong in that regard anyway, much stronger than other areas of civil society action. But the public won’t see the difference between sectors, between let’s say civil society actors within the health area or civil society actors within a more general development area. Dochas in fairness has done lot of work in that area this year, but it might be more damaging next year or the year after. We have to wait and see. At the moment the public donations start beginning to struggle more than ever before, and that’s because not just a lack of money, but also because of institutional corruption as far as the public would be concerned.

TT: What do you see as obstacles or pitfalls in the establishment of a global citizens movement?

BM: If I can remember back to Joburg, as a kind of concrete example, I found as a participant, I got a lot from it individually, but I felt at times, when talking to other participants in the conference, that maybe people were coming with different ideas of what it is, what it could be. That’s quite healthy at a beginning of a process, or even in the early years of a process. I don’t see that necessarily as an obstacle, but I do think that the timeframe for a thing like this ought to be organic. It needs to take longer to establish itself than more traditional types of movements that are more thematic in nature. I think one of the challenges for a global citizens movement is patience. I think we need to have stamina and patience to really work in the longer run. And I wonder sometimes if have both of those, and weather or not we got the patience and the capacity to wait a while, because without the support of DEEEP and other actors, it becomes less feasible to be held together. So I think that the two things that would be needed in the long run to establish it even more is patience and stamina. I’m reminded of the phrase that the revolution won’t be funded. It’s not the funding that I think will be the pressure in the longer run. Rather the willingness to continue to contribute, and if people have the patience and stamina to make that happen.

TT: You have talked a lot about development education already. How do you see the potential of development education in the facilitation of a global citizens movement, and how does development education need to evolve in order to assume this role?

BM: I suppose maybe on my background in Development Perspectives, we were trying, in our own very small way, to contribute to a global citizens movement, without naming it, for the last five, six, seven years. We didn’t have anything physically to attach it to, but essentially this was what we were trying to do. We were trying to build the capacity and awareness of people to see themselves as global citizens and to see themselves attaching to things they were passionately interested about. We would not necessarily name it, but something we felt very strongly about being involved in like a global citizens movement is something that we were trying to encourage. And I would say especially development education with adults is something that we can marry and knit in and link quite easily. So I think there is a strong overlap. Citizenship is a core part for me, and active citizenship is a core part of what development education is about. And I don’t see development education ending with awareness raising. It can go on and should go on into a deeper sphere. I do think
that there should be that aspect to progressive development education. And how it can evolve? Even having the global citizens movement, and even knowing that it exists is starting to change some discussions in the development education sector, particularly in Europe for sure. I can see that more references are being made to global citizenship in papers that are being produced, in policies that are being talked about, in organisations own strategic plans. So I think even having the global citizens movement is like a type of soft power. It’s a way of influencing the evolution of development education, which is for me very positive, because as I said earlier, progressive development education has to have something like this as part of its core anyway.

TT: Danny from CIVICUS said in the interview I did with him that “I’m not sure if something called development education will survive in the decades to come, because when the development framework itself is going to change so dramatically, then the idea of educating about development seems to be a little bit odd”. The idea of development as a concept becoming obsolete, we should not talk about development education anymore. Do you agree on this? Which kind of reaction does this provoke from the development educators you are at your heart?

BM: Development of course is a contested concept. It means so many different things to so many different people. There is a good chance that development education in the next decade will become less used in discourse and debate. And maybe that’s a good thing. I would disagree about the possibility of development education being about development. Sometimes there is a very old view that people have about what development education is. Development education can be used differently, very progressive and not traditional in its roots. So I do agree that in the usage of the term “development education”, I would say it’s best days are behind it. But in terms of the ethos and the essence of what it is, I think that will continue. It might continue in a different guise and in a different way. It could be spoken about more as part of global citizenship education. But I think that the more radical roots of development education will continue. They might just change in terms of the naming of it. But I would challenge some of the views people have of development education being just related to development. I was listing to Gustavo Esteva yesterday in Dublin. He was speaking at the 40ies anniversary of a very interesting college, Kimmage Development Studies Centre. And he was, even though coming from a post-development point of view, arguing for a strong need for the roots of development education to continue, and I would totally agree.
Rene Suša
28 May 2014
APPROVED BY EMAIL ON 30 MAY 2014

Rene Susa agreed non-anonymous use of the interview.

TT: Please present yourself – name, age, occupation and anything else you would like to add.

RS: My name is Rene Suša, and I’m 30 years old. I work as a global education practitioner for the last 7 or 8 years. I mostly work with schools, especially with young people and teachers. I also work in developing new educational materials and approaches to global education, and most of my work, at least in the last time, has been informed by the post-colonial and post-structural theory.

TT: Let’s go to the question of the global citizens movement that is at the centre of my research. You have been to the global conference on “Building a global citizens movement”. What motivates you to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement?

RS: I would say that before going to Johannesburg, I was very sceptical about the potential and the use of trying to engage in such a process, because from what I have seen so far, I have seen many parallel movements emerge, that don’t really talk to each other that much, although their ideas and goals are very similar, but always at the expense of somebody being left out, and if its supposed to be a global thing, I always had the doubt: How can you do it at a scale that is large enough? And, after since Johannesburg, I would say that the way events unfolded there I got some clues that keep me very much motivated and interested actually, and especially the part that at least in that event the people there didn’t claim to actually be representing somebody, talking for somebody else, which is what large scale movements usually do but instead the discussions were more about exactly how to open up the debates to be as inclusive as possible, and without being to deterministic, but still having a direction, and I think this was echoed very well then later in Istanbul, the way it was at least presented to us, in the report of Frank Geary with the flotilla approach, and also with the idea of movements having to be radical, but also radically inclusive - with again the word “inclusive” maybe also having some power relation connotations to it, but let’s not go into that – but it's precisely this thing: So how to stay in this flow, where there are many things happening at the same time sort of converging to the same direction, and how to make sure that none of them becomes so overpowering that it threatens others. So how can we keep it open? And I think its happening. The way discussions are going, it is happening, and this is what keeps me motivated and interested.

TT: Very interesting. So how do you define a global citizens movement?

RS: I wouldn’t dare actually to do it. I don’t think we even did it in Johannesburg. There are a lot of people who have a problem with the word “citizen” of course, because of the connotation of being linked to citizenship, as something which is a legal status of something like that. I would personally see it more in a sense of “global peoples movement” or as a “human movement” I guess… I mean “global”, the word as such, is a little bit redundant, because everything that happens on earth in a sense is global. And “citizen”, as it is a word that is being so much contested, I would just leave it out. I would say it’s a sort of a human movement. We are participating in it as a fragment of it. I don’t think that we are really at the centre. And I don’t think that anybody should be at the centre.
TT: Very interesting, very much linked to the idea of inclusion of course that you mentioned before. Do you think that a global citizens movement, or human movement, as you outlined, is useful or necessary for the causes you are involved in?

RS: Well, I think things are happening on very multiple layers. I would say that this kind of emergent international movements, or global movements, or however, are a part of the story, which is something like a … I don’t know… it’s a bit like the theory which says that ideas and changes in personal lives of peoples happen a little bit in parallel, and that this kind of a movement is perhaps a new kind… I don’t think we ever had in history such a thing of an idea being manifested in actual gatherings of people at a global scale. It responds more maybe to the collective part of the idea being manifested, and I think its part of the story, in a way. I’m not sure if that was clear what I said…

TT: Yeah, it was clear, but maybe I can insist a bit, so maybe more concretely: What are the causes you are involved in, maybe start with this, and then how does this link to international, global, human movement?

RS: Okay, well, what I’m personally interested in is something which I guess could be most easily defined as epistemological pluralism. So the idea of the coexisting of various knowledge production systems. The idea behind epistemological pluralism is that you have multiplicity of co-existing knowledge production systems, that come from different cultural and social background, and that they all have something valuable to offer to us. And I think that in this kind of globalised world and emergent global movements, there is a possibility for the ideas and concepts from this kind of different knowledge production systems to actually meet among each other for the first time, and maybe to discuss solutions or ideas that were beyond the scope of what was possible before. For instance in Johannesburg, where we had such really broad participation of people from 80 countries you could really see the different emphasises that people put on certain notions. We had – in spite of a quite large representation from Europe, people from many other parts of the world, and from these other parts you got a lot of the concepts that were first of all not anthropocentric, which I think is something quite needed probably in this time, and that are capable to address a wider range of issues. And I think that the old solutions have run dry, so its good to have this in the broader perspective, in a very open forum. I think that is what this movement can provide, it can provide an open forum as discussion place, were different ideas can meet.

TT: This provokes also some reflections from my side. I just read yesterday the first publication by UNESCO on global citizenship education. There it says that one of the fundamental tensions in the concept of global education is the dichotomy between the promotion of universality while respecting singularity. So basically the common cause versus the plurality and also individual level rights, self-improvement and so on, versus common and collective identity, interest and participation. What you just outlined is very much an emphasis on the diversity aspect, but where do you see the relation with some kind of common cause, or even political agenda, or it this something that should not be so much considered at this point of the movement?

RS: I think that I’m not sure if I would be actually willing to risk putting a central term for the whole movement, but if I would personally be choosing one, I would it would be the word justice. But not necessarily very much defined, because justice has many faces – we can talk about social justice, political justice, economic justice, environmental justice and what not… for instance in the background where I am coming from, there is a lot of discussion about epistemological justice, and I would say that this could be a very good core, so as to start first with the exploration of the possibilities of radically different world views meeting on an equal ground, before we decide what a common cause is, if we ever decide that. But I think
we haven't had actually begun to converse properly yet. I think we are still not at that point. So I would suggest that first, before we try to outline a common cause.

TT: Now, let’s bring it back a little bit more to your particular environment. What are the implications of a global citizens movement, I mean the notions you just outline, human movement and so on, in your particular country or region?

RS: Here, this is a good question. I think it’s a bit difficult to say. For starters I would have a hard time defining what my region is, because I would necessarily see it geographically, but more in the sense of people that I have the opportunity to talk to. And while I’m not sure that I could claim that such a movement has an impact in Slovenia as such, but what I can see is that the people that I have talked to so far, from various kinds of backgrounds, very diverse backgrounds actually, that somehow it resonated their needs as well. What I guess is rather common is the general dissatisfaction with the current situation, and to that you get basically get two mainstream responses: some who think that the existing story can provide answers, that we just have to wait, and the crisis will go away, and we have the problems and solutions already figured out, both of them, but those I’d say are not in the majority. And then you have the majority of people who are generally concerned about the future of their life and I feel that the kind of discussions we are having do somehow speak to them. Because they see that it’s really not looking well for the future, especially in the countries, that… ok I probably come from the country probably least hurt from the south European countries, but still, especially among the youth any kind of positive outlook on future is virtually non existent.

TT: And, there you see a potential for a human global movement to provide some…

RS: Yes, I see it in the sense that people see that the tools they have at their disposal are not going to be able to secure for them a meaningful existence. So I think a lot of them are looking for other tools.

TT: What do you see as obstacles or pitfalls in the establishment of such a global citizens movement, human movement, global conversation and so on?

RS: I think that the things we are struggling against, which is this established relationships of exploitation and domination, if it’s in brutal force, or through money, or through ideas, cultural and epistemic violence are actually very difficult to dismantle. Even for the people who are aware of all this, but it’s just that the all pervasiveness of the same kind of patterns is really – wow – its shocking, its very, very difficult to step out. I don’t think that just by claiming that we are opening a space, that we are actually opening it. I think that the doing of that poses challenges, which are probably beyond what we actually imagine right now. This is certainly not a trivial thing – this is extremely, extremely difficult. Extremely, extremely difficult. And even if I just now look at the context of our cultural background, having radically inclusive conversations with, I don’t know, let’s say extreme right wing parties which have just risen up in Europe, or let’s say with the architects of the current financial system, I’m not sure if we are equipped to deal with them. Let alone to establish a forum where diverse worldviews – that don’t come from the worldview in which we were socialized, are meeting, so it would be in fact a meeting of worlds, you know, and that usually doesn’t end well. There is always a desire from one of these views to dominate others, and I think that is the central thread of history so far. Always somebody thinks: I got it right, you all got it wrong. And I don’t think we are immune to that, we should always keep that in mind.

TT: Now back to development education and global learning – how do you see the potential of development education in the facilitation of a global citizens movement, and how does development education or global learning need to evolve in order to assume such a role?
RS: I think that’s a very good question. I think that at a point where development education currently is, or global education, or however we call it, I wouldn’t dare to suggest that it should per se take a role in facilitation of these discussions. Simply put I don’t think we are broadminded enough yet for such a task – regardless of our words. If I look at the most of the development education, some of it it’s critical yes, I admit, and offers potential for that, but the mainstream part is still very much in the paradigm of, you know, the west being at least somehow better… if not necessarily through our economical and political structures, then at least through our science, our knowledge, through our ethical values, morals and so on.

And I would say that first what we really need is a maybe not the whole development education or global education sector at the same time, but at least parts of it, to be able just to really engage first deeply with the kinds of knowledge which comes from outside of our contexts, to be prepared to understand what it actually means to relate to that. And I don’t think that there are many people who have had this kind of an experience, or if they had I’m not sure they are working in global education. We should look for help from everywhere.

TT: Don’t you see at least tendencies or potential to have the kind of post-colonial questioning or pluralistic epistemologies reflected in global learning, if you think of people like Vanessa Andreotti for example, or the critical whiteness discussions and so on? These are things that are happening, isn’t it?

RS: It’s not that I’m not optimistic. I just think we need to develop it much further. I think that the theory is actually miles ahead of practice. I think huge leaps have been made in theory, and they really offer us a good, solid, and I would dare to say, scientific background, to engage with this kind of things. But then the single act of actually practicing it – I find it lacking. And this is where I think we should focus. We should focus now a little bit more on the practice. I think theory has gone really quite far, I’m very happy for that. Now it’s time for trying it out.

TT: And what would we need to advance this practical development of global learning?

RS: This may sound simplistic perhaps, but simply more opportunities for exchange on a global level from all sides with people actually visiting different cultural and educational contexts for prolonged periods of time. So that they actually can embody a little bit of a different approach. And not just one – there is always the danger of replacing one story with the other, which leads nowhere. Theory has been very, very useful in equipping us with concepts for dealing with this kind of situations, but we simply have to try them out a little bit first, to build our practice.

And on the other hand – you don’t really have to go anywhere, you just have to be very persistent and keep engaging with the difficult questions that we are blocking out for a prolonged period of time. In think we learn well in groups that stay together for a few days and that are able to put as much mess on the table as they possibly can by exposing the things that don’t work and gathering courage to try something out of the box. Courage and some good old honesty I guess are key to this. Kurt Vonnegut mentioned un-neurotic courage in of his books 50 years ago. We need to develop that kind of courage.

TT: Now last question is if you would like to add something?

RS: On a personal note only, five years ago, or maybe three years ago, maybe even two years ago, I could not have expected us having this kind of conversations that we are having now, especially not on a global level. I think that the situation of crises is really creating a window of opportunity, and so far it has been used, I would say, in a good way, in a way that really, really surprises me. I would never have imagined to see this happen, within my
lifetime, let alone now. So I’m actually very happy about it. It’s maybe a bit silly and disrespectful to say that crisis is actually a good thing, but it does have it’s positive sides.

TT: When you say “it” happening, you mean like a human movement, or steps towards global conversations or global citizenship or something?

RS: Yes…

TT: Thanks a lot. You will receive the transcript for approval.
TT: Can you please present yourself briefly with your name, age, occupation and also what are the causes you are involved in, or what is your activist profile, if you would like to call it like this?

MS: My name is Marina Sarli, I’m Italian and living and working in Greece. I’m 39 years old. I’m active in the field of voluntary action sector, since I’m 16. When I was first engaged with the CSO community. Until I was 22, I was a volunteer for many organisations, mainly environmental and human rights organisations in Italy, and Fair Trade associations in Italy. These were the three fields I was active in. And at the age of 22 I moved to Athens, for a European volunteering service project. So this was my long term volunteering experience abroad. And I did it on children and youth education, actually environmental education for kids and youth in a children’s museums here in Athens. A quite innovative educational institution I would say for the Athens environment. Then I found my first job, and my passion became professional. I found my first job with a Greek NGO, which was working on youth mobility and active youth participation. It’s called ELIX, it’s a quite big NGO here in Greece, and very networked at global level through the network alliance of European voluntary service organisations. Through ELIX I also started to have some European roles in the alliance, in the board of the alliance and working groups and so on. At this moment I’m working as a freelance project writer and coordinator. Now, because of the semester of the Greek presidency of the European Union, I’m coordinating the project for the NGDO platform of Greece for the semester. I’m working on a full time voluntary base for my fair trade association by writing and monitoring the programme sector. I also have a very active role in the new project in Greece which is called Greek Bank of Memories, which is mainly a project that links cultural and social aspects of memory sharing and solidary, on how to educate the society, with a special focus on young people, on the value of the third generation, of the third age memories and human capital that is hidden behind the personal stories, so that they become collective stories when they are shared. I’m also in the DARE Forum since three years now, and in the steering group of the DARE Forum. I learned a lot, I have to say. I learned so much that I was proposed to run for the board of CONCORD two years ago, and I was elected there. And that’s a really great experience for me.

TT: You have participated in the conference in Johannesburg last November “Building a global citizens movement”. What motivates you personally to engage with the idea of a global citizens movement?

MS: Concerning the experience in Johannesburg, I have to say when we were discussing in the DARE Forum the profile of participants, I really thought this was targeting much more activists than to the ones who are mainly in the office behind the PC, instead of trying to mobilise people. But once I was there I have to say that the feeling was that I should be there. And what motivated to be there, besides the link with the DARE Forum, so it was anyway a chance to enrich the DARE Forum experience with a global dimension on what is actually our European work, so what motivated my was exactly this. Always in my work with Fair Trade, or as a volunteer with Human Rights organisations, I always had the global dimension as my mission, and my vision. But I rarely had the chance to have it in my activities. I’m based in a specific family, I’m mainly travelling to Brussels or Italy, but I stay in
Europe, and I really miss some time the contact with the global dimension we are working for, so that was the main motivation for me.

TT: “Global citizens movement” is a very vague term and we still don’t really know I guess what it means. How would you define it? What is a global citizens movement for you?

MS: I would define my global citizens identity – that would be much easier than defining the movement at this stage, and I think that all the identities together make the movement. If I think of my personal global citizens identity, I would say a global citizen is someone who cares, who takes into consideration the social, environmental, economic issues without considering the borders of countries. The neighbourhood is a global world. A global citizenship does not care if it is here or there, something is happening somewhere and this makes him feel involved and engaged in a way. So this is something that I feel for myself. So if I see there is a sort of movement arising in South America or an injustice in Asia, it counts exactly the same as if it would be two kilometres from my house, or in my country. If I have to define the movement – the movement is all these people who feel like this, meet and try to merge their energy and vision and commitment for this global dimension and try also to involve policies at high level and people, to engage other people to feel part of this dimension – this creates a movement.

TT: There are two aspects which have been crystallising a bit in my conversations so far: One is, based on global citizenship more or less as you defined it, some kind of planetary identification with humanity and planet, so a global citizens movement as a space for learning, for connecting, for sharing. Or then there are others how emphasise more common goals, common strategies, common political agenda, even common organisation. One is basically a global citizens movement more as a horizontal network of sharing, connecting, learning of locally based global citizens, and the other one would be more a joint political agenda with defined common strategies and goals, or even a common organisation. Do you see a tension between these two elements, or what would be more important for you if you would need to make a choice?

MS: I would say in an ideal scenario we don’t have to make a choice. We need the two levels, and we need the two levels to become one level. This means wide learning and sharing from the grassroots, from the locally active people in the society, in the communities and so on, and we are already working at the political level. This is the ideal scenario. This means direct democracy, participatory democracy. So while we act we make already policies. That means having our people, the people of the global movement, in the place where political decisions are taken. In this case the two levels not only co-exist, but actually are one level. To reach this ideal scenario, we should not set it as a utopia, but to see what is feasible, because it is better probably to have small but radical changes than big and impossible ones, to dream in big and impossible ones. So I think we need to work at the two levels, and I don’t see any tension. I see that if you only stay at one stage you will never have the impact at global level that we desire.

TT: If you think of the causes you are involved in, like voluntarism, fair trade in Greece, or your engagement with CONCORD… Do you think that a global citizens movement is useful or necessary for the causes you are involved in?

MS: It’s useful for sure, and it’s needed. I would say that being in Greece, it’s a controversial period to speak about what ever global. Greece is a very introvert, focussing a lot on the local, because of the financial, economical but also social and values crisis that is going on since 2009. The main aspect that people are interested in to analyse and are concerned about is the local one. If I think of the causes I’m working on in Greece, we should never stop
trying to explain the links between what’s happening locally and what’s happening globally. Only this actually gives the right dimension of the solidarity that Greece is expecting, because the solidarity Greece is expecting is not on a local level, it’s expecting it from outside. We are demanding solidarity commitments from outside of Greece, but we are caring of being solidarity only in Greece, and this is non-sense. If we analyse this position, it’s quite easy to explain to the people that this is non-sense. We cannot demand if we don’t offer the same, and I don’t mean money. We cannot demand solidarity if we don’t offer solidarity. And when you explain this, actually people agree. It’s not the case that ActionAid or Medecins sans Frontiers are suffering, they are really going well in this period, although the crisis is high, especially as they are making clear that it is not here and there, it’s somewhere and the somewhere is about all of us. So it is not only needed, it is necessary at this stage at Greek level. I’m also afraid, especially if we see the results of the European elections, that the European level is also very week, because these localist – “Let’s protect ourselves!” – is a feeling that is rising also in other parts of Europe, if we think of France… so, yes, it’s needed. My only fear is that it’s needed, because we think it’s needed, but people think it’s not, if you look at the results of the vote and so on. In a certain way, we have to force the change in the way we dream. That’s my professional doubt in the last year.

TT: What are the implications of a global citizens movement, in your particular country or region, if you think of Greece for example? What I would be particularly interested in is the tension between a localist approach and a global dimension, because obviously, and I’m sure that many people who are protesting in Greece or are voting, they are affected and at the same time they know very well that this is not a Greek or national phenomenon, it’s very much linked to international policy frames, IMF and all these global actors. But as a result, do people feel like global citizens? What is the meaning of this for people in Greece?

MS: I don’t think that the majority of people feel like global citizens, and I think there is political will not to feel like global citizens. The school curriculum is totally focussing on Greece, on the global age of the ancient Greece, how Greece was strong, or has the power to become again strong. It is totally focussed on Greece. I really can feel that they are very nationalists, and being very nationalist, the have a really localist approach to everything. Now with the crisis even more, and even before the crisis. They are open to others, they have a tradition of a hosting country with a strong touristic sector, they have been sailing since generations, so they are open to other cultures, but always recognising strong localist focus in their identity. Much more than other countries I have to say, for example much more than Italy I think. So Greek citizens are not global citizens yet, and are not ready. But I would build on the crisis. We are working now though the PIIGS project on crisis countries, and through this project we are speaking with young people and trying to make the links, to explain that there is a horizon to enlarge. Keep the local focus but make this local wider than the border of your country. Start from your neighbour, but think that you neighbour is part of something much bigger than the national identity.

TT: When you talk to these young people in this PIIGS project, I guess, they are not necessarily surprised to hear that problems people in Portugal, or in Italy or Ireland are facing, are pretty much based on the same kind of structural mechanisms that also led to the crisis in Greece?

MS: But is still is Europe. When we discuss about this, we keep the European dimension, and especially, what I was telling before, the demands that Europe should help us, because it is happening not only to us. Then we have to go a step further. What we do is try to analyse what happened in Argentina a few years before the Greek crisis, and if they are aware of this, and if they were demanding solidarity for Argentina at this stage. And if not, if
they would be demanding it now, because they know what they themselves are going through - the same situation more or less than Argentina had. 10 years ago we didn’t have the crisis, Argentina had it, and we didn’t care. Now, we have the crisis. If Argentina had it, would we demand solidarity? This is the step we have to do now.

TT: So how was the reaction from the people you are working with when you put these global implications on the table?

MS: We are still at the stage of working with a selected group of young people who will become global activists in our activity, and they will make the main activity from now on. Although they are selected through courses from universities, we have to say that they actually feel the dilemma – actually we are not aware of it, and our TV programmes were very superficial in explaining what was going on in Argentina. And we stress a lot on the consumistic attitude we have. We work a lot on the very old fashioned sentence: Act local, but see the global implication. Your consumistic attitude, your political will when you vote specific politicians that do not support specific policies at European level… What is the impact on the life of any country, with land grabbing to produce our cheap biofuel and so on… and they don’t know! There is not the right access to information. We are working in a country were information on global issues is almost zero, and is left only to few journalists, and few organisations that are still sustainable and able to work. There were much more in the past, but the crisis shut down a lot of associations. Even work on information has been dramatically reduced.

TT: When you think of the global citizens movement, or the global dimension in citizenship, like in your local context as you just described it, but also globally through the process we tried to start in Johannesburg for example, what do you see as obstacles or difficulties in the establishment of a global citizens movement?

MS: One obstacle I would think of is the lack of ability to manage diversity, cultural, geographical diversity and so on. Although we all believe it is a richness, and probably the base for a global movement identity, I think working in practice we always tend to work and to consider the work from our point of view. So from the standard we are used to work. For example: All the young activists we are with in the PIIGS projects are dreaming to be connected through Internet with young activists, not only in the PIIGS countries but also in the so-called South. And when we were discussing about where and how, they would say: the very remote communities in Africa, very remote. And they don’t have the perception that in the very remote communities in Africa, they would probably not only not have Internet, but not even electricity. So I think when we want to have a lot of people engaged, we have to be aware of the difficulty to manage diversity, political diversity, cultural and religious diversity and so on.

TT: How do you see the potential of development education in the facilitation of a global citizens movement, and how does development education need to evolve in order to assume this role?

MS: First of all I would seriously take into consideration the possibility to stop calling it development, but call it global education, if we want to have a global citizens movement. But apart from the potential, I see the role as a key role. We cannot think of a global citizens movement without considering global education or development education as a key tool to reach it. We don’t go anywhere if we don’t invest in global education. From this answer you can imagine the potential.

TT: And why do we need it?
MS: If we want to stay and feel like an elite of workers, of people already engaged, and speak among us and dream and also vision and also act – I don’t say that we are not effective in producing results - but if we want to be an elite of enlightened persons, we don’t need to stress on global education as a key role. But we want people around us to join, to participate, to influence, even to change our vision, to participate in the change and to bring us to the limit of what we envision and dream in our works. There is a lack, a gap in what we dream and what we are able to achieve. And If we want to have people on board, citizens, and not only the ones who work on this, we need to invest in education.

TT: You say we should stop talking about development education and call it global education, but what does it mean conceptually, what does it need to assume this role of facilitating a global citizens movement?

MS: I would go a bit were Stefan went during the presentation on the European Year for Development. I think that the global dimension, the global issues should be mainstreamed. So conceptually I would say that what we should achieve, what we have to work for, is to make clear and visible, immediately visible, that fact that global issues concern you anyway, anywhere. Where ever you are, you are a global citizens, not only a citizen of your country. This is the concept we have to work on. Especially in the reality I work in, which is Greece.

TT: Thank you!