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TAAP'ing in to Community Led Development (CLD)

What is Community Led Development (CLD)? What are its' lessons for the development of the TAAP Inclusion Approach and Toolkit? We spoke with [Dr. John Coonrod](#), Executive

Vice President of The Hunger Project to learn more about CLD's transformational approach, its' champions, challenges and successes.

According to the [Movement for Community Led Development](#), "Community-led Development (CLD) is the process of working together to create and achieve locally owned visions and goals. It is a planning and development approach that's based on a set of core principles that (at a minimum) set vision and priorities by the people who live in that geographic community, put local voices in the lead, build on local strengths (rather than focus on problems), collaborate across sectors, is intentional and adaptable, and works to achieve systemic change rather than short-term projects." The Movement's website notes its' alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, stating that "As individuals and organizations committed to the successful implementation of the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we call for enhancing the power and capacity of communities to take charge of their own development." The systems thinking at the core of the approach is evident in its focus on investing in organizations; developing leadership and self-reliance; demonstrating to local government the advantages of social capital and social cohesion; and ensuring community-based minority organizations are linked into national and global networks where they can fight independently for their rights.

The Movement for CLD, which is an open collaboration of its 42 members, seeks to take community-led development from traditional small projects to a level that transforms society. CLD works with grassroots organizations and local governments to establish formal partnerships, set applicable vision and priorities, and together, work to achieve them. This approach of systematically strengthening the self-reliant development of communities has evolved as a methodology from the 1920s, inspired by the Freedom Movement in India and the Rural Reconstruction Movement in China. According to Dr. Coonrod, CLD was largely marginalized from the international and national policy agenda in the mid-1980s due both to the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Process (SAP) and the need to address global health challenges. Many development actors continue to believe that investing in strong community-level institutions is the "right" way to do development -- the approach most consistent with human dignity, agency and accountability. Numerous countries - from Brazil to Afghanistan to Indonesia to Kenya - have witnessed the success of national support for bottom-up approaches and have led a resurgence in interest in CLD. In addition, key challenges of the SDG era – climate change, infectious diseases, women's economic empowerment -- require integrated strategies at the community level.

Movement members believe in a gender-focused, transformative process that "*empowers citizens and local authorities to transform entrenched patriarchal mindsets and take effective action.*" One example is Oxfam's [Female Food Hero \(FFH\) Initiative](#), an innovative approach that uses a reality TV show format to recognize the achievement of rural women who are small stakeholder farmers and provides evidence of how a platform for women to be agents of change

can benefit entire communities. An NPR story on the FFH program, "[Female Farmers find Fame and Fortune on Reality TV Show](#)" relates that 'The idea for the initiative came about after campaigners at a regional Oxfam meeting in Africa decided they needed to change how people were talking about female farmers. 'A lot of what we were doing for smallholder women farmers wasn't having an impact,' says [Eluka Kibona](#), who manages Oxfam's involvement with the show. They wanted less of a "pity party" and more of a "celebration that would give them the status they deserve," she adds.

Another example is the Hunger Project's work in [India](#), which empowers women elected to local government in more than 2,500 panchayats (clusters of rural villages), to meet the development needs of their communities. "Across seven states of India, these women lead 14.3 million people. At the regional level, the Hunger Project facilitates federations of women leaders to strengthen their voice and provide a platform for learning and exchange."

As with any social movement, CLD has encountered a few challenges. The biggest challenge is the prevailing top-down, command-and-control siloed accountability system of most development investments – in other words, the patriarchal mindset institutionally expressed. Transforming the way communities finance their own development requires a profound transformation of mindset. Coonrod notes, "A correlate of this is that – because CLD has been off the agenda since 1985 and has had very little funding – there is lack of well-organized literature and evidence upon which to base funding."

The TAAP team applauds the commitment to gender integration that is at the center of the CLD approach. We look forward to engaging with the Movement to explore further how the community led development approach can be applied in programs that are sensitive to other traditionally marginalized people (LGBTI people, racial and religious identity groups, persons with disabilities, etc.). Dr. Coonrod explains that "Virtually all 'modern' approaches to CLD have included very strong gender interventions. One of the failures of the 'pre-Beijing' approaches to CLD was that they empowered existing traditional community leadership structures that were generally patriarchal and non-democratic." Dr. Coonrod further explains that "Just as with gender, it will be the collective power of marginalized groups, organized, connected and operating within a political structure friendly of community-level civil society – that will ensure individuals the ability to secure their rights. Building the rights awareness and capacity of both participatory local governance and local civil society among all groups is the heart of the work of CLD. Attitudes can actually change more quickly at the community level – face to face – than in society as a whole."

The TAAP Inclusion team commends the members of the Movement for CLD as it continues to "inclusivize" this innovative community led development approach.

Photo: Village Satoli Women, India, 2014. Courtesy of Jennifer Collins-Foley, World Learning.



How Can Inclusion (Matters) Improve People's Lives?

In a recent [blog](#), **Maitreyi Das**, co-author of the World Bank's 2013 flagship report, *Inclusion Matters: The Foundation for Shared Prosperity*, asks, "What happened as a result of the *Inclusion Matters* [report](#)? It made a big splash in the world of ideas but what did it do to improve people's lives? This is not to say that ideas don't affect the lives of people, but ideas need to percolate into practice. How do we know if a report has been relevant for development *practice*?"

The *Inclusion Matters* report has inspired the TAAP team and its partners to respond to its call to action. The TAAP Approach seeks to operationalize the evidence-based study of social inclusion and findings from the *Inclusion Matters* report through a systematic and analytical integration of inclusion sensitivity and responsiveness throughout an inclusivized program cycle. We are already seeing promising results from the TAAP application in the [LEAD-Mongolia](#) project and will be sharing news soon regarding pilots with TAAP partners in Jamaica, Algeria, Egypt and Moldova!

While the TAAP approach seeks to operationalize the *Inclusion Matters* report into development *practices*, Das points out that the report has also been used as a foundation for *training*. Shortly after the release of the report, the World Bank organized a one-week training on social inclusion in Uganda with the following goals: 1) to enhance the understanding of social inclusion and the opportunities and challenges presented by its changing context; 2) to expand the sets of indicators and methods used to measure well-being and to assess the impacts of policies, especially on groups of the population at risk of exclusion; and 3) to discuss how to use a social inclusion lens in the design of policies and programs.

The resulting [training package](#) consists of two main parts exploring why social inclusion is a relevant concept and how it can be achieved. The package also contains seven modules covering issues that are relevant to social inclusion and tools that can be used to achieve it – gender as a driver of exclusion, consultations, subjective well-being, qualitative methods and impact evaluation. Development practitioners, trainers and inclusive development champions are sure to find the modules to be an accessible and comprehensive resource.

The World Bank has also recently updated a webpage on [social inclusion](#). Check it out!

Photo: Documentation Training, Kampala, Uganda, ILEIA, World Bank Flickr, January, 2011.



TAAP'ing Unconscious Bias: Part 2

Some TAAP Tuesday readers may remember that in the May 24, 2016 TAAP Tuesday [edition](#) we highlighted Harvard University Professor Iris Bohnet's

What Works: Gender Equality by Design. Bohnet argued that through the application of behavioral design through de-biasing organizations instead of individuals we can make smart changes that have big impacts on gender equality. In a review by the Wharton School, the author found “that often, despite the best of intentions, efforts at improving women’s status and opportunities on the job falter and even backfire when they focus on changing mindsets. Unconscious bias proves persistent and elusive. Tweaking the practices and procedures by which companies identify, develop and promote talent, however, can improve equality and diversity at ‘shockingly low cost and high speed.’”

A new article in The Atlantic, [“Is This How Discrimination Ends?”](#), also addresses the challenges of bias, noting that there’s plenty of hard data to validate the devastating manifestations and impacts of bias. The author, Jessica Nordell poetically relates that “Bias is woven through culture like a silver cord woven through cloth. In some lights, it’s brightly visible. In others, it’s hard to distinguish. And your position relative to that glinting thread determines whether you see it at all.”

The challenge is to find a way to end bias. Nordell shares an intriguing hypothesis and application put forward by Patricia Devine, a psychology professor and director of the Prejudice Lab. The idea is to develop awareness of the implicit associations that people make (i.e., how certain concepts are linked in a person’s mind) and see those associations as a habit. The researchers strongly contend that bias can be treated as a habit. “Many psychology experiments that try to change implicit bias treat it as something like blood pressure—a condition that can be adjusted, not a behavior to be overcome. The Madison approach aims to make unconscious patterns conscious and intentional.

‘The problem is big. It’s going to require a variety of different strategies,’ Devine says. “But if people can address it within themselves, then I think it’s a start. If those individuals become part of institutions, they may carry messages forward.” The article includes compelling stories of how the Madison approach

has led to increased awareness of bias and improved outcomes two years after a bias-as-a-habit intervention. Stay tuned for more on this intriguing research!

Photo: From iPACE Myanmar Inclusion Training, World Learning, August 2016.

This Week's TAAP Staff Pick:



1 - [Why White Women Must Make the Equal-Pay Fight More Inclusive](#) From Brittany Packnett, vice president of national community alliances for Teach for America and a co-founder of Campaign Zero, this article discusses how the fight for equal pay has, for too long, left women of color out of the conversation. She challenges white women to "not simply feign equality, but behave equitably."

2 - [Why the Only Future Worth Building Includes Everyone](#) Pope Francis delivered a surprise TED Talk on April 25th at the annual TED conference in Vancouver. He challenged the leaders at the conference to build a future society focused on the inclusion of all people. Check out the video of his talk which got a standing ovation from the TED conference attendees.

Have an interesting article to share for TAAP Tuesday? Please share with taap@worldlearning.org.

Photo: Joe Raedle/Getty Images.
