



LOCAL FUTURES
ANNUAL REPORT 2022

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

For decades, Local Futures' work has straddled two worlds. On the one hand, there are those in our movement who are motivated to work politically to change the rules of the global economy. While they resonate strongly with our big-picture critique of techno-economic globalization, they have tended to view hands-on localization projects as quaint, but ultimately doomed in the face of the bigger system.

At the same time, many thousands of people on every continent are working hands-on at the grass-roots to build community and local economies. While these people celebrate the 'solution-multiplier' of localization, they sometimes switch off at the notion of systemic change, believing that only local action is worthwhile.

It has always been our contention that these two kinds of work – 'resistance' and 'renewal' – need to come together. And, over the past year, this marriage has happened more rapidly than ever before.

Covid, extreme weather events, and expanding centralized technocracy have made it increasingly evident that economic decentralization is both a matter of survival, and the most radical move to preserve and grow political autonomy. As a result, grassroots localizers are exercising their political muscles, while outspoken political changemakers are becoming committed localists.

And whether or not one believes in the possibility of transforming the global economy, Local Futures brings the perspective that the actions needed to affirm wellbeing, connection and resilience in the



Photo credit: Local Futures

here and now are the very same actions needed to catalyze a movement for systemic change. For example, to figure out how we, as communities, can reduce our dependence on the global system and support our own homegrown localization projects, we actually need to understand how the mechanisms of the global system keep us trapped. By the same token, if we are to strengthen our collective call for policy changes, we need to build more localized systems that will preserve our autonomy, connect us to one another, and ultimately empower us as a political force.

In other words, big-picture, global-to-local awareness informs the successful creation of local 'lifeboats', while local 'lifeboats' give momentum to political awareness. In this way, resistance and renewal are two sides of the same coin.

Similarly, localization bridges the gap between environmental and economic concerns. Over this last year in particular, the cost of living has risen sharply, and people in the middle class are working harder just to put a roof over their heads and food on the table. At the same time – and because of the same policies – nature is being destroyed at an escalating rate. All the while, corporate profits have soared to new heights.

The interconnectedness of these crises is more and more evident, dissolving the false left/right, progressive/conservative divisions that keep people apart. Despite the polarization and divisiveness seeded by media algorithms, opposition to corporate rule – and a corresponding embrace of local, life-affirming economies – is now identifiable across the political spectrum. It is exciting to be working in this space at a time when the potential for new coalitions is blooming.

I am gratified that Local Futures' efforts over the decades – our writings, films, campaigns and conferences – have incubated this growing awareness of localization as the systemic antidote. The success of last year's flagship programs – especially the World Localization Day campaign and the release of our film Planet Local: A Quiet Revolution – has me feeling both optimistic and motivated about the year ahead.

I feel there's no more important work to be doing at this time than the work of spreading big-picture awareness of the economic system, while supporting, fostering and making visible the alternatives offered by the world-wide localization movement.



Helena Norberg-Hodge
Director, Local Futures

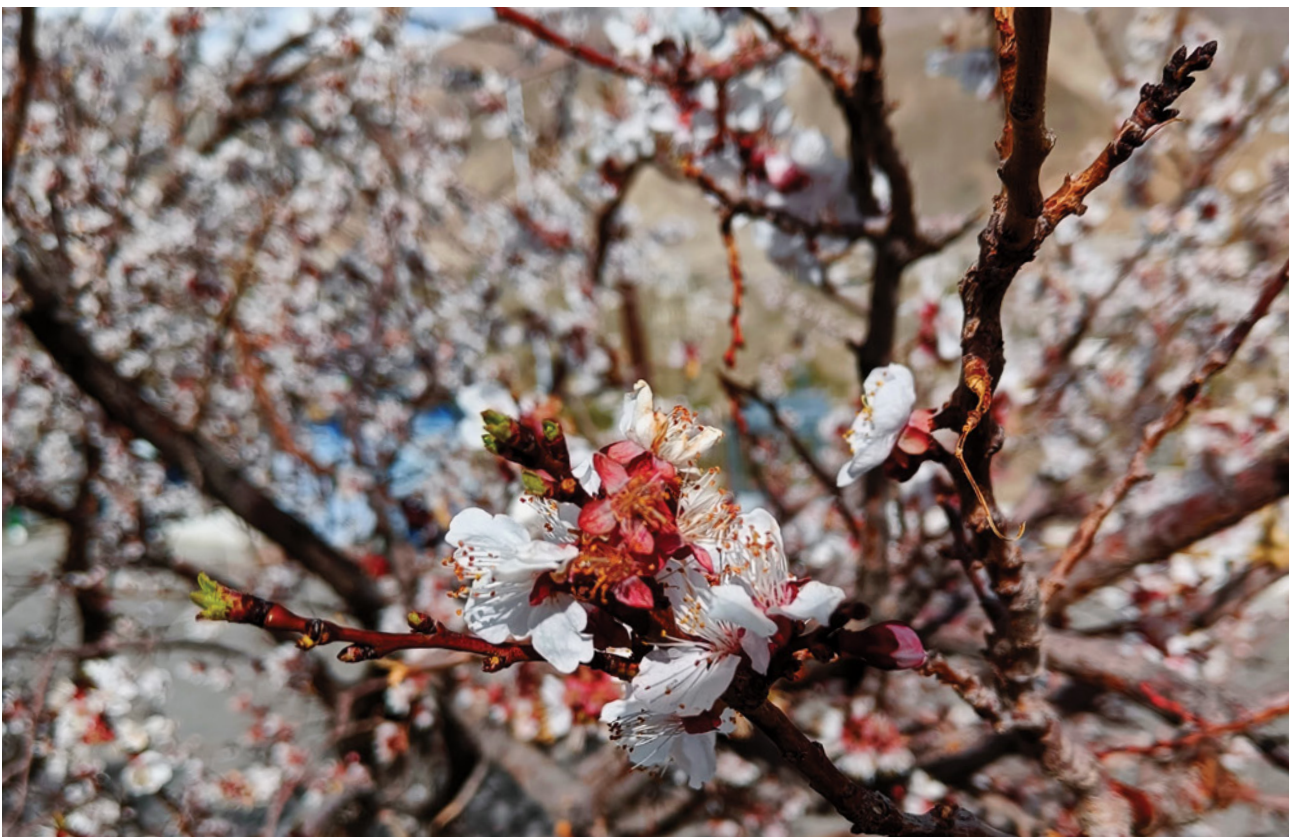


Photo credit: Neil Vyas, Unsplash



FROM THE GROUND UP

Following the success of World Localization Day (WLD) in 2020 and 2021, we continued to develop and promote this celebration of the worldwide localization movement in 2022.

We are keen for WLD to be a global celebration, rather than a solely Local Futures event. We therefore acted as an umbrella organization in 2022 – encouraging groups and individuals around the world to organize their own events, while we promoted the overall program and organized a smaller number of our own contributions. Although many people had become accustomed to online events thanks to Covid-19, others were keen to reconnect in person, and we chose to curate a hybrid schedule with a mix of online and face-to-face gatherings. Many organizations celebrated the event on 21st June, while others did so throughout the month, with a few activities continuing into July.

We were very pleased that **90 groups in 30 countries** took part in this worldwide celebration, many of which hosted multiple events. Some included a screening of our **new film**, *Planet Local: A Quiet Revolution* (discussed later), which was released on the official date of WLD. Other events consisted of highly imaginative activities, a large number of which we showcased on the WLD website.

These were extremely diverse, and included:

- A series of conferences focused on nature- and localization-based solutions across eight Spanish cities, culminating in a multi-city Climate Journey, all organized by Social Climate.
- A virtual journey around a 400-year-old farming community in Vietnam, focusing on traditional agriculture and how to cook the famous local dish, phở, thanks to Nhật Anh Trần (Kiara Unseen).
- A Twitter event by the East African collective, Amplify Girls, looking at how community-driven organizations provide local solutions to local problems, in turn helping to build flourishing communities in which girls are given more agency.
- A celebration of "Local cooking with local sun", which involved more than 300 children at Prakriya Green Wisdom School in India (in association with Bhoomi College) cooking rice curry in portable solar cookers.

Part of Local Futures' own contribution to WLD was a lively **conversation** that took place on WLD itself, when author Jeremy Lent and Local Futures' Director Helena Norberg-Hodge discussed a wide range of topics around globalization, localization, and system change.

WLD also gave a boost to our **social media** reach in 2022, with increases in Local Futures' and Helena's Instagram accounts being noted following WLD. These were helped by some particularly active partners, including EcoResolution, YoCo, Ecolise, Amplify Girls and Pesticide Action Network Asia Pacific (PANAP).



Photo credit: Graphic Node, Unsplash

ECONOMICS OF HAPPINESS CONFERENCE JEONJU, SOUTH KOREA

Our ongoing collaboration with the city of Jeonju continued in 2022, with the 8th Economics of Happiness Conference in Jeonju taking place in September. International speakers included Nathan Schneider, Mika Tsutsumi, Diana Finch, Helena Norberg-Hodge, along with Song Wi-chin and other highly respected thought leaders from South Korea.

The event provided a forum for discussions on a “sustainable cities” approach. As a city of 665,000 people, Jeonju’s focus on localization is making it a significant example of how smaller cities can be truly sustainable. The municipality is committed to “Shifting its administrative system away from a paradigm that prioritizes growth and development towards one that puts people first ... to create an economy that works for the people and makes local communities happy.”

Additionally, Jeonju’s mayor, Kim Seung Soo, voiced the need for policy-led localization at the municipal level in our film *Planet Local: A Quiet Revolution*.

PLANET LOCAL: A QUIET REVOLUTION

A major accomplishment was our film, *Planet Local: A Quiet Revolution*, which premiered on World Localization Day, 21st June. A 50-minute compilation of contributions to recent Local Futures events worldwide, the film gives voice to some of the growing number of people building a more beautiful world. It features grassroots activists from every continent, alongside internationally known figures like Noam Chomsky, Vandana Shiva, Russell Brand, Naomi Klein, Jane Goodall, Gabor Maté and Helena – all of them bringing inspiration and clarity to a world full of dark news.



Our wonderful team of volunteers has already translated the film into **eighteen languages**, enabling it to reach a far larger audience. Translations include Chinese (Mandarin), French, Hindi, Kiswahili and Tagalog.

In addition, the trailer is available in fourteen languages.

Although the film was launched on WLD, its impact continues to grow long after that event. By the end of the year, the [English](#) version had received over 30,000 views on YouTube, with nearly 2,500 on Vimeo. The [German](#) version had received 10,000 YouTube views, and [Spanish](#) nearly 8,000. The **total number of YouTube views across all languages is over 60,000** at the time of writing. In addition, we attracted **2,300 new subscribers** to our YouTube channel: an increase of more than 25% in one year.

As well as community and individual screenings, we were very pleased that the film was also broadcast on Cape Town TV, a non-profit, free-to-air, community television station in South Africa, as part of World Localization Day.

In order to help communities engage with the issues raised by the film, we also produced a five-page [discussion guide](#) with key questions for consideration.

"I think that the film, Planet Local, is *stupendous*. *Incisive* and very beautifully put together. The chorus of voices is magnificent. I think it *will be powerfully useful for all of us*."

— David Abram
author of "The Spell of the Sensuous"

GREAT MINDS IN SOUTH KOREA: ILLUSTRATED LECTURES

Another major event in 2022 was a series of illustrated lectures on Local Futures' work and the 'big picture' of global-to-local systems change for the South Korean television channel, EBS (Educational Broadcasting System), as part of their *Great Minds* project.

The series consists of twenty short (4-10 minute) "lessons" given by Helena. The sessions were professionally filmed in a studio, with "b-roll" footage – tailored to the content – added later. The format allowed an array of subjects to be covered in an accessible manner, with Helena addressing a variety of topics, from a critical analysis of technological development to the benefits of place-based reconnections.

Great Minds is an on-demand subscription service that presents lectures by some of the world's leading experts and scholars on a broad range of academic subjects – from history and science to IT and music. Thus, Helena's lectures appear alongside other well-known thinkers and artists like Yuval Noah Harari, Jane Goodall and James Cameron.

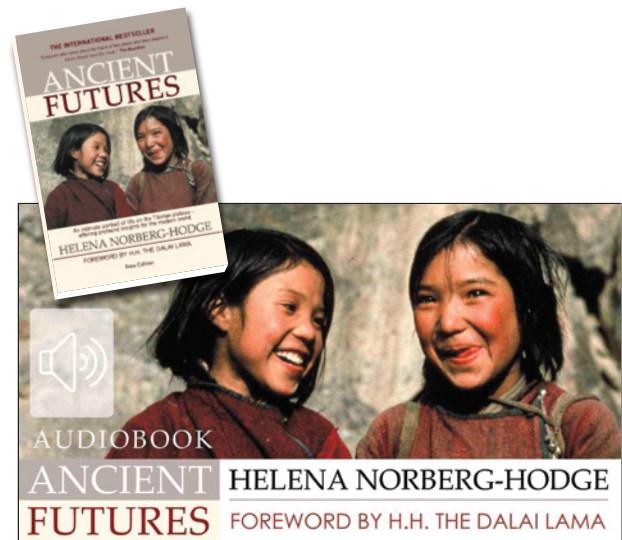
The lectures have now been broadcast in South Korea and are available internationally via the EBS *Great Minds* [website](#). Crucially, Local Futures has the rights to use the footage, and we hope to use it as a central part of a landmark online course in 2024.



Photo credit: Christian Mackie, Unsplash

NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM LOCAL FUTURES

First published in 1991, Helena's book **Ancient Futures** remains as relevant today as when it was written. After updated editions were published in 2009 and 2016, and an e-book in 2017, we have now published it as our first [audiobook](#), with a brand-new Introduction and an Afterword in which Helena contextualizes both the crises we face and the solutions we can be part of. She also introduces us to a multitude of grassroots initiatives, giving listeners inspiration for action.



Life After Progress: Technology, Community and the New Economy is a collection of [essays](#) by Helena and members of the Local Futures team, with a foreword by Bayo Akomolafe. Written over the past 25 years, some of the essays ask us to rethink our basic assumptions about human nature, poverty, progress and happiness, while others point to the root causes of our many crises. Taken together, they outline the steps needed to bring a happier, healthier world into being. It is also available as an [e-book](#).



A large number of smaller writing projects for other organizations have also been undertaken by Local Futures staff, with Helena receiving invitations to write ten **articles** and **other written publications**, while Alex Jensen and Steven Gorelick have also contributed book chapters, and magazine and website articles. These have been published in places as varied as Dumbo Feather magazine in Australia, the Vikalp Sangam website, and a forthcoming book titled *Climate Adaptation: Accounts of Resilience, Self-Sufficiency and Systems Change*. This is in addition to blogposts on our own website, which featured several staff contributions in 2022: [Chak Chok: a campaign against junk food](#) (Kunzang Deachen and Alex Jensen), [Supply chain failures](#) (Helena, Henry Coleman and Steven Gorelick) and [Putting technology in its place](#) (Helena).

LADAKH: BARLEY, ICE AND MORE!

The Local Futures Ladakh (LFL) team worked with a wide range of partners to successfully organize several exciting events and campaigns. Some of these continued the work of previous years, while others were new innovations.

Along with other partners, the team arranged a **two-day festival called Celebrating Nas** (barley). Barley and roasted barley flour (*ngamphay*) are very important in the traditional Ladakhi diet and in cultural and ritual activities, but are being overlooked in favor of rice and packaged food. The festival was very well attended and included a wide range of speakers and activities. Subjects varied from the importance of *nas* in Ladakhi culture to the experiences of artisans involved in related crafts such as basketmaking and pottery. In addition to the talks, there were many other activities – from music to a puppet show illustrating the importance of Ladakhi food and the dangers of junk food. Food stalls provided a selection of delicious and varied traditional dishes. A [full report](#) on the event is available.

A major outcome of the festival was a boost to our **campaign against junk food**, *Chak Chok* (meaning unwanted or rubbish). Junk food and drinks lead to health problems, large amounts of plastic and other waste, and economic loss locally, as these products are produced elsewhere and imported into Ladakh. They also have the effect of devaluing local products and culture, which are often seen as old-fashioned. LFL, along with Dr. Nordan Odzer, have been taking the *Chak Chok* message to dozens of schools and villages all over the region.



Photo credit: Local Futures

The **Listening to Ice** project was a collaboration between famed singer-storyteller Morup Namgyal, researchers and scholars from the UK, and Local Futures. The aim was to preserve and share the environmental knowledge embedded in local nature and culture. It resulted in *Singing Ice*, a book of music and songs – many in danger of being lost – about mountains, glaciers, rivers, and streams from the rich archive that Morup has been gathering for decades. The book launch took place at the Women's Alliance Centre in Leh, featuring collective singing from the book, and a local food meal.

As part of LFL's Tourist Education and Mindful Travel Program, we organize **regular screenings of documentary films** addressing a variety of pressing social and environmental issues, followed by wide-ranging discussions. In 2022 we began to pair the screenings with local food dinners at Solja Cafe, at the Women's Alliance Centre.



Photo credit: Local Futures

Another part of our Mindful Travel program is **Help with the Harvest**, which pairs volunteers with local farming families as a way of alleviating labor shortages during harvest time. This is not only helpful to the host family, it also provides meaningful cultural exchange and learning for both the volunteer and the host. In 2022, we organized Help with the Harvest activities in villages in the central Ladakh region, reasonably close to Leh. The most intensive part of the program involved a group of students from Vietnam, who stayed for three days in the village of Tarchit, where they helped five families with pea harvesting, mustard seed threshing and straw bundle hauling. The students also went to several ancient monasteries, met young Ladakhi changemakers, and interacted with local NGOs and socio-environmental initiatives. A [video](#) of the trip and an [article](#) have been produced.

The **Khunak Alliance** was initiated by the LFL team to bring together young Ladakhis from a broad range of disciplines, who are not only concerned about the eco-cultural changes taking place in Ladakh but are also taking action to acknowledge the anguish that they feel and tackle the issues. Local Futures hosted the first two-day residential gathering of the Khunak Alliance in late 2022. This was an opportunity to talk about eco-cultural distress and initiate some projects to address it. It has so far resulted in:

- an Instagram [video](#) by Padma Rigzin and filmmaker Morup Namgail on the emerging problem of land privatization, especially on the open flatlands that are critical for wildlife;
- two videos by LFL staff members Kunzang Deachen and Spalzes Angmo, describing healthy local food recipes to replace packaged junk food.

Kunzang Deachen also participated in a **study and report** titled The Goba of Ladakh: Current Relevance of a Traditional Governance System, as part of the project Alternative Practice and Visions in India: Documentation, Networking and Advocacy. This was undertaken by Kalpavriksh and sponsored by a number of European and Ladakhi NGOs.

TALKING THE TALK - PODCASTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Following the re-launch of the Local Futures [podcast](#) in 2021, four new episodes were released in 2022 featuring Iain McGilchrist, Charles Eisenstein, Vandana Shiva and Gabor Maté, covering subjects from rediscovering wisdom to mental health in the global economy.



VOICES FROM THE FIELD

online conversations with local community experts



Local Futures also hosted three episodes of [Voices from the Field](#). This is an ongoing series of conversations featuring people that have hands-on experience with actions that can help build healthy communities, participatory democracy and human-scale ecological economies, and is designed to complement the Localization Action Guide. In 2022, we heard about:

- Car-free cities, with Shail Shrestha from Nepal;
- Minga: a multi-solution cooperative in Portugal, with Jorge Gonçalves and Alexandre Castro; and
- Reclaiming the commons and building resilience, with Chris Wood, founder of BALE (Building a Local Economy).

These discussions were recorded and are available on our website and YouTube channel.



UPGRADES, UPDATES AND OUTREACH

We are always keen to improve our existing materials, and in 2022 this included upgrading the **Localization Action Guide** that we launched last year. The Guide has been extremely popular, and we added several features that were requested by our user test group, including a search function and the ability to view the site in dozens of languages powered by Google Translate.

Following our move to a more user-friendly website platform in 2021, we also renewed the Local Futures **homepage** and **updated thirty core and inner pages**. In addition, the team revised the website in order to comply with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and CCPA (California Consumer Privacy Act) regulations.

The **International Alliance for Localization (IAL) mailouts** continued to provide valuable digests of localization-related events, news and publications. These are compiled by Local Futures and sent to the IAL online forum. During 2022, we reduced the frequency from fortnightly to monthly in order to reduce email fatigue.

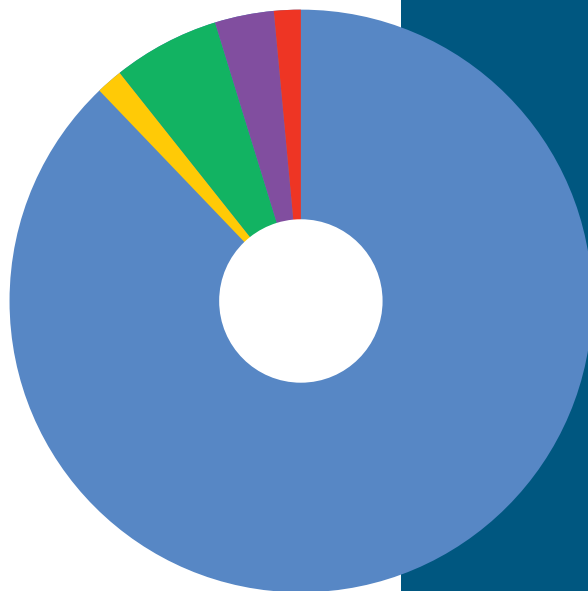
A vital part of our outreach work is making our publications available in as many languages as possible, and we were pleased to welcome Sarah Crowther to coordinate our **translation** efforts. In 2022, publishers in Germany, Spain and Finland translated and published Helena's book *Local is Our Future*. In addition to translations of *Planet Local: A Quiet Revolution*, we also translated our short film *Local food can save the world* into Dutch, Hindi, Korean, Portuguese and Vietnamese. We are greatly indebted to our many volunteer translators for helping us expand our reach.

Events and interviews provided many opportunities for spreading the global-to-local message. Helena, in particular, continued to receive a large number of requests and participated in thirty events, podcast episodes and other interviews. Other team members were also busy promoting and explaining localization through a score of events and interviews. These ranged from radio interviews to attending a Carfree Cities Alliance retreat in India, and from addressing a Surfers for Climate Action event in Australia to organizing screenings of *Planet Local: A Quiet Revolution*. We have also been able to work with universities, with Anja Lynbaek talking to the University of York, UK as part of their One Planet Week, and teaching a local economics university diploma course for Latin America – *Plataforma de Introducción a Nuevas Economías, Latin America* (PINE). This course was coordinated and certified by the Faculty of Economic Sciences, University of Cordoba, Argentina (Facultad de Ciencias Economicas, Universidad de Cordoba), and had nearly one hundred students.

FINANCIAL

Total Revenue \$483,251

- Donations* 425,809
- Lecture and event fees 28,801
- Screening, streaming & broadcast 5,003
- Interest and investment income 358
- Royalties and writing fees 6,177
- Sale of publications and videos 16,178
- Administrative support fees 925



* Includes \$20,748 earmarked for organizations for which ISEC is the fiscal sponsor.

Total Expenses \$423,176

- Management and administrative 41,417
- Global to Local Educational 169,820
- WLD and Economics of Happiness 111,769
- Grassroots Localization Support 28,597
- Fundraising 29,521
- Ladakh 26,079
- International Alliance for Localization 15,973





50 LBS.

LOCAL FUTURES

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Anja Lyngbaek

Kristen Steele

Marjana Kos

Alex Jensen

Henry Coleman

Carly Gayle

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Samantha Salmon

Jonny Tomlinson

Anja Light

Kunzang Deachen

Chozin Palmo

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Bertrand Raguet

Founder and Director

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UK Administrative Coordinator

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Social Media Assistant

Ladakh Project Associate

Ladakh Project Associate

Ladakh Project Associate

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