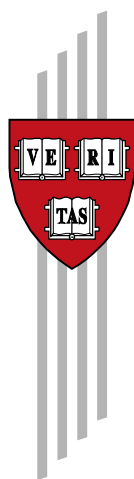


# Scaling PDIA Solutions through Broad Agency, and Your Role

Matt Andrews, Lant Pritchett and Michael Woolcock

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# **Scaling PDIA Solutions through Broad Agency, and Your Role**

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## **Abstract**

Many development challenges are complex, involving a lot of different agents and with unknown dimensions. Solutions to these challenges are often unknown, and contextually dependent. At the same time, there are political imperatives at play in many contexts which create pressure to ‘find the solution now...and then scale it up.’ Such pressure raises a question: how does a policy entrepreneur or reformer find a new solution and scale it up when dealing with complexity? This is the subject we address in the current paper, which is the fifth in a series on ‘how to’ do problem driven iterative adaptation (PDIA) (Andrews et al. 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c). The paper focuses on building broad agency solutions in the process of identifying problems and finding and fitting contextually appropriate solutions. The broad agency is, in our opinion, a most effective mechanism to ensure scaling and dynamic sustainability in the change process. As with other working papers on this topic, the contents here do not offer all answers to those asking questions about how to do development effectively. It closes by reflecting on the importance of ‘you’ (the reader, and ostensibly part of a policy change or reform team somewhere) using this and the other ideas as heuristics to rethink and reorient how you work—but with your own signature on each idea.

## **Introduction**

Matt uses comparative cases on public sector internal audit reform to teach about PDIA (Andrews and Seligmann 2013). A first case reflects on Malaysia's experience. In 1979, motivated by a small cadre of newly professionalized internal auditors in both the private sector and Ministry of Finance (and buoyed by the passage of international norms regarding internal audit), the country passed a law requiring government-wide adoption of internal audit; using international standards, with a circular detailing how this should be done. Twenty-five years later, a research program found that only 35 of 202 State and Local Government bodies had internal audit units in place. Other entities either could not afford the practice or did not see a need for it (Ali et al. 2007). The government responded by producing a new circular demanding government-wide internal audit adoption. Progress has been better since then, but is still slow and selective.

In contrast, Burkina Faso introduced an internal audit reform in 2007 that was not actually called an 'internal audit reform'. It emerged when a new Prime Minister appointed a well respected academic, Henri Bessin, to address the high levels of corruption in the country (which was the focus of regular citizen rallies and growing political tension). Three existing inspection and oversight bodies were merged for this purpose, and the World Bank was asked to advise on reform options. Mr. Bessin's team adopted a step-by-step approach, starting with a combined report from all three entities (about what they did to address corruption and what they intended to do in the future). The report was presented publicly, and gave the Prime Minister a quick and visible early product on which to build legitimacy for the broader reform.

This led to a next step, where Mr. Bessin gathered cabinet ministers (under the auspices of the Prime Minister) to explore areas in which his unit might start applied investigations. At a

workshop, the Ministers were asked about the biggest problems in their ministries. A few ministers were forthcoming with examples, which Mr. Bessin and World Bank colleagues explained were a manifestation of ‘risks’ that could be mapped and addressed. In response, a small group of ministers agreed to host five pilot ‘risk mapping’ exercises. These built on basic internal audit methods translated into a Burkina-compatible approach, and were implemented by local officials and consultants, in a matter of months. They proved a success, and generated enthusiasm amongst ministers who reaped greater functionality and legitimacy from the exercise. The work was scaled from five to eleven ministries as a result, and the teams who undertook the risk maps were sent for international training in more formal internal audit methods. They then undertook performance audits in an expanded set of ministries, and adopted a formal corruption investigations focus. By 2012, they had completed over 600 investigations.<sup>1</sup> The role has grown since that time, even after Mr. Bessin retired and the government was ousted in a coup d'etat.

We start with these stories because they speak to questions we often hear when discussing PDIA and efforts to build state capability: “Can these efforts scale-up?” and “Are these efforts sustainable?” The stories reveal different answers to these questions—and help us to explain what we think scaling and sustainability goals should entail in complex state building processes, and how these should be pursued:

- Malaysia’s case tells a strangely positive story in respect of both concepts, using standard interpretations of each. It involved rapid scaling (called ‘explosions’ by Myers (2000)) and affected large numbers of agencies covered by audit laws (that were also meant to adopt the practices, in what Urvin (1996) would call a significant ‘quantitative’ scaling

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<sup>1</sup> See a 2014 United States State Department Briefing (<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/227134.pdf>).

initiative).<sup>2</sup> The change was sustained as well, with laws maintained for 25 years—and the low level of implementation also holding firm—suggesting that the government reached a new static equilibrium in which systems and practices were ‘enduring’ (even if they were not performing).

- In contrast, the Burkina case shows slower, less expansive, and more muddled scaling—through what Myers (2000) calls expansion (where one builds on pilots) or association (where one builds on and through relationships). The numbers were less impressive, with one unit providing internal audit services to a small, incrementally growing set of entities. There were other kinds of scaling, however, with the new unit performing more activities over time, expanding its mandate, and enhancing its resources. Urvin (1996) calls these the functional, political, and organizational expressions of scaling up,<sup>3</sup> which combine with common quantitative manifestations to foster multi-dimensional scaling (which we call 4-D scaling, given the four dimensions). Interestingly, the continuous change suggests that it would be a misnomer to describe Burkina reforms as ‘sustained’. Instead, they contributed to what Chambers et al. (2012) call ‘dynamic sustainability’ (involving ongoing improvement to systems and capabilities, not an end goal or resting point where one system or capability is simply maintained).

We are not fans of rapid but false scaling, like was experienced in Malaysia, or static sustainability one sees in the same case. Rather, we believe that the Burkina Faso case is a good example of scaling and sustainability in state building exercises, especially when these exercises pertain to complex challenges. One needs gradual four dimensional scaling (4-D scaling) in such

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<sup>2</sup> Where ‘quantitative’ scaling involves producing ‘more’ units of something—arguably the most common understanding of ‘scaling up’ or ‘taking things to scale’.

<sup>3</sup> Put simply, ‘functional’ scaling involves learning how to do more actions and activities; ‘political’ scaling infers expanding a mandate and political support; ‘organizational’ scaling refers to the growth in an organization itself, typically through additions to resources.

situations—where capability expands in all four ways; quantitative (‘more’ entities are affected), functional (‘more’ activities are performed), political (‘more’ support is attracted, and mandates are broadened), and organization (‘more’ resources are allocated to areas of growing capability)—with organizations learning more things and achieving more political space to move and use new capability. One also needs dynamic sustainability, where improvements are made, consolidated, and improved upon; reflecting a progressive and adaptive expansion in capability (rather than the achievement of some apparent premature medium-term end point).

Think of the complex challenge involved in exploring new lands, like the western United States in 1803 (discussed in Andrews et al 2015): Where would the Lewis and Clark explorers have been if they managed to scale by ‘numbers’ only, making ground from St. Louis to the west coast but with no codified knowledge of how they got there, and no added political authorization from indigenous leaders along the way, or extra resources to survive and make it back to St. Louis? Imagine, further, if individuals in the United States stopped after the Lewis and Clark journey and ‘sustained’ their achievements, instead of building on such: We would not have the easy 2015 journey from St. Louis to Los Angeles if adventurers did not follow with their own dynamic additions to knowledge and practice. We would not, in fact, have Los Angeles.

We believe further that the goals of 4-D scaling and dynamic sustainability are attained through a blend of ‘expansion’ and ‘association’ (where small steps or pilots allow learning and then action at scale, and where many agents are engaged to diffuse the new action), rather than ‘explosion’ (where an intervention is devised and scaled with haste). In keeping with the 1804 metaphor, we believe that one builds big journeys out of many small action steps, and through relational links that allow learning along the way, diffusion of lessons, and creative progress in groups. You cannot have a big bang scaling up initiative when you don’t know what you are

scaling, or how it will fit the many contexts you are scaling to, or when you lack trust and acceptance from those who have to adopt and then live with the new thing you are scaling.

We have embedded various strategies that promote 4-D scaling and dynamic sustainability in the PDIA process. Think, for instance, of the way problem deconstruction draws attention to the areas in which scaling is actually required (where the ‘causes’ of a problem typically overlap with areas in which one needs quantitative, functional, political, or organizational change—often at scale). Think, also, how iterative processes promote dynamic learning and adaptation, and how action and reflection opportunities foster improved functional and organizational scaling (where organizations are trying new things, learning how to do them, and building resources to do them again). Think, further, about the PDIA focus on building authorization (which promotes quantitative and political scaling over time).

People are at the center of all these PDIA elements. We have discussed this in some length regarding the need to get authority for PDIA initiatives, and have alluded to it in mentioning the work of ‘teams’ at various points in prior chapters. These discussions do not, however, do justice to the breadth and depth of ‘agency’ required to make PDIA happen—especially if aims to achieve broad and deep scaling and dynamic sustainability. We focus on this topic here. We start by presenting a stylized discussion of the Burkina Faso case to show what we mean by building broad and deep agency for PDIA, drawing on theory about embedded agency and change. Following this, we discuss ‘who’ we believe one needs in a PDIA change process—focusing on a selection of key functions that need to be played at different points in the change process. We then discuss ‘how’ one mobilizes agents to play the roles and provide the functions required, emphasizing strategies to leverage, convene, and connect. We conclude the

working paper by asking, as usual, what this means for you; ‘what role will you play in PDIA, given where you sit or stand in any given challenge situation?’

## **Why broad engagement matters**

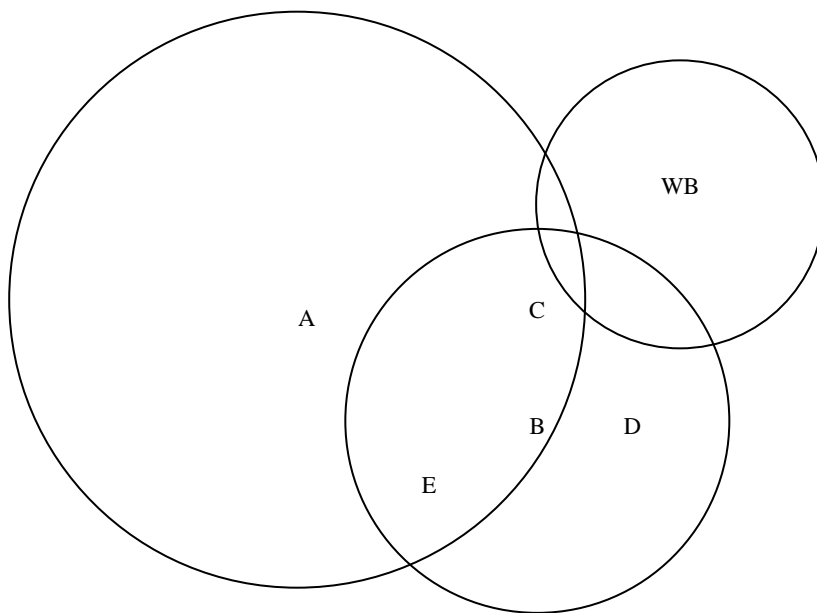
Gaps in state capability tend to fester. People in governments accept these gaps and learn to live with them, all the while going to work, collecting paychecks and climbing organizational ladders to positions of prominence. This was arguably the case in Burkina Faso in the early 2000s. Corruption was considered high and growing at this time, with the country performing poorly on most corruption indicators (reflected, for instance, in a decline in its Transparency International Corruption Index score, from 34 in 2005 to 29 in 2007). This was becoming a problem for the government, with social and political tensions increasingly focused on the issue—asking why the country no longer lived up to its name (with ‘Burkina Faso’ meaning ‘land of the upright or honest people’). In this atmosphere, long-time President Blaise Compaoré appointed a new Prime Minister, Tertius Zongo, to head the government. He became the head of government—denoted by the central position ‘A’ in the large circle in Figure 1, which represents a defined social or policy network or field—let us say ‘the Burkina Faso government’.

Zongo was part of the elite in his country, having spent over twenty years in and around government and holding high-level portfolios prior to his final appointment (like Minister of Finance). As discussed in Andrews et al (2016c), centrally located agents (or elites) like Zongo are commonly considered the most embedded in their contexts. They are empowered by pre-existing rules of the game and social and political structures, and are the greatest beneficiaries of



such—having the most power, biggest office and largest paycheck. Because of this, a theory called the Paradox of Embedded Agency suggests that we should not expect them to regularly perceive the need for change, have access to change ideas, or risk their interests in pressing for change (Andrews 2013; Battilana and D’unno 2009; Seo and Creed 2002). This, theorists would argue, is a major reason why capability gaps persist in most places (given that one cannot get the authority needed to address pressing problems).<sup>4</sup>

**Figure 1 Broad Agency Even at the Start of a Change Process**



Source: Authors’ analysis, based on the approach in Andrews (2013, Chapter 9)

In contrast, agents at the periphery of the network (like agent B in Figure 1) are more weakly embedded in the established network and co-exist in other social spheres (like the mid-sized circles, which signifies the network of agents and entities working on anti-corruption in

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<sup>4</sup> Adaptive leadership theorists (Heifetz et al. 2009) suggest that authorizers actually find themselves at huge risk when supporting change, arguing that they are often removed or pushed aside when they do step out and try to promote adjustments to the status quo (as other elites de-authorize their change efforts, and them).

Burkina Faso at the time). These agents can often see the problems in the status quo, and even have ideas to address such, and have less to lose in promoting change. They lack the authority to actually promote the change, however, and need a connection to authorizers for this.

Change in such situations requires a connection between the authorizer and the problem identifier. Mr. Zongo found such agent in the form of Henri Bessin, a respected academic who Mr. Zongo knew from his own days teaching accounting and Finance. Bessin had enough overlap and respect in the Burkina government to warrant an appointment by Mr. Zongo (as the head of a new entity to address corruption). Bessin was also independent enough to have new ideas, given past work in France and elsewhere. Importantly, however, he did not have the implementation experience in Burkina Faso that existed in extant organizations also working on anti-corruption (including inspections, audit and investigation bodies). As a result, he reached out to these entities (C, D, and E in the figure), and started his work with a joint report on what they all had done previously and planned to do in the future. He also lacked direct experience working on the kinds of financial and service delivery corruption that concerned many Burkinabe citizens, but found the World Bank did have this experience and enlisted their help (even though they occupied a different, and only partially overlapping, social circle).

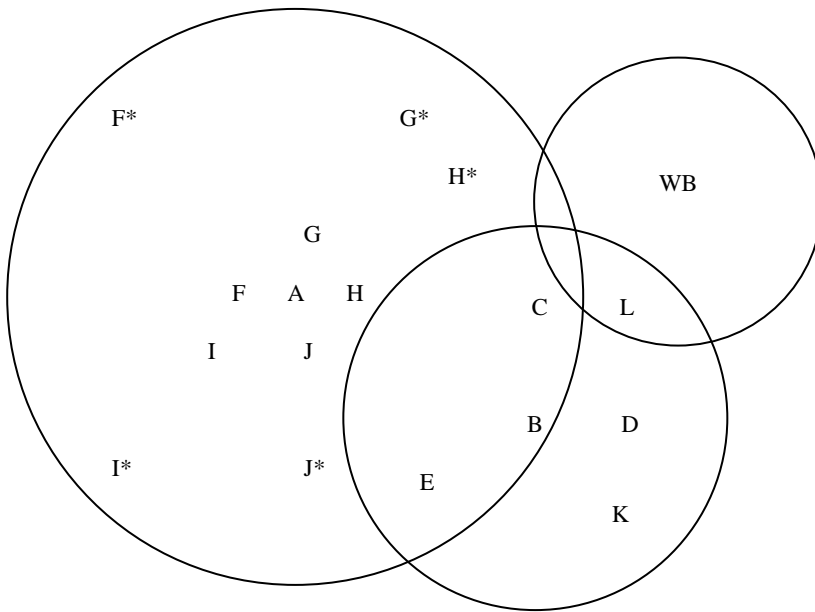
This is a simplistic, stylized way of showing how the Burkina Faso reform began. Note, however, how clearly we already see the multiple agents needed reform, playing different roles in different parts of the reform network. This was not the work of one person, but of a broad set of agents—from the start. Broad engagement like this helps to overcome the constraints of embedded agency—such that authorizers can support reforms even if they do not know what the core problems or solutions are, and with less risk than when they act alone (with broad engagement and support helping shore up legitimacy of the reform or policy intervention).

As alluded to in the introduction, the reform grew (or scaled) at this point. The report produced by Mr. Bessin and his colleagues (with help from the World Bank) was well received and ‘championed’ by the Prime Minister in a motivational public meeting. It became a tool the Prime Minister could use in mobilizing other cabinet ministers to meet with Mr. Bessin and his team, at a workshop focused on identifying new activities and engagement opportunities for the anti-corruption authorities. Figure 2 shows these cabinet ministers as F, G, H, I and J; all close to the center of power and surrounding Prime Minister A. They were asked to identify the major problems they faced, and Mr. Bessin explained that his team would help them uncover the causes of risk associated with these problems (much as a problem deconstruction exercise would do). Not all of these ministers agreed to participate in this activity, but the handful that did gave Mr. Bessin and his team authority to work with people in their ministries (F\*, G\*, H\*, I\* and J\*). These people were vital to the work, because they knew their sectors and ministries and departments better than anyone in Mr. Besson’s team. Mr. Bessin’s team also included some local consultants at this time (shown as ‘K’ in the figure) and World Bank advisors (L); who offered new skills and money to do the ‘risk mapping’ pilots.

The risk mapping pilots demonstrated what proper internal audit and control could offer government, and showed how these tools could resolve the problems worrying individual cabinet ministers. This led to additional cabinet members signing up for an expanded set of risk mapping exercises a few months later. At the same time, funding for training started to grow (from additional sources) and Mr. Bessin’s team were offered training opportunities in France. Each of these advances (and many others alluded to in the introduction) involved the addition of people into the reform process, helping to consolidate gains and then build more (in the spirit of dynamic sustainability) and foster 4-D scaling (where more entities were being covered by the

intervention (quantitative scaling), Mr. Besin’s organization was learning new activities (functional scaling), their mandate was growing (political scaling), and resource allocations were expanding (organizational scaling).

**Figure 2 Even Broader Agency as Change Processes Scale and Progress**



Source: Authors’ analysis, based on the approach in Andrews (2013, Chapter 9)

The importance of broad and deep engagement should be obvious, even from even these overly simplistic and stylized figures. It should be equally obvious that efforts to build state capability demand more breadth and depth as one looks to implement real actions and then to scale these up (in any of the four scaling manifestations discussed). Broad engagement means expanded authority, a better sense of the problems, an improved stock of ideas to solve problems, a more accurate view of implementation challenges, and more. All of these contributions help to take the opacity out of complex challenges, improve understanding of these challenges, and create agreement on what to do in the face of such challenges.

When we talk about broad engagement, we are not just referring to the idea of having many people involved in efforts to build state capability, however. As in the example presented above (in Figures 1 and 2), a broad engagement is one in which many people provide *real and different leadership roles* from many *different places* in the social or state structure. In the example, this includes the leadership of the Prime Minister, Mr. Bessin, the World Bank, individual Cabinet Ministers, and all others who took risks to engage in this change process. The different roles played by these agents are all vital to ensure the find and fit process benefits from diverse views and ideas. Additionally, having people at different positions in the system allows for expanded coverage and diffusion of new ideas and capabilities—all vital if one wants to ensure 4-D scaling and dynamic sustainability (given that there are many people to advance the reform, not one or two champions).

We see this breadth and diversity of engagement in other cases as well, including in the reform cases discussed in prior working papers (Andrews et al. 2016a, 2016b, 2016c). Swedish budget reforms emerged from blended contributions (of ideas and authority, resources and time) emanating from specialists in think tanks, politicians and experts in Parliament, career bureaucrats in the Ministry of Finance, the newly appointed Minister of Finance, officials in other parts of the national government, local government members, and more.<sup>5</sup> The diversity of ideas led to creative reforms, and the breadth of engagement meant that the reforms could be diffused across government—accepted by highly different groups of agents and implemented at scale and in a sustained fashion. The private sector reforms in Mantia tell a similar story. A team in the Ministry of Industry had the mandate to lead these reforms, but only managed to achieve the reach required for results through the links it forged with other government agencies

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<sup>5</sup> We provide a list of references in Chapter 7 to illustrate the sources referred to in the Swedish case. These sources are themselves diverse and make the point of diversity quite apparent.

(addressing over 40 challenges in very different organizational settings). These included the customs bureau, ministries of infrastructure and land, social services agencies, Prime Minister's Office, and various local governments. Connections to all of these entities were made with real people, who needed to be motivated and empowered and authorized to engage. Once engaged, however, they spread the ideas and urgency of reform to their own organizations, bringing impact at scale through an organic process of diffusion.

These examples illustrate that broad engagement matters, but they do not help to explain exactly 'who' is needed in a broad engagement or how these people can be mobilized and organized to foster change at scale. We move to that now.

## **The people you need**

The idea that broad sets of agents are required to make successful change happen raises many questions: Who needs to provide such agency? When? How? In 2008 a multi-donor group called the 'Global Leadership Initiative' commissioned work to answer such questions (Andrews, et al. 2010). The research started by selecting reforms in which change seemed to be progressing successfully in some of the toughest contexts one could imagine (like post war Afghanistan, and Rwanda, and the Central African Republic). To better understand the change experienced in these initiatives, participants and close observers of the reforms were identified and interviewed, using a structured protocol. Questions asked about who led reforms at the start of reform and years afterwards, and why these agents were considered leaders.

When asked about leaders at the start of reform, 148 respondents pointed to 103 agents, across 12 reforms. This reinforced the idea that multiple agents were needed in reforms—not just

as participants but as providers of ‘leadership’. Interviewees were asked why they identified these agents as ‘leaders’. All responses were transcribed, summarized, and classified according to emerging themes. This helped to identify functions played by people identified as ‘leaders’:

- some provided formal authority for change;
- others inspired and motivated change;
- some recognized the problems needing change;
- other supplied ideas for solutions;
- some provided financial resources needed to start change;
- others empowered other agents, offering continuous and practical support and encouragement;
- some contributed implementation advice to ensure reform designs were realistic;
- others assisted the interaction of small groups of agents directly, by ‘convening’ their engagements;
- some were classified as ‘connectors’ because they reached out beyond core groups and teams, facilitating indirect links to distributed agents.

In follow-up work (Andrews 2015a) we find these functions are commonly present in major reform initiatives. Interestingly, we also find that the person commonly called ‘the champion’ or identified as ‘the leader’ usually plays three of these functional roles (and very seldom plays others): authorizer, motivator, and convener. This is what we see the Prime Minister doing in the Burkina Faso case as well (authorizing and re-authorizing the reform at various points, motivating all parties at the time of the report and beyond, and convening cabinet ministers to discuss next steps). Our stylized presentation of the Burkina Faso case also resonates with the ‘Global Leadership Initiative’ (GLI) finding that agency and leadership broadened as

implementation advanced and interventions scaled (Andrews et al. 2010). The GLI researchers identified 146 agents as leaders in the implementation of the 12 reforms. This was 43 more than were identified at the start of the initiatives (about a 30% broadening of agency).

When asked why they identified such agents as implementation leaders, interviewees once again reflected predominantly on what the agents did to facilitate change. Interestingly, a larger proportion of ‘leaders’ provided formal authority in this stage than at the start (19 percent as compared with 16 percent). The expansion of this ‘authorizer’ group reflects the increased formalization of state-building reforms over time (which required greater formal authority), as well as the fact that most reforms become more distributed during implementation (and more diffused authority is required when more organizations are involved, as we see in the Burkina Faso example). Other functions proving more prominent in the implementation stage included:

- the provision of implementation advice (increasing from 6 to 17 percent, indicating the greater focus on applied action in diverse contexts);
- the empowerment of other groups to participate (increasing from 9 to 12 percent);
- problem identification and communication (which rose from 4 to 7 percent); and
- facilitating connections to distributed groups (which grew from 10 to 14 percent, showing that connectivity matters a great deal when scaling reform).

The evidence from these interventions suggests that efforts to build state capability require leadership contributions from multiple agents during initiation and even more during implementation and scaling. It also helps to point to the kinds of people required in these processes, given the roles they play. Table 1 summarizes the key functions these people need to provide in three categories commonly used (by functional theorists) to define the roles people play in fostering change (Hackman and Walton, 1986): substantive contributions relate to those



providing ideas to make change happen; procedural contributions refer to those navigating organizational rules and systems; maintenance contributions are the relational roles vital to mobilizing others to participate in the change process.

**Table 1. The roles you need from people involved in your state building initiative**

Function set	Roles
Substantive contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Construct, communicate problems</li> <li>ii. Come up with ideas for reform</li> <li>iii. Provide implementation view</li> </ul>
Procedural contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iv. Provide formal authority</li> <li>v. Motivate and inspire reform</li> <li>vi. Empower other agents</li> <li>vii. Provide financial support</li> </ul>
Maintenance contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>viii. Conveners of small groups</li> <li>ix. Connectors to distributed agents</li> </ul>

Source: Andrews (2013)

You should ensure that your initiative involves people playing these roles, with champions potentially occupying three of the slots (authorizer, motivator, and convener) but others on hand to ensure the others are also in place. To help in this respect, Table 2 give you a chance to reflect on the people you believe will play different roles in the strategy you have been developing to address the complex challenge you identified in Chapter 6. Take a minute filling the table in, with real people’s names. Note where you have gaps, as well as where you have multiple names to include; these give you a sense of where your ‘agency strategy’ needs to provide more focus (or could perhaps be more relaxed).

**Table 2. Who will play the roles needed in your initiative?**

Function set	Roles	Who you think will play the role
Substantive contributions	i. Construct, communicate problems ii. Come up with ideas for reform iii. Provide implementation view	
Procedural contributions	iv. Provide formal authority v. Motivate and inspire reform vi. Empower other agents vii. Provide financial support	
Maintenance contributions	viii. Conveners of small groups ix. Connectors to distributed agents	

Source: Andrews (2013)

**Mobilizing people to build capability at scale**

It is useful to identify the different role players needed for effective state building. It can also be frustrating, however, because the list is probably long and the people identified come from many different domains. You may be wondering how you will mobilize them all into a PDIA process. This section offers some ideas. The ideas derive from the work of Silvia Dorado (and more recent application by Westley et al. (2013)). Dorado calls functions like those in Table 10.2 ‘resources’ that agents provide and are “integral to change” (Dorado 2005, 390). She identifies three approaches to mobilize these ‘resources’: leveraging, convening, and accumulating. We often employ these approaches when mobilizing agents for PDIA processes, with a fourth we call connecting.

‘Leveraging’ describes a process in which politically skilled agents initiate change by identifying projects, and then build internal support and external acceptance for such. This process depends on having agents that can influence change from a central position and

simultaneously identify people to provide alternative ideas and package these as viable solutions. This calls for an authorizer who is loosely embedded in the context or is connected (directly or indirectly) to idea providers and translators. Prime Minister Zongo arguably played this role at the start of the Burkina Faso case. He was embedded in local politics but also enjoyed connections beyond such sphere, which he used to identify and appoint Mr. Bessin (who was less embedded and could bring a legitimate voice of change to augment Zongo's vision).

The leveraging approach usually involves strategies discussed in Andrews et al. (2016a); where those working with the authorizer build urgency and acceptance around established problems. This is what Mr. Bessin did (with the help of the World Bank) in getting cabinet ministers to reflect on the problems they were facing (as an entry point for change). It is also the approach that Mantian authorities used to obtain support from other ministries and agencies—showing these agencies that firms faced problems related to their area of expertise leveraged their support.

Going beyond leveraging, the 'convening' approach entails creating inter-organizational arrangements that bring different people and their resources and functional strengths together to "jumpstart a process of change" (Dorado 2005, 391). Events can be used to foster this convening (like the inter-ministerial workshop in Burkina Faso) as can mechanisms like coalitions and teams (like in the PDIA cases of Mantia and Nostria, discussed in prior chapters). Teams are essentially convening mechanisms that bring select agents together, in repeated engagements, to combine efforts in search of solutions around shared problems. A convener is often required to bring teams or coalitions together, because opportunities for engagement and coordination are not organic. This key player is a "catalytic agent" who bridges "unaware, unsure or skeptical actors to explore the possibilities of cooperation" (Kalegaonkar and Brown 2000, 9). Both Prime

Minister Zongo and Mr. Bessin played this role in Burkina Faso, especially assembling the cabinet members for discussion—but also the teams to work on actual risk maps.

It is important to note that convening mechanisms like teams take a lot of energy and effort to actually work effectively. One needs to have the right process for this as well. A few key process elements are embedded into PDIA to help in this respect. The emphasis on repeated action engagements is an example. Studies show that teams work better when they work together, and the repeated activities help to ensure this happens. The emphasis on identifying a clear problem to solve, and a goal (problem solved) is also crucial for any team (where studies show that focused and goal directed teams tend to be more effective than others).

Connectors play a similar role to conveners, though they make links between agents without necessarily bringing these agents together. The connector thus gives reforms and other interventions ‘reach’—ensuring that distributed groups can engage even over distances and differences. Consider the way Mr. Bessin connected the Prime Minister and other ministers to capacities in local consulting firms, indirectly, to ensure that the former groups benefited from the talents of the latter agents.

In their study on reforms, Andrews et al. (2010) find that the most important leadership functions across all 12 reform cases related to convening and connecting. Conveners brought smaller groups of key agents together, with direct ties, to initiate and guide reform. They did this mostly by hosting formal and informal meetings and gatherings and establishing diverse teams. These teams became the nerve center of reforms. In contrast, connecting agents created indirect ties between other actors to facilitate broad interaction, ensuring that ideas were shared between core groups devising reforms and distributed agents experimenting with new proposals. These

connectors were particularly important in implementation, where the role of distributed agents was also greater—fostering diffusion of the changes and allowing new capabilities to reach scale.

These kinds of convening and connecting roles are vital in the mobilization process in many successful reforms. The work in Mantia and Nostria involved regular meetings, for instance, organized and facilitated by specific people who exhibit the classic traits of a convener (being liked and trusted by many, organized and persuasive, and open to others' ideas). It is important to note that these people were often the quietest in meetings, and when they did engage it was to move meetings along or to facilitate reflection. In both of these examples the convener worked with relatively small teams (of 5 to 7 people) who met face-to-face regularly. These people all connected to other groups and people outside of the core team, however, which ensured breadth of reach.

The convening and connection arrangements described here are perhaps best illustrated in a snowflake metaphor (as shown in the figure at the start of this chapter, and used in other work on organizing (McKenna and Han 2014)). A core team is convened at the center of the snowflake, with all members connecting outwards to other people who convene their own teams. This structure can expand outwards and still stay stable given the strong convening at its core. It balances the competing need to have smaller teams (capable of actually getting things done) while also achieving broad reach.

It is important and interesting to note that convening and connecting agents accounted for more than 25 percent of named 'leaders' in the Global Leadership Initiative study (Andrews et al. 2010). There was also a key role for those motivating and inspiring reform, however, especially in early periods. This indicates some 'leveraging' in the mobilization process (where a high-level office holder mobilized people by inspiring them) , although the co-existence of these

agents with conveners and connectors suggests that motivation was an insufficient mobilizer. Conveners and connectors were still required, particularly in the implementation period where the role of motivators was smaller and the role of connectors grew. This speaks, potentially, to the importance of third party ties between powerful high-level agents at the center of a network (like a minister), and implementers at the periphery. Direct ties between such agents are not common and are certainly not conducive to equal engagement or mutual empowerment (especially in hierarchical contexts). Peripheral implementers may view centrally located motivators like ministers or even mayors as powerful authoritarians trying to control them—as subordinates—which could foster resistance to change. Less prominent conveners and connectors, in contrast, can build connections to distributed implementers and more effectively mobilize their engagement.

The final strategy for mobilizing broad agency is ‘Accumulating’. This involves a long and probabilistic process whereby new designs emerge and are implemented and diffused through the unorganized interaction of multiple agents. There is no central agent facilitating this interaction, which happens largely because of luck and/or the natural coordinating characteristics of open social systems, both of which are argued to emerge as a change process takes shape (and as the intervention becomes dynamic). This is the emergent leadership one finds referenced in complexity theory, and is exemplified in an effective free market system (where all agents have freedom of information, movement, and interaction, and ideas and engagement patterns emerge to foster continuous and dynamic change).

**What is your role in building state capability?**

It is likely that mobilization always involves a blend of leveraging, convening, connecting and accumulating. We certainly embed ideas of the first three into the PDIA work we support; building authority and a problem narrative to facilitate leverage, creating teams for convening, fostering broad connections, and hoping for emergence and accumulating forces.

The salient observation is that mobilization matters, however, to ensure that broad agency is in place to foster change. We believe that you could benefit from thinking about the viability of using all of these strategies in your context. Table 3 allows such thought, asking you to reflect on who you might see playing key roles in either mobilization strategy (motivators in leveraging and conveners and connectors in convening). It also calls you to think about the contextual viability of both strategies. As with prior exercises, your thoughts at this stage (when we assume you are still preparing for an initiative) will not be final or complete. These thoughts allow some structure to your ‘agency’ or ‘people’ strategy, however, and also give you a foundation to use in structuring learning throughout the reform process. We imagine you returning to reflect on these thoughts when you are considering lessons from your various experimental iterations, constantly identifying new people to include and noting opportunities and constraints to using different mobilization mechanisms.

The challenge of mobilizing agents to build state capability is not easy, regardless of the mechanism one employs, especially in places where gaps have festered for long periods (or where no capability ever existed). We like to think of these challenges as adventures or expeditions into the unknown—much like the 1804 Lewis and Clark expedition discussed in Andrews et al. (2015). Anyone signing up to such an expedition needs to be aware of the demands and risks of the journey; this is not the same as building a road or following a map in a

car down that road. The journey is dangerous, and potentially costly, and must therefore be embarked upon with thoughtful care and consideration. It will involve failure, and days where it is difficult to see such failure as learning (which we obviously encourage). It is also a potentially exciting and rewarding journey, however, that will energize and empower those who are open to trying new things out, learning, and adapting.

**Table 3. Which mobilization mechanism/strategy best fits your situation**

<b>Mechanism/strategy</b>	<b>Key role players</b>	<b>Contextual considerations</b>
Leveraging	Who are the motivators?	Are there trust and power issues that might undermine the motivation?  How much reach do the motivators have?
Convening and Connecting	Who are the conveners?  Who are the connectors?	Are mechanisms like teams commonly used?  Are the mobilizers trusted and neutral?  How organized are the mobilizers?
Accumulating	None	How open and emergent is your context?  Can agents engage freely with each other?

We are grateful that you have managed to read your way all the way to the end of this book and can only imagine it is because you are in fact open to exactly this kind of experience.



We have been working with people all over the world who are thirsty for a new way of doing development, and especially of working with governments in developing countries. You may want to join that community, at [www.doingdevelopmentdifferently.com](http://www.doingdevelopmentdifferently.com). You will meet people there who are trying new things out, working iteratively, and pushing boundaries. Not everyone is using the PDIA approach as we present it here, and that is appropriate and important: the more variation in methods the more opportunity we all have to learn.

As you consider your next steps after reading this working paper, we want to make one last suggestion: try and reflect on what your roles are in addressing the challenges you are working on? Use Table 4 to do this.

**Table 10.4. What role will you play in your chosen effort to build state capability?**

Function set	Roles	What role will you play, and why?
Substantive contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Construct, communicate problems</li> <li>ii. Come up with ideas for reform</li> <li>iii. Provide implementation view</li> </ul>	
Procedural contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iv. Provide formal authority</li> <li>v. Motivate and inspire reform</li> <li>vi. Empower other agents</li> <li>vii. Provide financial support</li> </ul>	
Maintenance contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>viii. Conveners of small groups</li> <li>ix. Connectors to distributed agents</li> </ul>	

Source: Andrews (2013)

Make sure that you do not identify yourself as playing more than three roles, please. This is our rule-of-thumb limit to the number of roles any one person should play in any given effort to build state capability. Every role involves risk, and we think that people playing more than three roles are likely taking on too much risk and putting their survival in jeopardy. Furthermore, we believe that groups are needed to make change happen and build state capability; and you

limit the size of your group if you occupy too many roles. Good luck in your efforts to build state capability, and please make sure to check in with us on your progress.

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