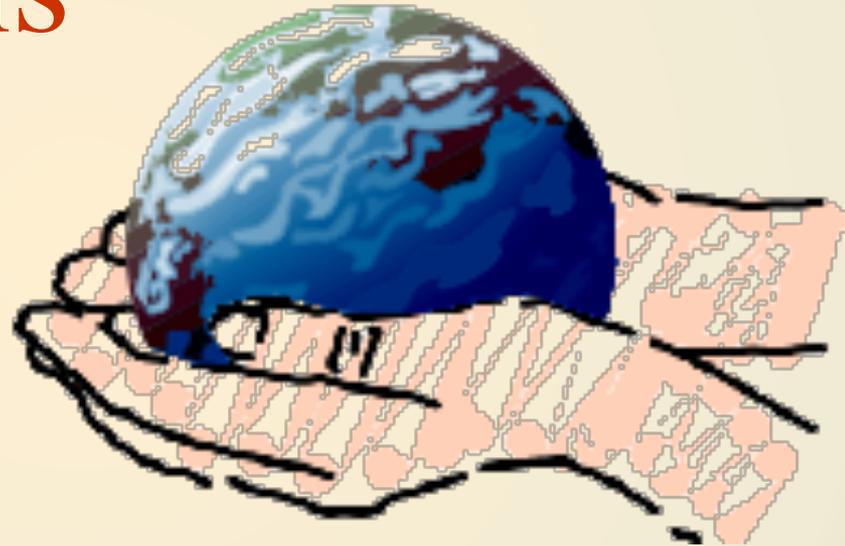


Developmental Commons



Creating a platform
for community “quantum leap”

Personal Impetus for Inquiry

- Inspiration from studying examples of “economic miracles” that contradicted prevailing view that 8 of 10 new enterprises failing in first 2 years is “natural order.”
- Frustration with “embarrassment of riches” in developmental resources (funders, TA, support services, incubators, etc) which, in practice, are fragmented, superficial and largely ineffectual.
- Conundrum of trying to reconcile prevailing models of “organization” with actual phenomena of community.

There *is* a better way...

- There are many examples of “economic miracles” in which communities achieve a very high rate of innovation and very low rate of failure.
- Examples: Mondragon Cooperatives in Basque region of Spain, “flexible manufacturing networks” of northern Italy, “shanzhai” phenomena in Shenzhen region of China.
- Share a “meta-organizational” structure of many independent parties that flexibly share knowledge & resources such that they act, in some respects, like a single, integrated enterprise.
- These communities were models for widely adopted policies (e.g. “industry clusters”) but not well-understood because requires reconceptualizing “organization.”

A Commons = Where Community Meets & Fulfills Itself

“Community is the spirit, the guiding light of the tribe, whereby people come together in order to fulfill a specific purpose, to help others fulfill their purpose, and to take care of one another. The goal of the community is to make sure that each member of the community is heard and is properly giving the gifts he has brought to this world. Without this giving, the community dies. And without the community, the individual is left without a place where he can contribute. The community is that grounding place where people come and share their gifts and receive from others.”

— From *The Spirit of Intimacy* by Sobonfu Somé

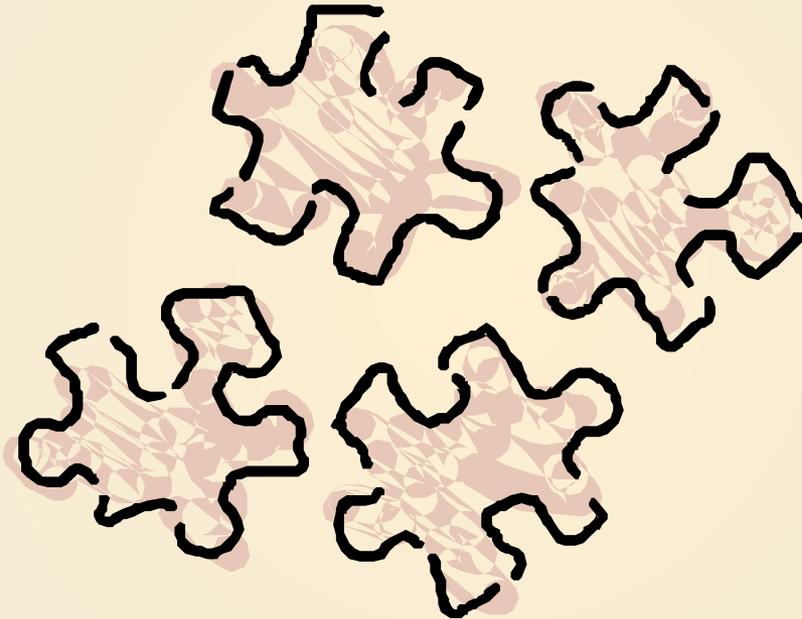
Imagine:

An integrated regional framework to:

- Create shared vision & link our individual efforts to that vision.
- Encourage entrepreneurial initiative & identify strategic opportunities.
- Coordinate resources & services among all stakeholders in support of entrepreneurial action.
- Provide continuous developmental support & risk management from idea to R&D to start-up to expansion and spin-off.
- Address enterprises' minor set-backs and make timely corrections so as to prevent translate potential failures into lessons learned.

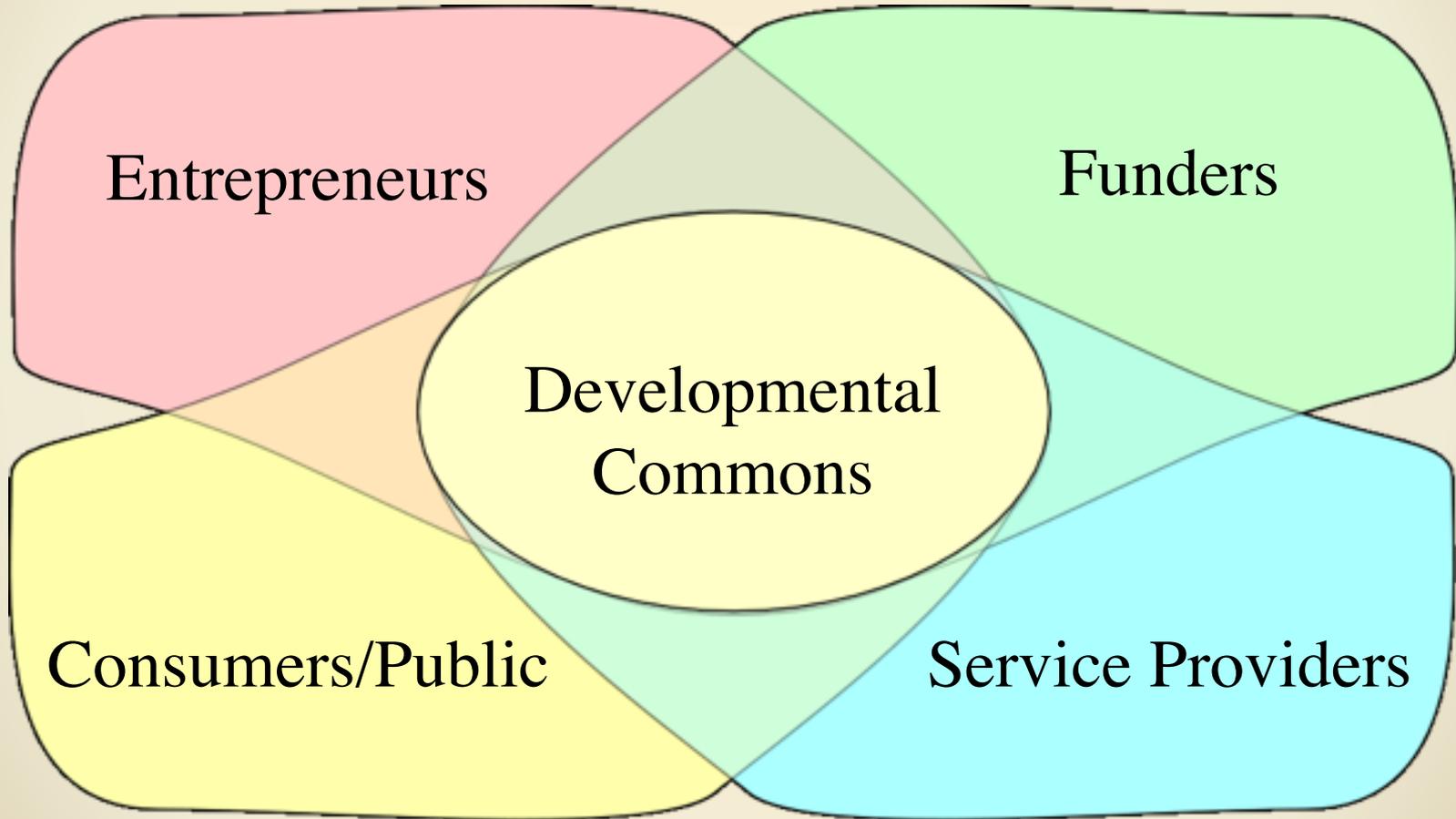
What's Missing?

- We have all the pieces...



but we haven't put them together.

It's time to rediscover the
Commons of our Shared Future



Developmental Commons:

- **Develop** - 1. To build up or expand; 2. To make stronger or more effective; 3. To bring into activity or reality; 4. To cause to unfold or evolve gradually; 5. To make more available or extensive.
- **Common** - 1. Belonging equally to, or shared by, two or more or by all; 2. Belonging to or related to the community at large.

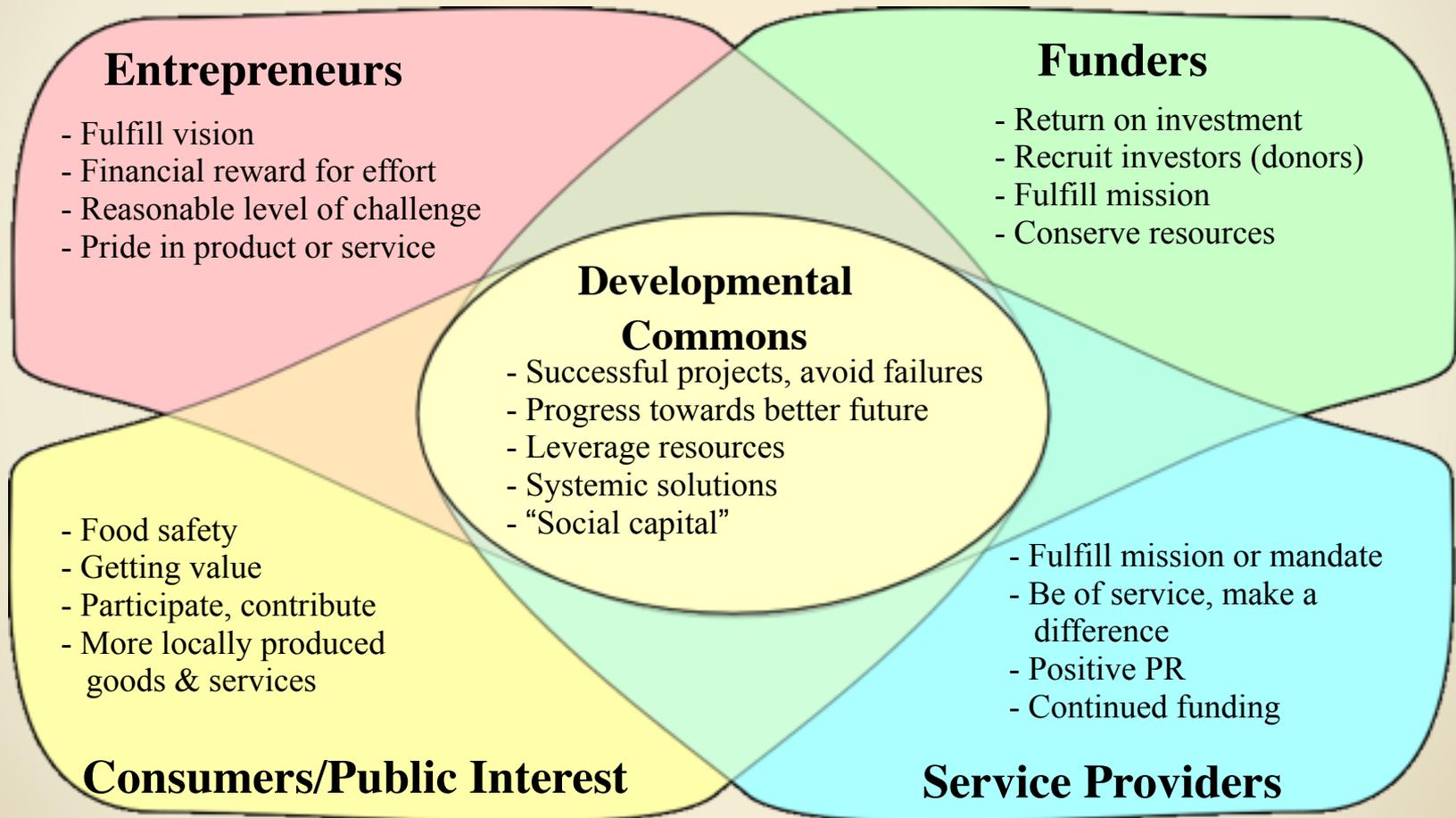
From: *Webster's New World Dictionary, 3rd College Edition*

A developmental commons is:

A set of *agreements* and *stable inter-organizational relationships* that:

- furthers the interests of all stakeholders, collectively and individually;
- in order to function or exist at all, must be universally accessible and not owned or controlled exclusively by any one party;
- is distributed throughout a network of inter-dependent parties;
- does not force but maximizes opportunities for participation.

Interests of Stakeholders



How can we possibly *organize* this?

The answer is simple: we can't.

“There is simply no way to govern the diversity and complexity of twenty first century society or our enormous capacity to interfere with biospheric and genetic systems, with separatist, linear, mechanistic, seventeenth-century concepts of organization.” - Dee Hock, founder of VISA

The same can be said for a developmental commons.

A New Paradigm: “Chaordic” Organization

Chaordic [kay´-ordic], *adj.*, fr. E. chaos and order

1. The behavior of any self-organizing organism, organization or system which harmoniously blends characteristics of order and chaos.
2. Patterned in a way dominated by neither chaos or order.
3. Characteristic of the fundamental organizing principles of evolution and nature.

Dee Hock developed this paradigm in the process of creating VISA. Two other prime examples of chaordic organization are the internet and the “open-source” software movement.

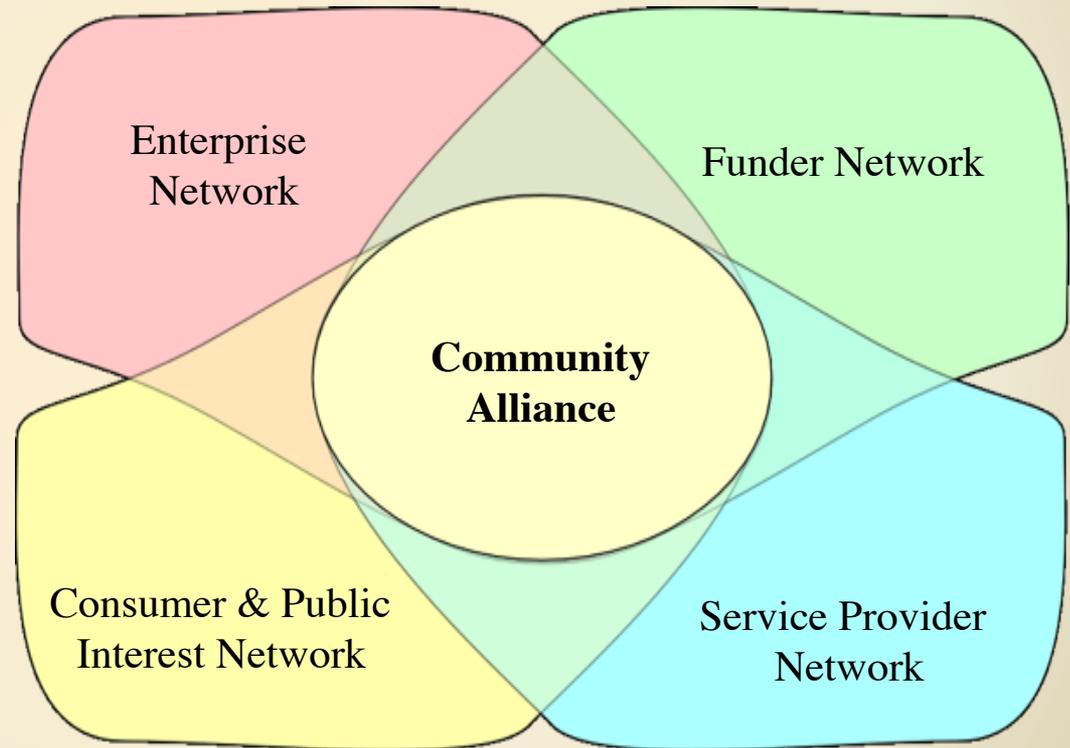
Design for a Developmental Commons

Two complementary facets:

- A “Community Alliance” - provides the nucleus of shared purpose & principles.
- Developmental commons “infrastructure” providing open framework for collaboration implemented through “structured network” of independent stakeholders.

Community Alliance as Nucleus to Developmental Commons

- Serves a “platform of collaboration” rather than an “umbrella”
- Exist primarily to enable constituent parts.
- Members have the right to organize in any manner, at any scale, in any area, and around any issue or activity relevant to and consistent with Alliance’s Purpose and Principles.
- Powered from the periphery, unified from the core.
- Durable in purpose and principle, malleable in form and function.
- Equitably distributes power, rights, responsibility and rewards.
- A measure of its success is how invisible it is.



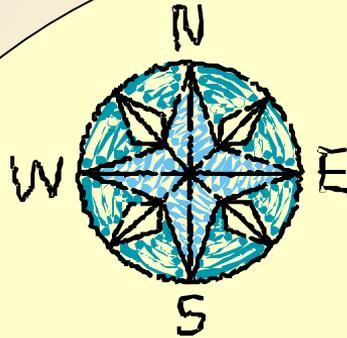
“The greater the capacity to receive, store, utilize, transform, and transmit information, the more diverse and complex the entity.” - Dee Hock

Steps to Form Community Alliance

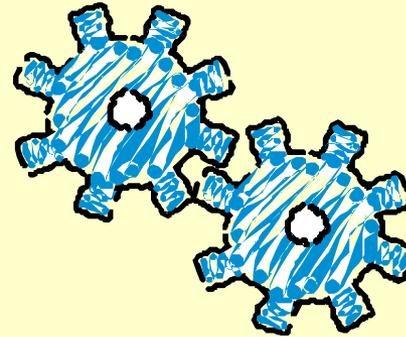
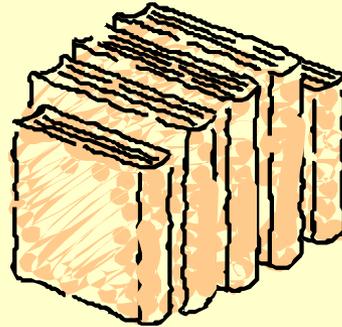
- Recruit founders for community alliance representing key stakeholder groups.
- Create declaration of purpose and principles.
- Create constitution, incorporate Alliance and recruit membership.
- Implement “practices” through multilateral agreements.

Developmental Commons “Infrastructure”

Project Tracking



Investment Pool



Knowledge/
Vision-Base

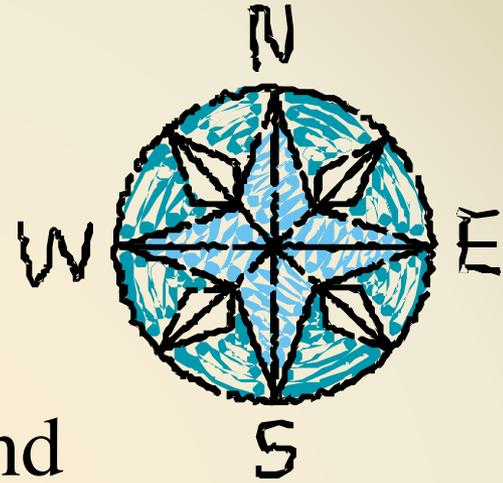
Service Linkage

D.C. Infrastructure

General Design Principles

- Open to all parties, on all levels.
- Respects and encourages self-determination by all parties.
- Can not be owned or controlled by any one party.
- May be implemented by one party or subset of the whole, but always under the sanction of the whole.
- Supports role clarification by stakeholders rather than imposing roles on any party
- Enables emergent organization of whole by free action of stakeholders

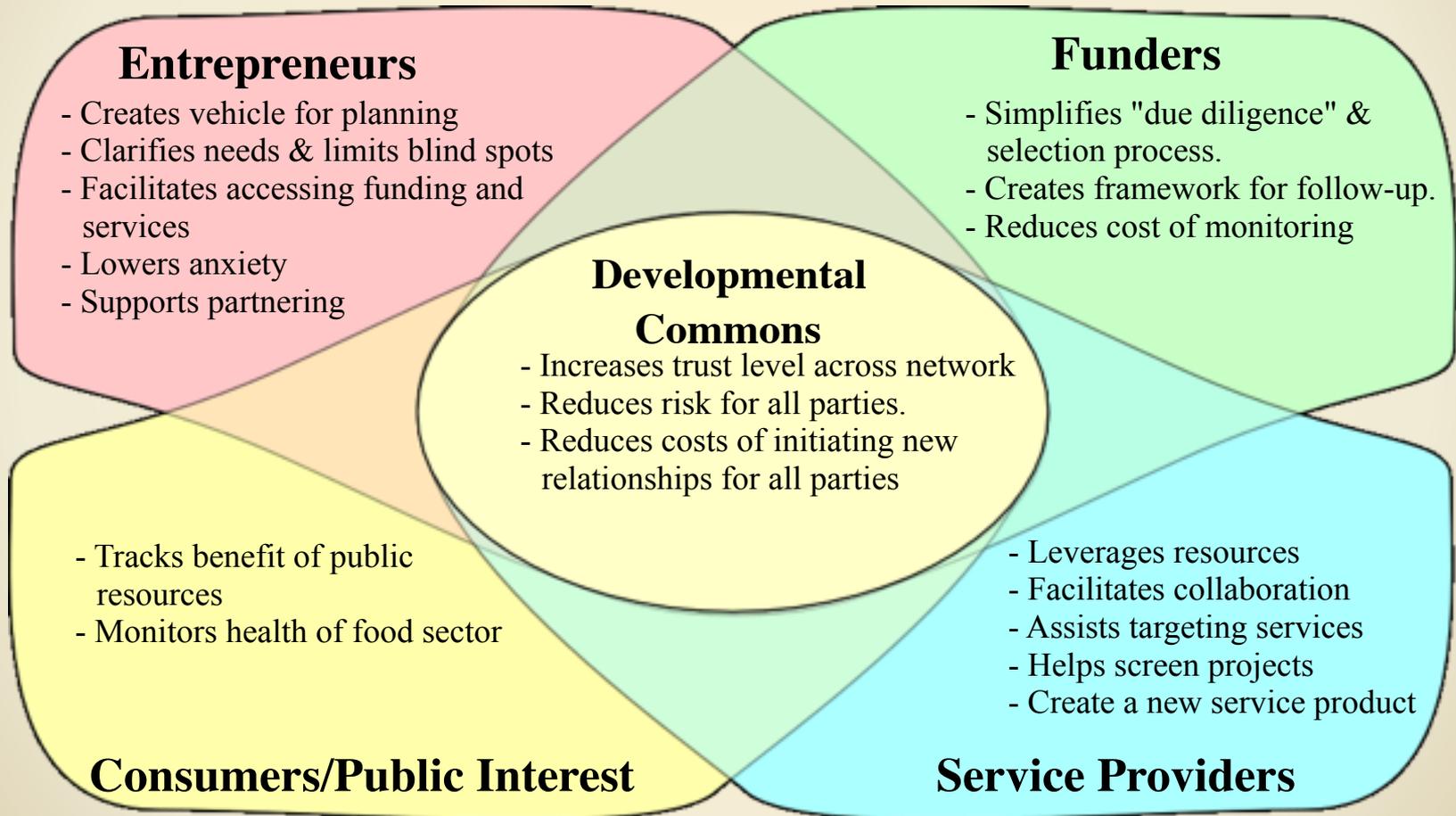
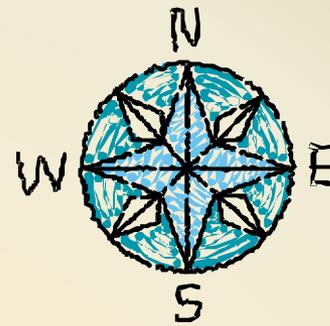
Project Tracking



A standardized system for project assessment, planning and tracking.

- Provides common frame of reference for internal and external stakeholders.
- Comprehensive planning tool for enterprise.
- Standardized reports created for various purposes and levels of disclosure.
- Access controlled by project owner(s) with provision for 3rd-party verification of key data.

Benefits of Project Tracking



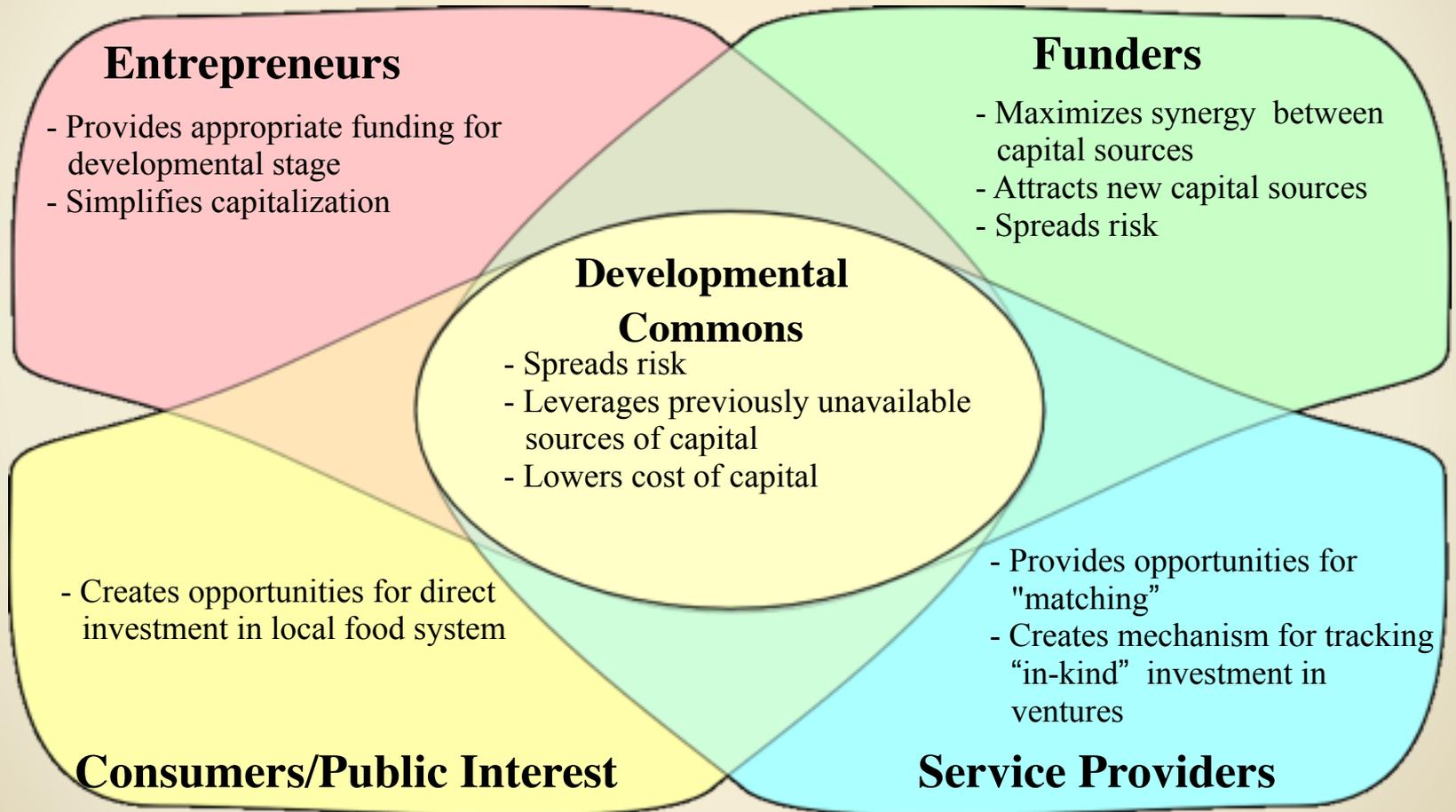
Funding Pool



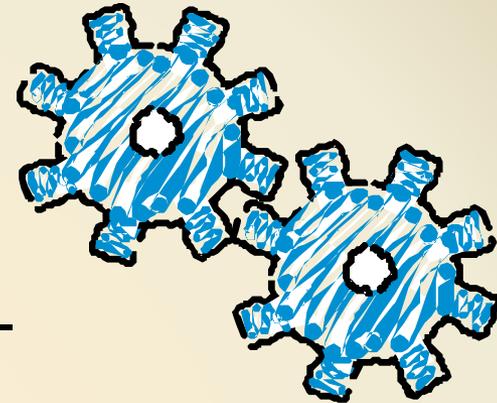
A virtual “pool” of funding that tracks capital from multiple sources invested into a “portfolio” of targeted projects.

- Leverages multiple sources & types of capital.
- Funds are not actually held in pool, they are merely tracked.
- Matches various types of “investment” (i.e. grant, loan, equity) to appropriate phase of project development.
- Managed like a venture fund in that investments are linked to rigorous project assessment and tracking.
- Potentially tracks non-conventional investments such as sweat-equity and in-kind services.

Benefits of Funding Pool



Service Linkage

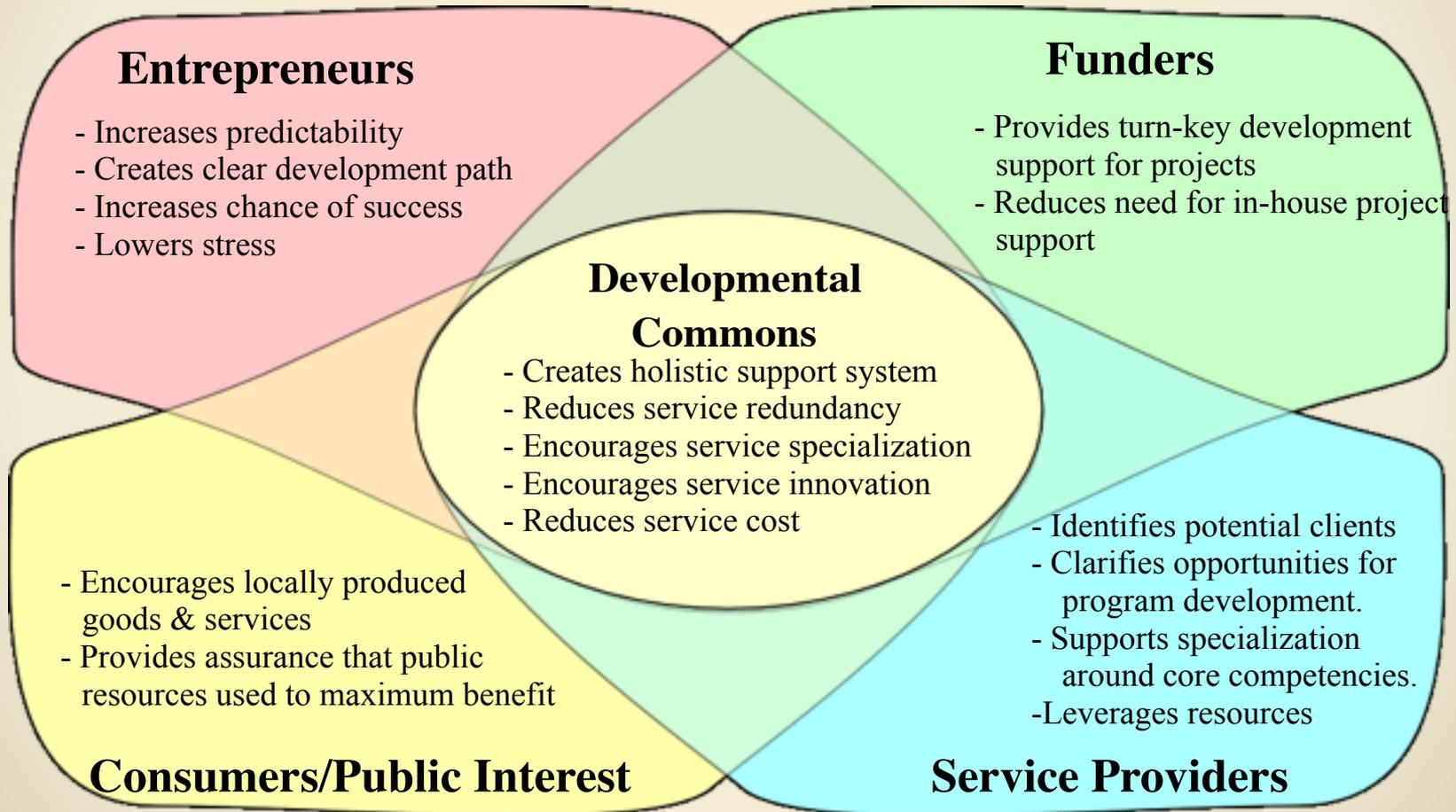
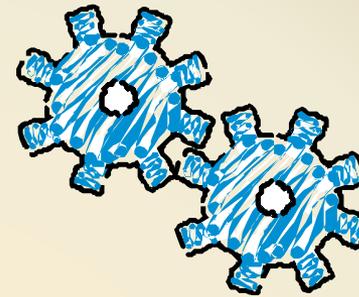


A framework of basic developmental tracks by which to link services across institutional boundaries.

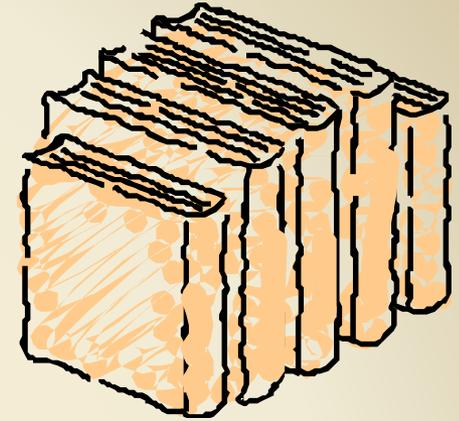
Mechanism for integrating services that:

- Is venture (or project)-centered.
- Addresses all phases/stages of development (offers clear path forward for enterprises & projects).
- Crosses/links services across institutional boundaries.
- Creates opportunities for service provision - doesn't force integration.

Benefits of Service Linkage



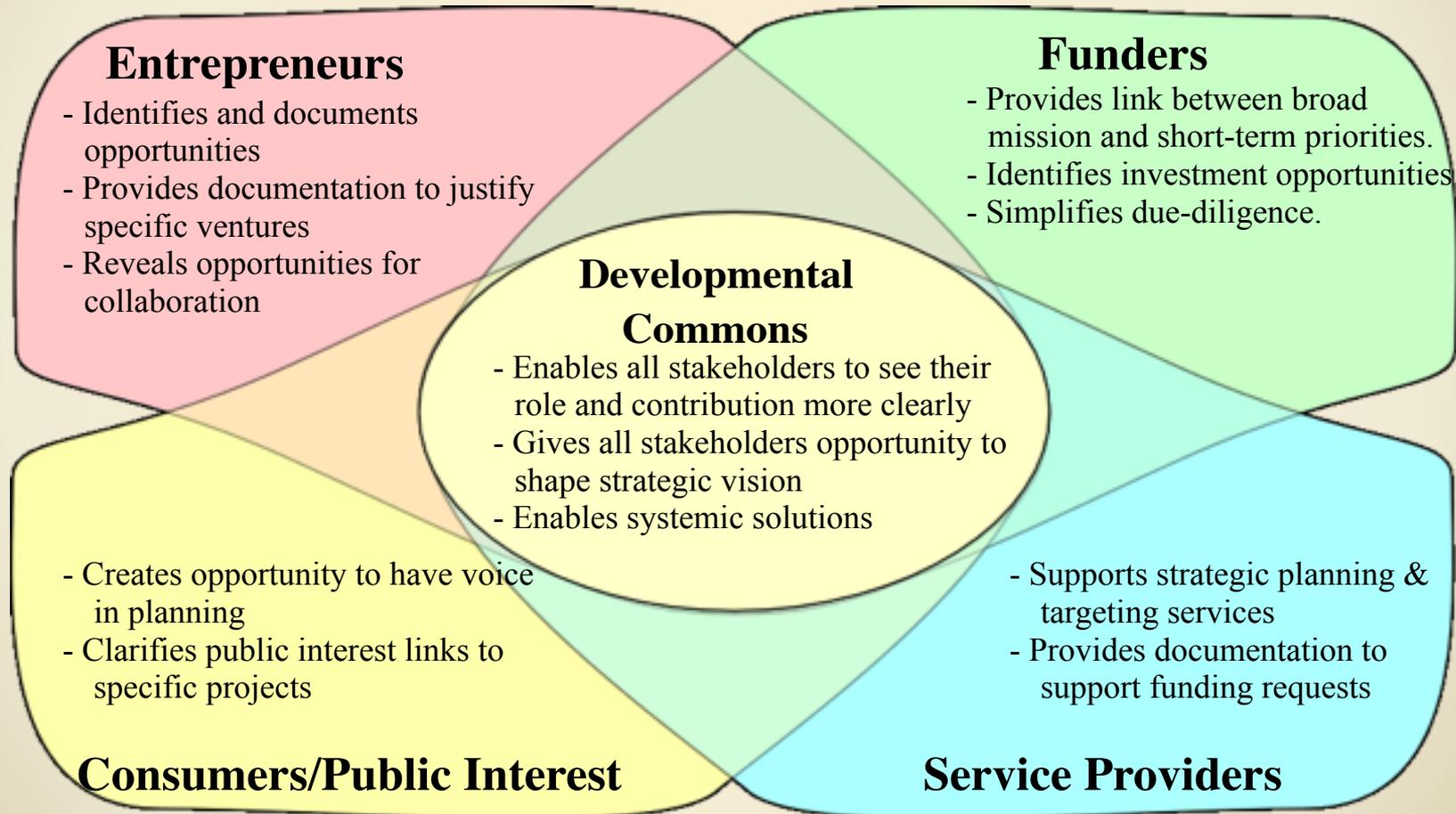
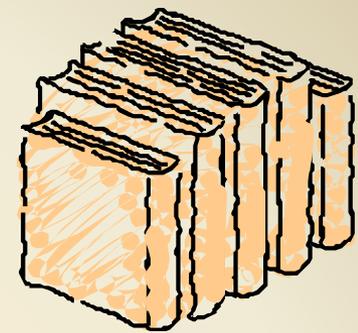
Knowledge/Vision Base



A universally-accessible repository of sector-specific information and resources for strategic planning on all levels.

- Master repository for research and planning documents.
- Identifies gaps, limitations & opportunities in sector.
- Dynamic directory of enterprises and other stakeholders in the sector.
- Resources and tools that support on-going strategic planning on all levels of the sector.
- Information “backbone” for the developmental commons.

Benefits of Knowledge/Vision Base



In the end, what it's all about?

“If not such great, new ideas of organization and community, what? If not you, who? If not now, when?”

- Dee Hock

“The grace that is the health of creatures can only be held in common.

In healing the scattered members come together.

In health the flesh is graced, the holy enters the world.”

- Wendell Berry from the poem *Healing*