



The Movement for Community-led Development



Who we are: As organizations committed to the success of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we call for enhancing the power and capacity of communities to take charge of their own development.

A Human Right. Every human being has the inalienable right to participate in governance. For most of those living in hunger and poverty, this means governance within walking distance. People in power must view people as “active citizens,” not beneficiaries.

SDG #16 calls for building participatory, effective, accountable institutions “at all levels” – which must start at the level closest to the people.

A Gender-focused, Transformative Process.

Community-led development is more than participatory projects. It requires a long-term process that empowers citizens and local authorities to transform patriarchal mindsets and take effective action.

Key Global Challenges. Four of the biggest challenges in the SDGs – to halt stunting, empower women, achieve *inclusive* economic growth and build climate change resilience – all require integrated and community-led solutions.

An end in itself. Community-led development is more than an effective and sustainable *means* to achieve development goals. As expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 29, “Everyone has duties to the community *in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.*” Participatory local governance is the only pathway through which most people will have this opportunity.

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Our Manifesto identifies five goals:

1. Voice and Agency for Women, Youth and All Marginalized Groups.

All citizens need local civil society organizations and a policy environment that guarantees their opportunity to participate in decision-making and development.

2. Adequate Community Finance. There must be policies that ensure all communities have a fair share - at least 20% - of public resources for achieving local goals in ways that are transparent, timely and publicly accountable.

3. Good Local Governance. Local governments must be democratically elected, financially autonomous and with skills to fulfill their responsibilities to meet the basic needs of their citizens. Local governments need to work in partnership with active citizens through bottom-up planning, social accountability, and the Right to Information.

4. Quality Public Services. Every community must have affordable, reliable access to quality health care, education, water, sanitation, vocational training, food and nutrition security, natural resource management, public safety and justice – preferably through integrated strategies and co-location for efficiency and convenience.

5. Resilience. All communities must establish regularized processes for disaster preparedness and risk-reduction – developing the skills and awareness to be resilient to climate change and social/political disruptions.

Activities: To catalyze the systemic change required for these goals, members work together to share best practices, conduct research and policy analysis, build consortiums for larger-scale action and engage with governments in support of achieving national-scale programs.

Learn more! Join the Movement!

The movement comprises 75 global members, 1500+ community-based organizations and national chapters in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uganda and Zambia, with more in formation. (Updated January 2022)

