



# Phoenix Rising

MARCH 2021

The events of the last year have laid bare the vulnerability of society in both developing and developed nations. In January 2020, an outbreak of antibiotic-resistant cholera, fueled by typhoon flooding and storm surge, struck Bangkok. In May, Brazil's president ordered troops to fire on protesters trying to block a major development in the Amazon basin. A heat wave and inversion layer over Delhi led to tens of thousands of deaths. And then in November a cyberattack managed to bring down a significant portion of the North American power grid. Cities were dark from Montreal to Washington DC, just as a massive winter storm barreled up the coast, ripping roofs from houses, flooding seaside communities, and leaving major highways impassable. As the storm was followed by a deep freeze, social media filled with images of people in stricken communities struggling to find shelter and food. The searing picture of a New Jersey mother weeping as she cradled the body of her child, dead of exposure, has become a symbol of that terrible time.

And yet in the weeks and months that followed, it has become clear that together this string of calamities was the wake-up call nations needed to recommit themselves to civil society. Amid an outpouring of support for impacted communities not seen since the first days after 9/11, the world began to refocus its attention on the need for solidarity, cooperation, and attention to broader connectivity of our existence. As the global tide of generosity rises, political leaders across the world are considering a new message: today's profit and prosperity are important, but not at the cost of the wellbeing of generations to come.

MARCH 2025

It's 2025 and the seed planted in 2020 is growing. Recognizing that development in the Amazon needed to be halted, Brazil called a snap election and removed its pro-development president, and the international community stepped in to offer significant aid that offset the lost short-term profit. Delhi implemented stringent air pollution controls reducing the number of vehicles driving in the city by nearly two thirds, with widespread support from its citizens—and US tech companies are now offering Indian planners free access to clean vehicle and smart streets technology.

In 2023, several countries joined together to create multilateral foundational agreements establishing a blockchain-enabled, ultra secure global data network. This new network is beginning to facilitate the critical exchange of data measuring not only traditional information but also more intangible aspects of the common good, all governed by new

High social cohesion (priority is the common good)/  
Willingness to embrace transformative technological and organizational change



PHOENIX RISING

standards on the quality and use of that data. And in the past year countries have returned their attention to pressing environmental concerns, with new

multilateral commitments to a set of Sustainable Development Goals (or SDGs), including: cutting carbon emissions, reducing international overfishing, and ensuring broad access to clean water, health care, and education.

The advent of the new global network has also begun to cement a new set of widely held principles around the role of technology as an engine for communal social improvement. Robotics have begun to replace human labor in many areas, and 3D printers are widely in use. And although many traditional jobs have been displaced by AI, countries that signed onto the SDG principles agree that the advancement of society should not leave people worse off and are working to implement a universal basic income, easy access to capital through microloans, and free education.

### MARCH 2030

It's now 2030 and signs of progress are everywhere. After gaining widespread adoption among governments, the SDG principles are making their way into everyday life worldwide. Individuals have access to constant real-time information from the global network, including a virtual dashboard showing how the world is doing on its 17 SDG measures, allowing people to make decisions based on that information each day. Norms around responsible consumption are broadly embraced: homes alert owners to unacceptable levels of energy use (with fines for those who do not comply), and wasteful consumption is legally and socially discouraged. People also contribute resources to the betterment of current and future generations with mandatory monthly contributions to a global wellness account – ensuring that poorer nations are able to feed their people and remain in good health.

Technology is being widely used to level the playing field for those living in remote and rural areas in Canada and around the world. Most jobs are contract based, and remote work is common, while free online courses from MOOCs mean easy access to learning and reskilling. Investments in high tech green infrastructure—including eco-friendly rapid transit across oceans—have been a boon for developing communities and countries. These initiatives are already having an impact on reducing the world's carbon footprint.

Most people have accepted the near-constant surveillance of their data that these technologies entail, recognizing the value for sustainability and quality of life. But the transformation has not been seamless. Some countries have attempted to use open networks to interfere with more vulnerable societies. These violations have been met with swift sanctions. And although many individuals enjoy the sense of common

High social cohesion (priority is the common good)/  
Willingness to embrace transformative technological and organizational change



PHOENIX RISING

purpose, some still miss the more fragmented, individualistic past. It is not easy to adjust to a world where not only technology but also values have changed so dramatically since the beginning of the century.

High social cohesion (priority is the common good)/  
Willingness to embrace transformative technological and organizational change