



# Forming an MCLD National Association

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Freedom of association is a human right. The formation of civil society networks for collective voice and action are vital to achieving sustainable social and economic progress.

As a recognized global network of national associations, MCLD supports that right by setting and agreeing on a minimum set of standards for its member National Associations so that governments and the general public can be assured of MCLD's integrity nationally and globally.

One role of the MCLD Global Assembly will be to protect these standards and formally accept new National Associations by a transparent application process supported by the Global Secretariat.

## Minimum Standards

- Alignment with the 12-point Global Standard for CSO Accountability, developed by a dozen CSO networks from around the world. (<https://csostandard.org>)
- Commitment to the Values, Principles and Goals of MCLD
- Democratically selected and gender-balanced association leadership (chairs or co-chairs or steering committee) from local CSOs or country nationals of good repute.
- At least 10 members of which at least five are local CSOs.
- A local constitution consistent with the local CSO legal requirements (whether they intend to register locally or not) including local standards for membership. This constitution should also be consistent with the MCLD values and principles.
- A responsive and transparent process of setting goals consistent with building a strong ecosystem for community-led development in their country and in contributing to that process globally
- Appointment of two representatives that participate in meetings of the Global Assembly, no more than one of whom can be male.
- Appointment of a coordinator, who is a citizen of that country and based there, to work in close, regular partnership with the Global Secretariat.
- Participation in peer learning and key strategic activities organized by the Global Secretariat.
- Adherence to basic policies on key issues like non-discrimination, child safeguarding, anti-terrorism, anti-money laundering adopted by MCLD.
- MCLD recognises that every national association will form and adhere to its own membership rules. However, those rules should be based on the principles of inclusion and transparency- the foundational values of MCLD. Every National Association will have a documented process for membership and all applicants will be provided with a written explanation about the status of their application.

## Application Process

An association may only refer to themselves as part of MCLD and use the MCLD logo once their application has been formally accepted by the Global Assembly (and during the transition phase by the Global Secretariat). Please note that only an approved National Association (with an MoU) is permitted to use the MCLD logo. Once approved, members of that National Association may use the MCLD logo to show their participation in the movement but not for their independent activities, unless they are being carried out by the NA or have the explicit approval of the NA. MCLD will rely on the member National Associations to ensure that its logo and name is used appropriately.

- A group or network seeking to be a National Association will apply for membership in writing to the Global Secretary.
- Once an application has been received, the Global Secretary will arrange for a call with all the interested organizations in that country along with the regional coordinator to go over the process.
- Application shall be made in writing in English or the official local language, affirming agreement with the minimum standards, listing the names of member CSOs/individuals and providing letters of recommendation as outlined below.
- Applicants shall include letters of recommendation from two organizations whose reputation can be known by the Global Secretariat/ Assembly.
- MCLD Global Secretariat will provide all applicants with a written explanation on the status of their application within 3 months of receipt of the full application package.
- The Global Secretary will take all NA applications to the membership committee of the Global Assembly along with a report on due diligence for their review. During the initial transition phase, the review will be carried out by the Global Secretary with support from the relevant regional coordinator.
- After the initial due diligence, if approved, a group/ network seeking to become a NA will be recognised as a *National Association Under Formation*. As a NA under formation, the group may participate in all MCLD activities and events and be part of the all NA coordination calls. It could mobilize members saying that it is an MCLD NA under formation and be invited to participate as observers in the Global Assembly. However, an NA under formation may not call itself MCLD, use the MCLD logo or send members to the Global Assembly. It is also not allowed to formally register using the MCLD name.
- NAs under formation will receive support and guidance from the regional coordinators and the MCLD Secretariat. They have to demonstrate alignment with MCLD values and processes and regularly meet for collective reflection and action. An NA under formation whose members meet regularly for at least a year and set up norms and processes aligned with MCLD values will be recognised as an MCLD NA by the Global Assembly on the recommendation of the Global Secretary. At this time, the NA under formation will be invited to sign an MoU that recognises them as a MCLD NA with the right to use its name and logo and send members to the Global Assembly.

- We recommend that MCLD NAs wait for a period of at least 12-18 months to ensure socialization of values, trust and mutuality among its members before formally registering in their country. Regional coordinators will support you during this process.

Once a National Association has been formally accepted, it will be listed on the MCLD website, will be able to call itself an MCLD National Association and will have access to all learning materials, training, calls and events organized by MCLD. Please note that MCLD strives to ensure visibility, access and funding for national associations. **However recognition as an MCLD National Association does not automatically guarantee any funding for the National Association, its members, steering committee or coordinator.**

*The diagram below outlines the formation process.*

