

MCLD US 2023

Annual Report



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Cover Photo: Community member from Kalamba Subcounty during the Participatory CLD Assessment Tool Training visit to Mpigi District, Uganda, August 2023. Credit: Baluku Isaya, MCLD Uganda.

MCLD US 2023 Annual Report Compiled by Sera Bulbul

INTRODUCTION

The Movement for Community-led Development

The Movement for Community-led Development (MCLD or the Movement) is a dynamic Majority-world-led network of networks dedicated to ensuring that every person has a fundamental right to voice in the decisions that affect their lives. We currently have over 2000 local, community-based organizations and 35 INGO as members and are active in 17 countries through our National Associations. At MCLD, we recognize the imperative to move beyond conventional, top-down development paradigms, embracing a transformative model based on equitable partnerships and placing communities at the forefront of their own progress.

MCLD US

MCLD US, a civil society initiative comprising US-based organizations committed to community-led development, is one of 17 National Associations of MCLD. It is a membership-based 501c3, registered in the state of Virginia. As of December 31, 2023, it has 29 INGOs and INGO networks as members.

MCLD's mission is to ShiftThePower so that low-income communities successfully achieve their own visions and goals.

MCLD US contributes to this mission through global policy advocacy, mutual capacity strengthening, and forging partnerships with like-minded organizations and networks. MCLD US also seeks to ensure visibility, access, connections, and funding directly for majority-world MCLD National Associations.

FOUNDER AND BOARD CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to our first MCLD US annual report! Although MCLD was launched alongside the UN Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, until 2023 we were “incubated” as a global network within The Hunger Project (THP), an international NGO that has pioneered gender-focused community-led development strategies for more than 30 years.

Our strategic intent for 2023 was to fully establish a new values-based organizational structure that is inclusive, equitable, accountable, transparent and funded by a broader group of stakeholders.

In late 2022, representatives from each region of our global movement designed that structure – a global network of independent national associations led by the Majority World (often referred to as the Global South).

No more US-dominated “hub and spoke models” – MCLD US would be one of many National Associations with global decisions made democratically in a Global Assembly representing each National Association, the vast majority of which are currently in Africa. There will continue to be a global secretariat staffed by employees of whichever National Association they live in, accountable to the Global Assembly.

MCLD US became an independent 501c3 charitable membership association in February 2023. As we set out to raise our own money, the core expenses and administration continued to be within The Hunger Project for one final year. We established a small initial board of directors and began to establish our own administrative structures to be fully operational by December 31, 2023 – and succeeded in that process.

MCLD could not slow our pace during this transition – international funders are finally getting serious about shifting power, in terms of funding and decision-making, to local communities. We accelerated our support for the growth of additional MCLD National Associations, as well as our leadership to transform the policies, practices and overall ecosystem for community-led development.

Our success in 2023 is due to the passionate and effective leadership of thousands of community leaders and their allies who champion for the fulfillment of their rights within national and international agencies.

In addition to generous and committed ongoing support from The Hunger Project, we deeply appreciate the unrestricted capacity-strengthening grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and to the voluntary contributions, both in-kind and cash, from our 2023 MCLD US members.

Onward to a more just and sustainable future!



John Coonrod
MCLD Founder and Board Chair

CELEBRATING CONNECTION, COMMITMENT AND COURAGE

Executive Director's Message

As MCLD US completes one year of its existence, we take this opportunity to celebrate and reflect on our collective journey together.

I remember when I first joined MCLD in February 2019, we were still trying to convince the world of the need to put communities front and center in development, fielding questions on evidence and efficacy. Fast forward five years and Devex has recognized us as one of the 24 organizations to look out for in 2024, alongside heavyweights like The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the World Food Program. In the last few years, MCLD has facilitated high-impact campaigns, built powerful alliances, developed transformational tools, influenced policies and helped in re-imagining key global spaces. And we have been able to do all of this because of the over 2000 committed, passionate local and community-based organizations and their 29 INGO allies who are a part of our network.

2023 was a year of transformation for MCLD. We moved from being a movement to a movement organization. We wanted to not just meet the growing demands on our movement, but to also show the world an alternate system of working together; a system built on connection, not competition. **MCLD US was born out of this journey of transformation. It is a place for international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and Minority World (often incorrectly referred to as the Global North) actors to pool their influence, knowledge, abilities and access together so that they can be true allies to Majority World**

actors. It is a place where passion meets practice, commitment meets collective action. Where a small team of disruptive thinkers supports an ever-growing collective of dedicated humanists to reshape not just policies but how they are formulated, by whom and towards what ends.

In our first year itself, with the courage of our members, the collective wisdom of our Majority World partners, the unwavering commitment of our small (but mighty) team and the confidence of our funders, MCLD US has been able to challenge and change the dominant ways of thinking, being and doing. This report is a testimony to what we can achieve when we stand in solidarity with each other, guided by our common humanity and building on our collective power. But as we exercise this collective power, let us always remember the words of Martin Luther King Jr:

“Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love.”

In 2024, MCLD US will continue to work with its sister National Associations from around the world to complete our transition into our new structure. We will support our diverse and dispersed Secretariat in holding MCLD’s first Global Assembly in July 2024 and in co-creating MCLD’s global strategic plan for 2025-28. We will also work with MCLD US members to ensure that the MCLD US strategy is aligned with the Movement’s overall strategy.

We will, through our various working groups and members, continue to build trust between Majority World actors and the policy-makers and the public in the US. We will also continue to facilitate equitable spaces for unlearning and learning where Majority World actors and our US-based members collectively develop tools and practices rooted in the lived experience and wisdom of communities.

Most importantly, we will continue to stand in solidarity with Majority-World actors even as we seek to influence and enroll more INGOs into the movement.

The road ahead is long and uncharted. Our structure, our values-based ways of operation and our commitment to continue to nurture the passion and interconnectedness that define a movement all challenge the status quo.

We are determined to step away from the current hierarchical, patriarchal and colonial structures of operation; to find our power in connections, not control.

This requires courage. We know that we do not have all the answers. We will make mistakes. But we are committed to learn from each of these mistakes.

The indomitable feminist activist Kamla Bhasin, once said, "Optimism is a form of resistance. If we do not have hope, we will not dream. If we do not dream, we will never transform this world." We hope this annual report will nurture the optimism within each of us. That it will encourage us to dream and to work towards realizing this dream together.

We thank you for your trust, your passion, your commitment and most importantly, for your courage in forging this new path with us.

In Strength and Solidarity,



Gunjan Veda
Global Secretary, MCLD and Executive Director (US)

2023 IMPACT

Thought Leadership

8

Articles Published

17

External Panels
and Events

Influence

661

Organizations Reached
Through Virtual Events

981

Participants Reached

Strengthening of CLD Practices

164

People Trained on the
Participatory CLD
Assessment Tool

174

Participants in the
(Un)Learning Labs

2023 IMPACT

Devex recognized The Movement for Community-led Development as one of 24 global development organizations to watch in 2024, alongside organizations such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, CIVICUS, Deloitte, and the Inter-American Development Bank. This was because of our advocacy to “give community organizations a seat at the table” and our capacity to “be an outspoken critic of the current system and simultaneously connected and supportive enough to work within that system.”

As we continue with our transition to a global network of networks, we will leverage our voice with our partners across the globe to collectively transform the international systems.

As we continue with our transition to a global network of networks, we will leverage our voice with our partners across the globe to collectively transform the international systems.

So far, MCLD-US’s work with our sister National Associations to impact USAID’s policies has demonstrated that our voice is being heard.

Devex notes “How much progress it [MCLD] makes against its goals is, in some ways, a bellwether for the success of the localization movement, which has so far involved a lot more fanfare than funding.”

OUR FRAMEWORK

To ensure that our commitment to community-led development is as impactful as possible, MCLD uses a six-point framework to represent our focus areas. Over the next 17 pages, dive into MCLD US' activities in each of these six areas.



GLOBAL POLICY ADVOCACY: TRANSFORMING SYSTEMS

MCLD US is committed to creating spaces for local and community-based organizations (CBOs) to interact with USAID and other funders to shape policy. In November 2023, we worked with CIVICUS and Peace Direct to facilitate a letter from Majority World actors to funders, bilateral agencies, and international organizations on how to organize events on locally-led development. [This letter](#) has received attention at global forums, was featured in an [article by Devex](#), and has received over 1800 signatures as of the end of March. It remains open in 2024 and is garnering commitments from INGOs, networks, funders, and government agencies. In 2024, we are also facilitating a guidance note to support Minority World signatories and funders in translating these principles into action.

Through a partnership with Peace Direct, we strived to create spaces for funders to engage directly with local organizations. Our initiative started by co-hosting a virtual event in January on how USAID will measure their new 50% commitment, after which we invited participants and members of MCLD and Peace Direct partners to complete a survey on the 50% metric (in English, French, and Spanish). We presented the culminating collaborative report back to participants and USAID staff and convened a second follow-up call in July for USAID to close the loop on how feedback from our participants was incorporated. The January call was also the first MCLD event with American Sign Language interpretation and widespread participation from disability rights groups.

USAID hosted its first Local Capacity Strengthening Forum (virtual) in October, and MCLD US designed a side event on Strengthening the Ecosystem for Locally-led Development. Our facilitators featured champions of locally-led and community-led development from Kenya, Malawi, Benin, and Uganda.

MCLD US has been recognized as a thought leader in the locally-led development and decolonizing conversations. We were invited to participate in and speak at various global and international forums in 2023. We not only participated in these conversations but also tried to ensure that these spaces included members from our majority-world national associations in pursuance of our objective to ensure visibility and access for them.



Gunjan Veda at a workshop on centering local knowledge and resources in the HDP Nexus with MCLD Uganda members Albert Taremwa, Baluku Isaya, Sophie Kange, Matte Jockas, and MCLD Kenya member Zippy Wambua at the USAID East Africa Regional Knowledge Sharing Meeting on HDP Coherence - Naivasha, Kenya, May 2023.

MCLD US participated in or facilitated the participation of our National Association sisters in the following global events:

UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Conference
January 2023

MCLD US organized a side event with speakers from MCLD including Zipporah Wambua, Director for Participatory Development, Makueni County, Kenya (member of MCLD Kenya).



New York City, USA

InterAction Next Big Think Session on U.S. Global Food Security Response: Zeroing in on Local Leadership
February 2023

MCLD US co-organized the panel which was facilitated by Sophie Kange (MCLD Uganda)

Virtual



Launch Event of the School for CLD with the Governor of Makueni County Kenya
March 2023

John Coonrod (MCLD US) delivered the Keynote Address



Steve Ogutu (MCLD Kenya), John Coonrod, and Governor Mutula Kilonzo Jr. at the Signing of MoU between Makueni County and MCLD Kenya, March 2023.

Virtual



Side Event at the Summit for Democracy
March 2023

John Coonrod and Zipporah Wambua spoke on the panel "All Politics is Local"

Women in Leadership Development (WILD) Forum
May 2023

Gunjan Veda moderated the "Leadership in the Context of Decolonizing Global Development" event



Virtual

Naivasha, Kenya



USAID East Africa Regional Knowledge Sharing Meeting on HDP Coherence

May 2023

Gunjan Veda facilitated a workshop on centering local knowledge and resources in the HDP Nexus with MCLD Uganda members Albert Taremwa, Baluku Isaya, Sophie Kange, Matte Jockas, and MCLD Kenya member Zippy Wambua.

World Bank Global Youth Summit

May 2023

Sera Bulbul (MCLD US) spoke in the Plenary Session, Setting the Community Agenda: How Local Development Strategies Have a Global Impact



Sera Bulbul at the World Bank, Washington DC USA
Photo Credit: World Bank Group

Washington, DC, USA



Congressional Hunger Center Summer Seminar Series

June 2023

Ann Hendrix-Jenkins (MCLD US) spoke at the event "Examining Power and Privilege in International Development"

Women Deliver Conference

July 2023

Becky Irakiza (MCLD Burundi) participated in the conference.

Kigali, Rwanda



Devex Pro Live

July 2023

Gunjan Veda and Rose Mbone (MCLD Kenya) spoke on the panel "How to put your money where your mouth is on localization."

Virtual



UN High-Level Political Forum

May 2023

John Coonrod spoke at two side events hosted by the Government of Kenya.

New York City, USA







**PEOPLE POWER
CONFERENCE,
COPENHAGEN, DENMARK**

Gunjan Veda



**SHIFTTHEPOWER SUMMIT,
BOGOTA, COLOMBIA**

Gunjan Veda



**WORLD BANK GLOBAL
YOUTH SUMMIT,
WASHINGTON DC, USA**

Sera Bulbul



**CONFERENCE ON
STRENGTHENING LOCAL
ACTORS IN HDP NEXUS,
COPENHAGEN, DENMARK**

Rose Mbone and Gunjan Veda

ALLYSHIP WITH THRIVING NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

MCLD US continued our partnerships with our sister National Associations, working to ensure visibility, connection, access, and funding. In 2023, in addition to supporting with trainings and capacity strengthening efforts, we collaborated with MCLD members to get published in Agrilinks (Liberia), obtain funding from World Vision (Malawi and Uganda), and attend global events and conferences (Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya). We also collaborated to provide micro-grants for their initiatives, including to Sierra Leone and Nigeria to carry out campaigns to prevent election violence. With a micro-grant from MCLD US of \$5,000, MCLD Nigeria reached over 9 million people through advocacy, awareness building, and community visits.



SACD-Nigeria and partners with their campaign posters. Photo Credit: SACD-Nigeria, March 2023.

In addition to external visibility, we continued to lead the publication of MCLD's monthly column, *Movement Matters*. Each month, the interview-style column highlights one National Association member to showcase the breadth and depth of the work that member organizations engage in and probes the importance of MCLD in each individual's journey.

MCLD US also convened and facilitated a range of regular calls, including monthly global calls, engaging with our membership in dialogues on pertinent Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) issues. Key topics we addressed in 2023 include climate change, power to civil society, youth and peace, and disability inclusion.

Case Study: Nigeria Micro-grant - The impact we can support by being allies to National Associations

30 organizations in the MCLD Association in Nigeria, known as Strategy Action for Community Development – SACD-Nigeria, conducted a successful “Say No to Violence” awareness campaign across 13 states of the country, reaching 1 million people directly and 10 million through social media and the radio.

Messages countering election violence targeted more than 100 communities across Nigeria. The campaign focused on how to peacefully conduct oneself in a poll line and cast votes. SACD-Nigeria reported that in these communities, election violence was reduced by 40% compared to the last Presidential, National Assembly, and Governorship and State House of Assembly elections. The advocacy campaign contributed to significantly decreased incidents of violence, as well as an increase in awareness and understanding about the impact of violence on individuals and communities.

SACD-Nigeria’s initiative also culminated in the establishment of community support groups to look after victims of violence. MCLD US funded the initiative through a small grant of \$5,000 dollars. SACD-N members also contributed their own resources to ensure the scale and success of the campaign.



*“Say No to Violence” Campaign
Photo Credit: SACD-Nigeria*

ENHANCING THE PRACTICE OF COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT

In 2023, organizations, funders, and governments continued to recognize the need to be more community- and locally-led in their work – and have been increasingly approaching MCLD to understand how to translate their intention into action. MCLD US has been pivotal in supporting organizations directly and collaborating with our National Association sisters to become more community-led in their practice.

As part of our focus on collaborative research and capacity strengthening (see pages 26 and 27), MCLD US continued our commitment to facilitating trainings on the Participatory CLD Assessment Tool. The tool continues to be an important learning resource for organizations to assess and understand their community-led development practices.



*Community members of Bui Area, Ethiopia after piloting the Participatory CLD Assessment Tool.
Photo Credit: MCLD, April 2023.*

In 2023 we conducted certificate trainings in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and virtually. MCLD US was also invited to conduct a training on Centering Local Resources and Knowledge at USAID’s Regional Knowledge Sharing Meeting in Naivasha, Kenya in May 2023. We partnered with MCLD Uganda and Kenya in this endeavor.

As interest in the tool continues to grow, MCLD US also continued our initiative to develop a pool of certified facilitators within our member associations to run these trainings in their countries in their local language. MCLD US facilitated the training of trainers (ToT) process with MCLD Uganda and Malawi after they received grants from World Vision, and supported other MCLD National Associations including Benin to organize trainings. As interest in the tool continues to grow, this broader trainer group will also enable more frequent trainings across the globe, both virtually and in person.

In March 2023, MCLD Kenya signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Makueni County government, Kenya to set up a School for CLD and Devolution in the county to train government functionaries, civil society, and community leaders from not just the county, but the entire region. MCLD US worked with MCLD Kenya to co-create and deliver a 16-week curriculum for the School for CLD and Devolution in Makueni, Kenya, with MCLD Kenya. The designed curriculum comprises modules on the Sustainable Development Goals, community-based planning, gender equity, resource mobilization, community wealth-building, disaster preparedness, citizen-led governance, data for the people, and social accountability.



The School for CLD and Devolution, in Makueni County, Kenya. Photo Credit: MCLD Kenya, April 2023.

The inaugural class of 35 officials from Makueni County celebrated their graduation in November 2023. Similarly, when MCLD Kenya signed an MoU with Taita Taveta County, MCLD US' Gunjan Veda conducted a two-day in-person training on CLD with the key government functionaries in Taita Taveta.



*Facilitation Workshop at the School for CLD and Devolution, in Makueni County, Kenya.
Photo Credit: MCLD Kenya*

MCLD US staff also contributed to current thinking around community-led development in academic journals through articles that suggest new frameworks, approaches, and ways of thinking about key CLD issues. These pieces offer critical insights into underlooked aspects of CLD; we aspire for them to support other organizations with their localization efforts.

Articles by MCLD US Staff

Chronicles of a Transformative Movement: Strengthening our

Interconnectedness: This article in the Interdisciplinary Journal of Partnership Studies highlights MCLD's transformation process and the learning journey that we have been on together as a Movement. The article by Gunjan Veda and all members of MCLD features stories and knowledge from across our network and is a work of collaboration true to our values.

The Commitment Mural: Let's Decolonize Evaluation Together in the Journal of Multidisciplinary Evaluation: This co-authored article challenged existing publication norms that keep out community and local voices and sought to re-imagine the journal as a place for co-creation and mutual knowledge sharing.

How do you define knowledge? A team from MCLD US and CLD Benin explored this question with over 300 members of our Movement. Our process led us to develop the Community-led Worldview of Systems Change showing how the intangibles in a community can lead to tangible change and 10 recommendations for community-led development. We published two articles in Knowledge Management for Development Journal (KM4Dev):

- [Part One: The community-led worldview of systems change: a framework centering local knowledge and aspirations in pursuit of transformational sustainability and resilience.](#)
- [Part Two: Creating spaces for knowledge decolonization: changing relationships and shifting power dynamics for co-creation across the Movement for Community-led Development.](#)

In addition to the journal articles, MCLD US published articles in key international development publications. These sought to explore specific practices of CLD and advance thinking around what makes community-led approaches powerful.

- Opinion: [How intent for locally led development will turn into practice](#) by Gunjan Veda on Devex.
- [The invisible forces at the heart of community-led development](#) by Sera Bulbul in Alliance Magazine
- [Can Storytelling Fuel Community-led Development](#) by Emily Kombe
- [Global Fund for Community Foundations Interview](#) with Gunjan Veda

SOLIDARITY

MCLD US is committed to building solidarity networks that go beyond collaboration. For too long we have been busy competing with each other. Systems transformation requires all of us.

At MCLD, we have experienced the power of a collective, and deliberately identified opportunities to build solidarity with other organizations and networks in 2023. We believe the only way to transform the current ecosystem is if all the stakeholders come together and stand with each other through values-based solidarity, going beyond opportunistic and grant-based partnerships. The Majority World Letter introduced on page 12 was part of this solidarity initiative. We have also been regularly in touch with Majority World networks to strategize together and share information.

MCLD US is also part of a network of power shift convenors comprising Minority World Networks. In 2023, we worked with the other convenors to bring together bilateral funders to discuss the nuts and bolts of operationalizing LLD through two virtual convenings. The first looked at the islands of success on locally-led development so that funders could inspire one another. The second delved specifically into areas that had been identified by the funders for discussion, for example, direct or intermediary-based funding to local organizations.

Throughout 2023, we also continued to connect with Majority World networks, ensuring space and visibility for them and inviting them to key global forums.

BY THE NUMBERS: THE SIGN-ON LETTER ON CONVENINGS FOR LOCALLY-LED DEVELOPMENT

1800+

Local Actors Signed

30+

INGOs Committed

7

Funders Committed

Case Study: Conferences on Locally-led Development

MCLD has been advocating for members of local and community-based organizations to be included in global policy spaces and forums. In 2023 we succeeded – organizers invited our colleagues and community leaders across our network to multiple conferences and events. Yet we learned that an invitation was not enough to ensure community voices at the decision-making table.

Doris Fatima Webber is the director of the Women’s Advocacy And Agricultural Development Organization (WAADO), a community-based organization in rural Sierra Leone. In September 2023, Doris was invited through MCLD to attend a global convening on locally-led development in Copenhagen. Her colleagues, members of her community, and MCLD Sierra Leone fellow members were thrilled at the opportunity to have their voices heard at a global policy forum through Doris.

Shortly afterward, we learned that Denmark does not issue visas in Sierra Leone, and the only way Doris could obtain a visa would be to travel to a consulate in Ghana or another country. Despite multiple efforts to raise the funds for this trip on top of the conference costs, Doris was not able to attend the event.

When a second opportunity arose for Doris to attend a conference, this time a convening in Colombia, Doris planned far in advance to start the visa process. Her visa did not arrive in time.

We know from our members’ experiences that Doris’s case is not unique. This is the experience of Majority World activists and movement leaders all the time. As the locally-led agenda gains traction in international fora, the hardship and disappointment that local actors face is becoming increasingly apparent.

We are working with other National Associations and partner organizations like Peace Direct and CIVICUS to turn this experience into a moment of mobilization around a systemic issue. **The experience of heartbreak for Doris and the members of MCLD Sierra Leone exposed a need to come together to challenge and transform the system that subjected Majority World leaders to this humiliation.** MCLD members conferred with other majority world actors to see what could be done, and the sign-on letter on convenings for locally-led development was developed. Today this letter has been signed by over 1800 local actors, and 30 INGOs and 8 funders have committed to following the principles outlined in it. This is just one example of how MCLD’s different forms of engagement reinforce and inform one another.

MUTUAL CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

The MCLD Secretariat hosts several mutual capacity strengthening platforms for members across the globe to learn from one another's expertise, share stories and lessons from practice, and build solidarity and appreciation for their own capacity. MCLD US staff are central in the planning and facilitating of these platforms.

The (Un)Learning Labs began in 2022 as a collaborative environment to explore our current modes of thinking, doing, and learning while drawing from the valuable insights of our colleagues. Through virtual meetings, we acknowledge and leverage the diverse capacities, experiences, and knowledge that participants contribute to the collaborative space.

MCLD US continued to lead the coordination of the (Un)Learning Labs in 2023 with a focused series on community-led monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL), with our member the Institute for State Effectiveness. We organized three sessions introducing MEL and community-led MEL, and diving into creating theories of change in a community-led way.

“

Recognize that **unlearning** is the highest form of learning.

”

- Rumi

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH: EVIDENCE, TOOLS, LEARNING BY DOING

MCLD US is committed to co-creating tools to enhance the practice of CLD. Since the creation of our collaborative research team in 2019, we have developed two multi-lingual tools, developed recommendations for implementers, funders, and governments, and carried out analyses of community-led programming. The group's Participatory CLD Assessment Tool – and subsequent community-led version – continues to grow in popularity with increasing demands for training, as outlined above. In 2023, MCLD US finalized the design of our two- and three-day trainings on the tool and a guide for facilitating discussions on the tool with community members. We also grew the accessibility of the tool through the introduction of five new languages: Amharic, Bangla, Luganda, Swahili, and Ewe. The community version of the tool is now available in 8 languages.

The USAID-funded research project, Locally Led Development in Fragile Environments (LIFE), is in its second year of implementation. Jointly created and implemented by MCLD US, The Hunger Project, World Vision, and a specialized research team, LIFE examines how facilitation and community leadership improve resilience at sites in Bangladesh and Ethiopia. It also seeks to find ways to make existing evaluation approaches more CLD congruent. Mutual capacity strengthening and continuous learning and adaptation are central to LIFE, and in 2023, MCLD US staff facilitated the project's capacity strengthening process alongside the research team. As part of the process, MCLD US developed frameworks and modules on CLD congruent Monitoring and Evaluation.



The LIFE team applying the Participatory CLD Assessment Tool with community members at World Vision's Bui Area Program in Ethiopia.

Photo Credit: Gunjan Veda, MCLD, April 2023.

The LIFE team training on the Participatory CLD Assessment Tool along with USAID Mission staff in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Photo Credit: The Hunger Project Bangladesh, January 2023.



THP Bangladesh piloting the community version of the Participatory CLD Assessment Tool with community leaders and members in Abhaynagar.

Photo Credit: The Hunger Project Bangladesh, January 2023.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

Highlights of Key Partnerships and Collaborative Projects

Establishing a Values-based Movement Organization: The Hunger Project

Throughout 2023, The Hunger Project, the organization that incubated MCLD and continues to remain an active member, supported the MCLD Secretariat team in ensuring a smooth transition for the Movement. They also continue to be MCLD's largest funder.

Ensuring Majority World Voices Shape USAID Policy and Practices: Peace Direct

In partnership with our sister National Associations, MCLD US has been engaged in advocacy to ensure that community voices and local organizations are involved in shaping USAID's locally-led development policy. We have worked side by side with Peace Direct to advocate for Majority World actors to have voices in USAID policies. Since our [events in January](#) – where we invited USAID to listen directly to feedback from community-based organizations on their commitment to put communities in the driver's seat – and July – where we followed up and closed the loop, MCLD US' partnership with Peace Direct has been strengthened through a joint grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation to forge relationships and new forms of engagement between USAID and local actors.

Reimagining Convenings on Locally-led Development: CIVICUS + Peace Direct

MCLD US – in partnership with our National Association sisters – CIVICUS, and Peace Direct collaborated to facilitate a sign-on letter outlining recommendations on how convening spaces on locally-led development (LLD) should be organized. The letter grew in urgency this year after many local organizations and networks expressed frustration at their lack of inclusion at key global events and forums on locally-led development. After four months of circulation across our networks and beyond, [the letter](#) has gained 1800+ signatures from Majority World individuals and organizations.

In addition to the practical solutions outlined in the letter, MCLD, CIVICUS, and NEAR shared our collective reflections on the myriad commitments made to further locally-led development which have yet to be met in an [article](#) featured in Alliance Magazine. The growing solidarity between our networks stems from a recognition that we need to work together to enable locally-led development and center community voices.

Locally-led Development in Fragile Environments: World Vision, The Hunger Project, USAID

As USAID works to expand its evidence base to inform and strengthen its locally-led programming in non-permissive environments, MCLD US, World Vision, The Hunger Project are working in partnership to provide valuable answers and evidence.

As our LIFE project entered its second year, our focus was on capacity strengthening and preparation for realist-informed evaluations on how community-level leadership and facilitation are initiated and implemented in CLD. The project is coordinated by the MCLD US staff and is creating exciting resources around conducting evaluations through a CLD lens.

Strengthening Community-led Development Practices: World Vision

MCLD US has committed to increasing the number of trainers on our Participatory CLD Assessment Tool. Our goal is to have trainers on the tool in every country that can adapt the training to their local context with local examples, bringing in their own rich and diverse experiences.

World Vision is also on a journey to enhance the practice of CLD in its programming. As an active member of MCLD US, they were aware of the tools and trainings we organize. A partnership enabled us to organize two Training of Trainers on CLD and the Participatory CLD Assessment Tool in Malawi and Uganda, while also benefiting the World Vision teams in each country.



Above: Members of Kasangadzi Area Program, Dowa, Malawi, apply the Participatory CLD Assessment Tool. Below: MCLD Malawi members visit Kasangadzi Area Program. Photo Credit: Gunjan Veda, MCLD, August 2023.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Summary

In 2023, MCLD US began our transition from being a program within the Global Hunger Project (THP) to establishing ourselves as an independent 501c3 charity. Banking and accounting were established, initial grants were received, and the final expenses for the year were accrued into MCLD US and submitted on our IRS 990 form available [on our website](#).

Nearly all of our activities in 2023 were funded by The Hunger Project. The Hunger Project met all our operating expenses as the staff continued to sit inside the organization. Their support was instrumental in establishing processes and systems for MCLD's new structure, including the formation of MCLD US.

MCLD US also secured its first direct grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation to assist with organization development and to attend key global moments and events. This two-year grant will allow us to operationalize our new structure and we are grateful for the support and trust shown by the foundation.

MCLD US is part of the Powered by the People consortium led by Partners Global and funded by USAID. This funding is expected to commence in 2024.

MCLD US also received voluntary contributions from its members in lieu of membership fees. Beginning in 2024, the membership fee structure has been finalized based on consultation with members and approved by the MCLD US board.

Financial Overview - December 31, 2023 in USD

Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$204,597
Liabilities	
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$5,010
Net Assets	
Without Funder Restrictions	\$199,587
With Funder Restrictions	\$0
Total Net Assets	\$199,587
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$204,597
Support and Revenue	
Membership Dues	\$24,593
Contributions	\$179,446
Program Service Revenue	\$1,250
Total Support and Revenue	\$205,289
Expenses	
Program Services	\$5,510
Management and General	\$192
Fundraising	\$0
Total Expenses	\$5,702
Change in Net Assets	\$199,587

GOVERNANCE

MCLD US INGO Members and Network Partners:



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Biraj Patnaik

National Foundation
for India



**Carrie Hessler-
Radelet**

Global Communities



Grace Boone

CDA Collaborative
Learning



**Janet Edmond
(Secretary)**

Conservation
International



**John Coonrod
(Chair)**

Sarvodaya USA



Karen Hirschfeld

Oxfam America



**Ramatoulie
Isatou Jallow**

Center for Ethics
and Rule of Law



**Rujuta
Teredesai**

GlobalGiving

OUR TEAM



Gunjan Veda

Executive Director



Nelly Mecklenburg

Senior Manager,
Learning and
Network Weaving



Sera Bulbul

Senior Associate,
Research,
Communications,
and Learning

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

After seven years of “incubation” within The Hunger Project and explosive growth during COVID-19, MCLD regional leaders and external advisors came together in October 2022 to co-create a new, global organizational structure that remains true to its values even as it is able to mobilize greater financial resources. This was followed by a six-months long listening exercise with MCLD members, through listening cafes held in multiple languages, to understand their vision for MCLD.

We have a strong intention to not recreate the rather neo-colonial “hub and spoke” model. We stopped using the word “chapters.” Instead, we created a “network of networks” where members in each country would set their own priorities in a National Association consistent with the laws and standards in each country, yet aligned around a global mission and set of values. In instances where global decisions are required, these would be made democratically by a Global Assembly that includes a gender-balanced pair of representatives from each National Association. Our Secretariat would have members seconded from different National Associations.

2023 was established as the transition year to move from being a movement to a “movement organization”, and our new independent structure became operational on January 1, 2024.

We look forward to continuing to collaborate with our members, partners, and funders as we embark on this new chapter, and thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to community-led development.



www.mclld.org

Twitter: @communityleddev

LinkedIn: Movement for Community-led Development

Facebook: Movement for Community-led Development

Instagram: @communityleddev

The Movement for Community-led Development US (MCLD US) is registered in the USA as a 501(c)3 charity.