Study Guide to

Process of Sustainable Growth

based on

29th of December 2015 Letter
Insights from the Frontiers of Learning
28th of December 2010 Letter
Ridván Message 2010

Summary

The major aim of the series of plans we are all currently involved with, is to significantly advance the process of entry by troops. This is achieved by a furthering the process of sustainable growth in every cluster. This study aid/guide aims at listing the steps of this process, starting from the beginning, through each milestone, and to the current frontiers of learning. Each step is summarized by an excerpt from messages of the Universal House of Justice. Alongside each step, references that provide further detailed descriptions, explanations and elaborations, are given.
Invariably, opportunities afforded by the personal circumstances of the believers initially involved … to enter into meaningful and distinctive conversation with local residents dictate how the process of growth begins in a cluster. [L28-10§4]

What happens next follows no predetermined course. [L28-10§4]

- Need to draw help from friends in other clusters [L29-15§5]
- Establishing basis for building capacity: [IFL2013 - 2.1 & 2.2]
- Spiritual prerequisites: [L28-10§31]
- Rectitude of conduct: [L28-10§32]
- Chaste and Holy life: [L28-10§33]
- Freedom from prejudice: [L28-10§34]
- High standards and sincere daily effort: [L28-10§35]
- Overcoming habits from society at large: [L28-10§36]
- Strive to understand the totality of the vision: [L28-10§37]
- Avoiding false dichotomies: [L28-10§38]
- Thinking in processes: [L28-10§39]
- Teaching: [R2010§2-6]
- Accompaniment: [R2010§19-20]
But irrespective of the specifics, the outcome must be the same. Within every cluster, the level of cohesion achieved among the core activities must be such that, in their totality, a nascent programme for the sustained expansion and consolidation of the Faith can be perceived. [L28-10§4]

Role of the ABM:s in this phase: [L28-10§5]
Purpose of the Institute process: [R2010§8-12]
Children Classes: [R2010§13-14]
Junior Youth Groups: [R2010§16-18]

This initial flow of human resources into the field of systematic action marks the first of several milestones in a process of sustainable growth. [L28-10§4] ... when a programme of growth is nascent in a cluster, there might be a handful of individuals who are involved in its promotion and those who are participating might come from only several households, ... [L29-15§22]

Condition 1 - Institute Process: [L29-15§8]
Condition 2 - Quality of tutors: [L29-15§8]
Condition 3 - Accompaniment [L29-15§9]
Enhancing quality of institute process: [IFL2013 - 3.1]
Growth needs to be ten-fold: [L28-10§15]
Effects and benefits of the Institute Process: [L28-10§16]
Individuals: [L28-10§ 31 - 39]
Teaching: [R2010§2-6]

Before long, there forms a nucleus of friends in a cluster who are working and consulting together and arranging activities. For the process of growth to advance further, the number of people sharing this commitment must rise, and their capacity for undertaking systematic action within the framework of the Plan must correspondingly increase. And similar to the development of a living organism, growth can occur quickly when the right conditions are in place. [L29-15§7]
Parallel to the establishment of mechanisms to support the institute process, other administrative structures are gradually taking shape. [L28-10§7]

Greater structures as complexity rises: [IFL2013 - 3.2]
Introduction of ATC: [L28-10§7]
Reflection Meetings institutionalized: [L28-10§7]
Need of coordinators emerge: [L28-10§6] [L29-15§10]
Need for an ATC appears: [L29-15§11]
Role of ABM and other agencies to ensure administrative structures being forged take on the requisite characteristics: [L28-10§8]
Role of the LSA/Increasing capacity: [L28-10§18, 27]
Role of the NSA/RBC: [L29-15§12]
Those serving on administration: [L28-10§29-30, 42]

The impulse to learn through action is, of course, present among the friends from the very start. The introduction of quarterly cycles of activity capitalizes on this emerging capacity and allows it to be steadily reinforced. [L29-15§13]

Centrality of the Word of God: [L29-15§14]
Act of teaching assumes greater prominence: [L29-15§14]
Expansion phases: [L29-15§15]

The pattern of community life has to be developed in places where receptivity wells up, those small centres of population where intense activity can be sustained. [L29-15§16]

Initiating community building activities in neighbourhoods and villages: [L29-15§17]
Intensifying community-building efforts: [IFL2013 – 3.4]
By now, the process of growth in the cluster will conform to the rhythm established by pronounced cycles of expansion and consolidation, which, punctuated every three months by a meeting for reflection and planning, are unfolding without interruption. [L28-10§7]

Sustained rhythm of expansion and consolidation: [IFL2013 - 1.1]
Identifying and overcoming obstacles to sustainable progress: [IFL2013 - 3.4]
Qualitative and quantitative advances: [L29-15§18]
Progress is difficult and different in every cluster: [L28-10§9]

2nd Milestone: It signals the maturation of an everexpanding, self-sustaining system for the spiritual edification of a population: a steady stream of friends is proceeding through the courses of the training institute and engaging in the corresponding activities, which serves, in turn, to increase the number of fresh recruits into the Faith, a significant percentage of whom invariably enters the institute process, guaranteeing the expansion of the system. [L28-10§9] ... by the time a programme has become intensive, these figures ... have grown: perhaps tens of individuals active in the work of expansion and consolidation, while those participating might well surpass a hundred. [L29-15§22]

As the growth process continues to gain intensity, the friends’ efforts to engage in meaningful conversations bring them into many social spaces, allowing a wider array of people to become familiar with the teachings and consider seriously the contribution they can make to the betterment of society. [L29-15§23]

... more and more homes are provided as venues for community-building activities, making each a point for the diffusion of the light of divine guidance. [L29-15§23]

[IFL2013 - 1.3]
The institute process comes to be supported by a growing number of friends serving capably as tutors who, cycle after cycle, offer the full sequence of institute courses between them, at times with marked intensity. Thus, human resource development proceeds with minimal interruption and generates a constantly expanding pool of workers. [L29-15§23]

Patterns & signs of clusters sustaining intense activity in neighbourhoods and villages: [L29-15§24]
Releasing the capacity of the youth: [L29-15§36]

In the course of their endeavours, the believers encounter receptivity within distinct populations who represent a particular ethnic, tribal, or other group and who may be concentrated in a small setting or present throughout the cluster and well beyond it. [L29-15§25]

Youth most responsive element: [L29-15§35]
Reaching out to youth in receptive populations: [IFL2013 - 3.5]

As growth in the cluster advances further, greater demands are being placed on the organizational scheme of … [L29-15§26]

The Training Institute [L29-15§26, 44]
The Area Teaching Committee [L29-15§27]
The Local Spiritual Assembly [L29-15§28]
Fostering the capacity of youth: [L29-15§36]
The National Spiritual Assemblies: [L29-15§42-43]
Effective organizational scheme: [IFL2013 - 1.4]
A notable characteristic of advanced clusters is a mode of learning that permeates the whole community and acts as a spur to the rise in institutional capacity. [L29-15§29]

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<th>Expressions of mode of learning: [L29-15§29]</th>
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A natural outcome of the rise both in resources and in consciousness of the implications of the Revelation for the life of a population is the stirrings of social action. [L29-15§30]

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<th>Emerge organically: [L29-15§30]</th>
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<td>Importance of “being” and “doing” [L29-15§36]</td>
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<td>Greater involvement in the life of society: [IFL2013 - 1.5]</td>
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For the movement of a population to have come this far demonstrates that the process which brought it about is strong enough to achieve and sustain a high degree of participation in all aspects of the capacity-building endeavour and manage the complexity entailed. This is another milestone for the friends to pass, the third in succession since the process of growth in a cluster was begun. [L29-15§31]

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<th>Expressions of societal impact: [L29-15§32]</th>
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In some of the clusters where … locations within these clusters where a significant percentage of the entire population is now involved in community-building activities, … the reach of activity is extensive, the societal impact of the Faith becomes more evident. [L29-15§32]

| In such clusters, while the friends continue to be occupied with sustaining the process of growth, other dimensions of Bahá’í endeavour claim an increasing share of their attention. They are seeking to understand how a flourishing local population can transform the society of which it is an integral part. This will be a new frontier of learning for the foreseeable future, .... [L29-15§33] |

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