



# How does the use of open innovation and community-building help to scale sustainable social impact?

A case study of makesense Mexico

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## Abstract

**Title:** How does the use of open innovation and community-building help to scale sustainable social impact? A case study of makesense Mexico

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Today, businesses are undergoing a shift in mindset as social and environmental issues become a necessary consideration in their practices, and, at times, the core driver of their work. Extensive research has suggested that social impact requires collective efforts to be achieved and scaled. Yet, we do not know how open innovation and community-building help to scale sustainable social impact. To address this question I conducted a qualitative, inductive study on makesense, a global organization working with local businesses and entrepreneurs to scale social impact in Mexico. My findings show a virtuous cycle between the three pillars of community-building, open innovation, and sustainable social impact. They reinforce each other by starting with a personal transformation within each volunteer, followed by nurtured proactivity and experimentation with the methodologies that they have learned, and the subsequent empowerment of the community as a whole, circling back towards further growing the community. My findings provide new insights to building communities around open innovation, the benefits of collective social entrepreneurship guided by a top-down vision but driven by bottom-up innovations, and the power of utilizing a glocal strategy to scale greater local impact across geographies.

**Key words:** Open innovation, Community building, Social impact

## Resumo

**Título:** Como o uso da inovação aberta e a construção de comunidades ajudam a escalar o impacto social sustentável? Um caso de estudo sobre a makesense México

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Atualmente, as empresas estão a passar por uma mudança de mentalidade, à medida que questões sociais e ambientais se tornam considerações necessárias nas suas práticas e, por vezes, o principal fator do seu trabalho. Uma extensa pesquisa sugeriu que o impacto social exige que se alcancem e ampliem esforços coletivos. No entanto, não sabemos como a inovação aberta e a construção de comunidades ajudam a expandir o impacto social sustentável. Endereçando esta questão, conduzi um estudo qualitativo e indutivo sobre a makesense, uma organização global que trabalha com empresas e empresários locais para ampliar o impacto social no México. As minhas descobertas mostram um ciclo virtuoso entre os três pilares de construção da comunidade, inovação aberta e impacto social sustentável. Estes reforçam-se mutuamente, começando com uma transformação pessoal dentro de cada voluntário, seguida por uma proatividade e experimentação com as metodologias que estes aprenderam e o subsequente empoderamento da comunidade, voltando ao crescimento da mesma. Deste modo, os meus resultados revelam novas ideias para a construção de comunidades em torno da inovação aberta, para os benefícios do empreendedorismo social coletivo guiados por uma visão de cima para baixo, mas impulsionados por inovações de baixo para cima, e para o poder de utilizar uma estratégia glocal para dimensionar um maior impacto local nas geografias.

**Palavras-chave:** Inovação aberta, Construção comunitária, Impacto social

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## Introduction

As climate change and humanitarian crises are becoming of greater concern on a global scale, businesses are reconsidering their business models as they are held increasingly socially accountable (Business News Daily, 2020), putting responsibility on companies to act in favor of the well-being of their society. The topics covered by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are also economic and political issues that are gaining global traction and influencing business decisions in most sectors, exemplified by global platforms such as the UN's Business Call to Action, which engages companies to develop inclusive business models aimed at incorporating base of the pyramid populations. The development of inclusive business practices enhances traditional business models because they are "designed to provide access to goods, services and employment opportunities to underserved populations in commercially viable ways"(Uncharted Waters, 2016, p. 5). Businesses, governments, and individuals are looking for new approaches to pending challenges; by aligning with the SDGs, "businesses and corporate leaders will not only help build a prosperous, more sustainable world, but also mature new global markets and enter the next era of business"(UN Global Compact, 2016). Social entrepreneurs offer business models aiming to help marginalized populations to rise from inequalities and salvaging ecosystems on the verge of collapsing. It is a topic that has academic and managerial relevance as it introduces a new way of doing business in a global society that is experiencing a shift in values and priorities, targeting neglected local issues that have global impact and inspiring others to follow their lead (Santos, 2012, p. 348).

Deiglmeier and Greco (Stanford Social Innovation Review, 2018) identified what they call a "stagnation chasm", in which social innovation initiatives are blocked from achieving their full potential due to a series of three factors: inadequate funding, a fragmented ecosystem, and a talent gap. Focusing on the second one due to its intrinsic aspect of community building and its pertinence to this research paper, they highlight the value of building relationships in the private, nonprofit, and public sectors; increasing cross-sector fluency through "bridgers" to facilitate collaboration; and, lastly, funding partnerships and collaborations with both time and resources. According to Deloitte's 2018 study on The Rise of the Social Enterprise, the fastest growing segment of workers are those with "alternative work arrangements", those that are "contingent, gig, and crowd-based", and it has been noted that most companies are not ready to manage a workforce ecosystem that goes beyond people within the enterprise (Bersin, 2018).

However, engaging in open innovation by opening the search for solutions to other stakeholders, people who are also affected by the issue, whether it be directly or indirectly, is an often-untapped source of valuable insight. "[The key principles of open innovation] include transparency and visibility; reasonably open access so that anyone can contribute regardless of formal expertise; peer review and feedback" (Mulgan, 2007, p. 32). "[Generally linking] widely dispersed communities of contributors in collaborative work...[with] the underlying principle [that] knowledge grows best through sharing and cooperation"(idem), there is scarce previous research on the value of open innovation in an entrepreneurial ecosystem. Therefore, I have chosen to define my research question as **exploring the role of open innovation and community-building on scaling sustainable social impact.**

The international organization *makesense* utilizes the concept of open innovation in their business model in order to stimulate an active community, approaching a common societal problem from various perspectives, ultimately building a local network of engaged actors that continues to grow on a daily basis. By taking into consideration the perspectives of a variety of stakeholders and giving them tools and support, this has led to a strong community of engaged citizens who partake in the development of solutions to their local social and environmental issues. Through this research, I aim to show the value of community-building and open innovation as a means to further the reach and the depth of social impact within society, using *makesense* as a case study due to their business model being founded on these two practices and their exponential growth since their establishment, with Mexico City as a setting because of its pressing socio-environmental issues as a mega-city in a developing country.

## Literature Review

### Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship is a field with no unanimous definition, but one aspect that is agreed upon is the distinguishing factor of "the relative priority given to social wealth creation versus economic wealth creation" (Mair & Martí, 2006, p. 39). It is aligned with the UN SDGs by "involving the innovative use and combination of resources to pursue opportunities to catalyze social change and/or address social needs"(idem, p. 37). A definition of social entrepreneurship suggested by Santos reads "the pursuit of sustainable solutions to neglected problems with positive externalities"(Santos, 2012, p. 335).

Social entrepreneurship strives for **positive social change** (PSC), which is defined as “the process of transforming patterns of thought, behavior, social relationships, institutions, and social structure to generate beneficial outcomes for individuals, communities, organizations, society, and/or the environment beyond the benefits for the instigators of such transformations” (Stephan et al, 2016, p. 1252). There exists surface-level change, which is based off of extrinsic motivations and rules to which one must conform as an individual or an organization. However, for a sustainable social impact, Stephan developed his Positive Social Change Framework in which organizations are now turning to the “deep-level route”, one in which the combination of intrinsically motivating different actors, developing their capabilities, and subsequently empowering opportunity structures, leads to a shift in dynamic at the societal level.

Mair and Martí (2006) suggest evaluating social entrepreneurship through different theoretical lenses and, by considering the embeddedness of a project within its social context as a non-negligible element that can both enable or constrain its development, it complements its economic activity. According to structuration theory, the agent, or social entrepreneur, cannot be detached from the structure, or community. A second lens is institutional entrepreneurship, which consists in disrupting deeply set structures. Then, the importance of networks, or social capital, which plays into the success of a venture, although "overembeddedness" can also limit the benefits of solidarity by restraining the flow of information. Lastly, despite being through different means, social entrepreneurship aligns with social movements in its pursuit of social transformation, and the authors remark that one must not look at a venture's success or failure as binary, but rather as the degree of achievement of such a transformation. Although it is a growing field, "the lack of a theory of SE may be a barrier to the full recognition and more focused support that might be needed to enable these initiatives to grow"(Seelos & Mair, 2005,

p. 243), hindering its ability to reach its full potential, but it continues to be validated as a powerful catalyst for shaping sustainable societies.

As previously mentioned with social capital, networks are vital in scaling the impact of social entrepreneurship, and communities of dedicated actors are important vehicles in mobilizing change, as supported by the following study on collective impact.

A study from Stanford was conducted on the concept of **collective impact**. It is defined as "the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem"(Kania & Kramer, 2011). It is an idea that has been often overlooked due to the tendency of "focusing on independent action as the primary vehicle for social change"(idem). This puts the responsibility on a single entity to solve a certain problem, one which may involve many actors, and the defined solution should eventually be replicated in order to scale the impact. This creates competition between organizations that could actually benefit from each other's knowledge, rather than overlap on research and ultimately consume more resources than they would if there were to collaborate. Kania and Kramer (2011) propose a series of five conditions that lead to alignment and powerful results: a common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and a backbone support organization. They also make the distinction between technical and adaptive problems. The former refers to a concrete problem for which the solution is known and can be implemented only by specific actors. Adaptive problems, on the other hand, involve a number of stakeholders who must become actively engaged in order to reach a solution. This study suggests that, since social problems arise due to the activities of a multitude of governmental and commercial activities and not only from nonprofit organizations, all of these actors have their part to play in finding solutions.

There are, however, mixed reviews about the effectiveness of this concept, namely regarding the benefits of competition, the difficulty in implementation after the commencement of a project, and the patience required in seeing true change. In their SSIR article, "Collective Impact or Coordinated Blindness?"(2013), researchers Boumgarden and Branch challenge the effectiveness of a collective impact strategy, arguing that "collaboration is initially helpful in generating efficiency of implementation by centralizing the focus of multiple organizations", but it is beneficial only when the identified solution is the correct one. Their position is that narrowing down one solution in order to scale it inhibits us from exploring all possible

solutions and from learning from each other's mistakes, and thereby advocating for the competition model over collaboration. Nevertheless, collective impact remains a powerful tool to be explored, especially if it is implemented as a foundational strategy and priority in a business striving to scale positive social change.

Once a community has grown around an initiative, different methods can be employed to generate positive social change within society, and one human-centered approach that can be utilized by members of a community to leverage their existing capabilities and empower them to find their own solutions is positive deviance.

The concept of **positive deviance** was first proposed as a social occurrence by Jerry and Monique Sternin in Vietnamese villages in the 1990s. They observed that some children were better nourished than others even though all families had access to the same resources. They found that some families engaged in certain behaviors, such as washing their children's hands before a meal and feeding them more often throughout the day, which helped them retain the nutrients they needed, and these practices were later implemented as part of a community-wide project (Sternin, 1998, p. 6).

This concept was later developed for the organizational context. Positive deviance refers to the “systematic, community-driven approach to uncover existing strengths within a community and to scale those existing capabilities and opportunities whilst motivating and training community members to change their behaviour,” (Stephan et al, 2016, p. 1259). A positive deviant is an individual who accomplishes more than others when given the same resources. This can be analyzed either by considering a new approach to a problem or its subsequent distinct outcomes. In a 6-step model, Pascale along with Jerry Sternin outline the different components that lead to a deep change in mindset that will eventually become embedded in company culture, or that can be applied to a greater community.

This human-centered approach, leveraging real-life experiences, perspectives, and thought processes as a basis for problem-solving are foundational elements for inciting community-driven initiatives and open innovation.

## **Open Innovation**

**Open innovation** is a concept that started in the technology industry and brought about the practice of democratizing tools for both the access to and the creation of knowledge, which in turn has blurred firm boundaries when it comes to innovation. In the technology business model, different forms of open innovation are open ecosystems, open innovation through acquisitions, open patent systems, and open sourcing (Bogers et al, 2019, p. 83). In 2014, Tesla took the road of an open patent system through their All Our Patent Belong To You initiative, allowing anyone who, "in good faith, wants to use [their] technology"(Musk, 2014). The idea is that their true competitors are not other electric vehicle manufacturers, "but rather the enormous flood of gasoline cars pouring out of the world's factories every day"(idem), which inhibit them from pursuing their goal of solving the carbon crisis.

There is also a distinction between outside-in, or inbound open innovation, and inside-out, also known as outbound. Inbound open innovation refers to the idea that many companies already conduct their research and development abroad, which should serve as justification for inviting external sources to contribute ideas. Outbound open innovation is providing access to one's own findings in order to encourage greater adoption of said technology, overall creating a significant foundation on which others can build. Bogers et al (2019) emphasize the benefits of both types of open innovation by suggesting that, rather than continuing to create new segments of knowledge, it would be more useful to combine already existing knowledge to create sustainable solutions. In other words, rather than continuing to gather new bricks of information, society now has the necessary tools to begin to build structures that can be utilized to solve societal issues.

A number of trends have emerged in today's society, propelling more widespread adoption of open innovation. First, most large organizations conduct part of their Research and Development activities abroad. Not only this, but there is considerable decline in in-house R&D, reaching out to external institutions as a means of saving costs. Also, intellectual property rights are seen as a facilitator to collaboration, controlling but also enabling the access to ideas. Lastly, digitization has impacted the flow of information, creating greater connectedness and opportunities for open innovation (Bogers et al, 2019, p.78-80). The authors argue that the success of open innovation depends on "developing a culture that promotes

collaboration and overcomes the not-invented-here and not-sold-here syndromes"(idem, p. 85), which requires a drastic change in mindset that not everyone is willing to undergo.

Within a context of social impact, open innovation is a relevant approach because firms recognize that the issue at hand is one that involves many different actors in society, and in order to find a proper solution, they must not solely rely on their internal knowledge. In their study considering the impact of goal multiplicity, defined as the "simultaneous pursuit of economic and social goals", on open innovation and innovation performance, Stephan, Andries, and Daou (2019) outline that these strategic goals influence the sources of knowledge that firms will utilize. They argue that firms with predominantly economic goals will resort more to internal knowledge due to existing competition, while social goals often require collaboration and input from many more stakeholders, as one firm alone could not usually provide the necessary solution to a widespread social problem, resulting in external information sourcing.

Leveraging key actors in society by involving the people who are affected by the problem and who will also benefit from the solution helps to promote the active use of open innovation, increasing the number of positive deviants in society and ultimately scaling positive social impact.

## Methodology

### Makesense: Case Study

Makesense was founded in 2010 when a group of young people decided they wanted to use their own skillset to help social entrepreneurs in their impactful endeavors. By connecting citizens and entrepreneurs, there began to be a great exchange of knowledge and skills in which both parties benefitted. This is how the community was born, and, by further connecting with governments and companies, it was able to scale and has continued to grow, ultimately leading to a global network of impactful members. Today, the organization has a permanent team of more than 80 people based in Paris, Mexico, Dakar, Manila, Beirut, Lima, and Abidjan, and a community of over 100,000 engaged citizens through their “hotspots”, 200 institutional partners, and a portfolio of over 3,200 projects supported (makesense, 2019).

The general theory of change that makesense has defined is to create a society in which each woman and man is encouraged to further their engagement by developing their capabilities through a collective framework to create an inclusive and sustainable society. Makesense decided which actors to involve in their process based primarily on two studies. The first being Stanford's study on collective impact in which makesense acts as the backbone organization, being the fundamental platform to connect all actors in the same place. Their second reference considers the critical mass theory advocating that, to reach significant change in society, it is necessary to mobilize 25% of society.

The organization has three pillars. The first is dedicated to corporations where their role is to help larger companies become more sustainable by offering a number of programs and consulting services. The second is for entrepreneurs through their incubator program, connecting them with mentors and giving them ongoing support in the beginning stages of their project. The third pillar targets citizens. Through events around creative brainstorming sessions, volunteers not only generate innovative problem-solving ideas, they also develop a deeper understanding of the challenges their communities are facing, they build a network of like-minded colleagues, and they provide potential solutions derived from their own perspective, as a local, rather than as an expert in the domain. This organization has created a local as well as a global ecosystem to bring together members of a community who strive to improve the quality of life in their respective cities.

The first event format to come about was the hold\_up, an activity about a specific challenge a social entrepreneur faces, and up to a dozen citizens who share a common interest for this theme come to the hold\_up for a guided brainstorming session, based on design thinking methodology, to offer concrete solutions for the entrepreneur.

Makesense Mexico was the second office to open, when Kenza, a volunteer in the office in Paris, was invited to move there to be the Community Developer for the Latin American region. After spending two years working full-time in community development, Kenza shifted her role to launch makesense's first incubation program in Mexico after having validated the assumption that there is indeed a strong interest for social business throughout the local community of citizens. The program was initially funded by a partner and the focus was on water issues, an important local problem in Mexico City. Through the incubator, makesense became a key player in the first movement supporting social entrepreneurs in Mexico.

Although the makesense methodology is the basis for the functioning of the organization, each individual hub develops their own strategy in accordance with local issues. In Mexico, they widened their scope to include themes around sustainable cities - water, mobility, clean energy, urban design, sustainable food, responsible consumption, social fabric. Today, the full-time team in Mexico is composed of Kenza, the Operations Manager, Diego, the Country Development Manager, Evelyn, the Community Booster, David, the Director of Design and Innovation, as well as four external innovation consultants and an intern. Their community is currently composed of 40 citizen ambassadors, who are the most active volunteers in the city, as well as a significant number of sense\_makers, who are the citizens who attend their events, the entrepreneurs from their incubator, and the organizations with whom they work.

## Geographical Context: Mexico City

The value of mobilizing a community in a city as enormous as Mexico City is a necessary effort to develop network effects that will spill over throughout the city, and later the country. Mexico is the second largest emitter of greenhouse gases in Latin America, and it constantly struggles with problems such as the provision of clean water, air pollution, and rural deforestation and erosion (Stiftung, 2019). Mexico is the tenth most populated country in the world, and Mexico City is the fifth most populated city across the globe (United Nations, 2016). The city is located at 2,250 meters of elevation, which keeps the city relatively cool throughout the year; however, this, coupled with the surrounding mountains and the intense air pollution, limits the city's air circulation.

Mexico is a developing country with a bustling economy, coming in as eleventh worldwide (CIA, 2020) and it was a pioneer in being one of the first countries to pass a specific law on climate change, setting goals to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However, having a large, hard-to-quantify informal sector aggravates the already-prominent non-compliance with existing regulations working towards social and environmental issues.

The people who are born in Mexico City are referred to as *chilangos*, and among this population there remains a socioeconomic and ethnic divide between those who have European ancestry from the Spanish empire, who occupy higher social ranks, and those with indigenous roots, who continue to fight to establish their voice in society (Rincón Mautner, 2019).

Due to the numerous environmental and social issues that affect such a large population on a daily basis, Mexico City is a relevant location in which to base such research.

## Data Collection

The data on which this research paper is founded is a combination of primary and secondary sources.

Source of information	Use of information collected
<b>Primary data</b>	
Observational data gathered during an internship over the course of 7 months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Direct interaction with different actors of the community</li> <li>- Participation in events leveraging open innovation (OI)</li> </ul>	Understanding of the dynamics of the relationships within the community, and the methodology that makesense uses and how they train their volunteers.
12 interviews with members of makesense community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 interviews with full-time team members in Mexico City and Paris</li> <li>- 3 interviews with entrepreneurs from current and previous generations of the incubator program</li> <li>- 6 interviews with volunteers (citizen ambassadors and consultants)</li> </ul>	Exploring the personal and professional impacts of makesense through OI and community building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Understanding of challenges and successes of community building.</li> <li>b. Understanding of benefits of open innovation methodologies and community membership.</li> <li>c. Understanding of impact of makesense on the personal lives of volunteers and their perspective of their own impact</li> </ul>
<b>Secondary data</b>	
Archival data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facebook group join requests: 439 responses to “Why would you like to join makesense?”</li> </ul>	Understanding what attracts individuals to the community and what they hope to gain from the experience.
Activities Report 2018	Understanding the tangible impact that makesense has had.
Articles published by makesense	Understanding the transparency of the organization in explaining and sharing their way of working and the vision of society that they are trying to achieve.

### Primary data

Regarding primary data, I completed a seven-month internship in makesense working predominantly in community engagement, the organization of events, and administrative and logistical tasks, allowing me to gather firsthand observational data from my own interactions with the team in Mexico, as well as with teams and communities from all over the world, from assisting to a number of community events as well as dynamics from the incubation program, and from befriending many volunteers as well as living with one of the citizen ambassadors.

I later conducted 12 interviews with members from the makesense community who I met during my internship and who were actively engaged in the events. Three of these were with full-time team members, two from the office in Mexico and one from the international hub in Paris. I was working on a daily basis with Kenza and Evelyn and they were happy to share their

experience, and they put me in touch with Lauren, the Community Developer for Europe who was in Mexico City visiting from France, and she took the time to speak with me. I chose these three individuals in particular because they all currently have, or have had, roles focused on community building and they experienced different challenges and perspectives in the various contexts where they were community developers. I later had three interviews with socio-environmental entrepreneurs, two in the current generation of the incubator program and one from a previous generation, all of whom I had met in informal settings and who were interested in participating in interviews. They provided pertinent insights regarding how the methodologies founded on open innovation and the support that makesense provides distinguishes it from other programs, and how diverse actors from the community contribute to the development of their impactful ventures. Lastly, I spoke with six volunteers, four of whom are citizen ambassadors, who shared their experiences in applying the methodologies they learned as well as the impact of makesense in their personal and professional lives. I asked them questions like, “Do you believe that certain characteristics of Mexican culture facilitate and/or create certain obstacles to practicing open innovation?” to identify local challenges that makesense faces in implementing its methodologies there, to identify room for improvement for scaling impact, and to define factors that unite the community in Mexico City. I had also met them in informal settings and knew them quite well, and they were enthusiastic in helping me and contributing to my data collection.

## Secondary data

The secondary data that I collected was varied. I had access to archival data in the form of requests to enter the makesense México hotspot Facebook group for the past year and a half, I analyzed 439 responses to “Why would you like to join makesense?” to understand what attracted individuals to the community and what they hope to gain from the experience, which helped me to confirm the results I had gathered from my interviews. It allowed me to see what people anticipate their experience to be within the organization and whether this opinion changes after becoming involved as a volunteer. I also revised the Activities Reports of 2018, articles published by makesense analyzing their impact assessment, and a series of internal documents, allowing a more objective overview of the evolution of their collaborations and growth over the past years.

## Data Analysis

After gathering this data, I developed possible models, interacting with my advisor to define the best one (see Appendix D). I initially contemplated solely focusing on the organization's methodologies leveraging open innovation because of my personal interest in the design of these formats, and their tangible impact on the development of social and environmental solutions. However, as I spent more time in the office and going to events, I quickly realized that the bonds within the community were special and worth looking into.

A turning point for me was when I attended a session with the current generation of entrepreneurs and listened to them practice their pitches. I saw the interaction between the four entrepreneurs and how close they were, how much they wanted each other to succeed, how, even in that moment, they devised a new collaboration between two of their businesses. This made me realize that sustainable innovations don't come about solely from the support of the core team, much of their growth comes from the bonds that form between individuals in the community. Therefore, I decided to widen the scope of my thesis to include community-building.

### Defining three pillars

At this point I had three pillars: community-building, open innovation, and sustainable social impact. I had to analyze my findings to define the order of these pillars – did community building cause open innovation, or vice versa? After hearing the story of how makesense grew from its inception, I privileged the fact that people who heard about it were drawn to their vision and the means to achieve it, and through word-of-mouth this common purpose became a movement which continues to gain momentum and develop its activities. Community-building and open innovation are mutually reinforcing in the way that they create ties and trust between engaged actors. This, coupled with the provided space for experimentation and expression, ultimately leads to sustainable social and environmental impact in both tangible and intangible ways, exemplified respectively by the successful ventures having completed the incubation program and the empowerment of the community. Through new initiatives and the success stories of the entrepreneurs, the cycle continues as network effects emerge, there is increased awareness throughout the society of the organization's work, community members share their experiences with their entourage, and community-building initiatives continue to weave ties between individuals and encourage bottom-up initiatives.

### Characterizing community building

I found community-building to be characterized by organic growth, a glocal strategy, and global and regional support. In HBR's "Creating an organic growth machine" (2012), Favaro, Meer and Sharma discuss corporations' mistake of resorting to serial acquisitions rather than stimulating company growth internally, organic growth being an indispensable long term source of increased performance. Organic growth is invaluable because the intrinsic motivation attracting new members is based on a sincere belief in the organization's work, ensuring that its essence will be preserved. Regarding glocal strategy, the phrase "Think Globally, Act Locally" has been adopted by many causes, for example the UNDP, to discuss the importance of local engagement with communities and the environment for better global representation. Based on Thomas Friedman's explanation of glocalization, authors Dumitrescu and Vinerean summarize it as "the art of attaining a fine balance of assimilating foreign influences into a society that add to its diversity without overwhelming it" (Dumitrescu & Vinerean, 2010, p. 150), facilitating the acceptance and adoption of new initiatives. Global and regional support also play a big role in makesense and the community is very reactive worldwide to any issue. The solidarity between the hubs and the hotspots is commendable as teams across the globe coordinate to simultaneously implement new programs, such as the new "Reaction" program that started in France to tackle challenges posed by COVID-19 for vulnerable communities, and that is already being developed in Latin America and Africa. These three characteristics strengthen the organization's local presence and impact.

### Characterizing open innovation

I believe the second pillar, open innovation, to be characterized by a horizontal structure, interactive methodologies, and a provided space for experimentation. I consider this as a three-step process, horizontal structure establishing a mindset of openness, interactive methodologies the technical training, and the space for experimentation as an opportunity to embrace leadership and apply the acquired theory. In his Forbes article "The Nature of Leadership in a Flat Organization" (2018), Craig argues that leadership is a skill rather than a role in itself and that flat organizational structures benefit from "[allowing] specialists to pursue passion projects that serve the organization with team support", exemplifying how a flat structure promotes innovation. Then, the interactive methodologies that makesense uses are based on collective action, active listening, and design thinking. As explained by Brown and Wyatt, respectively the CEO of IDEO and the leader of its Social Innovation Group, in their SSIR article "Design

Thinking for Social Innovation” (2010), design thinking incorporates three spaces: inspiration, in which the project team creates a framework for their thoughts; ideation, generating many ideas which are then synthesized into a more concrete set of insights that are then used as a basis for opportunities for change; implementation, which starts with prototyping ideas then a communication strategy. By involving different actors in these spaces, it triggers collaboration and open discussion, where judgement is set aside to encourage a creative flow of ideas, no matter how simple or extravagant. Lastly, a space for experimentation is an outlet for the community to apply what they have learned by their own initiative, but with the support of the team to ease the pressure. Being constantly at the disposition of the community provides a constant opportunity for volunteers, which they can seize whenever they feel ready and where they know that their ideas will be taken into account.

### Characterizing impact

Within the last pillar, the degree of sustainability and impact is based on the established impact measurement system. This is the guiding force in the evolution of the organization and through my interviews with the team members, I understood the imperative nature of having such a reliable reference. The distinct theories of change and the KPIs that they developed, after many trials and errors, has strengthened them as an organization and has deepened their understanding of their work as well.

### Identifying the virtuous cycle

People join the community, friendships grow, individuals develop a sense of belonging as they discover this new outlet for self-expression and sharing, and they increase each other’s knowledge in different themes that interest them, personally or professionally, each member valued and contributing with their perspectives. By engaging in open innovation, they are pushed out of their comfort zone and learn to trust each other and the organization; as they become more comfortable they become more proactive, and they provide new insights and projects, promoting bottom-up innovation. As the different actors begin to see the sustainable social impact that their efforts have on the organization, on their community, and on themselves, the feeling of unity around the common goal of creating an inclusive and sustainable society, the progressive empowerment of each individual, and the new collaborations that are knit promote network effects that further develop the community. This virtuous cycle has enabled makesense to grow into the global impactful organization that it is

today, working alongside leaders in the field and touching the lives of thousands of people wherever they go.

## Findings

### Community Building

Having a common ideological ground has fostered strong intrinsic motivation within individuals to scale the makesense movement, and this is the foundation for the makesense community. Being supported by global and regional bodies, as well as utilizing global strategies, has led to the creation of mutually beneficial practices in addition to professional and personal networks, nurturing a sense of belonging within each individual.

Makesense's growth stems from a common belief and desire to help struggling social entrepreneurs to improve their business, subsequently having a positive social and environmental impact on society, creating a strong sense of unity in one's community.

### Organic growth

The makesense community has grown in an organic way ever since its creation in 2010. "[Some people] already knew Christian and Leila, the two co-founders of makesense, and decided they wanted to do the same things in their cities"(Lauren, Community Developer for Europe). The development of the first hotspots was incited by the already-existing intrinsic motivation of people who shared the same values and who believed in the vision of the organization from the very beginning. This way, it became an organization that grew from the passion and creativity of its founders and the people it touched.

Originally, makesense was focused on an event called the hold\_up, but this activity requires training and considerable preparation in order to be successful. "Christian had been training all of the people who wanted to do hold\_ups, but at some point, there were so many that they hired a community developer. So, the first makesense employee was actually a community developer"(Lauren). This initiated the more formal growth of makesense as an organization rather than as a movement, due to the potential that people saw in its long-term growth.

As it started to gain momentum, other offices began to open throughout the world, ultimately creating the 7 hubs that are present today. Hubs are opened in one of two ways. One scenario "is when we find a partner who wants to finance the opening of a hub in a city, or country, and we hire someone to do it with them. That happened in Lebanon, for example" (Lauren). The second possibility has a more organic root: "The Peru office was opened by a volunteer in makesense who saw the potential of the makesense methodologies in this country because she

had traveled there before"(idem). This exemplifies the proactivity that is at the heart of the organization and that enables it to grow and scale to other pillars and geographies.

In France, they started a project that they named *Paum e* to connect people who feel a bit lost in terms of their career or their studies, and its success was overwhelming:

*We didn't intend to launch a community, at first it was a podcast, and for the launching event, so many people came and what they loved was talking to other people who felt a bit lost, that they were not alone, and that there was a whole community around it.*

*-- Lauren, Community Developer for Europe*

It generated such a strong sense of belonging between the people who attended the event, this became an unexpected new branch of makesense in France. This is an example of the very natural growth of the community, continuously reaching out to individuals who are looking to make a difference in their lives or in the lives of others, and the tendency of people to come together around a common struggle.

To ensure the successful development of the organization in different communities around the world, each hub, or office, is in close contact with one another, and each hotspot, or volunteer base, is supported in its growth, everyone continuously learning from each other and strengthening their practices.

## Global and regional support

All hub leaders participate in sense\_meetings once a month, "the objective has always been to share best practices, current main projects, and obstacles"(Kenza, Director of Operations in makesense Mexico). There are also taskforces that are transversal to all teams and that are specialized in ensuring the necessary global support on a specific subject. For example, the Waterline is a group of 5 people who act as "guardians of the reputation", constantly doing risk assessments for different projects and evaluating the direction in which the organization is heading.

There are also community developers for every region in which makesense is active, but no longer in Latin America. There used to be sense\_meetings with all of the hotspots and an ambassador program, but this was put on hold when no resources could be allocated to region-

wide community development. The idea was to refocus on Mexico, all the while continuing to support Latin American hotspots for specific and sporadic needs, as well as facilitating client events in other countries. "About the office (in Lima), honestly, we have tried [to coordinate] but I think that the two ecosystems are so different and, as we are small teams, we prefer to focus on our own offices" (Kenza). Regions are therefore given the liberty to assess how to best manage their offices and to what extent they harmonize with each other's operations.

The flexibility to adjust practices in accordance with local preferences, all the while maintaining the core values of makesense, has led to the development of glocal strategies, where all communities share a common mission, but with significant cultural sensitivity in order to connect authentically with the local ecosystem.

## Glocal strategy

The organization nurtures a glocal mindset, one where the essence of makesense is the main driver but where the organization adapts to different geographies. This strategy is extremely beneficial in the context of community building as it unites all members around a common mission to which they can relate, with objectives that are clear and where everyone knows their part in achieving said goal. This is done with the intention of becoming as mutually beneficial as possible, molding itself to what the local community needs it to be in order for them to generate the greatest positive impact.

*[Each] hub is developing a strategy depending on the local issues. For example, in Mexico it's about sustainable cities, while in the Philippines they are talking a lot about health issues. If we consider Paris, the people who come to be volunteers, it's more because they are questioning their action in society. In Dakar, within the citizen engagement part, makesense is seen as more as a way to be trained to find a job.*

*-- Lauren*

They strive to maximize individual-to-individual transformation by being an organization with which locals can identify. As makesense continues to grow, the goal is to scale the volunteer program without losing its core that is human interaction, introspection, active listening.

All of their methodologies and activities revolve around local issues, because when people feel concerned by the problem, they also feel concerned by the solution. And, if they have a voice

in the problem they care to address, this further drives the desire to work towards a viable solution.

Makesense leverages cultural tendencies to enhance the effectiveness of their operations. Local context has a significant impact in hubs' organizational structures:

*In all offices except France and Mexico, they have one country leader. In Mexico, we did at the beginning but we decided that it was not the best scheme for us and we now have different leadership roles.*

*-- Kenza*

Country laws are another important consideration: "in France there exists the specific status as social enterprise, and here in Mexico it doesn't, we are a civil association"(Kenza). Although the core of their way of working stems from the same values, each office knows what practices will help them to flourish in a particular country context.

Regarding the effect on community building itself, "it has an impact in the way people interact with the organization, how they perceive work, how they perceive social innovation" (Kenza), which further highlights the need for hubs to personalize their approach in order to cater to local preferences: "in Africa, they don't say sense\_drink, they say sense\_tea because many people are Muslim and it is forbidden to drink alcohol" (idem). This creates greater opportunity to scale the activities, as they can be redesigned to serve the same purpose, but by different means.

The organic growth, global and regional support offered, and glocal strategy of every hub has molded the makesense community in Mexico, allowing it to define its own structure, to position itself as a milieu in which to develop one's capabilities and to pertain to a passionate group of active citizens, creating a familial space of collaboration and trust, reinforced by characteristics of Mexican culture.

## Outcomes of Community Building

The community is organized around 4 pillars: a well-defined purpose; connections, rituals, and activities; rewards; ambassadors. The purpose, or mission, of the community is “to give socio-environmental innovation tools to people so that they can inspire others to solve socio-environmental challenges” (Evelyn, Community Booster in makesense Mexico). The activities in which they partake are sometimes within the makesense repertoire or community retreats, but are often other casual events such as hosting parties or going out for drinks, “these are key for the community to get to know each other and to interact” (Evelyn). The rewards are the direct benefits of involving oneself in the organization, such as the opportunity to volunteer in the social entrepreneurship sector without necessarily pertaining to a specialized circle, developing a new skillset, becoming part of a community that shares the same passions, and the friendships that derive from that. Lastly, there are the ambassadors, the most active volunteers, who mobilize the community, which is primordial due to the fact that there is no full-time team member in Mexico dedicated to the task. “In [makesense] Mexico, people can come from any level of study, which creates more **inclusion** because we take into consideration everything and everyone” (Kevin, Citizen ambassador); the diversity in the community in Mexico City facilitates inclusion because of the richness of the perspectives and the firsthand experiences of some of the issues they strive to solve.

Considering a database of 439 observations, encompassing the requests to join the Mexico makesense hotspot Facebook group, the two most common responses to the question "Why do you want to join Mexico makesense hotspot?" revolved around sharing knowledge and growing their network (21,18%) and a personal interest in social entrepreneurship and socioenvironmental themes (18,22%). When asked their own reasons for deciding to get involved in the organization, interviewees recognized makesense as their outlet to immerse themselves in social and environmental issues, with the benefit of entering a community of like-minded people. They also strongly value the **training** that makesense provided, which was a tangible benefit from a professional perspective. "As a volunteer, I could help people, I could get to know what are the problems in Mexico and what is getting done. I could improve my own skills in presentation, in organization, in Spanish [...] I was given a lot of responsibility" (Kevin).

Furthermore, when observing the makesense community in Mexico, it is important to take into consideration the elements of Mexican culture that affect the dynamic within the organization. Certain obstacles that were identified through the interviews are that Latin America is considered to be more *reactive* than proactive; the geographical obstacles due to the traffic and layout of Mexico City have created the necessity for alternative online events and webinars; and that "other countries are more straightforward - when I was in France, it was a yes or a no, it was not 'ahorita'," (Kenza) - "ahorita" is a typical word used in Mexico, stemming from the word "ahora", which means "now". "Ahorita" refers to any length of time, it could mean in two minutes, in 2 hours, or in 2 days. This creates a lot of uncertainty for the role of organizer or coordinator as well as the necessity to be patient and creative.

Nevertheless, certain aspects of Mexican culture greatly enhance community activities, such as **connecting** quickly with people, keeping calm and avoiding disagreements, as well as its characterization as "super colorful, vivid, it's enthusiastic. I would say this helps a lot in creating enthusiasm around new projects. Even if something is uncertain, it's not a problem, let's do it" (Kenza).

When asked which words they would use to characterize the makesense community in Mexico, interviewees chose Young, Dynamic, Cheerful, Camaraderie, Collaboration, Competent, Open, Critical, Solidary, and Trusting, among others. People feel **safe and supported** within the community, there is no pressure and their participation is voluntary, coming primarily from their intrinsic motivation. This is highlighted by the notion that their commitment to the organization is not contingent on their infallible presence:

*To be part of the community, you do not have to be there all the time, but when they need you or that you need them, you know they are there and we can continue to exchange knowledge with each other.*

*– Georgina, entrepreneur*

The members of the community have successfully generated a **mutually beneficial network**, the advantages of which are further accentuated by the deep bonds that they have knit not only on a professional level but also in their personal lives. The entrepreneurs from the incubator expressed particular gratitude for this aspect during their interviews, referring to themselves as brothers and **family**, with a strong **collaboration**.

*Those of my generation are my brothers, my family. We have a very good relationship of companionship, a lot of support, encouraging each other, sharing experiences, doubts, frustrations, concerns. With the other generations, we have a good ambiance, closeness, we know what each one is dedicated to, we also care about each other, we recommend each other to our contacts, we cheer each other on.*

*– Manuel, entrepreneur*

The structure of the community helps its members to define their roles around a common objective and people want to join makesense to learn and to grow their network around themes that are important to them. The cultural sensitivity of the glocal strategy is vital for makesense to be embraced in a city, and this then creates a community culture that fosters a deep sense of belonging and of acceptance, leading to the empowerment of each citizen involved.

## Open Innovation

The horizontal structure of makesense, the safe space for experimentation that they provide, and their organized activities promote trust and collaboration within their community, resulting in the active use of open innovation to further their mission.

## Organizational structure

Makesense promotes their **horizontal structure** as a means for everyone to have a voice, establishing a mindset of co-creation and proactivity, and promoting inclusion. The organization actively seeks the input of community stakeholders when defining their programs.

*We have the office, but we also have the active community that isn't internal, but it isn't external either. They know how we function and they give us recommendations. It's much more valid for us.*

*-- Evelyn*

When structuring the focus of the organization in Mexico City, the team did extensive research on the biggest challenges of this society, and they decided to also gather data from the community itself, considering its diverse composition.

*What we did before defining [our focus] was to talk with specific stakeholders in the city, so with the government, social entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs in general, citizens, and our community of volunteers, to know what were the biggest issues they faced as a society. More than their role in their corporation, or their organization, but from their own perspective as citizens.*

*– Kenza*

The local community serves to orient makesense as an organization, and its malleability has furthered its development as an inclusive entity that leverages the input of its community to optimize the success of its socially- and environmentally-focused programs.

## Interactive methodologies

The **interactive events** that makesense organizes, such as the previously described hold\_up and happy\_hour, are based on collective intelligence, active listening, and design thinking methodologies, which aim to brainstorm a large quantity of ideas, focusing on ideating a

maximum before narrowing down viable solutions. The goal is not to provide the most expert comments, they even prefer to avoid knowing the professional backgrounds of their participants, but rather to practice out-of-the-box thinking, which supports the notion that everyone's participation is valuable.

*For some [organizations], our methodologies are surprising, because we put everyone at the same table, at the same level, to collaborate, no matter the hierarchy. For some of them, it's the first time that their voice is heard. In the corporate world, it's not that common.*

– Lauren

The realization that one's opinion is valued is extremely powerful. Giving a voice to those who are concerned by the matter empowers individuals by allowing them to contribute to the solution.

## Space for experimentation

Makesense creates opportunities for individuals to become leaders and for them to offer new ideas, methodologies, and activities, as well as giving them the **space and resources needed for experimentation**. Within the team itself, everyone is encouraged to test an idea about which they are passionate.

*If you have an idea, you can prototype it to see if it works, but always aligned with our values and consulting the people who can be impacted by this decision, or are experts in this field. Once you have completed these requests and also consulting if there is a budget for that if needed, you can take leadership of it and make it happen.*

– Kenza

This has been the case of makesense since its foundation,

*For example, Lea and Alizée who I worked with in Paris were the founders of the incubation program of makesense, but at the beginning they were just volunteers. They thought, hey, these formats that you do with social entrepreneurs, why not go further and do a 6-month incubation program instead of just a two-hour long hold-up, and now the incubation program is one of the most successful in the organization.*

– Kenza

The organization itself has grown and expanded to different pillars based on the initiatives of people from their community, "and you have the tools and the support, and no barriers to do it. So, anyone can really be an innovator inside of the organization,"(Kenza).

## Outcomes of open innovation

The hope is that other community members take advantage of this space to offer their own ideas, however, "[Latin America] is a bit more reactive than proactive," (Kenza). The community is very reactive to themes, and once a conversation starts around a subject, many jump in to share insights, thoughts, and initiatives; however, Evelyn recognizes the fact that they don't make the most of this opportunity to develop their personal projects, an obstacle which the team plans to tackle by bettering the structure of the community to stimulate **proactivity** and hopefully spread the desire for experimentation.

Given their success, volunteers as well as entrepreneurs have referred to makesense tools for their personal use, utilizing the methodologies as well as supplies that they were not accustomed to before, **adapting** them to their needs.

*We are starting to implement hold\_ups in our teams because it can complement other methodologies that we use [...] The hold\_up is a tool that is very effective to solidify teams.*

*– Aníbal, Entrepreneur*

Aníbal experienced significant breakthroughs in the hold\_ups he had with makesense regarding challenges he was facing in his venture. However, the methodology appealed to him for use within his own team and he is able to maneuver it to obtain beneficial results.

Certain volunteers also felt compelled to apply what they have learned to new contexts:

*Makesense helped me to realize how precarious education is in Mexico, so I created an educational program around innovation with what I learned from makesense and other projects. I went to an orphanage in Colombia for a month and a half to inspire kids to study sciences, using methodologies from makesense to help them identify a problem within their house and engaging in design thinking to brainstorm viable solutions.*

*– Ilce, Citizen Ambassador*

The use of **collective intelligence** and **active listening** in makesense methodologies helps their community to develop new perspectives and pushes the different actors out of their comfort zones to create a novel way of collaborating. Hold\_ups and happy\_hours are examples of their events utilizing collective intelligence as a means to generate innovation.

The hold\_up's direct impact is on the social entrepreneurs who make use of the solutions and thoughts of the participants after the event.

*The exercise was really good for us to realize that we weren't asking ourselves the right question. After having analyzed the 500 post-its from the workshop, we realized that we weren't putting in place objectives for each of our activities, nor defining the indicators to know if they were being correctly evaluated, but we also realized that the girls working here already had good knowledge of sales processes...it made us understand that we have a lot of abilities that we didn't see before.*

– Georgina, Entrepreneur

The change in perspective that this event fosters helps the entrepreneurs to validate their endeavors, to interact with people who see the potential of their projects and who bring an invaluable external point of view that portrays their business in a new light. The use of open innovation coupled with the design thinking methodology establishes a **safe and collaborative space** for creative problem-solving. To maximize the impact of such an event, "it's important to learn how to ask the right questions, how to guide the discussion. You have to be dynamic, extraverted, with very clear guidelines in mind," (Georgina), and makesense trains its volunteers to ensure such an experience.

**Trust** is a necessary element to the functioning of open innovation, especially in a society that is taught to keep their knowledge to themselves, and through their efforts makesense has been able to create the necessary safe space for discussion. In Mexico, the success of these events is partially contingent on the facilitator's ability to disable the nurtured competition, as well as surpass the fear of rejection.

*We can be very hermetic and competitive, and we don't want to share things [...] we have been taught since we were little that 'you're the best'...It's very difficult in this culture to give good feedback, to accept it, and also to change your own behavior.*

– Tania, Citizen Ambassador

As Blanca, a volunteer and external consultant states, "it takes more work to prepare the space for innovation, to create a space of trust so that people will open up". The effort to open one's mind to such a practice also applies to the entrepreneurs, who learn to welcome external advice and acknowledge its value.

*The main tool that it has given us is being able to listen, the power to have a critical mind, being able to have this **humility to listen** to those external points of view, opinions on a specific point of our undertaking that may be faltering, and thanks to that it can give you more ideas to innovate.*

*– Manuel, Entrepreneur*

Open innovation was made possible by makesense's horizontal structure, interactive methodologies, and the tools and constant support that the team provides to the community, and this has nurtured a trusting and open mindset as well as a group of proactive citizens and entrepreneurs who strive to make a difference in their society, resulting in impactful bottom-up initiatives.

## Sustainable social impact

By defining their impact measurement process, makesense narrowed their vision for their development and the impact they want to achieve. This, coupled with engaging in active community building and fostering open innovation, has led to a successful incubation program, and empowerment and collaboration within their community.

## Impact Measurement Process

Impact measurement has been a key challenge for makesense as they began to lose sight of the impact that they want to have.

*For a long time, I had the impression that we were doing events just for the sake of mobilizing people and inspiring them, but we didn't really focus on the impact on the volunteers themselves.*

-- Kenza

They have approached the process in different ways since the establishment of the office in Mexico. At first, it was primarily based on feedback from the community, "we always had satisfaction surveys and this tells you a bit about what people perceive as an impact, but not what actually happens as an impact," (Kenza). So, they tried a different approach, which they have been piloting in France and Mexico for the past two years:

*We decided to create a specific taskforce made up of people from different offices all over the world, willing to put some of their time - similar to Google's 80-20 - to build an impact measurement system.*

– Kenza

In Paris, the hub received financing from their region to contract an impact measurement agency, with which they "co-created a survey to send to volunteers to evaluate **the impact that makesense has had on them**. It's not about the impact that makesense has on society," (Lauren).

*What the agency helped us to design is the model of society that makesense is trying to develop - it's an inclusive and sustainable model with strong values about benevolence, collaboration, creativity, and trust. For me, makesense made me understand that I was capable, and that's what I want every volunteer to experience with makesense.*

– Lauren

Having this clear goal in mind has **guided** the organization in its development. The Mexico hub did not have these resources so they started by bootstrapping with their existing tools, then by building off of France's experience with an external agency, and later by having many pro bono sessions with companies who shared with them different methodologies, ultimately leading to their establishment of a single specific methodology. Makesense Mexico began to define their **theory of change** for each actor in their ecosystem, and measure its progression.

*So, for example, with the citizen ambassador program, the idea is to give them skills for social innovation. Impact measurement is always before and after, so we do a **survey** before the program, after it, and another a bit later because some of these skills can take time to develop. And we measure specific skills based on what the OCDE considers as social innovation skills. We are going to take, for example, creativity which can be problem-solving, empathy...so different **skills and behaviors that are key for social change**.*

– Kenza

Defining a more comprehensive impact measurement process has helped the team to identify what their public values most about them. For citizens, the main benefits were the connection with the social innovation ecosystem which could complement their skills or resources to bring to light their own projects, as well as a sense of belonging, "and this is super key in social change, to feel part of something bigger,"(Kenza).

Makesense tackles large issues that can stretch beyond city limits, as a nation-wide, region-wide, or even global problem, which can seem unrealistic and unattainable. However, in their quest for sustainable social and environmental impact, the structure of this expansive global organization reassures the community in its role in attaining this objective through **KPIs**, reaffirming the community's trust in and commitment to their mission.

*We are not playing to save the world, you are really having an impact. Many spaces try to generate social benefit but without concretizing itself, it stays in suspension points, and makesense is admirable in that there is always a way to reach this goal.*

– Georgina, Entrepreneur

## Outcomes of sustainable social impact

### Successful innovations from the incubator program

Makesense was part of the first wave of initiatives helping social entrepreneurs in Mexico and has since established itself as a key player in this sector. The entrepreneurs from the incubator program recognize the benefit of the makesense methodology and the extent to which it has helped them to develop their business.

The entrepreneurs who joined the incubator all stated that the program that makesense offers is different than the other options available to them, that it "gives you tools in every sense and a real follow-up to strengthen your business, beyond just giving you seed capital" (Manuel). The entrepreneurs recognize the value in the comprehensive support as well as new methodologies that they have access to through this experience.

*Makesense gave us a perspective of innovation, of doing things in a different way, of exchanging experiences and experiments, in a format that was so dynamic in comparison to a classroom with a whiteboard.*

*-- Georgina*

The extensive **network** to which the entrepreneurs subsequently have access is also highly regarded:

*[makesense] introduces you to other initiatives and rather than competition, they **complement** each other very well to help grow your community, help you to **connect** with more people who may be interested in the same problem that you want to solve.*

*– Manuel*

Many individuals benefit from the connections they have made through the makesense community, which increased the impact of their own projects:

*[The community] has brought us much more than I ever expected, it has really impacted my project and it has helped a lot both economically, both in terms of relations and innovation, even design.*

*-- Anibal*

To see greater impact, it is important to define the role of each actor in the community and to identify possible synergies to help them grow from each other's experience and expertise, creating a network of mutually beneficial connections:

*Without organizations, these concrete solutions developed by our entrepreneurs and social ideas by our citizens won't scale and won't have the impact they envision.*

*-- Kenza*

In addition to the ongoing support, tools, and connections, makesense also provide significant intangible value for their entrepreneurs:

*Being chosen for the fifth generation shows us that our project has value, it was a very young project and already being selected for something **empowered** all of us. We're on the right path and someone recognizes that.*

*– Georgina*

Georgina even mentioned a new collaboration she is exploring this year with her venture and two other entrepreneurs from her generation of the incubator program. This validation has given these individuals faith in their projects, encouraging them to move forward with their ventures and to continue to leverage their new network, with collaborations emerging regularly.

## Increased awareness and knowledge of local problems

Makesense continues to **educate** their community by sharing already-existing solutions to socio-environmental issues as well as the potential of social entrepreneurship in addressing these issues.

*Through makesense, I met many organizations and many individuals who work in matters about the city, each one of them tackling a different problem. I knew these problems existed but I never saw which type of solutions were mitigating these problems.*

*– Tania, Citizen Ambassador*

For concerned citizens who knew about the existing issues but didn't know how to get involved, makesense became a way to integrate oneself as a part of a greater whole,

*[Makesense] brings together a group of people who share these interests and who didn't have the **opportunity to speak** about it, it helps them to grow stronger and more **confident** when acting for social inclusion and environmental projects.*

– Kevin, Citizen Ambassador

## Empowerment of community

As the community becomes more empowered, volunteers become more comfortable with suggesting new ideas. An example of a volunteer's initiative is Kevin who introduced the happy\_hour, a pre-existing event he learned through extensive online training, to Mexico:

*I made a small presentation to the team, I prepared a prototype [...] they gave me the opportunity to be listened to, [they] gave me feedback to adapt it more to Mexican culture. When you're doing an event, you won't just have the impact of the event but also the impact of **inspiring participants to organize their own event after**.*

– Kevin, Citizen Ambassador

Kevin saw the potential of the makesense community to adopt a new format and to partake enthusiastically in its experimentation, and he felt sufficiently empowered to take the lead. Makesense inspires its community to embrace their role in driving systemic change within their society:

*That collective empowerment that I experienced with makesense made me decide that I needed to empower more citizens to give them the opportunity to regenerate our social fabric.*

– Ilce, Citizen Ambassador

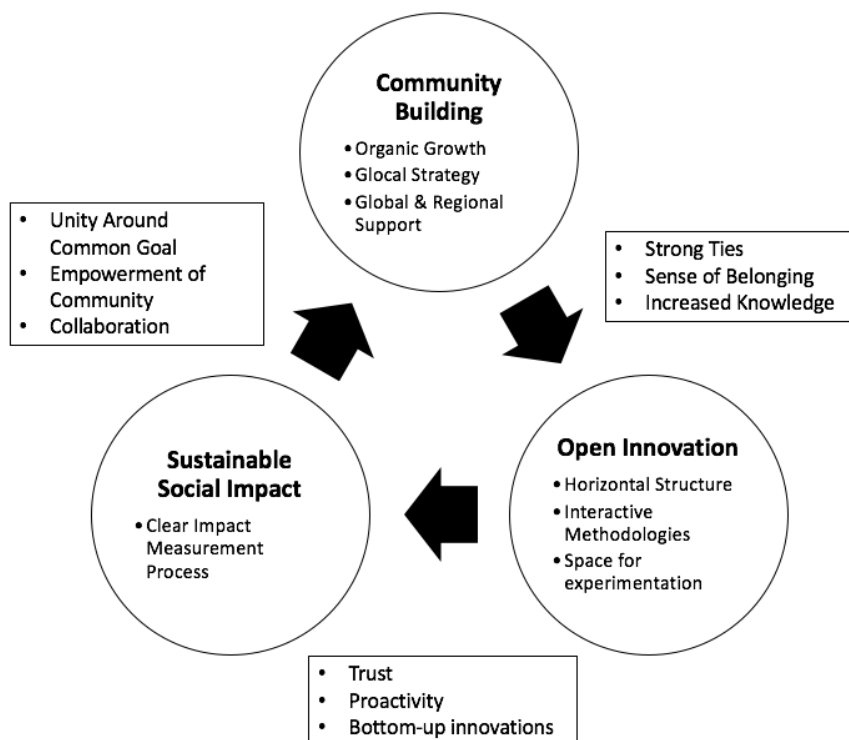
Other personal initiatives have begun to sprout as citizens further their understanding of social entrepreneurship, and it begins to seem like a viable option for themselves. "As entrepreneurs, we are the **success stories**, I guess, who inspire others to believe that they can do something good," (Georgina). By regularly interacting with these businesses, the volunteers change their perspectives of the day-to-day life as well as the recurring challenges of these ventures:

*I knew of the concept of social entrepreneurship, and I hadn't found the path to get there. makesense is a big step, it changed my perspective of what it is, what challenges they go through, and it's a **springboard** to get there eventually.*

– Blanca, Volunteer

By perfecting their impact measurement process and basing it off of specific theories of change and KPIs, makesense was able to produce successful innovations from their innovative incubation program, to increase awareness about local issues and the existing solutions making a difference, and to empower the community to leverage the tools and knowledge they accumulate to benefit them in their own endeavors.

## Process Model



Based on the empirical evidence that I have developed to answer my research question, I have defined a step-by-step model outlining the different necessary elements to scale sustainable social impact through community building and open innovation. These two practices have been found to reinforce the local impact of an organization, nurturing its expansion across geographies and business pillars.

I found **community building** to be contingent on the following three elements:

- **Organic growth:** Once a core is established, a support network will start to grow naturally, propelled by a strong belief in the organization's vision and the means they identify to reach their goal.
- **Glocal strategy:** Outlining a clear mission that resonates with the local population, fortified by defining roles for the different actors in the community, developed in a culturally-sensitive mindset, creates interactions that benefit the locals.
- **Global and regional support:** To ensure that the core values and the essence of the organization are preserved, global support is an invaluable tool. Furthermore, regional support targeting the geographical region's particular obstacles and cultural considerations provides a crutch at greater proximity.

The combination of these elements creates **strong ties** between people who share the same vision and develops a **sense of belonging** within the community because the members feel concerned and included. In addition to the emotional attachment, there is also **increased knowledge** around the theme at hand due to the interactions between members.

A group of passionate people developing a strong skillset around a common cause facilitates the implementation of **open innovation**, which I found to be reinforced by three characteristics:

- **Horizontal structure:** This creates greater space within the team to contribute their ideas, and by considering the community's points of view in the development of the business, it allows the organization to be more aligned with local needs.
- **Interactive methodologies:** Training the community through activities, events, and working with techniques that promote interaction, collaboration, sharing, and in a completely non-judgmental atmosphere helps the community to become more at ease with contributing their knowledge and perspectives, especially in cultures where openly sharing is not akin.
- **Space for experimentation:** Putting tools, space, and additional support at the disposition of the community incites them to develop their proactivity and experiment their own ideas in line with the organization's work.

Participating in open innovation can put people out of their comfort zone but with an inviting approach and an encouraging training methodology, it develops strong **trust** between community members as well as trust in the organization itself. As volunteers feel more comfortable within the organization, they are more **proactive**, deepening their engagement and resulting in **bottom-up innovations** from engaged citizens.

A passionate and collaborative community engaging in open innovation to solve problems that are important to them and to their society helps to scale sustainable impact, an objective that I found to be defined by the following:

- **Clear impact measurement process:** It is important to elaborate distinct theories of change for each actor in the organization, primarily to measure the impact on these people as they progress through their journey as a member, but also to help to orient the organization to ensure it is maximizing its impact with its short and long-term goals. It

helps the team to establish KPIs and milestones for the business to continue to scale while being aligned with their core values and mission.

This creates a strong sense of **unity around a common goal**, as everyone implicated in the organization knows their role and their specific objectives that they are working to achieve. This mindset leads to specific outcomes for the different actors in line with their theory of change, primarily successful innovations and increased competencies in applying the learnt methodologies, which continues to **empower** the community as they see the tangible benefits and the path in which their efforts are headed. Lastly, new forms of **collaboration** arise within active community members, strengthening network effects as people testify to the personal and professional value that the experience in the organization has brought them.

## Contributions

### I. Create a community *for* open innovation rather than *around* it.

In open innovation, one may create a community around the idea of innovating to further develop an existing project. An entity has a vision they are striving to achieve, and reaching out to external actors is a means through which that objective can be attained. This is done through the engagement of multiple actors, which can be initiated by different reasons ranging from specific knowledge or skills that are lacking internally, to the sincere belief in democratizing innovation. In their article, *Open Innovation and Strategy* (2007), Chesbrough and Appleyard present a matrix of value creation (in-house or community-driven) versus value capture (company or ecosystem) to present possible dynamics of an open system. Those that are community-driven and where the ecosystem captures the value are recognized as “products more akin to public good” (p.64), with Wikipedia as an example. They benefit from network effects, where every additional user increases the value of the network. The community is created for the sake of innovation, and they highlight issues such as “how to attract the participation of a broad community of contributors, and then how to sustain their participation over time,” (p.68), as well as how open innovation is led and how the agenda evolves.

In the case of makesense, the community is created before using open innovation, the latter not being the primary motivator to join the organization. Through my research, I have found that people choose to invest themselves primarily for the benefits of the community itself and the subsequent network and knowledge that they acquire through their engagement, as well as admiration for the work that makesense does. The community, however, is considered as a precondition in order to scale open innovation. In other words, rather than creating a community around open innovation, the idea is to create a community *for* open innovation, this tool being the means to achieving a greater social objective. Individuals do not join makesense primarily for the open innovation, but they are more willing to engage in the practice once they understand its role in scaling sustainable social impact.

## II. Promote collective social entrepreneurship guided by a top-down vision and driven by bottom-up initiatives to create an environment for open innovation.

There currently exist two streams of thought about social entrepreneurship. The first is hierarchical and conceptualizes it as a process led by a single social entrepreneur who drives the change and embodies the entrepreneurial spirit around a given issue, compelled by a strong sense of compassion that acts as a “prosocial motivator of cognitive and affective processes,” (Miller et al, 2012, p.620). The second is collective social entrepreneurship, which is “well suited to address community and environmental issues that require cooperation” (Mitzinneck & Besharov, 2018, p. 382), and relies “on voluntary participation and commitment from a broad base of individual and organizational members” (idem, p. 383). Montgomery, Dacin and Dacin (2012) further highlight the value of this collective approach, as opposed to that of the heroic lone social entrepreneur, as a way of filling resource voids through the sharing of complementary resources as well as the “benefits and consequences of partnering within and across sectors,” (Montgomery, Dacin & Dacin, 2012, p. 377).

I propose that open innovation has a role in furthering the impact of collective social entrepreneurship as it accounts for diverse inputs and points of view, leveraging the non-material resources of diverse actors to gather valuable insight and achieve innovative solutions. For contributors to remain engaged, it is “of critical importance that they perceive the ethical foundations of the organization to be upheld” (Mitzinneck & Besharov, 2018, p. 383). A top-down implementation of a clear vision to guide the effort, combined with encouraging bottom-up innovations with the regular incorporation of ideas coming from volunteers themselves, make open innovation more meaningful as the collection of actors contribute and progress towards a common goal. The complementarity of top-down long-term guidance and bottom-up initiatives establishes a mutually-reinforcing dynamic, creating conditions for open innovation to thrive in an entrepreneurial context, which makesense has used as a basis for scaling its impact and which other organizations can refer to when trying to stimulate innovation within their own base of followers.

III. Opt for a glocal strategy to allow for scaling through both geographical expansion and more profound impact.

Internationalization strategies are necessary considerations when aiming to create a global community. Global strategies allow firms to maintain their brand image across borders and to achieve economies of scale, but they see customers as having homogenous preferences. However, this tactic proves to be faulty as expansion to new countries is not always well-received, partially due to culture clash. A formula for compromise is a glocal strategy, one where the essence of the company is preserved while certain aspects of its functioning are modified to better cater to local preferences, thinking globally while acting locally. Such an approach values the heterogeneous preferences across cultures and leverages these characteristics to mold a strategy to better address the needs of the target population.

Makesense has employed this strategy as a way to scale its impact further across geographies, but also deeper, positioning itself as a valuable outlet for people to develop their knowledge and skills around topics that are meaningful to them and to their city. It has become an organization recognized for its competence, exemplified through the number of cities in which it is present, the number of projects it has helped to implement, and the impressive alliances it has woven around the world; but makesense is especially valued for the profound impact that it has on the cities it touches, becoming a creative outlet and an important crutch for individuals striving to improve their society, but lacking the necessary support. The local approach builds a significant following as every volunteer feels identified in both the problem and the solution, and the support that is provided is designed for the specific demographic of that city, all the while preserving the essence of organization in question.

## Limitations

One limitation of my work is that I was unable to measure the impact that makesense is having because I would need to compare their impact with that of another organization with similar practices and vision to see how they fare against one another. Observing this would confirm the benefits of investing in significant community-building initiatives and developing an infrastructure for open innovation. Future research could explore the replicability of my findings to similar organizations to determine the extent to which it is applicable in different settings and sectors.

Another limitation is regarding the qualitative nature of my data, where I interviewed 12 individuals who are actively engaged in the organization, but I was unable to connect with members who were once part of the community but decided to leave, or entrepreneurs whose ventures did not prove as successful after the intervention of makesense. Conducting additional interviews to analyze the entire spectrum of intensity of engagement and benefits of the methodology would provide a more well-rounded understanding of the different perspectives.

## Conclusions

Over the course of the seven months I spent working with makesense, I continuously saw how much the organization's work meant to the people involved in the community. By interacting with different offices around the world, I developed an in-depth understanding of the functioning of their business as well as their culture, and was intrigued by the intrinsically pure vision guiding their work. Their ability to mobilize significant communities who adopt their methodologies and support each other in developing knowledge, competencies, and initiatives to contribute to the improvement of their society is very powerful and allows them to retain their volunteers in the long term. The innovative solutions and strong bonds generated from engaging in open innovation enables them to scale their impact on social and environmental issues, shaping society to become more inclusive and aware. These three pillars of community-building, open innovation, and sustainable social impact are mutually reinforcing and create a virtuous cycle that helps makesense to continue to develop. These findings can thus be applied to organizations sharing the same vision for society as makesense to help them to deepen their impact and their reach through sustainable and innovative means.

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## Appendix

### A. Community Building – Additional quotes

Characteristics		Outcomes	
Glocal strategy	Why join makesense?	Community characterization	Community bonds
In terms of acquisition of volunteers, if you talk about how do we attract people to get engaged with makesense, you have to understand what drives them, what they need, why would they want to join makesense, and to adapt your message and your methodology to this. -- Lauren, Community Developer for Europe	I've always had this desire to help, especially social topics, but I had never found a way in which to get involved, and the sense_camp was a revelation - I wasn't just a random worried person, there were many other people who were worried. There was this whole group of people already doing things. -- Blanca, consultant & volunteer	Very young and dynamic. Young, not because they aren't experts, on the contrary they are very expert in what they do, but with the spirit of constantly looking for change, keeping the strategies that work well, but always in movement. It's a very cheerful community, in an environment of camaraderie all the time, it is not about competition, it is more about collaboration. -- Georgina, entrepreneur	I really enjoy spending time with other entrepreneurs; those from my generation, <b>we are like brothers</b> , and those from past generations are very valuable because we learn from their experiences. Being part of the community of companies and citizens is a huge benefit because thanks to them, we were able to <b>create greater impact</b> by developing cooking classes, creating events, involving people who are trained and interested in supporting us by generating sustainable projects. -- Aníbal, entrepreneur
We have the same values of collaboration, open innovation, trust, very human values. But then the culture of each office, the history of each country has an impact on the structure and on the way people work in the office. For example, in France, people are very concentrated in their work, they don't talk to each other, and when there is a visitor they don't mingle a lot, whereas for us, it's the contrary. We're in Latin America, we prefer human interaction. -- Kenza, Operations Manager	[I wanted to join] to learn, to meet people...for the training in design thinking to be able to apply it in my own job in training for teachers. --Viridiana, volunteer  I went to a hold_up, I liked the methodology and then they announced that they were going to give training and that's the moment I decided to learn that and to invest my time in something more. I liked that they offered this training, that they did this part for free for citizens and	I try to participate in all the activities that makesense promotes to generate this systemic change that we are striving for, primarily as an ambassador for community principles and as an agent of change. -- Manuel, entrepreneur	Those of my generation are <b>my brothers, my family</b> . We have a very good relationship of companionship, a lot of support, encouraging each other, sharing experiences, doubts, frustrations, concerns. With the other generations, we have a good ambiance, closeness, we know what each one is dedicated to, we also care about each other, we recommend each other to our contacts, <b>we cheer each other on</b> . -- Manuel, entrepreneur

	entrepreneurs. -- Tania, volunteer		
And I was talking to Casablanca and they told me that they weren't sure they could replicate this event [there] because if you say you are lost, it means you lost faith, and you can't say that in Casablanca.-- Lauren, Community Developer for Europe	People can say that makesense helped them to get this job because it helped them to work on their creativity, on their facilitation skills, on their communication. We need to make it clearer so that volunteers can valorize it afterwards.-- Lauren, Community Developer for Europe	I don't participate in the activities if I feel like the theme isn't something important to me or when I feel like I can't contribute. But when I can, I do invest a lot of time. – Tania, volunteer	We didn't just meet in a workshop. With the girls from [our generation of the incubator program], we aren't best friends but we do many things together, <b>bringing together our projects</b> . [...] Nowadays, every time I talk to them, every time we meet at events, I learn new things. This year we will even have our first <b>collaboration</b> with Las Panas and Ecolana. We are not only in a workshop. -- Georgina, entrepreneur

## B. Open Innovation – Additional quotes

Characteristics	Outcomes		
Horizontal structure	Events	Social Entrepreneurs	Trust
<p>We always design programs that allow us to learn from others because we know for a fact that we don't have <i>the</i> truth, or all that could be valuable for a successful program. So, our programs always start with diagnosis and immersion step that says that we are going to talk with at least five stakeholders that have to do with this issue. -- Kenza</p>	<p>Before, [the team] would organize everything and the volunteers would help. In the last sense_camp, the ambassadors built everything. Our team was on the sidelines, they were extremely involved. -- Evelyn</p>	<p>As Macchiavello says in his principality book, never surround yourself with praisers because everyone will applaud you. In the case of hold_up, someone may really like the project but they think you are limiting yourself [...] We could be using the same technology [to expand the reach of our business]. It was a great value. -- Aníbal</p>	<p>Also, there is this ever-present fear of rejection, of not being accepted. Trust plays a big role in these processes between people who don't know each other. It takes more work to prepare the space for innovation, to create a space of trust so that people will open up. -- Blanca</p>
	<p>We had never been able to project the future in such a way. It's very demanding for us to visualize things long term and [the happy_hour] helped us to do so in a manner that was much more fluid, fun, amusing. It leaves you with those powerful questions, how can I achieve this. -- Georgina</p>	<p>There is always an internal struggle between what you think you know and what other people tell you. But finally you learn to listen, to be able to have that active listening, and to be able to dominate those internal demons that you have, such as wanting to prove something, in order to improve yourself and especially your entrepreneurship. Yes, it is a little difficult, but later you get used to it and you enjoy it. -- Manuel</p>	<p>Also, there is this ever-present fear of rejection, of not being accepted. Trust plays a big role in these processes between people who don't know each other. It takes more work to prepare the space for innovation, to create a space of trust so that people will open up.-- Blanca</p>
			<p>The part that sometimes hinders is the zeal of knowledge, if I don't want to share it, it can inhibit open innovation a little, keeping and guarding the knowledge -- Blanca</p>

### C. Sustainable Social Impact – Additional quotes

Characteristics	Outcomes	
Impact measurement	Incubator program	Awareness and Empowerment
<p>It's a strong belief that everyone is capable. For me, makesense made me understand that I was capable, and that's what I want every volunteer to experience with makesense, that they are capable of getting to action, of giving good ideas, of talking in front of 10 people or 200. makesense for me is this push. -- Lauren</p>	<p>When I started to get to know makesense, their selection process, how they explained the process of developing a venture, adding to its extensive knowledge in how to create a business, not only that they're cool people and that they want a better world, but that they want to generate resources. So far, my experience with makesense is that it is one of the best-followed institutions for entrepreneurs that has really given good support to the ventures and are generating a change and a very positive impact in the way they support them. --Aníbal</p>	<p>It has made be a bit more conscious and sensitive to problems that I wasn't aware of. I had always focused on social themes but these aren't the only ones. There's the topic of water, urbanism, mobility... and I wasn't even seeing them. --Blanca</p>
<p>What we have seen with all of the measurements that we have is that makesense develops the skills of people to be social innovators; it also helps [citizens] to connect with the social innovation ecosystem, especially when they have a specific idea and they lack the skills or resources to make it happen, so connecting them with others can make their ideas become reality; it also gives them the feeling of belonging in a community that shares the same vision, and this is super key in social change, to feel part of something bigger. -- Kenza</p>	<p>In the case of makesense, the fact that you are a social company does not mean that you do not earn money, that you are not looking for resources, or that you do not want to earn something. That approach, that first you have to earn resources and that you are well, those you want to impact are going to be fine. So I think it is a total “chip change” that they have given us. --Aníbal</p>	<p>I've always had this desire to help, especially social topics, but I had never found a way in which to get involved, and the sense_camp was a revelation - I wasn't just an odd worried person, there were many other people who were worried. There was this whole group of people already doing things. -- Blanca</p>
<p>With social entrepreneurs, we want to strengthen their projects and make them more scalable, more impactful, and more structured. We make a radar chart with them before they enter the program around 4 specific areas that we consider key for a successful social business (business model and financial sustainability, social and environmental impact, visibility and partnerships, team</p>	<p>It is the only program that gives you tools in every sense and a real follow-up to strengthen your business, beyond just giving you seed capital. You have access to a very wide range of mentors and highly specialized people in different areas who help you in a very authentic way to overcome the obstacles that arise in your business [...] The second is</p>	<p>I have always had the goal of having my own professional project. makesense has inspired me; before I had more insecurities and a greater lack of knowledge. But now, I don't feel alone, I'm able to help other social entrepreneurs, I have greater confidence and knowledge. -- Blanca</p>

<p>complementarity). We do this before and after, and we compare how much they have evolved. It's very quantitative, but at the end of the day we also ask them about what is the most impactful results they have seen. They say that, thanks to makesense, they have more structured projects because we give them real direction and vision, they have a master plan; they have more faith in their projects, they feel supported because they are part of a community of citizens, social entrepreneurs, and organizations with which we connect them.-- Kenza</p>	<p>with the community of citizens who also give you a great opportunity to network with actors from different areas who are already doing something to solve key problems in their communities. They introduce you to other initiatives and rather than competition, they complement each other very well to help grow your community, help you to connect with more people who may be interested in the same problem that you want to solve(...) -- Manuel</p>	<p>Using post-its! Here Tiendita is full of post-its and they help us to facilitate dialogues. -- Georgina</p>
	<p>What we saw in the incubator program was completely different from what we were used to seeing. We had already done many courses, workshops... and makesense gave us a perspective of innovation, of doing things in a different way, of exchanging experiences and experiments, in a format that was so dynamic in comparison to a classroom with a whiteboard. --Georgina</p>	<p>The majority of people are already in their 30s, on a certain path, involved in projects, with experience that they share. It's not "we want to change the world but we don't know how to", it's more realistic. -- Viridiana</p>
	<p>Thanks to makesense, I was able to make my venture reality. Maybe you have already done research, you have already tried to validate with surveys, taken a step forward, put in place the things that you need, and with makesense's support we were finally able to move it forward. -- Manuel</p>	<p>It gave us the perspective that we are a company; there's a competitive aspect that we can't ignore. -- Georgina</p> <p>This experience has shown me that it is indeed possible to innovate from a humanitarian perspective. --Manuel</p>

## D. Brainstorm for Process Model

### Community Building

- makesense grew in a very organic way, stemming from the intrinsic motivation of the people already involved in the organization to help it grow and scale to other pillars and geographies.
- Readily available global and regional support further strengthens the community, ensuring that hubs are never isolated and that everyone is always on the same page.
- The goal of the organization is to continue to grow but through autonomous, self-sustaining communities, empowering their volunteers to take ownership of their efforts.
- They nurture a global mindset, one where the essence of makesense is the main driver but where the organization adapts to different geographies:
  - In order to be as mutually beneficial as possible, molding to become what the local community needs it to be in order for them to generate the greatest positive impact, being an organization with which locals can identify
  - to maximize individual-to-individual transformation
  - while leveraging cultural characteristics to enhance the effectiveness of their activities.
    - This has created a community culture promoting personal and professional development.
- Community engagement is solely based on the intrinsic motivation of all of the actors involved.
- Actors are able to grow their network by making connections that complement their professional occupations, but they also grow to become more than helpful contacts and they become friends, especially with people from the same type of involvement within the organization (entrepreneur to entrepreneur, volunteer to volunteer).

### Open Innovation

- makesense promotes their horizontal structure as a means for everyone to have a voice, establishing a mindset of co-creation and proactivity,
  - creating opportunities for volunteers to become leaders and for them to offer new ideas, methodologies, and activities.
  - giving them the space and resources needed for them to experiment
- Ever since their establishment in Mexico, they have involved the local community in orienting makesense as an organization.
- The use of collective intelligence and active listening in their methodologies helps their community to develop new perspectives and pushes the actors out of their comfort zones to create a novel way of collaborating.
  - Hold\_ups and happy\_hours are prime examples of their core methodologies utilizing collective intelligence as means to generate innovation.
  - Sense\_camp as the largest event of the year, gathering all actors for a three-day event composed of workshops, talks, networking, and team-building activities, bringing together the community and creating an open and enthusiastic space to discuss, share practices, and solidify bonds.
- Trust is a necessary element to the functioning of open innovation, especially in a society that is taught to keep their knowledge to themselves, and through their efforts makesense has been able to create the necessary safe space for discussion.

### Scale Sustainable Social Impact

- Local adaptation creates the opportunity to scale programs all the while maintaining the essence of makesense, ensuring that the organization has the greatest possible impact.
- Defining a more comprehensive impact measurement process, first by bootstrapping with existing tools, then by building off of France's experience with an external agency, and later by having many pro bono sessions with companies who shared with them different methodologies, ultimately leading to their establishment of a single specific methodology, allowed makesense to
  - define their theory of change for each one of their actors and measure its progression until now.
    - Having been part of the first movement supporting social entrepreneurs in Mexico, the entrepreneurs from the incubators recognize the benefit of the makesense methodology and the extent to which it has helped them to develop their business.
  - The idea is to design the model of society that makesense wants to develop and to measure the advancement in accomplishing this goal.
- To see greater impact, it is important to define the role of each actor in the community and to identify possible synergies to help them grow from each other's experience and expertise, creating a network of mutually beneficial connections.
- Through the empowerment of their community, makesense has generated visible increased proactivity as well as the development of a number of personal initiatives.
- makesense continues to educate their community by sharing already-existing solutions to socio-environmental issues as well as the potential of social entrepreneurship in addressing these issues.
- makesense has gained credibility within their community because their objective of making the world a better place is supported by structured calls to action.

### Room for Improvement

- Due to a lack of proactivity, retain and augment community engagement by offering more tangible benefits and by giving more responsibility to the community to promote a greater sense of ownership.
  - Development of skills repository
  - Restructure volunteer journey
- Increase the diversity of the profile of volunteers as well as the inner structure of the core team in order to broaden the reach of the organization.
- In addition to ensuring that the volunteer thoroughly understands the methodology, provide additional training on the art of facilitating and engaging others.