



Flow of Money, by David Korten

In a modern society in which most everything essential to a secure and happy life seems to depend on money, the flow of money takes on great significance. Where money flows there are jobs; where it doesn't flow there are no jobs. Where it flows there is food, shelter, health care, and education. In a modern society, where it doesn't flow there is starvation, homelessness, disease, and illiteracy. When shared it builds community. When not shared it creates isolation. We have heard that money is the root of all evil. Evil is that which is destructive of life. So follow the money and you will see the source and consequences of the evil that threatens the viability of human societies and the biosphere. Money however, is only evil when it becomes our master and confines us to lives of isolation. We can eliminate its evil dimension by restructuring the institutions of money to make money our servant--to serve the community of life rather than to destroy it. This great work begins with some basic questions. What is money? Where does money come from? Who decides who gets it and for what purpose? Who decides who will make these decisions? What is the outcome? The answers to these questions open a window into the importance of the structure of the institutional system that creates and allocates money. That structure determines where money flows, what it does -- and ultimately whether the society prospers or self-destructs. Money is a human creation. It is nothing but a number. Most of it is simply accounting entries in computer files. It has no existence, reality, or value outside the human mind. It is extraordinary that we, a supposedly intelligent species that prides itself on creating a great civilization based on popular democratic self-rule, allow money, a system of accounting entries, to rule our lives. Has it ever struck you how absurd it is that as a society we have so much work that needs doing and at the same time, so many unemployed people who would love to be doing productive work? [...] Our common future depends on creating a democratically accountable money system that operates as our servant, not our master. --David Korten, in a talk at Green Festival [1]

Links:

[1] <http://livingeconomiesforum.org/follow-the-money>