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# As the World Spends a Record \$2.89 Trillion on Military and Loses Another \$277 Billion to Climate Disasters, A New Book Argues We Are Defending the Wrong Things

*The Impact Entrepreneur Breakthrough by Laurie Lane-Zucker introduces “Defense as a Service” — a framework for security through prevention rather than militarized reaction — publishing September 1, 2026 from Berrett-Koehler Publishers*

**SHEFFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS** — In April 2026, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute reported that global military spending reached a record \$2.89 trillion in 2025, the eleventh consecutive year of increase. In the same twelve months, weather- and climate-driven disasters caused \$277 billion in damage worldwide — led by the January Los Angeles wildfires, at \$61 billion the costliest wildfire ever recorded. The World Economic Forum's *Global Risks Report 2026* calls this moment an “age of competition,” ranking geoeconomic confrontation and state-based armed conflict as the two most likely triggers of global crisis in the coming year.

Into this moment, on September 1, 2026, Berrett-Koehler Publishers will release a book that argues humanity has fundamentally misunderstood what security is, what it costs, and what produces it.

*We have spent the twenty-first century building bigger fortresses against a world we are simultaneously making more dangerous. The fortress logic is bankrupt. The math no longer works.*

— Laurie Lane-Zucker, *The Impact Entrepreneur Breakthrough*

***The Impact Entrepreneur Breakthrough: A Field Manual for the Regenerative Economy*** by Laurie Lane-Zucker introduces three new frameworks designed to shift how cities, enterprises, investors, and governments think about resilience in the polycrisis era: **Defense as a Service™**, the **Prevention Dividend™**, and the **Five Pillars of Real Security**. Lane-Zucker, who coined the term *impact entrepreneur* in 2011 and now leads a global network of more than 70,000 practitioners across 200+ countries, makes a case that is at once austere and hopeful: that the infrastructure for a different kind of security — distributed, preventive, mutual — already exists, and the only thing missing is the will to build it.

## A book published into the moment it diagnoses

The September 2026 publication date arrives at a convergence few authors could have anticipated when the manuscript was completed.

- **Eleven consecutive years of military escalation.** Global military expenditure has risen 41 percent over the past decade, reaching \$2.89 trillion in 2025 — the highest level as a share of global GDP since 2009. NATO members in June 2025 set a new target of 5 percent of GDP by 2035, more than double the previous benchmark.
- **A year of catastrophic disasters.** Insurance broker Gallagher Re counted 55 separate billion-dollar weather disasters globally in 2025. The costliest — the Los Angeles wildfires — was the most expensive wildfire ever recorded, and Category 5 Hurricane Melissa caused damage in Jamaica equal to 41 percent of the country's GDP.
- **A multilateral order under siege.** The WEF's 2026 risk report finds geoeconomic confrontation, armed conflict, and societal polarization at the top of every short-term outlook — with cooperation being replaced by confrontation as the operating logic of international affairs.
- **And a quiet, parallel reality.** Every dollar invested in disaster preparedness returns four to seven dollars in avoided losses. Every dollar invested in ecosystem restoration returns seven to thirty. The infrastructure of prevention has the highest documented return on investment of any category of public spending. It remains drastically underfunded.

Lane-Zucker's argument begins with this contradiction. The book is built around what he calls the Prevention Dividend — the measurable financial return on prevention versus reaction — and its diagnostic complement, the **Prevention Ratio™**, which measures the proportion of any institution's security spending directed toward prevention versus symptom response. “Most institutions, when they actually run the numbers, discover ratios of 80 to 90 percent reactive,” he writes. “Making that visible is the beginning of every other change.”

## Reframing what we mean by security

At the center of the book is the Five Pillars of Real Security framework, which redefines national and human security around five interdependent foundations: Ecological Stability, Public Health Capacity, Economic Equity, Democratic Infrastructure, and Community Cohesion. The argument is empirical rather than ideological: in a century where the largest threats to human life arrive in the form of pandemics, fires, floods, supply-chain collapse, democratic decay, and the slow-motion violence of inequality, the institutions positioned to actually defend lives are nurses, watershed managers, election workers, community organizers, and the people who maintain the infrastructure of trust between neighbors. Tanks and missiles, Lane-Zucker argues, are designed to fight a category of threat that accounts for a vanishing share of the actual harm humans now suffer.

*We are not arguing for a world without defense. We are arguing for a world that defends what is actually under threat — and recognizes that what is under threat is not, mostly, vulnerable to the kinds of force we have built to defend it.*

— from Chapter 7, The Five Pillars of Real Security

Defense as a Service — the operational framework introduced in Part III of the book — translates the Five Pillars into something cities, enterprises, and capital allocators can actually implement. Built on three operating principles (Distributed Capacity, Preventive Infrastructure, Mutual Benefit Protocols), it borrows the logic of cloud computing — shared infrastructure, continuous updates, distributed access — and applies it to security itself. The book documents existing prototypes: Costa Rica's eight-decade

experiment in mutualist security after abolishing its military in 1948; municipal climate-resilience networks in the Pacific Northwest; ecosystem-restoration finance vehicles in the Global South; the supply-chain mutualism emerging among regenerative agricultural cooperatives.

## The author and the network

Laurie Lane-Zucker has spent more than three decades at the intersection of culture, ecology, and enterprise. He coined the term “impact entrepreneur” in 2011 and, in the mid-1990s, working with the educator John Elder at Middlebury College, gave the name “place-based education” to a pedagogy he had spent years building as founding director of The Orion Society (1992–2004), where he worked closely with Wendell Berry, Terry Tempest Williams, Barry Lopez, and David James Duncan. He went on to found one of the earliest Certified B Corporations and the Triad Institute, and is the founder and CEO of Impact Entrepreneur, PBC, a global multimedia publishing platform serving more than 70,000 members across 200+ countries. Full author biographies are available in the online media kit.

*The most comprehensive and compelling vision I've ever seen for how business can regenerate — not just repair. I thought I understood the landscape, but Lane-Zucker reveals possibilities I hadn't even imagined.*

— Jeffrey Hollender, Co-founder, Seventh Generation; Adjunct Professor, NYU Stern School of Business

Additional endorsers include Tom Chappell (co-founder, Tom's of Maine), Jason Jay (Director, Sustainability Initiative, MIT Sloan), Sarah Holloway (Columbia SIPA), Judy Wicks (founder, White Dog Cafe and BALLE), Latha Poonamallee (Parsons School of Design, The New School), Marc J. Lane (author, *The Mission-Driven Venture*), and Elizabeth Boggs Davidsen (CEO, GSG Impact).

## About the book

**Title:** The Impact Entrepreneur Breakthrough: A Field Manual for the Regenerative Economy

**Author:** Laurie Lane-Zucker

**Publisher:** Berrett-Koehler Publishers

**Distribution:** Penguin Random House Publisher Services (worldwide)

**Audiobook:** RB Media / Ascent Audio · narrated by David Colacci

**On-sale date:** September 1, 2026

**Format:** Trade paperback, e-book, audiobook

**Price:** \$29.95 (trade paperback)

**Pages:** 384

**Illustrations:** 36 original watercolor illustrations

**ISBN:** 979-8-89057-231-8

**Book page:** [impactentrepreneur.com/breakthrough](http://impactentrepreneur.com/breakthrough)

## Author availability

Laurie Lane-Zucker is available for interviews, podcast appearances, panel discussions, keynote speaking, and feature contributions in print, broadcast, and digital media. He speaks fluently across

business, climate, public policy, and cultural-criticism beats, and is comfortable with both technical interviews on impact finance and frameworks-level conversations about the polycrisis. Launch events are in development for publication season; details and press credentials will be circulated separately. A complete media kit — author photographs, cover art, framework graphics, book descriptions, bios, and sample interview questions — is available at [impactentrepreneur.com/breakthrough/media](https://impactentrepreneur.com/breakthrough/media).

## Suggested story angles

- **Climate Week NYC and UN week framing:** what does “real security” look like at the moment world leaders gather to negotiate climate commitments while military budgets reach all-time highs? Lane-Zucker's Five Pillars framework as a unifying lens for the season's agenda.
- **The economics of prevention:** why the dollar-for-dollar return on disaster preparedness, ecosystem restoration, and public health capacity exceeds nearly every other category of public investment — and why that math is so consistently ignored.
- **Defense reimaged:** what would a security framework look like if it began from the actual sources of threat to human life in the twenty-first century?
- **The Costa Rica case:** an eight-decade real-world experiment in mutualist security, and what it has — and has not — proven.

## About Impact Entrepreneur, PBC

Impact Entrepreneur, PBC is a global multimedia publishing platform and network serving more than 70,000 members across 200+ countries in the impact economy. Founded by Laurie Lane-Zucker in 2011, IE produces Impact Entrepreneur Magazine, the Luminarias webinar series, field-building conferences, and video content. [impactentrepreneur.com](https://impactentrepreneur.com)

## About Berrett-Koehler Publishers

Berrett-Koehler Publishers is an independent publisher dedicated to an ambitious mission: Connecting people and ideas to create a world that works for all. A Certified B Corporation distributed worldwide by Penguin Random House Publisher Services, Berrett-Koehler publishes books that change lives, organizations, and society. [bkconnection.com](https://bkconnection.com)

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