

INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING IN THE SOCIETY OF JESUS. AN ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT STATE.

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A LETTER FROM THE FUTURE

Vatican City. July, 31st, 2020.

When María Puente arrived at Melbourne she was at the same time afraid but optimistic. Starting a new life in a strange country implied plenty of risks, but contrary to most of the undocumented immigrants arriving to Australia, she was confident of her future. One name, a phone number and an address written on a piece of paper were the main reasons for her peace. Fr. Jojo Magadia the rector of the Immaculate Conception Parish in her native village in the Island of Cullion had given her the contact of Maryanne Loughry rsm, the director of the Jesuit Refugee Service in Australia. Fr. Jojo felt especially proud when he had the chance to help one of many migrants who every year leave the Philippines. He could now offer a concrete support to many migrants, making use of the Jesuit Migration Service of Asia Pacific. This is a network that links the various pastoral, social and educational Jesuit initiatives working with migrants in the region. Fr. Jojo directed its development during his time as President of the Conference of Provincials in Asia Pacific. Now, making use of the technological tools of the network, he put people in touch with one another, so when Maria arrived at Melbourne, Maryanne was waiting for her, and JRS provided her the shelter, advice and the pastoral and personal care she deserved.

Maria's story is one of many included in the report that Xavier Jeyaraj, leader of the Global Ignatian advocacy network on migration, will launch this week in the United Nations Conference on Migration. Fr. Jeyaraj coordinates a well known worldwide network of social centers and higher education institutions, that advocates for poor immigrants. This report includes several personal stories and shows clear evidence of the win-win effects of policies that provide basic social services, such as education or health, to undocumented migrants. The report is the outcome of a three-year research project, directed by Dr. Rocio Calvo, a professor in the Boston College Graduate School of Social work who has coordinated an international team of researchers from 25 Jesuit universities in 20 different countries.

Fr. Jeyaraj will arrive at Geneva from Patna, the capital of the state of Bihar, in India, where he attended the initiation ceremony of the new Fe y Alegría school for adivasi children. Fe y Alegría now runs 50 educational centers in India, including groups that were previously working and became part of the Fe y Alegría network in order to increase their impact. As Fr. Orobator, the first African named international coordinator of Fe y Alegría, remarked: "Working together as a global body allows us to deliver quality education to people in need in so many places. Collaboration is our way of proceeding, and our international programs are the ground for the quality of our education". Fr. Orobator remembered in his presentation the commitment of many people who had made this dream come true, including Fr. Jorge Cela who, as president of the Latin American Conference of Provincials, fostered Fe y Alegría's expansion beyond Latin America.

Several Fe y Alegría students from Patna will be part of the group of 10.000 young people that will gather this August in the Mateo Ricci Center of Beijing, to participate in Magis 2020. They will meet

in person to conclude the pastoral work that all of them have done together during the last two years. With the support of the new communication technologies, they have reflected, shared, prayed and worked together in multicultural groups. They have been accompanied by an international team of 50 Jesuits from all the continents, led by Dani Villanueva who has pursued for many years the use of IT in the Society of Jesus as a means to carry out its global mission. It has been an awesome experience, as Clara Arancibia from Spain told her father: "Sharing our feelings and desires, praying together in so many different ways, and learning from a variety of experiences have made such a great difference in my spiritual life".

A number of the youths will later fly to Nairobi, to work for some months in the recently created Francis Xavier Open University. It is a new model of university that has been created as a joint effort of 100 Jesuit universities to facilitate access to higher education to people in the margins. Chris Lowney is the director of one outstanding activity of the university: a joint program with the Jesuit Refugee Service that is already offering tertiary education to more than 5.000 refugees in 25 camps all over the world. As William Leahy, the president of the new University said: "We are so happy that after so many years this dream has come true. Everybody told us it was impossible to achieve such an ambitious project. In fact, when Fr. General asked me to leave Boston College to start this new project, all my friends were sad for me: not even one, could imagine a group of 100 Jesuit universities working together as a real global team. But we have done it. We understood that collaboration is the best way to carry on our common mission in this time."

Fr. General is satisfied with all the initiatives and changes that have taken place during the last decade: "The Ignatian family, under the leadership of the Society of Jesus, is now a more global body, ready to face the challenges and serve the needs of the world. We have been blessed with our international networks that connect institutions, Jesuits and lay people from all over the world, and help us to implement our mission of faith and justice in a multicultural and multireligious world. I still remember the conference we had in Boston many years ago. It was an important moment to realize our possibilities, to identify our limitations and to listen together to the call of the Holy Spirit".

This vision of the future may or may not be true, but it is far from being impossible. In fact it only requires the willingness and capacity to connect the existing resources in the Jesuit world around common projects and international initiatives that contribute to the mission of the Society of Jesus. Those connections and common projects can make a difference in our apostolic impact.

In this paper we intend to offer an analysis of the current situation of international (and interprovincial) collaboration through networking. How far has the Society of Jesus been able to move in international networking? What are the main opportunities and difficulties for international collaboration? What can we learn from the experiences that already exist? These are

some of the questions we will try to respond to in the next pages. We will start with a brief reminder of the changing context and the challenges it is posing to our mission, structure and action. In the second section, through a review of the academic literature and the documents existing about networking in the Society of Jesus, we will try to clarify the concept of networking in the Jesuit context, highlighting its basic elements and characteristics. In the third section, we discuss the readiness of the Society of Jesus for international collaboration, trying to identify the main drivers and opportunities on one hand, and the obstacles and difficulties on the other. Later, we analyze some of the most significant networking experiences that already exist in the Society of Jesus, and the different models existing with their pros and cons and the lessons we can learn from them. Finally, we will end with some conclusions, including proposals or recommendations.

To prepare this analysis of the current situation of international networking in the SJ we have used three main sources: the review of the literature; the information about the existing networks available in reports, webpages and others; and a survey of 35 Jesuits and lay persons that are actively involved in international networking. In addition I have tried to include my own experience and perspective on the topic after 12 years of active participation in several Jesuit international networks¹

IMPORTANT NOTE.

As this is a long paper, and other speakers are going to deal with similar topics, if you don't have much time, we suggest you to skip the first pages and go directly to section 2.3. page 15

1. CONTEXT: THE NETWORK SOCIETY

¹ I have been actively involved in Fe y Alegria since 2000 (as executive director of Entreculturas – Fe y Alegria Spain; member of the Board of the international federation 2004-2007, and coordinator of the international program on advocacy 2005-till now). I've also cofounded the Xavier Network in Europe (a coalition of Jesuit mission offices and NGOs) and GIAN (Global Ignatian Advocacy Network). I have accompanied closely JRS, JASC (Jesuit African social centers network) and the network of social centers of Latin America. In Spain I have also been involved in several interprovincial initiatives in the social sector, included Entreculturas, which is itself an interprovincial institution.

Our world has been in a process of structural transformation for over two decades. As the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat reminded us recently, “we live in a world of turmoil”². Some experts consider this set of transformations as an epochal change. If we recall some of the historical events that have transformed the world, and our lives, since 1990³, we will realize that change is the most constant feature of our times. Among all these structural transformations, there are three macro-trends that affect international networking in a direct way: globalization as a process that impacts most dimensions of human life; the technological revolution; and the emergence of the so-called network society.

1.2. LIVING IN A GLOBAL WORLD.

Globalization is a process that affects almost all the spheres of both our personal and our social life. All the economic activities (jobs, production, finance,...), the social dynamics, the political system and in a special way, the cultural elements are being reshaped by globalization.

This powerful and complex process has a significant impact on the Jesuit mission too. As Dani Villanueva explains clearly, “the Church, and the Society of Jesus as part of it, has been passing through two different stages that have affected the concept of mission and therefore its public role: (1) a period of modernization after Vatican II that changed the terms of the mission into a new engagement with the world in addition to a straight forward proposal of justice and integral human promotion; and (2) a period of ‘global awareness’ that shaped the Church’s answer to the globalization process by emphasizing certain dynamics and structures needed to develop a new proposal of solidarity in a global world” (Villanueva, 2008). Globalization has a deep impact on the Society of Jesus’ mission and structure in several ways:

- Globalization Increases the importance of being and acting as a universal body. The present stage of the globalization process is characterized by the capacity of its core activities to work as a unit in real time in a planetary scale. This ability to act as a worldwide unit in real time is the main difference from previous stages of internationalization, in which presence in several countries was enough to be considered an international organization. In our days, being a

² “Healing a broken world”, SJES. Promotio Iustitiae nº 106, 2011/2

³ Some of them are: the fall of the Soviet Union, the rise of China, the economic dynamism of the Pacific area, the development of the global financial system and its recent crisis, the creation of the Euro currency in Europe, the rise of Internet and all its applications (email, websites, Facebook,...), the 9/11 terrorist attack and the subsequent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the rise of religious fundamentalism,... and the list could be continued.

global body means having the capacity to act as a global unity in real time, while maintaining internal diversity and plurality. This is a sign of the times that demands internal changes, as the last General Congregation emphasized: “The new context of globalization requires us to act as a universal body with a universal mission, realizing at the same time the radical diversity of our situations. It is as a worldwide community – and, simultaneously, as a network of local communities – that we seek to serve others across the world.”⁴

- Globalization demands from us a new way of looking at reality, a new contemplation of reality that moves our vision from the local (provincial/national) perspective to a more universal one. The contemplation on the Incarnation probably has never been so appropriate⁵. Our traditional boundaries of works, provinces, countries,... have been challenged by globalization, and our self-understanding of identity, belonging, and responsibility are being re-defined and broadened. Now, more than ever, we are called to go beyond those boundaries and combine our local presence with a global perspective in which we enrich one another.
- Globalization is transforming all our areas of action that are becoming global. We are increasingly dealing with problems, challenges, and opportunities that have a global dimension. Almost no field of action in the Society of Jesus can be considered anymore an exclusively local (or national) question, since all of them are affected by the globalization process. As Fr. General said in the Mexico meeting of higher education institutions: “Now, more than ever, we see that, in all our diversity, we are, in fact, a single humanity, facing common challenges and problems, and, as GC 35 put it, we bear a common responsibility for the welfare of the entire world and its development in a sustainable and life-giving way.”⁶ All our apostolic work in education, pastoral ministry, social action, intellectual work, communication, and other ministries is affected by this transformation and has to be reviewed in the light of the globalization process. It is remarkable that most of the challenges for our mission and most of the issues in which we are involved in our local (provincial) apostolic work

⁴ 35th General Congregation, decree 2, nº 20

⁵ “To see the various persons: and first those on the surface of the earth, in such variety, in dress as in actions: some white and others black; some in peace and others in war; some weeping and others laughing; some well, others ill; some being born and others dying, etc.” Spiritual exercises.

⁶ Depth, Universality, and Learned Ministry: Challenges to Jesuit Higher Education Today, Adolfo Nicolás, S. J., in “Shaping the Future, Networking Jesuit Higher Education for a Globalizing World. Report of the Mexico Conference, “ April 2010, ed. Fr. Frank Brennan, S.J.

have a global dimension that is increasingly relevant. “Serving Christ’s mission today means paying special attention to its global context”⁷

1.2. Technological revolution

This process of globalization is multidimensional, but it is associated with the emergence of a new technological paradigm, based on information and communication technologies, that took shape in the 1970s and was diffused unevenly around the world. The magnitude of this technological change “can be likened to the role of electricity and the electrical engine in diffusing the organizational forms of the industrial society”. (Castells)

The consequences of this revolution also affect human action in multiple ways, and it is forcing us to rethink the boundaries of what is consider possible. Technological transformations extend the limits of the feasible. Even if those technological changes cannot be consider neutral (either from an ideological or an economic point of view) and are unevenly distributed, they offer tremendous opportunities for communication, information exchange and knowledge generation⁸.

Many scholars have argued that, in our days, progress relies on the capacity for knowledge generation, which largely depends on the ability to reap the benefits of “the new technological system, rooted in microelectronics, computing, and digital communication, with its growing connection to the biological revolution and its derivative, genetic engineering” (Castells M. a.). In the same way, like any other international and complex organization, the Society is invited to increase its capacities by taking advantage of the incredible opportunities generated by the most extraordinary technological revolution in humankind. Technology, as any other means, should be used insofar it extends our possibilities and increases the impact of our apostolic work.

1.3. The network society

⁷ 35th General Congregation, decree 2, nº 20

⁸ As Fr. General reminded us, “one of the most positive aspects of globalization is that it has, in fact, made communication and cooperation possible with an ease and at a scale that was unimaginable even just a decade ago.” The Holy Father, in his address to the 35th General Congregation, described our world as one “of more intense communication among peoples, of new possibilities for acquaintance and dialogue, of a deep longing for peace.” Adolfo Nicolas, sj Op. cit.

We live in a networked world. Manuel Castells, in his famous trilogy “The Information Age”, used the term “network society” to define our world, which “is structured in its dominant functions and processes around networks”. (Castells M. , 2007) He argues that the forms and processes in every realm of economy, society, and culture, are built as networks, and that this network form of organization is powered by digital networks, a distinctive technology of the information age. Historically, networks existed mainly in the domain of private life and personal relations, while the world of production, power, and war was occupied by large, vertical organizations, such as states, churches, armies, and corporations. In our days, networks are present in most spheres of public life:

- In the economy “organizational networking is as critical today as was the process of vertical integration of production in the large scale organizations of the industrial era” (Castells M. , 2007).
- Social relations are characterized by what Castells calls networked individualism: a combination of individualism, as the dominant culture of our societies, and the new communication technologies, which perfectly fit into the mode of building sociability along self-selected communication networks. The network society is a society of networked individuals.
- In general terms, many dimensions of social life are increasingly organized as networks: transportation, communication, politics, research and knowledge generation, and many other activities are being reconsidered in the light of the networking approach.

At the same time, many institutions are moving toward network organization both in their internal structure and in the way they create and manage external relations with others. Private companies, non-profit organizations, mass-media, new intergovernmental institutions,... are all reshaping themselves as global networks. The globalization process and the technology revolution are prompting the creation and development of networks as the best adapted organizational paradigm in the new context. “That word, ‘networking,’ so often used these days, is, in fact, typical of the “new world” in which we live”⁹

1.4.Conclusions

⁹ Adolfo Nicolás, op.cit.

We are in the midst of incredible transformations that affect all the dimensions of our personal and social life. We are probably on the edge of a new era, a radical transformation of our social, cultural, and economic terrain. Among the several transformations that are taking place, three trends have a direct impact on the Society and impel it to deeper international collaboration: globalization (global vs. the national/international traditional approach); technological revolution (Internet vs. Gutenberg); and the network society (networks vs. traditional institutions and organizations).

This changing context affects in a direct way the mission, strategies and structures of the Church, and in particular the Society of Jesus. All these transformations represent, at the same time, challenges, risks and opportunities. They demand internal changes and transformations, in order to be faithful to the mission, the spirituality, and the 450 years of successful history of the Society. Ignatius and his companions founded the Society of Jesus in a time of great turmoil too. They had the capacity to create something new that was able to navigate successfully into the waters of modernity. Nowadays, the question we have to address is how the Society of Jesus is adapting itself to the epochal change that is taken place. And in more concrete terms, how is the Society of Jesus, as a network itself, getting ready to carry on its mission in the network society of the 21st century? In the next pages we will try to offer some inputs to respond to this question.

2. JESUIT NETWORK: CONCEPT AND METAPHOR.

Network is a word used frequently, in different ways and contexts. Whether in academia, the popular press, government policies, corporate strategies, nonprofit institutions, or just day-to-day conversation, the term seems to be over-used. There is a risk of misunderstanding it, and it is crucial to clarify its meaning before going further. In this section we will try to provide a framework to understand what networks are, and in particular, what network means in the Jesuit context.

The research on networking has developed in an extraordinary way during the last decades. There is a rich and vibrant reflection in academia about the concept, the characteristics and the critical aspects of networks. On the other hand, the Society of Jesus has just recently started to include this term in its documents and reflections. The number of studies done is still limited, though the

documents from the last General Congregations enhance the importance of networking. In this section we are going to present a brief characterization of networking as found in the academic literature and in Jesuit studies, and, from the dialogue between them, we will try to come up with a proposal of what Jesuit international networks are.

2.1. *Network theory: basic concepts.*

Researchers from very different fields of specialization have increased their interest in networking in recent times. Networks are now studied from very different perspectives: communication, biology, social sciences, business organization, computing, neurochemistry,... In all these areas, researchers have found that network theory is helpful for understanding how reality operates. Therefore, academic literature on networking shows a wide range of different perspectives in approaching the concept and analyzing networks. There is no single grand-theory of networks, but rather a confusing landscape in which multiple definitions of networks appear.

We will start defining network in a very open and general way, as a system of interconnected nodes (Castells M. , 2007). In the same perspective, Halgin and Boggarti define a network as a set of actors or nodes along with a set of ties of specified type that link them (Halgin). In a similar way Brass considers network as “a set of nodes and the set of ties representing some relationship, or lack of relationship, between the nodes”. All these definitions stress two elements in a network: the nodes (objects, actors, institutions, persons,...) and the ties (connections, relationship) between them that generate the structure of the network. “The ties interconnect through shared endpoints to form paths that indirectly link nodes that are not directly tied. The pattern of ties in a network yields a particular structure, and nodes occupy positions within this structure” (Halgin).

We accept this definition as a broad one, but want to be more specific about the types of networks we are discussing here. There are also several ways of classifying networks, according to different criteria: the types of nodes (life beings, institutions, objects, persons,); the kind of relationship (from informal to completely formal networks); the temporal nature (event-type or state-type); the density of the network; its purpose; the type of flows that moves between the nodes; ... But first we need to narrow the type of networks that are interesting for us. Moving from

our general definition of network towards a more concrete one, we will use the approach of Acemoglu and Ozdaglar, who identified four types of networks in the real world (Ozdaglar, 2009) :

- Biological networks: A number of biological systems that can also be represented as networks.
- Information networks: Connections of "information" objects. (i.e., network of citations between academic papers, World Wide Web, semantic,...)
- Technological networks: Designed typically for distribution of a commodity or service, these are infrastructure networks (e.g., Internet as a set of connections of routers or administrative domains, transportation networks [road, rail, airline, mail])
- Social and economic networks: A set of people or groups of people with some pattern of contacts or interactions between them. (Facebook, friendship networks, business relations between companies, non-profit alliances,...)

We are interested in the last-mentioned ones, although it is important to realize that we are going to take advantage and make use of many other biological, technological and informational networks as well. Around social (and economic) networks there is a rich and varied literature. We are not going into that area, but for the purpose of this paper, we are interested in a more practical approach, that may help us to understand how networks operate in social and economic activity. Within this kind of network, we again find in academic literature multiple ways of classifying them. For practical reasons and considering the goal of this paper and the type of networks in which the Society of Jesus is interested, we are going to use the Function Network Approach proposed by Hearn and Mendizabal¹⁰. It combines four elements to analyze (and classify) this concrete type of network:

- The purpose is the objective of the network and justifies its existence, but it is independent of the approach taken to achieve it. Identifying the purpose helps answer the question: 'Why are we supporting or working as a network?'
- The role of the network is to "promote value among its members in pursuit of the purpose" (Mendizabal, 2011). Two archetypal roles can be suggested: support (members act as independent agents but join the network to receive support that will make them more effective in their work) and agency (members coordinate their efforts with other members and act together as a single agent). Between these two extremes several intermediate models may exist.

¹⁰ "Not everything that connects is a network," Simon Hearn and Enrique Mendizabal, Overseas Development Institute, Background note, May 2011.

- The functions describe, more specifically, what the network actually does¹¹.
- The form describes the structural and organizational characteristics of networks including several elements as:
 - Membership. Type (individual, forming the so-called social networks in colloquial language; or institutional, forming inter-organizational networks,...) and any other characteristics of nodes.
 - Temporality of relations: state-type and event-type ties (Halgin)
 - Governance: type and role of hubs (or central nodes)
 - Relations:
 - Formality (informal vs formal networks)
 - Type of flows among nodes: information, resources, persons,...
 - Relation with environment: for instance, connection with other networks (isolated or connected networks);...
 - Resources required

The combination of all these elements offers a wide range of possible types of network. Later, when we discuss the meaning of networking in the Society of Jesus, we will come back to this approach that may help us to understand what the Society of Jesus means by networking.

Despite the different models and types of networks that exist, scholars have identified some common characteristics and features in social and economic networks that are different from other kinds of social organization, such as the market, the state, or the traditional bureaucratic and more formal institutions. Some of these are:

- Flexibility and adaptability to changes in the environment.
- Voluntary association and high individual freedom and initiative
- Self-organized or lean coordination bodies.
- Horizontality in decision-making process

• ¹¹ There may be many different functions in these networks, but some of the most frequent ones are: community building or coordination; filtering information and knowledge; amplifying common or shared values and messages; facilitating learning; investing and providing resources, skills and assistance; convening members and constituencies;...

- Use of information technology

2.2. The use of networks in the Jesuit literature.

As other colleagues are going to reflect deeply on this topic during our conference, I will not go into details. I just want to recall the main efforts done in the Jesuit world by way of characterizing networks, in order to use them to answer the question of what networks are for the Society of Jesus.

Networks in the “official” Jesuit documents

A review the essential literature on Jesuit networking shows that it is a term that has been used frequently in official documents of the Society of Jesus during the last 20 years. It seems that the Jesuits have been able to integrate this word into their own vocabulary simultaneously with the larger society, the media and other institutions. As Daniel Villanueva has argued, although the use of the term network is recent, it is not a complete novelty since this concept connects with the initial spirit of the order (“In his day, St Ignatius...sought collaborators and with them established organizations and networks to continue the work”¹²) and with the international and interprovincial collaboration that has been particularly stressed since the Second Vatican Council. In 1995, the 34th General Congregation recognized the existence of networks and gave a considerable boost to their promotion and development: “Although numerous regional and international networks already exist, to exploit more fully ‘all the possibilities given to us by being an international apostolic body,’ additional global and regional networks must be created. Such networks of persons and institutions should be capable of addressing global concerns through support, sharing of information, planning and evaluation, or through implementation of projects that cannot easily be carried out within Province structures”¹³.

It is in the 35th General Congregation (2008) that networks are acknowledged as a promising way of international and interprovincial collaboration. They are mentioned 14 times in three different decrees and a clear mandate is given to the whole Society to foster and stimulate them, as a new

¹² GC 35, Decree 6, “Collaboration at the heart of mission”, n° 30 conclusion

¹³ GC 34, Decree 21, “Interprovincial and supra-provincial co-operation,” n° 14

apostolic way to carry on the mission in a new context: “We encourage the Society’s government at all levels to explore means by which more effective networking might take place among all apostolic works associated with the Society of Jesus”¹⁴

Aside from the decrees of the General Congregations there are two other Jesuit documents that recommend international networking in two relevant apostolic areas:

- “Guidelines in Jesuit networking in the social area” is an important document prepared in 2002 by the Social Justice Secretariat that offers clear orientations on what Jesuit networks in the social area are, and how they are created and managed.
- The “Report on the Mexico Conference of Higher Education Institutions” is the most recent effort made to analyze and stimulate the implementation of international networks, in this case in the area of higher education.

There are other internal documents from specific networks which reflect further on Jesuit networking. In particular, some of the most active and relevant networks, like the Jesuit Refugee Service or Fe y Alegría, have produced reflections on their own experience.

Jesuit networks research

Despite this significant presence of networking in the official documents, there seems to be an important lack of research on this area. Not many scholars have done studies on this topic, either from the theological perspective or from that of business administration or social science.¹⁵ Deeper research on Jesuit networking is an urgent need that could be met by Jesuit universities in the future. Even the experience and practice of existing international Jesuit networks have been studied very infrequently and superficially. This gap may be seen as an opportunity for collaboration between universities (with their analytical and research capacities) and networks (involved in the practice) in order to reach conclusions from the analysis of best practices that may help other initiatives.

2.3. Towards a definition of Jesuit network

¹⁴ 35 GC Decree 6, nº 29 a)

¹⁵ The already mention thesis prepared by Daniel Villanueva in 2008, constitutes one of the few exceptions.

In most of these Jesuit documents, the term network seems to be used as a metaphor rather than a theoretical concept¹⁶. In my opinion it must be understood in this sense. The delegates attending the 35th General Congregation were probably not considering the theoretical implications of the concept when they encouraged international networking. Nevertheless, that does not mean that a theoretical framework is not needed, or that everything can be considered as a network. We need to clarify a broad definition for Jesuit networks that will be helpful for practical use. In order to avoid misunderstandings that can lead to fuzziness and imprecision and some kind of network craze, it is necessary to define what the Society of Jesus understands by networks and what their main elements and characteristics are, in the light of GC 35

In the last years there have been two main proposals to define and characterize a Jesuit network. The 2002 Guidelines in Jesuit Networking in the Social Area was the first one, and Daniel Villanueva's thesis, released in 2008 just after the GC 35, is the second one. The two proposals complement each other and jointly offer a complete depiction of Jesuit networks. We will use the elements of the network function approach of Mendizabal and Hearn (presented in chapter 2.1.) to analyze both of them:

		GUIDELINES ON JESUIT NETWORKING SJS (2002)	THE JESUIT WAY OF GOING GLOBAL VILLANUEVA (2008)
PURPOSE		With a purpose (ad intra or ad extra). There is no serious human concern or suffering which can be excluded from possible Jesuit networking. It's essential for each network to have a clear purpose and mission	Relying on the mission of the Society: faith that does justice Answering global problems
ROLE			
FUNCTIONS		Associating and co-operating in a rich interlacing of relationships (association leads to co-operation, which leads to operations, to common or individual action). Should aim at making a specific contribution of the Society,	
F O R M	MEMBERS	Independent individuals and/or institutions	Institutions
	TEMPORALITY		
	GEOGRAPHICAL	At a distance (beyond Province	Supra-provincial

¹⁶ Taken from Castells, M. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vDh7eGJwhwg&feature=player_embedded

SCOPE	boundaries)	
APOSTOLIC AREA		Using the interdisciplinary Jesuit body and expertise
GOVERNING STRUCTURE	With an identifiable co-ordination.	With clear mandate
INTERNAL ORGANIZATION		
RESOURCES		Tapping into existing resources and building on continuing initiatives
RELATION WITH JESUIT GOVERNANCE		Built over the official structure of the Society, linked to central governance
COLLABORATION WITH OTHERS		Cooperation and partnership, networking with civil society. Working with Church structures

Both proposals consider that “networking in the Society of Jesus may be summed up as a mode of proceeding, a style of working apostolically, a way of enhancing or carrying out our apostolate across many of the lines which, until now, have delimited our Jesuit activities and jurisdictions” (Guidelines).

The combination of both proposals shows a comprehensive conceptualization of Jesuit networking. Based on them, in the light of GC 35, Mexico, and the experience of the existing networks, and trying to integrate some elements from network theory, I propose the following characterization of Jesuit networking.

I will try to do so at two different levels:

- On the one hand, the basic definition of Jesuit networks, which determines the basic elements that all Jesuit networks must have. This defines the limits of what can be considered a Jesuit network.
- On the other hand, the characteristics of the ideal Jesuit network (the optimum) in the light of GC 35. This defines the horizon that may encourage existing or future networks.

I consider the latter aspect to be the most inspiring and suggestive, and the one most faithful to the spirit and the reflection that has taken place within the Society during the last 20 years. However I have also included the basic one, as it may be helpful to clarify the limits of what can be considered as a Jesuit network.

In its basic form, a Jesuit network is a way of carrying out the Jesuit mission through interprovincial collaboration that increases the apostolic impact of the members by connecting several initiatives or persons under the leadership of an international governing body.

In its ideal perspective, a Jesuit network is a way of implementing globally the Jesuit mission, connecting institutions to act as a global unit in order to generate a universal apostolic impact.

ELEMENTS		CHARACTERISTIC	
		IDEAL NETWORK	BASIC NETWORK
STRATEGIC INTENTION		“A mode of proceeding, a style of working apostolically, a way of enhancing or carrying out our apostolate”	
PURPOSE		Has a clear and specific purpose that contributes to implement the mission of the Society of Jesus at the global level.	Has a clear purpose that relies on the Jesuit mission
ROLE		An agency network that acts as a unity while keeping diversity and plurality.	Either support or agency
FUNCTIONS		It may have several, but should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building communities of solidarity. • Generating and sharing knowledge • Acting as a global unit • Advocacy 	Should increase the apostolic impact of the members, at least through learning and exchange
F O R M	MEMBERS	Inter- Institutional	Inter-personal or inter-institutional
	TEMPORALITY	State-type	State or event-type
	GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE	Global	Interprovincial collaboration.
	APOSTOLIC AREA	Cross-sector and multidisciplinary.	
	GOVERNING STRUCTURE	Adequate leadership Lean and flexible structures	Voluntary participation
	INTERNAL ORGANIZATION	Diversity of models. Sense of community Connecting institutions	Connecting different initiatives
	RESOURCES	Tapping into existing resources, institutions. Intensive use of technological opportunities.	
	RELATION WITH JESUIT GOVERNANCE	Clear link with the international governing body of the Society	Clear link with the international governing body of the Society
	COLLABORATION WITH OTHERS	Strong participation of others. Active collaboration with other Church initiatives and civil society.	

3. READINESS FOR INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING IN THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

Having proposed a definition of international Jesuit network, we now move on to the analysis of the current state of networking in the Society of Jesus. In this third section, we will start by reviewing the internal readiness of the Jesuits for international collaboration. In the next section, we will analyze critically the existing networks and present some conclusions and recommendations from their experience.

The goal of this third chapter is to analyze to what extent the Society is capable of setting up an environment that fosters and supports the initiation and development of international networks. We are going to identify, on the one hand, the main drivers and opportunities (existing and foreseen) that inspire and impel international networking; and, on the other hand, the difficulties and obstacles that limit and slow that dynamism. Later we will present a general summary of them and some conclusions and proposals emerging from that analysis.

To accomplish this goal we will use two elements: the insights coming from GC 35 decrees and other recent documents, and the results of a survey of a group of 35 leaders who are actively involved on international collaboration in the Jesuit family. This group is a significant representation of Jesuits and lay people who are trying to make the most of the opportunities and are directly confronting the obstacles for international networking¹⁷.

3.1. Drivers and opportunities that foster and boost international networking.

How well is the Society prepared to adapt itself to this changing context? How ready is it to act as a global body through international collaboration? Prima facie, it seems to be extremely well prepared to adapt to an era of globalization, technological innovation and networking. According to Daniel Villanueva, “the Jesuit advantages towards this model are based on 1) its transnational and interdisciplinary apostolic body, 2) its global and communitarian spirituality, 3) its innovative and adaptive tradition, and 4) its accumulated experience after more than 450 years of history”

¹⁷ All the details of the survey are showed in annex ---. It is worth noting that relevant members of most of the principal networks (Fe y Alegría, JRS, AJAN, GIAN,...) are represented in the group, which includes people coming from diverse apostolic areas (social action, higher education, pastoral, ...), and all the conferences of provincials.

(Villanueva, 2008). Following this scheme, and integrating the reflections of GC 35 and the opinions of some active leaders in Jesuit networking, these are the main drivers and the most significant opportunities foreseen in international networking:

- **Common mission.**

There is strong awareness of the need to act as a universal body to accomplish a real apostolic impact in implementing our common mission in the present context. This is perceived as one of the most significant challenges faced by the Society. And there seems to be a sense of urgency about it. *“It is only working at the local level that we will have a serious impact. Otherwise, we are just wasting our time”* (Tony Calleja sj. Regional director JRS Central Africa).

In this sense, a common global mission is perceived as an important asset and one of the most significant drivers for international collaboration. We share a common mission and vision that has been updated, is global, and inspires enthusiasm in its members. *“We are an organization that shares a vision of social reality (in which God is already present) and seeks its transformation to ‘reveal’ that presence of God in history. We are self-conscious of being a universal body, not just a set of isolated people”* (José Ignacio García SJ, European social apostolate coordinator).

Networking is seen as a promising way to carry out this common mission in a global world. The impact of some of the best known experiences is a source of inspiration and encouragement for new initiatives, as many people look to them as models for imitation. Other institutions (such as non-governmental institutions, advocacy networks or even private companies) that have succeeded in a global environment by taking advantage of its opportunities are also considered instructive experiences for knowing how to implement the Jesuit mission at the global level.

- **International presence:**

The Society of Jesus is an international apostolic body that is present in more than 110 countries. It is a worldwide organization with some remarkable and specific characteristics:

- The Society has a strong capacity to act locally, in direct contact with people and close to concrete realities. That is its greatest strength at the current time. It is an international

body that has a profound capacity to inculturate, to adapt, and to “translate” the universal mission and identity to each local context and culture.

- It is not only present in many places at the local level, but it works at the international level (either regional or global) through several “hubs”: General Curia, Conferences of provincials, network secretariats, representation before international institutions, etc. In particular, “The ongoing development of Conferences has become a key instrument for this collaboration. The Conferences help us to transcend the traditional borders between Provinces and attain a more corporate understanding of the responsibilities we all share. Collaboration among the different Conferences is perhaps more difficult, especially since the particularities of each one incline them more toward autonomy” (Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat, 2011). However, as we will see later, these international structures are, in general terms, perceived to be insufficiently endowed to foster, stimulate, accompany, follow up, and evaluate the international networks.
- This international presence is perceived as a comparative advantage, as a unique opportunity that very few organizations have. This is, at the same time, considered a special responsibility

- **Multidisciplinary and cross-sector approach.**

The mission of the Society is implemented in a comprehensive way that includes a diversity of initiatives and a multiplicity of apostolic sectors. There is a simultaneous presence on the frontiers and at the center; in the field and in reflection; in spirituality and in action; at the grassroots and in the towers of analysis. Several opportunities for collaboration are foreseen due to this diversity: *“Opportunities are plentiful for us as Jesuits due to our involvement, direct contact with the people and also the availability of the institutional and intellectual capabilities of Jesuits all over”* (Xavier Jeyaraj sj, assistant director of SJES).

Cross-sector collaboration is seen as a unique opportunity in this complex world. However, there is a humble recognition of the real difficulties in crossing the boundaries of the different apostolic sectors, even within the provinces. In this sense, there is a strong desire that international networking should avoid the rigid divisions between sectors that exist in many provinces and should promote multidisciplinary collaboration and a cross-sector approach in all apostolic work.

- **Leading institutions and well prepared teams**

In most cases, the apostolic work done by the different provinces, through the various works and institutions, is considered excellent, and it has a high recognition and reputation at the local or national level. The elements (nodes) of the network are already there, and most of them have high capacity at the local level. Therefore, of the two elements of a network, one (the nodes) already exists, and the other (connections) still has to be stimulated. Networking is considered basically an opportunity to connect institutions that are leaders in their respective fields and countries.

In addition, much of the enthusiasm about networks is rooted in a belief that the capacity of a network is somehow greater than the sum of its parts. “The basic assumption is that a network can mobilize or generate capacity and have a greater impact than could be achieved by individuals or organizations acting alone. The suggestion, in other words, is that in networks $1+1 > 2$ ” (Taschereau, S, 2007).

- **Structure conformed as a network.**

The Society of Jesus is itself organized in a way that shares some of the characteristics of modern networks: leanness, mobility, dynamism, reduced central structures, autonomy and decentralization, flat structure,... The simplicity and clarity of the Jesuit structure is a strong asset in the new “network society”. Again, it seems that the road is already half paved.

- **Shared identity and spirituality**

The Society is not only an international and multidisciplinary body with a common vision and mission, but it also has a shared identity and spirituality. This common identity is perceived as a valuable asset for collaboration: *“we can work together –even if we are from very different cultures -- because we share the same spiritual framework”*.

Ignatian spirituality is perceived as a strong driver for international collaboration, since it is a global spirituality. From the contemplation on the Incarnation, Jesuits and collaborators are invited to look “at all the plain or circuit of all the world, full of men” as the Holy Trinity does. Networking is seen as a connatural way to put into practice that spiritual experience.

Discernment is one of the main features of our spirituality. It offers a unique and powerful way to understand our complex cultural context and a successful decision-making methodology.

At the same time, networking is seen as a specially suitable way for strengthening the identity and spiritual experience both of individuals and institutions. *“Being part of such a rich network as Fe y Alegria has been a unique opportunity for me to integrate several dimensions of my personal vocation”* (Joseba Lazcano sj, former director of Fe y Alegria Ecuador).

- **Eagerness and expectations.**

The 35 leaders that participated in the survey unanimously expressed their great eagerness and their high expectations in this process. There are three types of expectations with different levels of enthusiasm:

Possibilities foreseen. Taking into account all these unique opportunities, there is a strong desire to take advantage of them. What are the expected gains from Jesuit networks? The most relevant ones are:

- Sharing experiences and best practices, learning from others.
- Generating and sharing knowledge
- Sharing resources to carry out joint projects
- Addressing global challenges through global action

Sense of urgency. There also seems to be a sense of urgency in this dynamic. In various analyses carried out during the last years in diverse apostolic sectors and regions, there is recognition of the growing complexity and inter-relatedness of major challenges, problems and opportunities. There is also a greater desire to overcome narrow approaches, such as those taken exclusively at the provincial level or within a single apostolic area. As we have already said, there is a strong awareness that international (interprovincial) collaboration is the only way in which apostolic action can have a clear impact.

The dynamism of needs. A smaller group of people expressed a desire to promote networking as a way of overcoming the needs and difficulties they have to face. In these cases, Jesuit networking is seen as a powerful strategy to help and support institutions in two critical challenges they are facing:

- Strengthening Jesuit identity
- Securing mid- and long-term sustainability by sharing resources, increasing effectiveness and efficiency, and gaining access to new ways of funding.

Necessity is a powerful driver to engage institutions in international collaboration. Without the belief that networking will offer gains and help local initiatives to improve their action and meet their needs, networking runs the risk of remaining an interesting and positive idea, but lacking connection to the daily needs, it will not generate the required commitment and energy from the concrete nodes. There should be additional efforts to connect the problems and needs of local institutions more clearly and directly with the possibilities offered by networks.

What do institutions/persons expect from networking? What would they like to achieve? Why do they find networking attractive?	
To increase apostolic impact in relation to mission in a global context	URGENCY
To share experiences, learning from others, best practices.	POSSIBILITY
To generating and share knowledge	
To share resources to carry on joint projects	
To address global challenges through global action	NEED
To strengthen Jesuit identity	
To secure mid-term sustainability adapting to the new context	

3.2. Difficulties and obstacles that limit and slow down international networking.

Given the opportunities, advantages and drivers for international networking, a strong promotion and development of them would have been expected. Nevertheless, as we will see in the next chapter, despite a positive dynamism that has increased in the last years, the development and expansion of networking is not going as quickly and smoothly as it should. J. Coleman expressed it in a graphic way: “The paradox is that the Jesuits sit on a stunning global network of schools, parishes, retreat centers, social institutes, but seem unable to connect them together or parlay their resources into effective global initiatives”¹⁸. We will try to identify the difficulties and obstacles that are slowing down the development of these connections:

- **The last mile in the path from an international body to a global one**

¹⁸ Taken from Villanueva 2008, J. Coleman, *America Magazine* blog, 2007

http://www.americamagazine.org/blog/entry.cfm?blog_id=2&entry_id=281

In a recent conversation, Fr. Tom Smolich sj gave me a wise clue to understand these difficulties. The Society of Jesus, he more or less said, has always been an international body; now it has to become global. A very important part of this path is already covered, but we should not underestimate the further steps required to become a real global body, with capacity to act in a global scale at the same time. A similar concern was expressed recently by social apostolate coordinators: “The Society functions well locally, that is, when it is in direct contact with local people and familiar realities. That is its greatest strength at the current time. Nevertheless, the challenges we have spelled out require of us collaboration on a large scale, and that is where we experience many weaknesses “ (Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat, 2011).

There is a risk of underestimating the changes required by globalization and expecting immediate results in international collaboration, without additional major changes in our structures, values, and ways of working. An important part of the path from an international body to a global one has already been covered (as was mentioned in the previous point), but we should all be realistic and understand that the remaining stretch (the last mile) is not an easy one; it requires energy and decisiveness as it will move us all from our comfort zone.

- **Identifying clear purposes for networks is not always easy**

Some networks were created without a specific purpose. Others were established as platforms for exchange of information and experience and later developed into “joint action” initiatives. Still others have been set up from the beginning with the goal of common work. In all these cases, determining concrete purposes and goals seems to be more difficult than expected. *“It is difficult to identify concrete topics and projects for collaboration”*¹⁹. It is a task that requires time, mutual knowledge and external accompaniment.

If we want to set up concrete, worthwhile goals and purposes for networks, a bottom-up process like this should be combined with a top-down approach. In this sense, some people remark that the better the Society is able to plan and set up priorities at the regional and global levels, the easier it will be to develop networks with focused goals and purposes.

¹⁹ In this section I will not name the authors of the comments taken from the survey, as it was done on the basis of anonymity and it was not possible to contact all of them in advance to ask for permission.

- **The institutional “proyecto social” and the absolute priority of local (provincial) initiatives**

The Society’s structure and culture privilege the provincial (local) level over the global one. The resources, capacities, and initiatives are at the provincial level and, in most of the cases, within each concrete institution or work. Fr. General said this very clearly in the Mexico meeting when speaking of Universities, although the situation in other apostolic sectors is not very different: “What we see is each university, each institution working as a ‘proyecto social’ by itself, or at best within a national or regional network. And this, I believe, does not take sufficient advantage of what our new globalized world offers us as a possibility for greater service. People speak of the Jesuit university or higher education system (...) But, as a matter of fact, there is only a commonality of Ignatian inspiration rather than a coherent ‘Jesuit university network’: each of our institutions operates relatively autonomously, and as a result, the impact of each as a ‘proyecto social; is limited”²⁰. There are some aspects closely related to this reflection:

- *“There are no incentives to facilitate involvement in international initiatives to carry on the global mission”*. There seems to be a kind of contradiction, as many people express the need for further international collaboration through networking, but at the same time they do not see their priorities and responsibilities as going beyond each local institution. Most of the leaders are just assigned a responsibility at the local level and they are not expected or mandated to get involved in international collaboration.
- *“Each institution is considered as an end itself rather than as part of a bigger body with a higher mission”*. Many people share their concern about the lack of interest in the “greater good” and a kind of shortsightedness existing in many works.
- A culture of self-sufficiency. As we said in the last section, necessity is not always considered to be a driver for international networking. Even though the experience of the most successful networks shows that the support and gains obtained by members were a relevant help to address their needs and problems, still many leaders do not see networking as a way to overcome their challenges and needs. On the contrary, there is a culture of self-sufficiency and autonomy by which each institution is expected to solve its own problems by itself, and collaboration is not sufficiently perceived as a help.

²⁰ Adolfo Nicolás sj, op. cit.

- There are high transaction costs, perceived and real, in initiating network collaboration.²¹
- There is the question of collaboration vs competition in the relations between some institutions, in particular on topics related to critical matters such as access to scarce resources.

- **Lack of resources**

Lack of resources is considered one of the most significant obstacles for international collaboration. This lack has to do with several aspects:

- Lack of resources within the institutions to attend to local and international issues at the same time. Local concerns consume all the energy, and international collaboration is considered an extra task that has to be addressed without additional human resources.
- Unbalanced capacities and resources within the networks.
- Creating relations and establishing networks require an initial investment of resources (time, money, energy,...), and gains come only later. Some institutions, even recognizing that in long-term they will benefit from the network, do not have the capacity to make such investments.

- **Insufficient use of modern technology possibilities**

There is a clear recognition of the importance and possibilities of modern technologies (“they can be powerful instruments for building and supporting international networks, in our advocacy, in our work of education, and in our sharing of our spirituality and our faith. This Congregation urges Jesuit institutions to put these new technologies at the service of those at the margins.”²²). And there is also a concern about the need to prepare ourselves to use them in a comprehensive way (“This collaboration will require the use of new technologies, for which we should prepare ourselves, since this type of instrument will be needed for communication among ourselves as well as for the carrying out of our mission and the promotion of participation.”²³). Nevertheless,

²¹ In economics and related disciplines, a transaction cost is a cost incurred in making an economic exchange, for instance: research and information, bargaining and agreement, policing,...

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transaction_cost

²² 35 General Congregation, decree 3, nº29

²³ Invited to collaborate, SJES, 2011.

new information and communication technologies seem to be significantly under-used. It seems that the Society of Jesus is not making enough use of these technological advances to foster, facilitate, and simplify international networking. A deeper and more technical analysis is required, but at least we have identified some obstacles:

- Access and knowledge. In some areas, access to these technologies is not always easy (for instance, Internet connectivity is expensive or difficult), and there is a need for formation in the use of modern technological tools that are unfamiliar to many people. This is the case even in the group of active participants in international networks.
- Lack of technological resources to facilitate knowledge, exchange, and access to information (see next point)
- In general terms, even if the situation is improving, there is a poor use of IT within the networks.

- **Information and communication difficulties**

Information and communication systems within the Society of Jesus, despite its success and effectiveness, are not the most adequate for facilitating horizontal exchange across provincial boundaries. Aside from the size of the “Jesuit world” and its geographical extension, there is a lack of knowledge and relationship among persons and institutions beyond their own province. *“It is not easy to know who else is working on the same issues and get in contact with them”*. As mentioned earlier, the advantages of IT are not being fully exploited to facilitate communication and information exchange at the international level. In this situation the role of “information brokers” (connecting nodes) is essential.

“In-person” relations are considered critical to creating a real sense of community (a basic characteristic of Jesuit networks). The experience of existing networks also shows that such relations are vital to boosting action and energy in networks, mostly in their initial stages. However these face-to-face encounters are costly both in time and in funds, and that is a real constraint. At the same, there are not many opportunities to facilitate temporary exchange of persons between institutions, which would be another way to improve interprovincial communication and interpersonal knowledge.

Other obstacles for international communication come from cultural diversity. Language especially is seen as a major constraint, especially for non-English speakers. Although such obstacles do not have an easy solution, they should be treated as highly sensitive issues that require an open and understanding attitude.

- **Lack of collaborative culture.**

At the heart of some of these difficulties and obstacles seems to be a culture of excessive autonomy and insufficient collaborative style. The individualism and competitiveness existing in our culture and a formation that stresses autonomy and self-sufficiency in carrying out the mission are factors that undermine collaboration and teamwork. This culture affects Jesuits but goes beyond them and is also present in lay people.

This is a central difficulty that deeply affects the promotion of international networking. It is important to note that relevant advances have been observed by many participants during the last few years. Probably the greater effort made during formation and the emergence of new social and economic initiatives grounded on collaboration (such as Wikipedia, Youtube, many advocacy campaigns,...) are helping to make our culture more communitarian and collaborative.

- **Need for soft-powered hubs**

In all networks there are some nodes that play a crucial role. They are called hubs because of their capacity to make connections, to become places around which encounters take place, and to act as information brokers. They are stimulation-centers of the network, fueling it with energy, information, connections and other resources.

The Society of Jesus has some hubs that are playing a very fruitful role in promoting these connections. Aside from the most obvious ones (such as the General Curia in Rome) it is interesting to note the growing importance of others, such as the conferences of provincials and their contribution to boosting relations within their regions. Also the secretariats of existing networks are acting as helpful nodes not only within their own networks but also in facilitating external connections. Finally certain institutions and concrete persons also have a significant role in this, playing a relevant role as “informal” hubs.

However, the shared opinion of the participants is that these hubs suffer from a lack of capacity, resources, and soft-power. Regarding the international bodies in the Society (Curia and

Conferences), there seems to be a desire to increase their resources and capacity and to transfer some capacity from the provincials. Nevertheless, at the same time their leanness and lightness are considered extraordinarily positive features.

3.3. Conclusions and recommendations.

After this analysis, we can summarize the positive and negative elements identified. The good news is basically twofold:

- The Society is extremely well prepared to act in a global context due to its shared identity, global spirituality, international presence, multidisciplinary work, and internal structure. More than half of the work is already done.
- There are strong desires and high expectations for international networking. People foresee extraordinary opportunities and comparative advantages. Leaders share an inspiring vision of global networks that connect leading institutions working in different fields and orient them toward concrete goals that make a difference in the apostolic mission. There is enthusiasm, energy and capacity.

But, there is also bad news: actual obstacles and difficulties are slowing this process and may undermine the positive energy that has been generated. These difficulties can be split into two groups.

- Some of them are practical and operative, having to do with technology, language, information exchange and communication systems, resources,... These may be solved in the short term if clear decisions are made and resources allocated. If we are able to overcome them, it would mean an extraordinary boost to fostering networks.
- Others are more profound and cannot be solved so easily. These are basically obstacles related to the lack of collaborative culture (both in institutions and leaders) and the need for strengthening international structures in the Society. However, both of them have already been identified and changes have been implemented. In fact, in some cases, considerable improvement can be observed.

In order to stimulate the drivers and opportunities and to remove the difficulties, we propose some recommendations that may contribute to create a positive environment for international networking. These suggestions should be considered as “martyr-proposals”, prepared with the intention to stimulate reflection and discussion. They are made out of deep admiration and love for the Society and as a humble contribution to debate:

1. The role of the international governing bodies of the Society is to stimulate and foster rather than set up, create or establish. That does not mean they do not have an active role to play. Provincials, conferences and the general curia should have an active role (intensifying what they are already doing) in facilitating, fostering, nurturing, accompanying, and evaluating international networks.
2. The role of international leadership is crucial. Research, participant perspective, and experience from existing networks show that suitable leadership is the most decisive factor in promoting international networking. Such leadership is critical both in international positions within the Society (especially in those responsible for apostolic sectors at the conference level) and in the key positions of already existing international networks. It seems that the “last mile” will be covered only if the right people take on that responsibility, and this should be seen as a priority for provincials. Similarly, in order to prepare Jesuits and lay persons for this new international leadership, a formation program for international leadership could be set up. This may be a way to contribute not only to formation and training but also to facilitating personal exchange and knowledge.
3. Priority should continue to be given to the efforts to stimulate a more collaborative fashion among Jesuits and lay persons.
4. A better and more intensive use of new technological opportunities should be promoted in several ways, for instance: supporting investment to improve access and formation; rethinking in a comprehensive way the use of IT at the international levels (both regional and global); developing those computing tools required to facilitate the information and communication exchange.

5. The role of hubs is essential. The more energy, capacity and resources that can be allocated to them, the more stimulation the networks will receive. As GC35 emphasized, the role of conferences may be essential in the future, but beyond them other “informal” hubs can play a critical role and they should be fostered and developed.
6. Stress should be placed on all efforts to promote a cultural change that stimulates collaboration, openness, long-term vision, generosity, and other similar values. At the same time, it would be convenient to develop different kinds of incentives to stimulate interprovincial collaboration, such as internal recognition, visibility, support, etc. Considering that the tangible results from international collaboration will take time, it is necessary to build a culture of patience combined with the visibility of any milestone.
7. The initiatives that may help to build interprovincial and international community are extremely important. It would be worthwhile to continue fostering different forms of human exchange (internships, exchanges, face-to-face meetings) beyond provinces and to make these accessible also for lay persons, who are increasingly taking on responsibilities.
8. Since the lack of resources seems to be a real problem, especially in the initial stages of networks, and since this kind of initiative does not have financial support from any province, one proposal could be to set up a fund for promoting international networks. This fund should be small, since its aim would be to stimulate international networking and help with the transition costs, but it should not substitute for internal effort and commitment on the part of the members. This fund could be used for several purposes such as the following:
 - As a kind of “seed capital” fund to co-finance the concrete needs of networks in their initial stages.
 - To support an exchange program that may help temporary mobility of persons from one institution to another. A program like this may contribute to increasing knowledge among Jesuit institutions and may facilitate a “communitarian approach” to Jesuit networking
 - To finance technological innovations that may contribute to easing international collaboration

9. We foresee a springtime of international collaboration and networking in the next few years, speeding up processes that have already started. In this forecast, however, it seems that intra-conference and intra-sector networking will be easier than global and cross-sector networking. For that reason, all efforts to promote cross-sector and cross-regional initiatives should be stressed.

4. NETWORKS IN THE SJ: CURRENT STATUS

In the last section we reviewed the readiness of the Society of Jesus for international networking. Now we will continue the analysis of the current status with an analysis of the main networks existing in the Jesuit family. First, we will give a general description of the most relevant existing networks, then we will present the different models that can be drawn from them, and finally we will discuss what we can learn from their experiences. In this section we will use the information of the networks available in reports, websites and other official publications. For the qualitative aspects, we rely on the opinions expressed by the leaders in the survey already mentioned in section 3.

The table below lists the international and interprovincial networks that have been included in this research. There are probably other networks that are not included in this list, but it is a significant representation of the whole international and interprovincial networking in the Society.

NAME	REGION	SECTOR	FULL NAME
ACJU-ASIA PACIFIC	ASIA PACIFIC	HIGHER EDUCATION	Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities - Asia Pacific
AJAN	AFRICA	CROSS-SECTOR	African Jesuit AIDS Network
AJCU	USA	HIGHER EDUCATION	Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
ASJEL	EUROPE	HIGHER EDUCATION	
AUSJAL	LATIN AMERICA	HIGHER EDUCATION	Asociación de Universidades SJ de America Latina
CENTROS SOCIALES LATINOAMERICANOS	LATIN AMERICA	SOCIAL	
CLAVIUS	GLOBAL	HIGHER EDUCATION	
CRISTO REY SCHOOLS	USA	ELEMENTARY EDUCATION	
EUROJESS	EUROPE	SOCIAL	European Jesuits on social issues

EUROPEAN MO/NGO	EUROPE	SOCIAL	European Jesuit Mission Offices and NGOs
FE Y ALEGRIA	GLOBAL	ELEMENTARY EDUCATION	
FLACSI	LATIN AMERICA	ELEMENTARY EDUCATION	Federación Latinoamericana de colegios SJ
GIAN	GLOBAL	SOCIAL	Global Ignatian Advocacy Network
HUMANITARIAN	USA	HIGHER EDUCATION	
IAJBS	GLOBAL	HIGHER EDUCATION	INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JESUIT BUSINESS SCHOOLS
ISJACHEM	GLOBAL	HIGHER EDUCATION	International Jesuit Association Of Chemistry And Chemical Engineering Universities And Schools
JASCN	AFRICA	SOCIAL	Jesuit African Social Centers Network
JEA	SOUTH ASIA	HIGHER EDUCATION	Jesuit education Association
JESUITNET	USA	HIGHER EDUCATION	
JESUITS IN SCIENCE	GLOBAL	HIGHER EDUCATION	
JRS	GLOBAL	CROSS-SECTOR	Jesuit Refugee Service
JSEA	USA	ELEMENTARY EDUCATION	Jesuit Secondary education association
MAGIS	GLOBAL	PASTORAL	
NATIVITY SCHOOLS	USA	ELEMENTARY EDUCATION	
RED XAVIER	EUROPE	SOCIAL	
SAPI	SOUTH ASIA	SOCIAL	South Asian Social Initiatives People
SJM EUROPA	EUROPE	SOCIAL	Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes Europa
SJM-R LA	LATIN AMERICA	CROSS-SECTOR	Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes y Refugiados America Latina

Considering the chronological evolution of these international networks in the Society of Jesus, we can identify three different periods.

Some international works and structures created to promote collaboration have been working for several decades (more than 40 years in some cases). Most of these older initiatives are either a) “official peer networks”, that consist of works/institutions/initiatives from the same apostolic sector within one region and that were set up in the context of the creation of the conference of provincials in some region or country; or b) personal networks, made up of individuals collaborating around a common issue or interest.

During the last 25 years the number of networks has increased and there has been a significant development in their action and impact. These long-term trends are evident in such events as the creation of JRS (1980), the establishment of the International federation of Fe y Alegría (1998-2000) and its later development (2000-2012), and the starting of AJAN in 2002. These are some of the most successful Jesuit networks (as GC 35 remarked²⁴).

During the last five years, and in a more intensive way after the last General Congregation, some remarkable initiatives have taken place (Jesuit Commons, GIAN, Ellacuria initiative, Red de centros sociales de America Latina, JASCN, SAPI, secondary education meeting,...). However, these are still in their initial stages, and their future is not yet totally clear. The success of Jesuit international networking would seem, at this moment, to rely on the development and consolidation of these new initiatives.

In general terms, we can affirm that, even though international (regional) structures for collaboration have existed for many years, during the last 25 years there has been a small but constant and long-term trend in promoting and fostering international networking. This trend has been intensified during the last five years by the launching of several initiatives whose success is still unclear.

4.1. Analysis of present Jesuit networks

To analyze the existing networks in the Society, we are going to use the Network Function Approach (proposed by Hearn and Mendizabal²⁵), as we did already in section 2. Due to the nature of this research, some of the elements of that approach could not be analyzed with enough depth and would require additional research.

4.1.1. Form

- **Type of members: inter-institutional networks**

All the networks included in this analysis are inter-organizational network. There are two reasons for this decision: a) intentional: as was mentioned in 2.3., from my point of view, the ideal

²⁴“Jesuits are often engaged beyond their province boundaries in national and international networks and in collaboration with a variety of persons, including other Jesuits. Some of these international networks such as Jesuit Refugee Service, Fe y Alegría, and the African Jesuit AIDS Network.”

²⁵ “Not everything that connects is a network,” Simon Hearn and Enrique Mendizabal, Overseas Development Institute, Background note, May 2011.

networks presented by GC 35 are inter-institutional rather than social or interpersonal; b) practical: it is difficult to identify interpersonal networks, as they usually are very informal.

This does not mean that interpersonal networks are not important. They can play a relevant role in at least three different ways: 1) interpersonal networks can contribute to implementing the mission at the international level; 2) they may be the initial stage of future inter-organizational networks, and 3) they can complement inter-institutional networks and are crucial for generating a sense of community. For these reasons, a deeper analysis of interpersonal networks would be a worthwhile project.

- **Geographical scope: regional initiatives rather than global**

Two main conclusions can be drawn from this perspective:

- The networking has taken place mostly at the regional level, fostered by the creation and development of the conferences of provincials.
- There are only a few initiatives acting at the global level, despite there being unanimous agreement on the opportunities and advantages of the Society as a universal body (see section 3.1.). In fact, only JRS can be considered a firmly established global actor, and, as we will see later, it has unique features which are not easily replicable. Some existing networks are moving toward a global stage (such as Fe y Alegría), and other global initiatives are just at their beginnings (like GIAN, the networks created in Mexico or JC: HEM). Thus far, however, the Society has not yet been able to foster and nurture networks at the global level. Since the future development of the Conferences will stimulate the progress of regional networks, special attention and care needs to be paid to networks at the global level.

- **Apostolic sector scope: limited cross-sector initiatives**

Regarding the analysis from the sector perspective the main conclusions are:

- There are three sectors with a positive dynamism: social action, higher education, and elementary and secondary education.
- Some of the most suggestive and successful networks (Fe y Alegría, JRS, AJAN) are not clearly identified with any apostolic sector and seem to have more freedom to move across sector boundaries.

- Cross-sector and multi-track trends are very infrequent and still weak, even though some attempts have been recently initiated (for instance, GIAN = social, higher education, education, and JMS = social, higher education, pastoral). Taking into account the importance given by GC 35 to these cross-sector networks, additional effort and special care should be given to these new initiatives.

	HIGH EDUCATION	ELEMENTARY SECONDARY EDUCATION	SOCIAL	OTHERS	CROSS-SECTOR
US	AJCU JESUITNET HUMANITARIAN	JSEA CRISTO REY NATIVITY			
CPAL	AUSJAL	FLACSI	RED CENTROS SOCIALES SJM-R		
JESAM			JASCN		AJAN
EUROPE	ASJEL		XAVIER NETWORK EUROJESS MISSION OFFICES-NGO SJM		
SOUTH ASIA	JEA – HE	JEA	SAPI		
ASIA PACIFIC	AJCU-AP				
GLOBAL	IAJBS	FE Y ALEGRIA	GIAN	MAGIS	JRS

- **Internal structure: Formality, internal governance and other organizational aspects**

An analysis of existing networks from the structural perspective, including formality, internal governance, coordination bodies, etc., yields the following conclusions:

- Most of these Jesuit networks have a high level of formality. A great number of them are even formally constituted under a legal status as association, federation or other title. In other cases there are formal agreements between the members, in which rights and responsibilities are detailed. There are probably also other less-formalized networks (consisting either of institutions or of individuals) that are beyond the scope of this report. At least two comments can be made in view of this:

- These “formal” networks are consistent in inter-institutional networks and logic within the framework of an organization such as the Society of Jesus.
- There is the danger of a lack of the freshness, spontaneity, leanness and flexibility proper to networks if we move into too formalized a style of international collaboration. These formal networks should allow internal informal initiatives to develop, operating as an umbrella that offers coverage to more flexible experiences.
- Regarding the internal bodies for coordination and leadership, there are different models:
 - Some of these networks do not have any secretariat or coordinating structure. The leading role is played by one of the members, in many cases operating on a rotation system. This is an adequate internal structure for information and experience sharing networks or for any other at the initial stage. Nevertheless if additional activities and gains are expected, this model generates internal tensions and slows down further development. Judging by the answers received in the survey, there seem to be many networks in this situation.
 - In other cases, the secretariat role is played by the Jesuit who is responsible, usually the apostolic sector coordinator within the conference of provincials. This type of internal organization assures relationship with Jesuit governance, but, as in the previous model, it works only in networks where activity is not intense.
 - There are a few networks with full-time leaders and secretariats that carry on the activities and development of the network. We want to note two features of these structures: 1) the secretariats or coordinating bodies or international offices, however they are called, are lean and light considering the amount of activities carried on (for instance, the coordination office of Fe y Alegría has a 10-person team and the size of JRS International office is similar). 2) The existence of a secretariat can be combined with a decentralized structure in order to avoid the risks of a bureaucratic international structure. For instance, the eight international programs of Fe y Alegría are led by different national offices that take on an international responsibility.

- **Relation with Jesuit government**

A common feature of most of the existing networks analyzed is that they have a strong connection with Jesuit government bodies. It seems that this link is considered extremely important, and the

experience of some failed initiatives (IJND, JDRAD and others) has probably stressed its importance.

At the regional level, the conference of provincials (through either the president or the sector leader) is the Jesuit body that secures the connection of the networks with the Jesuit governing structure. At the global level, where only a few networks are operating, the General Curia has taken on that role in various ways: JRS relies directly on Fr. General; GIAN is led by SJES with the support of the conference social coordinators;...

The connection of Jesuit networks with the Jesuit international governing bodies varies from one network to another, ranging from more formal and clear links to relations that are looser.

It is remarkable that some of the most successful international networks have developed strong forms of internal collaboration, as in the case of Fe y Alegria, JRS, SAPI, and others. The active participation of lay people or members of other religious congregations seems to be a factor that stimulates international collaboration.

At the same time, becoming an international network increases the capacity to engage with other institutions and networks. It might be said that the stronger your internal networking is, the more you will connect with other networks: internal networking supports external networking with others and vice versa.

- **Purpose**

More networks than expected do not have a clear purpose, beyond exchanging information and experiences. Many of them were created not around a stated purpose but around the fact of being Jesuit institutions working in the same field or region. Only after some time of initial knowledge and basic exchange among themselves did they undertake the task of defining a concrete purpose toward which they could align themselves. And frequently, because of the diversity of contexts, cultures, and priorities, it was difficult to find common topics of interest.

- **Function**

Beyond what is expressed in the official reports and documents, the answers from the survey show us what the real functions of these networks are:

- Information exchange
- Sharing values, identity and spirituality
- Reflection and knowledge creation and management
- Common projects
- Advocacy and communication
- Planning and setting common priorities.

- **Role**

Despite the intention of GC 35 to set up networks that can act as a single unit, I would judge that only a few networks (mainly JRS and Fe y Alegría) can be considered agency networks, that is, networks in which members coordinate their efforts with other members and act together as a single agent. Some networks are in the process of moving from support to agency, but most of them are support networks.

4.2. Models and types of networks:

After reviewing most of the existing Jesuit networks, there seem to be four models of networks according to their structure:

- **INTERNATIONAL NETWORKED ORGANIZATION.** This is on the border between an international organization and an international network. The national/regional structures report to and are named by the international structure. There are common strategic planning and concrete guidelines and orientations to implement. Nevertheless, there is a high degree of autonomy and financial decisions are taken at the regional level. Jesuit Refugee Service is probably the only initiative of this type.
- **INSTITUTIONAL ALLIANCE NETWORK.** In this network, members have a high involvement in the network that is reflected in several aspects: same name and public image, shared identity, common strategic options, and other similar commitments. But each member remains autonomous and each reports basically to its own provincial. Fe y Alegría, AJAN and SAPI would be good examples of this type.

- **PURPOSE NETWORKS.** In this type, members take part in the network to coordinate activities for a concrete aspect or dimension of their work, while they remain autonomous in other areas. Within this model, several degrees of involvement and global impact can be identified:
 - **GLOBAL ACTION NETWORK (GIAN).** A permanent link is established (or intended) that goes beyond concrete projects.
 - **JOINT PROJECT NETWORK (AJCU, AUSJAL,...).** The network has a temporary purpose (although it may be a permanent one) linked with a concrete project.
 - **EVENT NETWORKS.** These networks are set up for a concrete event and from their beginning have a temporary nature.
- **EXCHANGE NETWORKS.** These networks are just spaces for information and experience exchange.

MODEL		SUITABLE FOR	PROS	CONS
DECENTRALIZED INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION		Special initiatives depending only on central government of SJ	High effectiveness Capacity to act globally Agility and mobility (low transaction costs) Resource sharing	Participation and collaboration at risk Local engagement of provinces Not easily replicable
INSTITUTIONAL ALLIANCE NETWORK		Long-term priorities High value-added expected from collaboration Complexity of the issue or high needs from local works or new initiatives that demand high support	Nice balance between participation and effectiveness Proper combination of local and international strengths Connection with SJ government (local – regional – global)	Requires leadership with high capacity for managing tensions. Connection of international and local actions and dynamics
PURPOSE	GLOBAL ACTION NETWORK	Connecting already existing local works toward common priorities, while remaining self-governing	Tapping existing resources without losing autonomy	High transaction cost at the beginning
	JOINT PROJECT NETWORK	Working together on concrete projects, services or proposals with a perspective of continuity but without additional commitment	Convenient for initial exchanges.	Requires clear purpose and evaluation, without which it becomes worthless
	EVENT TYPE NETWORK	Collaboration on a concrete short-term project.	Facilitates knowledge and experience of collaboration	Low contribution to mission
EXCHANGE		Information and personal exchange.	Costless Community building	Low contribution to mission

4.3. Learning from these experiences: some critical questions for international networking.

1. What is the importance of having a concrete purpose? Many Jesuit networks start without a clear purpose. Members do not network toward a concrete goal, but join together just because they have a shared identity and, probably, a common field of action. But networks need goals and purposes to grow and sustain themselves. Without them, the initial enthusiasm will rapidly disappear.

Jesuit networks seem to be especially adequate for some purposes:

- Advocacy and Jesuit public image.
- Education and social services delivery
- Research
- Knowledge creation and management

In defining this common purpose, some clues coming from the experience of existing networks may help:

- “Have the big picture, the global vision, and from it try to identify a small piece to start with” (Gregory Ulferts, International Association of Jesuit Business Schools).
- Spend time finding out the common interests of the members: research, dialogue, prayer, and contemplation of reality help. Once you make a decision do not revise it again.
- Some networks (mostly the “official” ones) are becoming an umbrella organization, a space that generates different joint projects that are carried on by those members interested in a topic. These umbrella networks may be considered as a possible model for those “official” networks that are struggling to define a common purpose.

2. Achievements are important and should be celebrated. Members of Jesuit networks are expected to participate with generosity and open-mindedness that seeks the greater good of the whole Society rather than their own “self-love, will and interest.” However, the experience of these networks shows that, even if these positive attitudes are present, members must realize achievements (win-win situations) as part of the network. The main achievements realized by members of Jesuit networks are:

- Open minds. Participating in networks helps members to “realize we are part of something bigger than us” (Jesus Azcargorta, AUSJAL); “to open our minds and discover new horizons that go beyond our local concerns” (Alex Pizarro sj, FLACSI); and “to be aware that we are not alone” (Xavier Jeyaraj sj, SJES).
 - Jesuit identity. Networking helps us to “strengthen our Jesuit / Ignatian identity” (Maritza Barrios, Fe y Alegría and AUSJAL). Through collaboration with other Jesuit works “we realize our common mission and shared identity” (Christina Keng, Asian Migration Network).
 - “Learning from other experiences” (Mario Serrano sj, Red Centros Sociales América Latina) and getting access to information
 - Improving services. “We have improved our service”; “we can do things that we were not able to do alone”; “it has allowed us to do research projects”
 - Resources. “Being a global network helps us to gain access to international funding” (Tony Calleja sj, JRS) and reduces our operating costs (Luis Carrasco, Fe y Alegría)
3. Keeping close to the local: there is the secret treasure. Jesuit networks should connect local initiatives and work; they should not substitute for them but strengthen them. “The Society of Jesus is a global body and needs to increase its global character in order to position itself and be able to make a contribution to the global issues of today. At the same time it is a body totally immersed in local realities. The connection of local and global is its strength. It can act locally while thinking globally” (Peter Balleis, JRS). International networks must be at the service of the local nodes, so permanent checking and dialogue between the hubs and the other nodes of the network is essential.
 4. Tension between “center and periphery”, “integration and autonomy”, “coordination and functional autonomy” is always going to be there. These tensions may be creative and helpful or may be the cause of division. Dialogue and appropriate forms of participation may help to navigate through them.
 5. Different networks require different forms. As we saw in the previous section, there is no single way of networking: several models are appropriate to different type of networks. Even with a concrete model, each network must find its own specific style, structure, pace of

work,... Flexibility is one of the features of networks, and it should be used as much as possible.

6. Leadership is a key piece. As we already mentioned in the previous section, leaders can make all the difference in networks. Their role and impact is absolutely important. Many Jesuit networks have been able to make changes thanks to a small group of leaders who took responsibility and ignited passion around a common project. Such collective leadership seems to be crucial, especially in the initial stages of a network.
7. Jesuit connection. In section 3 we saw all that the Society could do (and is already doing) in order to foster and nurture networks. But the Jesuit networks themselves have also an important role in caring for this relation. Tensions, overlapping, and gaps in the relations between provinces and international networks are bound to appear, as local works get involved in international activities. Some models (in particular, Fe y Alegría as we have already said) make this relation easier, but permanent care and attention is needed.
8. Sharing is the magic trick. Networks do not develop themselves as if by magic, without significant resources shared. The experience of existing networks is that resources are essential for networking. Leaders express their concern about three types of resources: 1) time spent by members in network activities, including the importance of engaging people of the nodes beyond their immediate responsibilities; 2) human resources to carry out the joint activities of the network; 3) technological resources that may help to improve communication and information. Besides the global fund proposed in chapter 3, these resources must come from the members by sharing their knowledge, their people and their money for common projects. Sharing is the real way of doing magic in collaboration.
9. Birth, growth, and development. The growth of Jesuit networks is not always a straight and simple process; most of them pass through several stages in a process that will take time. One of the features of networks is the rapidity with which they are established and then dissolve. Jesuit networks are more stable and permanent once begun, but much time and energy is required to start one up.

10. At the end of the day: attitudes for international networking. We have written much about structures, organization, purpose, strategy, resources,... All these are important aspects in any network, but at the end of the day attitudes are what make the big difference. "Generosity" (Ignacio Suñol, Fe y Alegría); "Patience" (Rigobert Minani, JASCN); "Sensitivity"; "Passion" (Luis Ugalde, AUSJAL) are all essential to networking. The experience of existing networks shows how important all of them are for "getting out of our self-love, will and interest", seeking the greater good, and carrying on the global mission.

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