LOCAL MEANS LOCAL: FACILITATION AND LEADERSHIP IN COMMUNITY LED DEVELOPMENT

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Photo credit: Jon Warren, World Vision
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PROJECT OVERVIEW

• Impact of Community-led Development (InCLuDE) for Food Security

• Funded under the IDEAL Small Grants Program

• MCLD in partnership with CDU

• Started in September 2020

• Two parts:
  1. Dissemination of tools to strengthen CLD practice
  2. Rapid Realist Review
"I am grateful for the opportunity I had to interact with fellow passionate development practitioners and for the training. Indeed, it was valuable as it addresses the existing gap.

Trisha Patience Chalulu, World Vision Malawi"

"The training was insightful, impactful and great. Have learnt a lot on the approach to have a meaningful community development programs that are sustainable.

Yotam Ngwira, Youth Empowerment Towards Development"

"A mon tour, je voudrais vous exprimer ma gratitude pour la qualité de la formation que toute l’équipe nous a offerte. Je travaillerais pour une meilleure appropriation en vue de l’implémenter au mieux dans les différents projets de développement que j’aurai à mettre en œuvre.

Christian ADIDEME, Bénin Yali Alimni Association"

- **No external funding**
- **Collaborative effort**: 35 people from 23 organizations
- **Two tools**: CLD Assessment Tool and Quality Appraisal Tool for CLD Evaluations
- **Three languages**: English, Spanish and French
- **Downloads in 70+ countries**
- **Multiple trainings**: Malawi, Benin, Zambia, Canada
RAPID REALIST REVIEW

• Systematic review on how outcomes are created and why they vary across contexts for similar programs

• ‘Rapid’ – a short form of realist review

• Review of 117 documents from 57 programs (93 from MCLD member organizations and 24 from legacy Food for Peace)

• Expert Group and Reference Group

• Detailed report; Guidance documents for funders and implementing agencies in English and French

RESEARCH QUESTION:

How and in what contexts do key aspects of CLD – particularly leadership and facilitation – contribute to resilience and equity in relation to food security?
MEET THE PEOPLE

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METHODS

How did we do it?

Identification of the review question → Definition of terms; Development of the ‘initial rough’ theory → Search for primary studies

Data extraction ← Quality appraisal ← Inclusion / exclusion

Data synthesis and draft report → Implications and recommendations → Revised report and guidance
FINDINGS INTERPRETATION

- Data extracted to test theory, not to amalgamate results
- Findings show how CLD can work, not how it always works
- Combinations of causes (mechanisms) required for any outcome
- Combinations of contextual factors enable or inhibit mechanisms – different combinations of factors can operate together. The presence/absence of single factors rarely accounts for change (or lack of it)
- The findings inform considerations in decision-making, not ‘automatic’ decisions – this shapes the types of recommendations that can be made

RESEARCH QUESTION:

How and in what contexts do key aspects of CLD – particularly leadership and facilitation – contribute to resilience and equity in relation to food security?
LIMITATIONS OF THE REVIEW

1. Broad range of programs described as CLD

2. Very limited descriptions of facilitation or of leadership (difficult to distinguish between them)

3. Multiple terms for roles, roles not clearly described

4. Nature of evaluation methods – rigorous outcomes evaluation uncommon, very limited causal analysis

5. Limited description of contexts/factors affecting programs or outcomes

6. Capacity development approach – some variability in extractions
Community-led Development

- A development approach where local community members work together to identify goals important to them; develop and implement plans to achieve those goals; and create collaborative relationships internally and with external actors—all while building on community strengths and local leadership.

- Characterized by 11 attributes: participation and inclusion, voice, community assets, capacity development, sustainability, transformative capacity, collective planning and action, accountability, community leadership, adaptability, and collaboration.

Facilitation

- A co-creative and adaptive process in which a facilitator enables local actors to set common goals, take ownership of these goals, build on existing strengths, and work towards achieving their goals.

Community Leadership

- Can refer to either a type of leadership by an individual from a given community, or to a process by which a community exercises collective leadership at a grass-roots level.
### KEY FINDINGS

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<th>Context Matters: Environments Enable or Limit CLD (Local CBOs and supportive governments are enablers)</th>
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<td>Many current activities fall short of CLD practice</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Facilitation and leadership need explicit attention and resourcing</td>
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<td>Duration matters: Program design and implementation are central to CLD;</td>
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<td>Five forms of social capital are necessary for CLD in food security</td>
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<td>CLD can contribute to resilience by building human and social capital</td>
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<td>Clear terminology and program theory are required</td>
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<td>Stronger evaluation and reporting could strengthen CLD</td>
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**Note:** All findings refer to the sample of literature reviewed. The literature was selected for particular characteristics and may not be representative of the wider CLD sector. The findings show how CLD can work, not how it always works.
KEY FINDING 1

Context matters: Existing local CBOs and supportive governments enable CLD; low access to resources, low social capital and high barriers to participation limit CLD
**Enabling Contexts/Conditions for CLD**

- Supportive, effective and transparent policy and legal environment
- Program goals aligned with government goals or policy
- Local, relevant CBOs exist; Coordination across groups & levels
- Existing social capital, existing culture of collaboration, leadership engaged
- Accessible funding, transparent processes
- Program leverages synergies; Long term; Community building; ‘wins’

- Strong local government support
- Collaboration Gov’t workers & programs
- Partnerships, Trust, Access to resources
- Community participation
- Legitimacy, Sustainability
- Community leadership, motivation

Drawing on existing capitals (financial, material, human, social)… (C)
... contributes to trust (M), perceived legitimacy (M), and resources to enable effective implementation (C), which
... contribute to participation and achievement of outcomes (O),
... which builds further motivation (M) and stocks of capitals... (C)
... which, with appropriate leadership, are reinvested in CLD... (O)
Unsupportive Context/Conditions

- Poor quality / lack of infrastructure, government services, policies and qualified technical personnel
- Lack of government support, strategy or interest in supporting community-led goals
- Intra-government conflict, political opportunism and corruption
- High cost of access to legal and government services
- Severe drought, high conflict, other disasters
- Support but low state capacity/authority
- Low access to resources
- Reduced effectiveness of advocacy
- Reduced formalization of CLD structures
- Resources diverted to humanitarian aid or implementation harder

Low access to resources, especially from government (C), and low responsiveness of government (C)...

Reduces access to resources (M) and capacity for CLD (O). High costs and fragile contexts (C) decrease institutionalisation of CLD (M) which ...

...reduces effectiveness of CLD (O) and sustains current problems (O)
Programming duration matters, targeting small geographies is effective and collaboration requires investment.

KEY FINDING 4

1. Quick wins may improve community motivation, participation and support but may not be sustainable
2. ‘Community building’ versus ‘infrastructure building’
3. Duration matters: short term programs less likely to contribute to attitudinal shifts
4. Locations farther away from program centers benefit less
5. Collaboration is effective but requires investment
1. Many groups face barriers to participation in and/or outcomes from CLD

2. Sufficient evidence only available in relation to women and youth (and then not usually considering the most vulnerable women or young people)

3. CLD programming can improve equity for women and young people by developing their human capital, voice, roles, economic capital and decision-making autonomy

4. CLD can threaten improvements in equity for women if opportunity costs of volunteering undermine economic empowerment
**Example Equity for Women**

**WHERE**

- Laws, policies require equitable inclusion
- Capacity development on laws, policies
- Capacity dev. for women: skills for participation in group activities; economic empowerment
- Capacity development for men and boys: gender equity
- Activities adapted for equitable participation
- Skilful facilitation to challenge power inequalities

**PROGRAM THEORY**

Women develop confidence and voice, and women’s voices are included in decision-making.

Women develop a wider range of roles, at home and in the community, including increased capacity to earn and control income.

**EXCEPT WHERE**

- Gender equity perceived as ‘imposed norm’
- Gender quotas introduced without other enabling conditions (see left column)
- Cultural norms preclude women speaking in front of men
- Fear of gender-based violence for challenging norms
- Marginalized women not included
- Joint decision-making increases male control over women’s traditional resources.
KEY FINDING 7

CLD can increase resilience by developing capacities, social capital and social cohesion, and developing a ‘self-reliance mindset’
**Example Self-Reliance**

### WHERE

- Strengths-based approach
- Inclusive/representative group structures
- Participatory vision and goal setting, collective decision-making
- Existing cooperation and solidarity
- Local, transparent & accountable leadership
- Capacity development
- Resources mobilized

### PROGRAM THEORY

**Self-Reliance** — mindset shift, community-led collective action and common goals increase collective efficacy, passion for change and continuous learning, leading to self-reliance.

- Local leaders catalyze community participation
- Sense of ownership, motivation

### EXCEPT WHERE

- Non-participants in workshop processes
- Inequitable participation in workshops
- Social pressure or enforcement
- Elite capture
- Corruption
- Implementation failure, lack of success
**Example Social-Cohesion**

**WHERE**
- Spaces for collaborative action
- Resolution of tensions/conflicts

**PROGRAM THEORY**

- **Social Cohesion** — collaboration on a common cause and/or spaces for positive interaction between groups leads to increased bonding, bridging and linking social capital

- Increased social capital and social cohesion increase access to resources and support, which increases resilience.

**EXCEPT WHERE**
- Social pressure or enforcement – fear of retribution for non-conformity
- Targeting to specific groups, exclusion of other groups → increased tension/conflict
- Inaccessibility due to distance, poverty
KEY FINDING 8

• Multi-sectoral approaches can contribute to food security outcomes
• Programs which demonstrated food security outcomes all had evidence of equity outcomes and intermediate resilience outcomes. And all these programs used multi-sectoral approaches
WHERE

- Capacity development in agriculture
- Collective action (silos, food banks, community farms)
- Capacity development in social components for collective action
- Conflict resolution training for traditional leaders/religious leaders

PROGRAM THEORY

- Increased knowledge and skills in agriculture together with social and conflict resolution skills to resolve land-related conflicts contribute to agricultural productivity.
- Collective actions enable access to food during lean times.

EXCEPT WHERE

- Direct assistance to address food shortages is not provided, undermining motivation to participate.
- Train the trainer models mean local trainers do not have the range of technical skills required to resolve agricultural productivity problems.
**Example Equity, Resilience, and Food Security**

**WHERE**
- Higher levels of bonding capital
- Established collective assets and structures (e.g., savings groups)

**PROGRAM THEORY**
- Higher levels of access to resources including food, shelter and productive assets contribute to resilience.
- Collective action enables access to resources, learning from peers and personal support, creating confidence and capacity to recover from shocks.

**EXCEPT WHERE**
Capacity development for mothers in health, nutrition, life skills, savings and income generation activities

Increased knowledge and skills combined with improved economic capacity contribute to higher impacts in family nutrition

Reliance on women as volunteers to deliver programs demotivates group leaders and reduces opportunities for other income generating activities, thus undermining women's economic empowerment.
**Example Equity, Resilience, and Food Security**

**WHERE**

Capacity development in agriculture for women, plus access to resources (e.g., loans)

**PROGRAM THEORY**

Increased knowledge and skills combined with access to resources improves women’s agricultural productivity, which contributes to nutrition

**EXCEPT WHERE**

Poorest households (lowest increase in agricultural productivity)

Illiteracy undermines participation and/or learning
Formalized structures support CLD

**KEY FINDING 9**

1. Formalised structures can ensure processes of consultation with the wider community along with transparency and accountability

2. Formalised groups are viewed more positively by authority-holders, and can increase their engagement

3. Low literacy and high volunteer turnover undermine participation in formalised structures and could exclude the most marginalised
Group members elected by communities
Formalized governance procedures
Capacity development regarding governance, and relevant laws and policies
Clarity about roles and procedures
Timely advice and support
Access to ongoing resources, especially funding and capacity development

Formalized structures enable governance of community led development, processes for consultation with wider community, ‘official’ engagement with and/or advocacy to local government and with external bodies, and transparency and accountability to the wider community. Formalized groups are more likely to be viewed positively by authority holders.

Low literacy/low levels of education – low engagement with administration
High levels of volunteer turnover
**TOP RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Rethink evaluations**

2. **Rethink how RFPs are issued and how we respond to them** (i.e., clearly defined terms, outlined theory of change, specified roles and selection process for facilitators and community leaders, political and social context analysis)

3. **Plan and fund formalization of CLD structures** (ensure they are not imposed but created by community)

4. **Work with local governments**: align objectives, include them in training and create forums for them to interact with community members

5. **Redesign programs to compensate women and marginalized groups for the unequal burdens placed on them** in CLD programming

6. **Ensure appropriate workloads, renumeration, training and ongoing support for facilitators**
THANK YOU!

To learn more and join our collaborative research

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GUIDANCE
https://mclrd.org/research