

BEST PRACTICE

Consensus Building Approaches Help Organizations Plan for the Future

Strategic planning provides crucial time for reflection and forward thinking



David Fairman
Managing Director

Strategic planning has evolved well beyond its origins in councils of war. In government, business, and non-profits, strategic planning encompasses a variety of tools and processes to help organizational leaders and stakeholders review and clarify purpose, objectives, and operations. Regardless of context, when strategic planning works well, it produces at least three useful results:



Ona Ferguson
Senior Associate

- Clarity on the objectives an organization should pursue to achieve its purpose
- A plan for meeting those objectives over a defined time horizon, including clarity on the human and financial resources needed and how they will be mobilized
- Alignment of key internal and external stakeholders on the objectives and the plan



Gina Bartlett
Senior Mediator

While well known for our work on public, multi-stakeholder consensus building, CBI also works within individual organizations and across inter-agency partnerships on strategic planning. Many consulting organizations are well-positioned to provide expert analysis and recommendations on objectives or even to produce strategic plans for organizations. CBI's approach is fundamentally different. We believe

that the most insightful analytics and rigorous plans are only implementable if they reflect the input and gain the support of key organizational stakeholders: leaders, staff, board, and external partners.

Our experience is that it is possible for these stakeholders to work together well even in situations of high complexity and

organizational stress. When an impartial facilitator understands the organization, its issues, and context, effective facilitation can enhance the credibility of the process with all stakeholders, maximize the value of input from different vantage points, and support appropriate boundaries and relationships between core decision makers and other stakeholders.

Collaborative strategic planning can help organizations improve their focus and impact, especially at moments of transition in leadership, external context, or available resources. CBI has developed a set of tools and approaches to help organizations look inward, outward, and forward at these key moments and to reach well-informed and widely-supported decisions that position the organization for future success.

Our Unique Approach to Strategic Planning

Rather than coming in and prescribing what looks like a good strategic plan from the outside, CBI helps its clients work through essential questions together. We work with those most deeply involved in the organization or institution to explore and clarify a range of ideas and insights into what the organization needs to move forward. At the same time, we often recommend and seek external stakeholders' input to inform the discussion and ensure that the organization can "see itself as others see it."

Over the years, CBI has helped a very wide variety of groups think and work on strategic plans. We've been struck by commonalities in the kinds of questions that organizations

Continued on page 2

- » [page 3](#) Collaborating for Better Rapid Transit in Greater Boston
- » [page 4](#) Participatory Energy Planning in Chile
- » [page 5](#) Smith Island: Creating a Vision for the Future
- » [page 6](#) The Toughest Cases: Human Rights, Land Disputes and Palm Oil in Honduras
- » [page 7](#) At Risk: Southwest Florida's Caloosahatchee River and Estuary
- » [page 8](#) CBI News and New Faces

and partnerships need to ask and answer, whether the substantive focus of the work is resilience for the Bay area, alternatives to juvenile detention in Massachusetts, aligning estuary conservation initiatives across the US, or setting global priorities for 33 United Nations development agencies.

Across these domains and many others, the core questions often focus on future direction (Where is the world headed? How well positioned are we to advance our mission given where the world is headed? How could we strengthen our positioning and impact?), priorities (What is it most important for us to accomplish?), and operations (How do we make best use of our resources? How do we work together better internally and with our partners?).

We structure the exploration of these questions carefully to ensure that stakeholders give their best advice to decision makers, see that their advice is being taken seriously, and understand the rationale for the final decisions. We bring a unique set of skills and knowledge to these processes. We draw on our experience working with multiple stakeholders, facilitating effective meetings, dealing with challenging behaviors, and helping groups realize successful outcomes.

Lessons Learned

Every strategic planning project teaches us new perspectives and lessons. Among those that rise to the top are:

Seize the opportunity to align during times of change. When leadership has changed or something has triggered a question about the future course of action for an organization, strategic planning provides a great opportunity to deliberately decide the best way to adjust priorities and activities in a forward-looking way.

Scale the commitment of planning resources to the challenges and opportunities facing the organization. Thoughtful up-front assessment of organizational goals, issues, and perspectives helps organizations identify realistic goals and resources for the strategic planning process. Effective strategic planning engages stakeholders to identify the key questions, generate good ideas, select among options and make hard choices on allocating organizational resources. Organizations that are in excellent financial and management health and delivering on their missions effectively may be able to use the strategic planning process as a relatively “light touch” visioning and option-generating exercise. Organizations facing significant financial and management challenges, with real questions about their

operational effectiveness, will need to devote substantial time and resources to the process if they are to shift to realize the organization’s success.

Bring clarity. Honest self-reflection and problem solving is difficult both for individuals and for groups. People are sometimes afraid to hurt others’ feelings or acknowledge past or current problems, which leaves organizational challenges unspoken and unaddressed. Instead, surfacing those difficult topics in a thoughtful, deliberate way can be transformative.

Recognize the key decisions and seek agreement among the key stakeholders. Strategic planning can fail where there is a lack of consensus around big issues. An organization needs appropriate leaders, whether board members or top management, to make hard decisions about needed adjustments to direction and programming. Senior leaders often put off hard decisions or make them unilaterally, rather than involving colleagues who are currently divided, even if their alignment is critical for longer-term success. By clearly articulating the decisions that need to be made, facilitating open discussion to develop and assess options, and maintaining clarity about authority and time frames for final decisions, CBI facilitators help leaders work through the most difficult issues and reach a constructive resolution.

Inspire confidence and excitement. A great strategic plan does more than set direction—it inspires the organization’s stakeholders, leaders and junior staff, external partners and clients to work together to achieve a set of goals that they find truly meaningful and understand as central to the organization’s mission. When those most centrally involved in developing a strategic plan feel that they have achieved a breakthrough in understanding, insight and goal setting, they become advocates for the plan and generate a sense of real excitement and a shared commitment in others. Truly effective strategic plans become touchstones that leaders and staff review periodically to be sure they are still on target.

In sum, by making the strategic planning process a true collaboration, CBI facilitators help organizations stretch to a level of vision and commitment that will motivate their stakeholders to see a future filled with great possibilities for impact and work together to realize it. ♦

Contact: Ona Ferguson at oferguson@cbuilding.org;
Gina Bartlett at gina@cbuilding.org.

CBI Reports Volume XVIII • Issue 1 • SUMMER 2015

The Consensus Building Institute (CBI) is a not-for-profit organization created by leading practitioners and theory builders in the fields of negotiation and dispute resolution. CBI works with leaders, advocates, experts, and communities to promote effective negotiations, build consensus, and resolve conflicts.

Managing Directors
David Fairman
Patrick Field

**Founder and
Chief Knowledge Officer**
Lawrence Susskind

Consensus Building Institute
238 Main Street, Suite 400
Cambridge, MA 02142
Tel: 617.492.1414 • Fax: 617.492.1919
Email: cbi@cbuilding.org

Copyright © 2015. All rights reserved.
Licensing inquiries: sossi@cbuilding.org

Collaborating for Better Rapid Transit in Greater Boston

Facilitating a shared understanding of BRT's potential, and the foundation for public consideration



David Fairman
Managing Director



Carrie Hulet
Senior Associate

Boston prides itself on being the first city in the United States to have built a subway system. But being the first system also means being the oldest, and while the city has grown up around the “T” (as the public transit system is locally known), it has neither maintained the system properly nor kept pace with the ever-growing need for additional service. The metro Boston region is in desperate need of transit solutions with broad public and political leadership support that the regional and state transportation agencies can afford and implement fairly quickly. But where and how to invest in solutions remains a topic of much public debate.

Against this backdrop, CBI has been working with a group of stakeholders to investigate the feasibility of a Bus Rapid Transit system, or BRT, for metro Boston. In many cities around the world BRT provides service that is equal to light rail in terms of ridership, speed, and

convenience, but at a much lower capital cost. Gold Standard BRT systems feature dedicated right-of way, busway alignment, off-board fare collection, intersection treatments, and platform level boarding.

A few years ago, Boston's transportation agencies, MassDOT and the Metropolitan Boston Transit Authority (MBTA), identified a promising BRT corridor through Mattapan, Roxbury, and Dorchester. Local communities rejected the project, both because of concerns about traffic and parking impacts, and because of longstanding grievances in these predominantly lower income communities about poor transit service and what they perceive as broken promises to provide light rail. In the wake of the project's collapse, The Barr Foundation – a philanthropic organization with an equity-oriented smart growth agenda – wondered whether a multi-stakeholder group not directly associated with the public transportation agencies might effectively revive the BRT conversation. In late 2013, Barr asked CBI to design and facilitate the work of a Greater Boston BRT Study Group. To provide technical analysis and support to the Study Group, Barr contracted with the internationally recognized Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP).

Over an 18-month period, CBI facilitated a joint assessment by the Study Group's 15 community, business and technical leaders of the feasibility of BRT throughout greater Boston. The group was charged first with identifying specific corridors in which BRT was technically feasible and desirable. Then, the group sought to determine whether those corridors were socially and politically desirable.

The Study Group established its goals and the parameters for the initial inquiry, and ITDP did the technical analysis. Because BRT is most attractive where it can significantly reduce travel times for large number of riders, much of the technical analysis focused on identifying current and potential transit corridors where delay and demand are highest. With help from CBI and ITDP, the Study Group was able to absorb a large amount of data and analysis, and debate the merits of different corridors on additional criteria such as prioritizing underserved communities, anticipating and encouraging economic development, and meeting “latent” demand by creating more direct commuting routes. After several months of work, the Study Group identified five corridors in Greater Boston that showed promise on all or most of the key criteria.

Once the group had developed a credible set of technically feasible corridors, the group began assessing the social and political feasibility of each corridor. To do so, the group first identified stakeholders in the five corridors, including political, business, and government leaders, as well as local or grassroots leadership. The group then had the task of reaching out to stakeholders in the communities through which the five corridors would pass to learn about their interests and concerns.

The process revealed the group to be amply equipped to work with the top influencers, but when it came to assessing support at the grassroots level, the group simply did not have the right networks to engage effectively. After several attempts to organize grassroots conversations and develop outreach plans, the group decided its most valuable contribution would be to share what it learned during the analysis in a transparent and accessible way to ensure that a wide range of potential metro Boston BRT stakeholders, from decision-makers and key policy influencers to local business owners and transit riders, could learn about BRT as a transit option, and understand why the five corridors it had identified were so promising. The group wrote a report and built a website (bostonbrt.org) as a way to prime the pump for ongoing leadership discussions, and for future grassroots engagement.

By creating a clear, shared understanding of the potential of BRT in greater Boston within the Study Group, and using members of the group as well as the Barr Foundation's own leadership as ambassadors, the process laid a strong foundation for serious public consideration of BRT as a viable option for new transit investments. The Study Group's members and Barr also discovered their own limitations when it came to grassroots engagement at the neighborhood level. The Barr Foundation is now developing a creative outreach plan to those neighborhoods, and may organize a “Phase 2” process to move forward with that outreach. ♦

Contact: David Fairman at dfairman@cbuilding.org; Carrie Hulet at chulet@cbuilding.org.

Participatory Energy Planning in Chile

Helping to guide long-term planning for a cleaner, cheaper, and more accessible energy future



David Plumb
Director, Latin
America Practice and
Senior Mediator

Chile's 2,600-thousand mile profile stretches from the Atacama Desert in the north, which offers some of the world's best solar energy potential, to the wet and windy fjords of Patagonia in the south. The country's dramatically varied geography provides a wealth of opportunities for renewable power, yet Chile's energy sector finds itself stuck in a rut. Nearly every major energy project in recent years has faced major citizen protests and legal challenges. In addition, energy prices have risen sharply, and the country is saddled

with a coal-intensive power industry and cities clogged with winter smog from widespread use of firewood to heat houses. Energy Minister Máximo Pacheco describes the country's energy today as "dirty and expensive."

When he came into office last year, Pacheco announced an ambitious Energy Agenda to breathe new life into the sector. A key aspect of the agenda is a participatory, long-term planning process called Energía 2050. The goal of Energía 2050 is to rally a broad spectrum of the country behind a long-term plan that sketches out fundamental transformations and strategic steps to make Chile's energy cleaner, cheaper, and universally accessible.

CBI's Latin America office (based in Santiago) has been helping to guide Energía 2050 since mid-2014 together with a working team of technical and academic experts led by the Ministry. We facilitate a 28-member multi-stakeholder steering committee that is charged with developing a Road Map to 2050, the core document that the Ministry will then transform into an energy policy. We have also organized workshops across the country for citizen dialogue on key issues such as land use planning for energy infrastructure, and company-community relations in private power projects.



Energía 2050 interacts with the public on several levels. The steering committee represents many diverse interests – including civil society groups, companies and government bodies that have an important role to play, including not only the Energy Ministry but also the Ministries of Transportation and Environment. Some activist groups declined offers to participate, in part due to their opposition to controversial energy projects that the government is supporting.

The initiative has also included dozens of public workshops and meetings on a variety of topics. A website (www.energia2050.cl) provides information and updates. In the next few months, Energía 2050 also plans to conduct several "deliberative" citizen events, in which statistically representative groups of citizens will come together for carefully structured, day-long dialogues on Chile's energy future. Participants will receive information about energy sector challenges and trade-offs, spend time in small groups deliberating and at the end of the workshop express their views in surveys. The steering committee will vet the information and questions ahead of time to ensure they are unbiased.



The feedback from these citizen dialogues will influence the steering committee as it continues its work on the Road Map. The steering committee is currently working on draft vision for 2050, and making a work plan to address key issues. The process calls for the Road Map to be ready in the third quarter this year. If the process achieves its goals, it will produce consensus-based guidance on key priorities for Chile's energy future. By integrating core interests of government, business and civil society leaders, and citizens throughout the country, the Road Map may guide Chile to a cleaner, cheaper and more accessible energy future. ♦

Contact: David Plumb at dplumb@cbuilding.org.

Smith Island: Creating a Vision for the Future

Leading a community-driven dialogue to address sustainability challenges



Catherine Morris
Senior Mediator

Smith Island, off the coast of Maryland is home to 275 individuals, who have for generations made a living on the Chesapeake Bay. The legacy of the watermen's way of life, which is the backbone of the community's identity, is still alive and well today. The residents of Smith Island are part of a tightly knit community that cares for one another and maintains a high quality of life on an island. There is no law enforcement and

few social services. Visitors are drawn by the unique setting and history of the community; growing numbers of "mainlanders" travel by boat to experience its natural beauty and culture with binoculars, kayaks or sitting on the front porch of a home. Despite the success of this hearty island community, Smith Island is facing serious challenges.

In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, local residents, state agencies, and county officials asked CBI and Horsley Witten Group (HWG) to lead Smith Island in a community-driven dialogue, or Visioning process, on the impact of natural hazards and on the many challenges to life on Smith Island. These challenges include: shoreline erosion caused by storms and subsidence, an aging and declining population, an economy anchored in fisheries threatened by pollution, increasing numbers of vacant houses, and infrastructure in need of major investment. Portrayed in the press as an island that could be three feet underwater in 50 years, Smith Islanders have often felt like they were fighting for more than preserving their unique way of life but are also fighting for the right to remain on the Island and invest in their future.

The purpose of this Visioning process has been to lay the foundation for meeting these challenges. There are certain components of every visioning process that are essential to make it successful – a safe place for community dialogue; collaboration among diverse members of the community; participants' commitment to joint learning and exploration of new ideas; building consensus around what is best about the community; and creating a vision about what the community can become. The process for creating a vision for Smith Island includes these key elements:

- A community survey to identify what is most valued about the Island and what needs to change;
- Creation of a Steering Committee that is representative of the three villages, different businesses, watermen, and respected local, state, and county leaders to help guide the Vision process and to serve as spokespersons for the community;
- A series of public meetings to create a space for open dialogue about the challenges and ideas for solving them; and

- A number of technical workshops to bring in outside experts to provide advice and information on the priorities of the community.

Over the course of the Visioning process, discussions within the community have revealed several recurring themes that are integral to the future success of Smith Island. These include:

- Protect the Island from further erosion
- Make the island more easily accessible to visitors and part-time residents
- Sustain the watermen's culture as the foundation of the economy
- Build a more diverse local economy, including expanding tourism
- Develop and maintain resilient infrastructure
- Grow the year-round population

These themes are interdependent; success in sustaining and revitalizing the watermen's way of life depends on broader economic success across the island to attract more young watermen and support their families.



The loss of income from watermen also has ripple effects for the rest of Smith Island's economy.

The interconnected nature of sustainability on Smith Island is also part of its infrastructure challenges. To leverage investment in sizeable infrastructure projects, like the replacement of the sewage treatment facility, requires a long-term, organized commitment to growing the number of residents.

In March, CBI and HWG facilitated the third public meeting with the community and met with the Steering Committee to begin drafting the Vision Plan. The target date for a draft Vision Plan is this summer. In June the results will be shared with other communities at the Maryland Working Waterfronts Exchange. The Vision Plan will also be shared with the County Commissioners for inclusion in the County's Master Plan. ♦

LEARN MORE:

Project Website: www.cbuilt.org/project/smith-island-community-visioning-process

Contact: Catherine Morris at cmorris@cbuilt.org.

The Toughest Cases: Human Rights, Land Disputes and Palm Oil in Honduras

Sometimes designing a legitimate dispute resolution process requires examining deep structural problems



Merrick Hoben
Director, Washington
Office / Corporate-
Community
Engagement Practice

Last year CBI was asked by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) to help with a vexing corporate-community engagement problem. A palm oil company was not meeting the IFC's social and environmental requirements, while operating in a region marked by violence and social instability.

The context and the history of this case meant that addressing community concerns and getting the company into alignment with the IFC standards would require more than a course-correction on corporate policies and procedures. We

soon realized we were tackling head on a conflict with clear links to deep structural problems: longstanding disputes over land rights and access, pervasive regional crime, impunity, and polarized views regarding what sustainable development should look like in a troubled region, just to name a few.

Any one of these issues alone was daunting. Together, they amounted to a nearly impossible mountain to climb. Yet intense international pressure has also created a small window of opportunity to bring parties together. Moreover, none of the stakeholders is satisfied with the status quo.

The key tensions in designing a dispute resolution process also quickly became clear: a) how to define the scope of the issues in a way that all stakeholders would see as legitimate?; b) how to sequence issues in ways that was logical given the conflicts, and that maximized the opportunity for trust building and initial successes?; c) what to do about influences like narcotics trafficking and corruption, which could not be addressed directly and created risks to agreement building efforts?

We don't have all the answers, but a few insights are emerging. Here are seven.

1) Naming structural issues. When corporate-community conflict crosses over to national-level structural issues, ignore them at your peril. A key move in meaningful stakeholder engagement is naming of issues and problems to be addressed in a mutually legitimate way, even when it pushes the boundaries of scope. The real challenge is framing these as opportunities for shared value creation, not just pitfalls too big to tackle.

2) Recognizing informal influences. When assessing these kinds of conflicts in context of weak governance, understand that insidious influences on stakeholder agendas are real, serious, and often ostracizing – such as endemic narco-trafficking and corruption warping governance and skewing economic interests. Acknowledgement and navigation of issues that cannot be controlled is

difficult, but the risks of leaving them unacknowledged is even more serious.

3) Leveraging international frameworks and protocols. Addressing core issues (e.g. land access, human rights, impunity) accurately and fairly matters a great deal. Voluntary international social and environmental frameworks can become a mutually credible means for addressing the most prickly corporate-community issues. In this case, the company is aiming to be the first in Central America to implement the Voluntary Principles on Business and Human Rights (www.voluntaryprinciples.org/).

4) Sequencing. No surprise, in extremely polarized disputes, there are competing priorities. The question is: are there any common ties that bind? In this case, building agreement on immediate security and human rights protections (for both civil society and private operations) may be the best starting point for building trust and creating initial success. They also happen to the issues with the most company control, and thus a chance at demarcating some progress.

5) Joint learning. Organizing joint learning among stakeholders (including but not limited to 'joint fact-finding') can provide the first scaffolding for relationship building. Even though pervasive distrust will likely continue for some time, side-by-side learning on critical issues can help build mutual understanding of issues, options, interests and values.

6) Being patient, transparent, and iterative. It's natural for all stakeholders to carry a constant sense of anxiety and frustration in disputes such as these. Nobody wants wasted time or effort, especially where trust is low. Therefore, striking a balance between always listening to and validating concerns, yet respectfully naming uncomfortable truths about what it takes to make progress (and take good faith actions on all sides) becomes a dialogue art in itself.

7) Envisioning the roadmap. Finally, powerful and practical metaphors (and even accompanying graphics) are fundamental for issue exploration and alignment building. A good story that reflects how the stakeholders could ultimately work their way together to a much better place is often the most powerful engagement tool in the box. That's because the experience of shared narrative can only come from stakeholder exchange of viewpoints and joint refinement of something that could work for all.

Indeed, we're deep in uncharted territory on this one right now, but with a little suerte (luck) we might just find a way forward. ♦

Contact: Merrick Hoben at mhoben@cbuilding.org.

At Risk: Southwest Florida's Caloosahatchee River and Estuary

Helping local stakeholders develop a shared vision to improve the health of the watershed



Bennett Brooks
Senior Mediator

Decades of physical alterations, coupled with alternating periods of extremely high and low freshwater flows, have degraded the natural health and vitality of Florida's Caloosahatchee River and its estuary. Species from oysters to seagrasses struggle to thrive, while harmful algal blooms choke waterways and stain white-sand beaches. Stakeholders broadly recognize the need to improve the river's health, but have reached little consensus on solutions for

a system that defies an easy fix. Unable to speak with a unified voice, stakeholders from across the four-county watershed have struggled to attract attention and funding to improve the health of the watershed.

It is in this environment that the South Florida Water Management District asked CBI to help local stakeholders develop a shared vision for the river and estuary in early 2013. The intervention has contributed to some important results – from improved stakeholder dialogues to new state funding proposed for a long-sought-after water storage project — but the path to these successes was far from straightforward.

Over the past two years, CBI's work focused on a series of steps:

- **Upfront stakeholder assessment.** The District originally intended to launch a visioning process to identify key ecological conditions of a healthier system. An in-depth series of CBI-led confidential stakeholder interviews quickly threw a wrench into that plan. While stakeholders broadly supported the renewed attention on the Caloosahatchee, few had much appetite for more study. It was, they said, a time for action.
- **Adaptive management.** Given stakeholder resistance to a visioning exercise as originally conceived by the District, CBI worked closely with the District to devise a new path forward. The updated approach would look to quickly confirm common understanding about the system's health and then pivot immediately to stakeholders' call for action. Sidebar conversations with stakeholders confirmed their willingness to push forward with the new approach.
- **Science workshop.** CBI worked with Florida Gulf Coast University to design and facilitate a two-day scientific workshop. The workshop successfully clarified the science of what is and is not known regarding the ecological indicators needed to track the health of the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary. The effort helped to consolidate already available information and provide a common platform for pushing forward.
- **Implementing agency group.** Beginning in April 2014, a series of six "implementer" meetings involving municipal, county,

and state officials identified (for the first time ever) top-priority water quality and water storage projects for the region. The dialogue proved pivotal. The implementers moved forward in a stepwise fashion to identify candidate projects, develop criteria to guide prioritization discussions, and categorize projects as immediate, near-term and longer-term priorities.

- **Stakeholder community forums.** Concurrent with the implementing agency group meetings, CBI convened a series of community forums intended to fully integrate stakeholder perspectives into the project prioritization process. The process was intentionally iterative, with stakeholders from throughout the watershed providing guidance to inform each facet of the implementers' deliberations, and the implementers seeking stakeholder input on their evolving thinking.

There were numerous challenges in the project prioritization process. No comprehensive list of candidate projects existed, so implementers and stakeholders needed to create one. Limited and inconsistent data across candidate projects made it difficult to apply cost-benefit criteria deemed important to stakeholders. Some stakeholders hesitated to engage unless the dialogue would also encompass the more far-reaching policy issues seen as important to solving the Caloosahatchee's woes.

Yet the effort at producing an agreed set of projects paid off. Stakeholders and implementing agencies reached an unprecedented level of agreement, identifying six regional projects as immediate priorities. Additionally, participants put forward strategies for building stronger cohesion within the region, from a future process to prioritize among local projects, to maintaining and expanding stakeholder dialogues. Perhaps most remarkably, within a few weeks of the last community forum, the Governor's Office announced its intention to provide state funding for the region's top priority: building a new storage reservoir.

Like most projects, it is difficult to attribute the successes to one factor. But a few key pieces stand out. One, it was crucial to understand, reflect, and adapt to stakeholder dissatisfaction with the original visioning exercise. Pushing ahead as planned would have wasted resources and further alienated the affected communities. Two, it was essential to engage decision-makers early in the process. Their participation and support gave the initiative focus and energy. Lastly, the iterative dialogue between implementers and stakeholders was essential to shaping priorities that incorporated all the parties' interests.

To be sure, there is still much to be done and there are some very tough policy issues to address. But it is our sense that the dialogue over the past two years creates a more solid foundation for tackling the next set of challenges. ♦

Contact: Bennett Brooks at bbrooks@cbuilding.org

CBI in Action || *A snapshot of recent and ongoing work*

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

More information: David Fairman, dfairman@cbuilding.org.

>> In partnership with Convergence, CBI convened a week-long set of dialogues between 11 senior members of Pakistan's parliament and 14 Members of the US Congress. The Pakistani delegation also met with other US government, business and civil society leaders.

>> CBI continues its work with the Forum for Inclusive Nigerian Development (FIND), a leadership group of 27 Nigerians committed to diversifying Nigeria's economy and government revenues "beyond oil" for the benefit of all Nigerians. With the help of CBI and its partner the New Nigeria Foundation, FIND's members are now developing partnerships with governors and multi-stakeholder groups to launch state-level diversification initiatives.

CORPORATE-COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICE

More information: Merrick Hoben, mhoben@cbuilding.org.

>> CBI recently completed and shared publicly its dispute resolution assessment taking stock of dynamics and issues surrounding the Dinant Palm Oil - Community relationship in the Bajo Aguan of Honduras. CBI also suggested next steps for stakeholder engagement and dialogue that could leverage progress and help all parties to move forward constructively.

SOCIAL POLICY & CULTURAL RESOURCES PRACTICE

More information: Stacie Nicole-Smith, stacie@cbuilding.org.

>> CBI completed a 2-day Interpretive and Strategic Planning Workshop with the New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park and its partners, the first phase in developing a new Long-Range Interpretive Plan and Strategic Partnership Action Plan.

>> CBI helped Convergence and a diverse group of 25 national leaders in education create a shared vision for the future of children's learning, and is now helping the group launch Education Reimagined, a national initiative to support pioneers in transforming our education systems and practices.

ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT & LAND USE PRACTICE

More information: Patrick Field, pfield@cbuilding.org.

>> CBI is working with a inter-disciplinary research team to wrap up a five year project on strategies to appropriately enhance shorelines along the Hudson River to increase their ecological function. We are especially pleased that the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve was just selected by EPA Region 2 to receive a 2015 U.S. EPA Environmental Champion Award for the team's work on this Project.

>> CBI has been working with a consortium of wind energy producers and Fish and Wildlife Service managers to develop a precedent-setting, multi-species regional habitat conservation plan intended to balance the growing demand for wind energy facilities with the need to protect federally listed bat and bird species across eight Midwestern states.

>> For the second time, CBI facilitated the Bat Wind Energy Collaborative (BWEC) in its multi-year research agenda setting workshop at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory's site in Colorado. The participants, including wind development, wildlife, and technology, honed the next multi-year agenda for minimizing and mitigating wind energy impacts on numerous bat species across the landscape.

ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE & STRATEGY

More information: Patrick Field, pfield@cbuilding.org.

>> CBI helped the Stroud Water Research Center complete a five year strategic plan to launch in 2015. The goals of the Plan include advancing the next generation of leadership, diversifying funding sources, honing their education programs and increasing visibility of their world-class scientific research. With this Plan, Stroud seeks to advance freshwater restoration, education and science for the upcoming decade.

New Faces at CBI *We are pleased to welcome these talented folks to our growing staff!*



Michele Ferenz, CBI Senior Mediator, possesses over 15 years of experience as a facilitator, mediator and trainer.

Her primary practice areas are in natural resource management and international development, with a focus on fragile states and post-conflict societies. Michele has taught international environmental policy and negotiation theory and practice at Columbia University and the University

of Massachusetts. She holds degrees from Brown University and Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government.



Griffin Smith, CBI Associate Fellow/Junior Fellow, conducts research and works with senior staff on facilitations, mediations, and

multistakeholder problem-solving processes. A certified Massachusetts mediator providing court services, he also trains and evaluates mediators through the Massachusetts Institute of

Technology. Griffin holds a certificate in negotiation from Harvard Law School and a B.A. in Biology and Policy Studies from Grinnell College.

Susan Fashaw, joins CBI as an Accounting Support Coordinator



assisting the accounting department with budgets, billing and accounts payables. Susan has worked in finance for the past 15 years and

is pursuing her degree in accounting.