

Edge of Seven has come a long way since its beginnings in 2010. The program, the organization, the values and the impact on the ground have continued to grow and mature. Today, the organization is clarifying and refining the principles that drive it forward in how it makes decisions on programs and partners, how it creates collective impact and how it measures the successes and challenges that it faces. Understanding and communicating what we believe and what we hope to build in the world — our impact — is crucial to creating sustainable solutions. Our impacts (or outcomes) emerge from our actions and aligned principles (beliefs) — **they are our simple rules that give us direction.**

For instance a huge flock of Starlings flies in a beautiful pattern, swirling, mixing, flying close but not colliding. Systems analysts call it an emergent property (ie an outcome). But the birds only follow three simple rules (principles) to create a seemingly complex outcome. The rules: 1. fly close, 2. if another changes direction, you do too, 3. avoid predators. The simple rules lead to a complex adaptive system (CAS). The same is true in organizations, projects, families, teams, international development and all systems. **Therefore, as we act on our principles, outcomes (such as “sustainability”) emerge in our organization and our projects.**

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## BUILD CAPACITY

Create a greater ability in ourselves, our partners and the communities in which we work. We believe that fundamentally people have an enormous capacity to learn and grow and we seek to fill it. Build Capacity and build ownership.

2



## TRANSFER POWER

Push power to others. Give it away. Reinforce. Ensure that people know that they control the outcomes and can influence change. Take back power only when necessary. Repeat. Transfer power and you get the outcome of empowerment.

3



## PLAY ON STRENGTHS

We focus on finding and using our individual, group, and organizational strengths. We find ways to allow others to use their own. We focus on partners who can bring strengths to the table. We build new ones (capacity building) and assess (learn) areas for improvement. This magnifies the outcome of collective impact.



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## LEVERAGE



We bring more people to the party on all topics. Partnership+. We believe in utilizing more partners, more funders, more volunteers, and more supporters to create more impact. By putting ourselves in this “together” with others we begin to see, act and feel how mutually reinforcing activities lift up all our work. That is the big outcome of collective impact.

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## COLLABORATE



Work together. Not apart. By working in groups, we demonstrate how to share leadership and work to create an emergent property (outcome) of ownership and empowerment in the groups/people we work with.

5

## FOCUS ON GENERATIONS

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It's not only about today and tomorrow, but we focus on two generations forward. When we understand that we are building for the future, our projects, organization and outcomes become ones that will last — true sustainability.



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## LEARN

Always. Learn. Build Knowledge. We start with monitoring and evaluation but go beyond. We see ownership, sustainability, and empowerment emerging from learning.

