GRASSROOTS MATTER: LESSONS LEARNED FROM COMMUNITY-BASED LOCAL ECONOMIES PROJECTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NGO Committee on Social Development presents the results of its 2015 survey of community-based local economies projects. The 70 projects identified, located in 26 different countries, are local, collaborative groups in which people assessed their own needs and developed economic strategies to meet them. These include participatory economies such as cooperatives; community farming and agricultural projects; small scale industries and entrepreneurship; micro finance and savings groups. Groups served are those most often left behind by other development efforts; many focused on women living in extreme poverty.

Factors that contribute to project effectiveness fall into three broad categories: use of a highly participatory, group approach; careful planning with regular monitoring of what works and does not work; and selection of a reasonable project that fits with local conditions, uses local resources, and yields benefits to the participants. The community-based participatory approach appears particularly effective in achieving social as well as economic benefits. Along with better livelihoods and improved food security, participants gain self-esteem, experience better community relationships, and engage actively in local decision-making.

The lessons learned can be helpful in moving forward to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2015). The projects strongly indicate the interconnectedness of the SDGs and the ability of a single project to address multiple goals. As such, we urge member states to take these lessons and examples into consideration in continuing to develop means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda at national and global levels.

THE REPORT

"Development geared to the satisfaction of fundamental human needs cannot, by definition, be structured from the top downwards. It cannot be imposed either by law or by decree. It can only emanate directly from the actions, expectations and creative and critical awareness of the protagonists themselves. Instead of being the traditional objects of development, people must take a leading role in development." **(Max Neef, Chilean economist)**

Introduction

The launch of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an optimal time to reflect on lessons learned from effective efforts to reduce poverty, enhance equality, and strengthen social integration while protecting the environment. Experts at the 54th session of the UN Commission for Social Development called for a platform for sharing good practices and knowledge for mutual learning, as well as for effective partnerships between governments and civil society organizations, among other groups (United Nations, 2016). It is in this spirit that the NGO Committee on Social Development presents results of its 2015 survey of community-based initiatives to improve people's economic and social well-being.
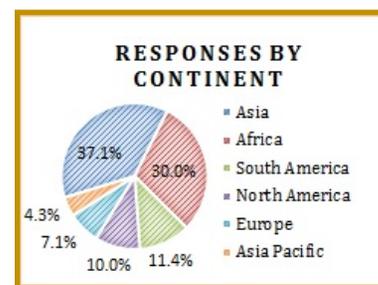
The projects discussed in this report are local, collaborative groups in which people have assessed their own needs and developed economic strategies to meet them. Many are sustainable with limited external inputs. All use a people-centred approach to engage individuals and groups that have been left behind by other efforts. Lessons learned from examining factors that contribute to project success will help in designing policies and projects that will meet the goals of the 2030 Agenda to end global poverty and leave no one behind (United Nations, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

The Committee on Social Development's Grass Roots Task Force regularly surveys grassroots organizations to glean best practices from their efforts on the ground. The 2015 survey focused on local economies projects that engage persons at the grassroots level to address individual and community poverty, often also addressing migration, education, health, and ecology. A semi-structured survey instrument containing 12 questions about grassroots projects, including their effectiveness and sustainability, was circulated in March and April, 2015, to NGOs with diverse locations world-wide. Seventy surveys were returned by the cut-off date. The analysis was conducted by members of the Grassroots Task Force. Most respondents included extensive description and evaluative comments. Because the most useful data are qualitative, the report quotes comments by respondents to illustrate the points made and includes case examples.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Survey responses were received from 26 countries across six continents as follows: Asia—26 responses; Africa—21, South and Central America—8; North America—7; Europe—5; Australia and the Pacific—3. The numbers served varied greatly, ranging from six people creating crafts and jewelry in the United States and seven working on a water project in Zimbabwe, to as many as 350,920 affected by a community development project in India. They addressed needs of over 410,000 persons, from newborn to 95 years. Not all initiatives recorded gender statistics, but it is clear from the descriptions that the majority of those served are women. Participants' educational levels ranged from no education to those in tertiary school and adult literacy programmes.

RESPONSES BY CONTINENT
- Asia
- Africa
- South America
- North America
- Europe
- Asia Pacific

37.1% 30.0% 4.3% 7.1% 10.0% 11.4%

Types of Projects:
The community-based initiatives included the following types:
♦ Participatory economies, such as cooperatives
♦ Community farming and agricultural initiatives
♦ Small scale industries and entrepreneurship
♦ Savings groups and micro finance projects
♦ Education and health projects
Many of the projects included a mix of strategies, such as blending savings with entrepreneurship or agricultural projects with cooperatives.

Geographic Span of the Projects

Oselumense Cooperative Society (p. 6)

Most of the projects surveyed were based in one or more geographic communities, although other definitions of community are possible. Well over half of the respondents said their projects involved persons from one area. That area could be a specific village or city, various slums in one locale, a collection of villages on a mountainside in India, or, as in Tanzania, a sector within an hour's walk. Although programmes had a specific location, they were open to engaging persons from outside their geographic area. For example, a Kenyan project is based in Nairobi, but serves persons who travel there from outside the city. Some initiatives, such as one in Botswana, serve multiple locations. Perhaps the broadest service area was that of a West Bengal initiative which engages persons in 3,624 villages within a 10,000 kilometer radius. Participants from within a 300 kilometer area take part in a Zambian project. Persons travel up to 2 ½ hours to participate in a Peruvian effort.

Vulnerable Groups Served
Many respondents pointed out the significance of identity factors other than geographic location. For example, a project involving Dalits and illiterate women in India reported, "Geographic area is really not the criteria for the initiative. It is thrift and credit which binds them; self-help groups have an identity of their own regardless of geographic location." A Canadian respondent described participants as "people who have fallen through the cracks." In an Indian initiative which engages rag pickers, it was noted that caste played a large role and was a unifying factor. Target groups of other projects included youth, indigenous persons, migrant settlers, persons with disabilities, persons with Hansen's Disease, relocated farmers, slum-dwellers, women who have HIV, mothers, girls on the street, landless persons, mothers of disabled children, and brick-workers. A respondent from Zimbabwe said, "The community is based on clan lines but they are being united by one common issue—fighting poverty that has resulted in a number of developmental issues affecting their different villages."

STRUCTURING PROJECTS THAT WORK

This section of the report will present findings on project structures and processes. These are useful in determining how grassroots projects engage vulnerable groups and sustain their involvement. Important elements include leadership and processes for decision-making, methods for dispute resolution, and sharing of risks and benefits.

Participants of these projects are often "people who have fallen through the cracks."

Participation in Leadership and Decision-Making
Grassroots group-based projects must develop processes for decision-making and address their leadership needs. Various leadership models are used:
♦ Rotational leadership and decision-making by consensus.
♦ Consultative or representational participation.
♦ Rules-based operations such as selection of leaders at specific intervals.

Leadership development is often an important element of

OSELUMENSE COOPERATIVE SOCIETY AND
FAVOUR PWD KEROSENE ENTERPRISE—EDO STATE, NIGERIA

Two cooperative initiatives in Nigeria are empowering persons who might previously have felt excluded. Oselumense Cooperative Society and Favour PWD Kerosene Enterprise are

medium-scale cooperative businesses in the Edo State of Nigeria which were proposed, set up, and are now managed by persons with disabilities. The 10-member Oselumense Coop sells food items while the 15-member Favour PWD Kerosene Enterprise sells kerosene. Both groups began as associations of persons with disabilities registered with the government. Six experience visual impairments while the remainder experience physical disabilities. Among the groups' aims are self-advocacy for inclusion, empowerment, and equalization of opportunities.

Profits pay the salesperson, maintain the facility and repay the non-interest loan from the Daughters of Charity used for startup capital. Specific amounts of the profits then are allocated to individual members. The groups share risks, dialogue, weigh options, seek information and advice, monitor, and use lessons learned for further planning.

The cooperatives have saved local people time and transport costs to fuel stations and markets. Fewer people are dependent upon handouts. Persons with disabilities are now seen no longer as objects of charity but as useful and responsible members of the community. They have greater self-esteem and self-confidence. This initiative involves multiple Sustainable Development Goals, including those dedicated to eliminating poverty and hunger, as well as those promoting gender equality (the groups involve men and women), decent work, reduced inequalities, and sustainable communities.

community-based projects. As stated by a multi-faceted project in India, "the ultimate goal of the community initiative is to be enhancing the target group [at] a grass root level by promoting leadership through capacity building to bring up a sustainable society by themselves." In groups such as neighbourhood-based, self-help units there is a high level of participation of all the members in decision-making while elected leaders do assigned tasks. Leaders are usually elected by consensus rather than majority vote. Members have equal rights and opportunities for attaining a leadership position. . In a very few programmes it is the NGO or other implementing agency that makes the decisions with opportunities for others to give their suggestions. In others, the project is entirely locally controlled. Respondents from a water-point, bore-hole project in Zimbabwe said: "The concept of community-based management implies that the beneficial community are in total control, have full authority and responsibility."

> *In many projects, leaders are chosen by consensus.*

Most of the responding projects use a group approach, organizing participants into small to medium size groups. One project noted that "[the participants] don't even want their number to exceed twenty. Other women who wished to join have been advised to begin another group entirely."

Regular group meetings are the norm throughout the initiatives. Most project groups meet monthly but in some instances meetings are weekly or quarterly. Projects reflect a sensitivity to cultural values and traditions in approaches to leadership and decision-making. At the same time, they chart new territory in expanding the voice and participation of women. Participants have a vested interest in continuance of initiatives and decision-making processes reflect this. There is on-going communication, consultation and dialogue among the participants. Based on participants' opinions and views, limitations are recognized and practices modified to avoid or eliminate problems. A consensus style of decision-making is

beneficial as it ensures inclusion of comprehensive local knowledge in an initiative; for example, local farming methods were embraced in a community agricultural initiative in Nigeria. We have learned not only that capacity-building and opportunity are key to participation and leadership but also that community-based organizations are the best means to facilitate leadership and participation.

Community participation in choosing the nature of a project contributes immeasurably to its success. "Grassroots projects must come from a felt need," said one respondent from Ecuador. Also important is participant involvement in evaluation and recommendations for future action; the Community Participatory Review and Reflection Process (CPRRP) conducted at Bemhiwa Community Development Support Centre in Zimbabwe involved 48 participants.

Dealing with Grievances and Disputes

The maintenance of positive relationships within a group is essential to effective operation of the group. **Open communication**, **transparency** and accountability are most important in sustaining positive relationships. Also, **when** participants have **ownership** and **greater stakes** in the initiative, they are more inclined to find solutions to problems.

> *"Grassroots projects must come from a felt need."*

Groups have developed different ways of dealing with grievances and disputes. Methods for dispute settlement included the following:

♦ Dialogue and open discussion are most frequently used, although this can take many hours or even days as was learned by the Phomphokwe Women's Association in Botswana.
♦ Dependence on tried and tested community practices of elders settling disputes through community dialogue is sometimes effective. For example, respondents from the 'Garden of Oneness' initiative in Zambia stated, "Local

leaders have a way to sit and dialogue and iron out things… and we trust their wisdom."

♦ Mediation or arbitration by outside parties was used in a few situations when consensus could not be reached.
♦ In one or two cases the grievance was resolved by the aggrieved person removing herself from the group or by the group asking the disputant to leave the group when an amicable solution could not be reached.
♦ On rare occasions, the organization sponsoring the initiative intervened in a dispute that could not be solved by initiative participants.
♦ Some groups have a code of conduct which is followed when dealing with a dispute.

Dispute resolution is time-consuming but done transparently, properly and justly it holds future benefit for the initiative as was learned by the Deepshikha organisation in Delhi who said: "As time passed they have become used to it and gained more knowledge about the proceedings and gained trust in the policies."

Burkina Faso project
(see opposite)

Sharing of Risks and Benefits

Local economies projects involve risks as well as promise benefits to participants. Although well-managed projects take many steps to minimize risk, complications can arise. Therefore, it is essential that projects plan for sharing of risks and benefits at the outset.

In most cases, benefits and risks are shared by members of the community according to agreed principles. In the case of micro-finance projects, this was usually done in proportion to the members' investment in the scheme. Dividends were shared proportionately at the end of the year according to the value of their savings. Discussion and dialogue were named as important in cases where risks affected the project negatively. In the case of default of loan repayments, pressure was brought to bear on the defaulter by the other members of

the community. In cases where family crises are the reason for default, most projects indicated that participants discussed the circumstances and found a way of temporarily supporting the members from their own resources. Only one group—a cultural group in Australia—had a formal insurance policy to manage risk.

Engagement with Governments, Civil Society Groups and Others

The majority of the survey responses indicated that other groups and organizations are involved with their initiatives on some level. The range and scope of involvement varied from providing initial funding/resources to more robust, ongoing direct involvement with the projects. The most common partners reported are non-governmental

organizations, followed by governmental bodies.

Some noted the importance of key partnerships within the community to maintain funding streams. Several programmes reported that their partners worked to educate the community members about how to integrate the components of the programme into the culture and lifestyle.

Projects that did not report involvement from other groups or organizations generally were micro finance/loan programmes that are managed by the community members. Savings are generated by the members and dispersing of funds is done through the members of the programme; one noted little interest in involving outside organizations due to "lack of trust and the perception of 'middle men'/agents who in the garb of helping [roles] destroy groups."

Of the 11 projects that reported no outside involvement, the majority said that they believed that involvement from other groups would be helpful. "The cash to the beneficiaries will be increased for the expansion of their businesses and more women will be enrolled."

Most respondents commented that financial assistance, as well as technical and moral support would be most valuable for their projects. "Some good mechanical/technical assistance from the start of the initiative would be helpful for a good, developed project" and "for the initiative to be sustained there is the need for technical supports for members of the initiative and also grants for expansion and maintenance." Another priority area included funding for strategic planning and development of sustainable participation from the community. "We need outside funding resources to help us fully implement the project and to reach out to more families to join this project." Other projects believed that any support or involvement from outside groups would be helpful to their mission. "Certainly, involvement or increased involvement of any other

"Involvement of any other groups will be helpful and welcomed."

10

11

groups will be helpful and welcomed."

Projects that stated that increased involvement would not be beneficial focused on the cultural/programmatic component of the programmes, rather than the financial implications of partnerships. One programme stated that the "services they currently received were adequate for what the programme seeks to provide, and therefore, not necessary'." Another response: "It may not be very helpful to join/involve other groups due to the geographical proximity, lack of common socio-political background."

IMPACT OF GRASSROOTS PROJECTS: BENEFITS TO INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES

Grassroots local economies projects yield economic and social benefits for individuals and families and often for their communities. Some projects also have a positive environmental component, thereby addressing the three dimensions of sustainable development—social, economic and environmental—identified in the 2030 Agenda.

Community members were able to generate income for themselves and their families in all the micro-finance and savings groups.

Projects' Impact on Individuals

Economic Benefits

Most of the projects responding to the survey identified improving the economic conditions of participants as one important goal. The fact that community members had been able to generate income for themselves and supplement their family income was mentioned by all the **micro-finance and savings groups.** This was particularly highlighted in the women-led groups where access to income generating activities and to credit has traditionally been limited or totally absent.

♦ A community-based outreach project among marginalized people living with HIV/AIDS in Kenya helped to provide basic business skills and training to more than 166 people. With loans, some have been able to buy assets such as land or sewing machines while others have expanded
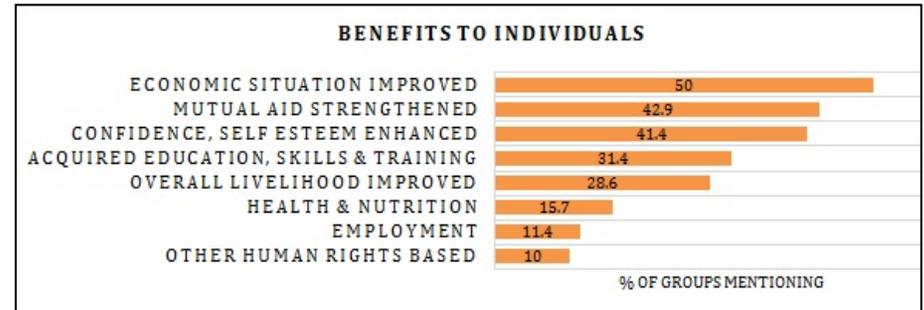
their small business initiatives.

♦ In one example from Bilhar, India a total of 2,083 women participated in 162 self-help groups supported by one Development Center. Most of the women, coming from the Dalit community, were now helped to support their families through self-employment - vegetable cultivation, agriculture, poultry and cattle raising and by setting up small grocery shops.

Other economic benefits mentioned by micro-finance groups included **having access to loans, developing a culture of saving and having more security** in times of economic and family crisis.

♦ Participation in community-based "Savings and Internal Lending Communities" (SILC) groups in several African countries "enables members to access small loans at times of crisis in their families such as death or sickness; provides small loans for fertilizer in the growing season…funds to repair the roof of their hut…and money to pay school fees," according to a group in Zambia.

Savings groups allow members access to loans during a crisis.

In a significant number of cases such as the Osuelumense Cooperative Society in Nigeria, economic benefits were also identified in terms of providing opportunities for self-employment or job opportunities. **Economic benefits** that were sustainable in local conditions were often linked to taking full **advantage of locally available resources.** This was true for both craft and agricultural projects.

♦ In Fiji a recycling craft project which took advantage of paper and plastic waste turned "trash to cash" and had

enabled some families to have a source of livelihood.

♦ Women's groups organized among the Masai pastoralists in Tanzania were able to start bee-keeping and goat projects to supplement their meager income as nomadic pastoralists. Leather is readily available, and skills in processing it are seen as the next step.

♦ In northeast Brazil, a community association of rural producers is promoting indigenous drought-resistant palm trees (licuri) for local processing and sustainable production of palm oil for local food, local cuisine, cosmetics, craft industry and brick making.

One of the most frequently mentioned ways in which the socio-economic wellbeing of individuals was enhanced was by education and skills training. Participants, especially women, often gained skills that enhanced future employment or self-employment. Not only did participants themselves benefit but participation in self-help groups and trainings enhanced their savings and made it possible for more of their children to be sent to school. This was cited across the board in examples from all the continents.

Economic and social benefits of the projects are closely intertwined.

Social Benefits
Economic benefits of community-based initiatives were closely intertwined with **social benefits**, clearly showing that **financial inclusion and social inclusion** are intimately related and mutually re-enforcing. Often, social well-being of participants was also associated with more productivity, **better livelihood strategies and improved living conditions**. Projects identified numerous lasting social benefits to individuals.

Participating in a cohesive group, developing skills and acquiring new sources of income strengthened the **sense of self-esteem of members**, giving them **greater self-confidence and self-worth**. Self-esteem was often accompanied by a strong sense of ownership and pride in what they were able to accomplish.

Nausori Women Recycling Trash represents the intersection of small enterprise with ecology. The project began as a group of five

women who decided to convert discarded trash, such as noodle, biscuit, soap, candy, and chip packaging into marketable goods in Fiji. They were mentored by a Daughter of Charity named Sr. Anna Wiwiek Soepraptiwi. Several years later, trainers have expanded the project to 62 villages.

Participants are mostly homemakers, with some the sole breadwinners in their families. A few youth, who had left school, also learned the technique. They transform rubbish into pencil cases, bags, mats, bracelets, and more. Products are registered with the government under the name Fiji Made. Among the ways Government came on board was through the creation of television advertising encouraging this recycling process. The project also has the support of the Ministry of Women, the Ministry of Trade, and the Ministry of the Environment. Several NGOs are involved.

One woman, who earned $75 per week through plantation work, discovered she could take home twice as much pay by selling goods she fashioned from plastic. A grandmother produced items at home, which funded the purchase of sugar, milk, and book bags for her grandchildren. A teacher carried the concept of respect for the earth into her classroom, where students pick up rubbish and crate crafts. One young man, who helped his mother pick up trash and design products, now wishes to become a doctor because, as he says, "I want people to have a healthy environment and a healthy life."

This project involves, to some degree, at least seven cross-cutting Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 1 (End Poverty); Goal 2 (End Hunger); Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality); Goal 8 (Decent work for all); Goal 12 (Sustainable consumption and production); Goal 14 (Reduce marine pollution); and Goal 15 (Halt and reduce land degradation).

- In the case of a community garden in Zambia it was noted that "people are proud of what they are creating. They have a great sense of ownership…They find a peace and wellbeing in the garden; not for monetary benefit."
- In Burkina Faso, the community initiative had created a social avenue enabling members to share their ideas and their problems and thereby serve a therapeutic function.

Many expressed the view that participants were now able to speak in public and felt empowered to move towards greater independence. This was particularly evident in the comments from women's groups from India, where several noted that because of their engagement in the self-help groups they were no longer so dependent on their husbands.

Literacy skills and other basic skills were highlighted by some of the most marginalized groups. In several cases where participants had been marginalized and stigmatized because of being HIV positive or suffering from leprosy, enhanced self-worth helped them to view themselves in a new light, giving them the confidence to live in the locality and be seen as fully contributing members of a diverse community.

Many projects helped participants feel more independent and confident.

Many of the **social benefits** identified related to **strengthened community relationships** and networks. Participants felt empowered by new knowledge, skills and training, and were able to be more actively involved in their local communities. Being accepted and integrated into local communities meant they enjoyed a wider network of contacts and new friends and greater social standing. They were seen to be contributing members of the community, which was more closely knit and offered mutual support.
- "Our groups savings and loans programmes help improve the relations of the families in the community through helping and supporting each other," reported a project in Cambodia.
- Cultural interchange programmes have been helpful to immigrant groups in UK and US and to aboriginal youth in Australia.

Projects also yielded health benefits. Members of agricultural cooperatives felt that their household food security was strengthened. Growing vegetables locally was associated with better nutrition which, in turn, was associated with health benefits for the family.
- In Peru, a tree-planting project highlighted the fact that members had an enhanced diet "with organic vegetables and edible mushrooms."
- In Brazil, where local plants were being collected and processed to make teas, syrups, healthy food, less money had to be spent on the purchase of medicines in pharmacies.

Enhanced access to clean water, more knowledge about hygiene and preventative health measures made for healthier communities and served as an incentive to people to produce home remedies locally, thereby saving on pharmacy purchases.
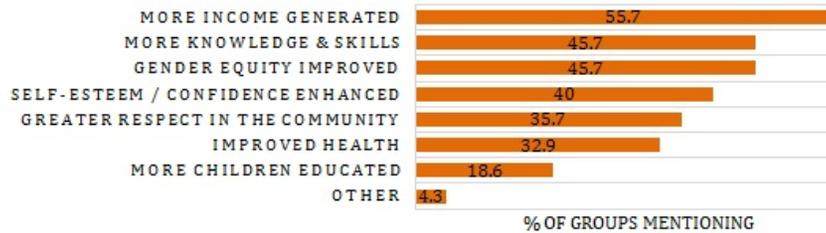

Bemhiwa Community Development Support Center (p. 19)

- One group in Zimbabwe reported that it had established a water point fund, from which its members benefited because there was reduction in diarrhoeal diseases.
- Sessions concerning hygiene have helped members in India to prevent opportunistic infections.

Projects' Impact on Communities
Communities also benefit as their residents gain economically and socially. The **social impact** on the community was noted through greater solidarity and mutual support, expressed through higher levels of participation in community affairs. This, in turn, leads to community level improvements that reach beyond direct participants in projects.
- After the earthquake in Nepal, 507 families from Koshi Dekha Village Development Committee have had to work together very closely to rebuild the houses and schools

IMPACT ON COMMUNITY

	% OF GROUPS MENTIONING
MORE INCOME GENERATED	55.7
MORE KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS	45.7
GENDER EQUITY IMPROVED	45.7
SELF-ESTEEM / CONFIDENCE ENHANCED	40
GREATER RESPECT IN THE COMMUNITY	35.7
IMPROVED HEALTH	32.9
MORE CHILDREN EDUCATED	18.6
OTHER	4.3

that were destroyed. All are in need of each other and focused on the reconstruction work for the welfare of all.

♦ In an area of New York where ethnic tensions can run high, a Women's Craft project has demonstrated that women brought together to engage in a meaningful group activity can learn from one another and from the community.

Greater *social acceptance of minority groups* was expressed by a number of different projects.

♦ For people affected by leprosy in River State, Nigeria, a community-based combined farming initiative had "broken the barrier of stigma." Those affected by leprosy are accepted and loved, allowed to marry and to participate in community affairs. Cooperatives with people with disabilities in Edo State enhanced respect for them.

♦ Through their participation in the Neema Entrepreneurship project in Kenya, women introduced their HIV positive colleagues to organizations which supported persons with HIV AIDS directly, enabling them to gain access to counseling, care, treatment and child sponsorship.

♦ Aboriginal people who attend Baabayn groups in Australia have a greater sense of pride in who they are and have succeeded in raising awareness about the situation of aboriginal communities

For many communities, membership in a group meant having access to a **broader range of community-based services**. Sometimes this was linked to a specific area of need.

♦ Several groups in India, Nigeria and Zimbabwe had

developed concrete initiatives in responding to the HIV pandemic through preventative programmes, as well as providing care and support to their members living with AIDS.

CASE STUDY
BEMHIWA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT CENTER—MARANGE, ZIMBABWE

The Bemhiwa Community Development Support Center came about in response to local felt needs in a drought-stricken rural area of Marange, Zimbabwe, where the effects of widespread HIV and AIDS, hunger and poverty brought women from four villages together in an effort to resolve their problems.

Engaging their local leadership and seeking support from the Diocese of Mutare Community Care Programme they were able to develop a number of income generating projects over a 13 year period. These included a grinding mill, a nutrition garden, a piggery, a tuck shop and a school uniform/dressmaking project, all of which evolved in response to needs and gradually became mutually sustainable. So far, 762 households have benefited from the initiative. Benefits to the families and impact on the community relate to 12 of the 17 SDGs, most notably SDG 1–6, 8, 10, and 12.

In the last six months, the severity of the 2015/16 "El Nino" has had a serious impact on food security, health, and water availability in the community, and threatened the sustainability of some of the projects. However, the resilience of the community has come to the fore, as the villages remain united despite the harsh drought and failed harvest. The participation of young women and girls has increased and there has been sustained moral support for this women-led initiative from traditional (male) leaders. The women-led committee has demonstrated enhanced capacity in managing the center in this time of crisis. In an effort to respond to climate change, they have also adopted drought-responsive initiatives that promote conservation of the natural resources.

- A community initiative in a poor, informal settlement in Brazil was able to develop a greater appreciation for alternative medicine in the local community. The whole community began to take care of plants and the environment and recuperate the value of traditional home-based cures and **there was greater knowledge of public health policies**.

With strengthened social cohesion and the training of local leaders, **new needs were identified and new initiatives** developed to address them.

- Vandalism virtually disappeared in one low-income area in Newcastle-upon-Tyne due to the community-based development of varied concrete activities for young people.

In some cases, the training opportunities offered and greater awareness of social issues had brought about **significant changes in local cultural norms.**

The Community Association of Uruçu (p. 21)

- One striking example was in a social service initiative in a remote rural area of India where awareness training had led to the elimination of female infanticide and a 30% reduction in child marriages.

In the political arena, community-based groups named various ways in which their involvement had impacted local communities. Firstly, participants were better informed about their rights and were better able to voice their grievances and seek justice when their rights were violated. Sometimes this meant that as a marginalized group in the society they were able to be represented in local decision-making structures which had previously side-lined them. Having a voice also meant that the community was better able to challenge unjust structures.

- A community-based youth project in Albania is helping people learn that youth are part of the solution. It is proving to be an advocacy initiative for more investment in youth, with young people being given the opportunity

The Community Association of Uruçu is made up of 28 families in the Mairi area of Bahia, Brazil. The Association has as its goal enhancing family-based sources of income cooperatively in a way that explores the more productive use of local resources while respecting the agro-ecological balance of the zone. One of the indigenous trees that thrives in the semi-arid conditions of northern Bahia is the Licuri Palm, a tree which holds great cultural importance to the local people. The palm nuts can be eaten raw, but also processed to produce coconut food products, biscuits, liqueurs and cosmetics. Licuri milk is a traditional component of local Bahia cuisine. The Community Association is promoting sustainable use of the licuri palm nuts by developing processing

skills locally. 14 people are now working directly in a mini-factory, networking with other rural producers in the area.

In conjunction with CESOL, the Public Center for Solidarity Economy and various faith-based and Government agencies, they have held workshops demonstrating the various uses of the Licuri palm Its seed extract can be used to produce vegetable oil, its leaves are used for craft work and even the shells of the nuts can be made into bricks. The Community Association is encouraging local producers to plant more orchards of indigenous trees and Licuri palms, and providing a market for their organically grown fruit. While the project is not yet self-sustainable, they are working towards this end, hoping to establish increased family income, promoting the practice of sustainable use of local resources and helping to stem the tide of rural urban migration. The initiative highlights an integrated, community-based approach to SDG 1, 2, 8, 12 and 13.

to be animators of change.

- A tree-planting initiative in the mountain communities of Peru has strengthened democracy at local level by involving the legally constituted representative body of the "Junta de Campesinos" in all the decisions and activities.

Because more people were able to exercise their right to vote, democracy was strengthened. Communities that had formerly been marginalized now had more credibility in the public sphere. Political impact was cited most often in the community-based initiatives in India and was often associated with higher motivation and an overall sense of empowerment.

In some countries such as Kenya and Zimbabwe the political impact of the project took on another important dimension, namely, greater tolerance for political and ethnic diversity.

♦ One entrepreneurship project on the outskirts of Nairobi noted that people from different political parties and ideologies were able to work together in the same group in order to achieve the goal of economic empowerment.

♦ In the women-led Bemhiwa rural project in Marange, Zimbabwe, the team spirit that had drawn them to work together as a community of 762 households facing poverty, food insecurity and drought had helped to "neutralize the political tension that used to exist in the four villages."

The impact in the **economic sphere** was noted most in improved economic status at the household level but was also reflected in the community as a whole. People were able to exploit local resources for self-reliance, generate income to support their families, have access to small loans and escape the clutches of the money lenders. Greater financial independence and increased productivity were linked to general improved standards of living and opening up of employment opportunities.

♦ Two cooperatives in rural Edo State, Nigeria established a local market for much-needed items such as kerosene and foodstuffs, thereby providing income for their members and saving people time and transport costs to fuel stations and markets.

In at least half the cases explored, **enhanced gender equality** was explicitly cited as an important outcome of community-based initiatives, an important finding in addressing SDG5.

This was particularly noted by **women's groups**, where participants claimed that their economic contribution to the upkeep of the family had led to greater respect for them as persons and as breadwinners.

♦ Participation in savings groups in India had empowered women to exercise their franchise in elections, thereby becoming leaders in their communities and even confronting men who exhibited a patriarchal mindset. They were able to demand their right to food ration cards from the Government and their children's right to education.

Improved gender equality was explicitly identified as a major outcome in at least half of the grassroots projects.

Women's collective rights have brought about some significant changes at local level. Women said that they now had greater awareness of their rights and were able to advocate more effectively for them. Participation in community-based initiatives had also helped many to have a more critical approach to social and political realities and to stand up against gender based violence and discrimination.

♦ For example, in the Bilhar region of India their demands resulted in the electrification of a village, the construction of a sewerage system, a paved road and the issuing of ration cards and housing allocated in the name of women, as well as reserving 50% of the seats for women in the election of local officials.

♦ Because women have been empowered through learning and practicing conservation farming skills, crop diversification and composting, as well as loan management skills in a rural agricultural project in Kaoma, Zambia, they stand a better chance in fighting against gender based violence.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO EFFECTIVENESS

In order to benefit from the lessons learned from the projects, it is important to identify the factors that contribute to programme effectiveness. This should help new projects to improve their chances of success. Respondents identified many elements that contribute to effective grassroots

projects. These can be grouped into three broad categories: relationships with and between participants; sound project planning and management; and selection of projects that meet participant needs and are appropriate and reasonable given the local context. Most effective grassroots projects **use a highly participatory, group approach and emphasize relationship building**. Regular group meetings contribute to building solidarity and trust. A project in the United States that focused on health and social services identified communication as "the key element for better understanding and relationships." They report that involving everyone with a role to play toward a common agenda worked well. Trust is particularly critical when the groups manage funds such as savings and micro-loan projects. The role of staff varied and different models contribute to success. Many projects said that the participants themselves manage successful projects using group decision-making and problem solving.

A few, however, credited regular "hand-holding" by staff as important to ensure success. The role of sponsoring NGOs varied from providing initial assistance and training to ongoing support. Some degree of common background of members contributes to solidarity and trust, aspects that all groups aim to achieve. A project serving an aboriginal population in Western Australia is run by Elders from the community who share the background of other participants.

Solidarity and trust are extremely important factors in the effectiveness of grassroots projects..

As reported by the response, "the Elders have similar lived experience as those they work with and so are respected and trusted. They are known in the community to be those who take initiative...They have a strong sense of pride in being Aboriginal and all their work is voluntary." A common background is not essential to effectiveness, however. An income generating project in Kenya managed to create trust and cooperation among women from different tribal groups. The groups in this savings and loans project, including two

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CASE STUDY
AN SIOL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT— DUBLIN, IRELAND

The An Siol Community Development project came into existence as a response to the needs of women in a deprived area of inner city Dublin where few had been able to complete basic schooling and there was a high instance of alcohol and gambling addiction among the male population. Sisters from the local parish helped the women form groups and receive training in various skills identified in a needs survey. These ranged from sewing, craft work and child care to assertiveness training. A local employment service was established to help the women access jobs and receive training in interview skills. In response to the drug problem in the area, volunteers from the community set up a group to support "dry users" and their families. By the mid 1990s the women's network was in a position to set up their own community development project and "An Siol" (The Seed) was born.

An Siol aims to address the causes and consequences of social and economic exclusion, acting as a catalyzing support for the work of local residents in identifying and responding to issues of concern and helping to provide local services that enhance their livelihoods and quality of life. The community development project has grown over the 20 years since it was established and now involves about 200 people. Some of the needs to which it responds include homework support for children in primary schools, low cost services to meet the needs of Senior Citizens and training in organizational skills. In response to a crying need in the community a "Personal Counseling and Psychotherapy Service" has been established with the aid of volunteer professionals. Seen in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, the initiative addresses SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 10.

groups of HIV positive women, created and enforce their own Constitution. The project reports that this holds the members together and that they often do jobs for each other during times of personal or family crisis.

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Self-help groups also considered themselves to be **sustainable** because they were connected with the community and had resources to engage members over time. A common strength of those projects that identified themselves as sustainable was the ability to understand the class/caste system and build trust among members that are connected via geography, educational level and familial relations.

Secondly, effective projects tend to be **well planned with regular monitoring and evaluation of what is and is not working**. Clarity of goals was mentioned by several respondents. A rural development project in Bahia, Brazil stressed the importance of setting targets and assessing progress

Chetna Bharati project (p. 28)

towards them through monitoring. Whereas values and good intentions matter, sound management is essential to project effectiveness. An interesting example was provided by a savings and loan group's project in Zambia. The money generated in the project is kept in a safe box with 3 locks; the keys are lodged with 3 different participants and money is only disbursed during group meetings. This demonstrates that trust can be combined with caution and safeguarding of member money. Transparency is also helpful in building and maintaining trust. Training of members is important in building participant capacity.

The third key element is selecting a reasonable project that **takes local conditions into account, uses local resources wherever possible and yields benefits to participants**. As one respondent from a sustainable agriculture project in

Chetna Bharati project (p. 28)

India put it, a project that is successful takes the local situation into account and pitches itself in a manageable mode. Examples are choosing the right kind of crops or animals, and production of products that are easily sold and use readily available raw materials.

♦ An example is a project in a semi-arid part of Kenya that is serving women (and a few men) who are mothers of children with disabilities. Mothers are given a goat and trained to care for goats; they then give the first baby goat born to another family. One factor in the success is the choice of goats: "The goat project is a simple project… Goats are hearty and can eat most anything so they are easy for the women to care for. The goat milk is very nutritious and in high demand."

Factors that improved project effectiveness also contributed to sustainability.

♦ Handicraft projects are more successful if the products are easily sold. The availability of plastic trash in Fiji contributed to the success of the handicraft project in Fiji that converted trash to craft items.
♦ A farming project in India introduced new methods of paddy cultivation and attributed effectiveness to appropriate technologies and to the training provided in use of the technologies.

Successful projects meet the needs of participants. As noted earlier, one respondent indicated "grassroots projects must come from a felt need." Because our survey focused on economic projects, this was fairly easy. Participants shared the need for income, so projects that are income generating address a basic need. As one project noted, the community served is very poor so it is easy to motivate participation. In this case, the project served workers and their children in the brickfields in West Bengal India with community water, sanitation, education and hygiene projects.

Many of the factors that respondents associated with effectiveness were also cited as contributing to project sustainability. Most respondents considered their projects to be sustainable and cited support of their communities and community leadership, contributions to economic empowerment and good project models that could be replicated in other villages or communities.

It is 25 years since self-help groups were started among a Dalit community in an area of India where people were landless, illiterate and dependent on daily wage labor for the upper caste people of the villages. Today some 6,500 women in Chatra District are organized in 591 groups. The community-based initiative focused on the formation of savings groups, each consisting of 10 – 12 people. Through organized struggle, the people confronted landlords, thereby retrieving some 2500 acres of land which was redistributed among the people. This has made it possible for them to cultivate land and carry out income-generating projects. Many have built their own houses.

The initiative has had a far-reaching impact on the community, which is now cohesive, interacting with others beyond caste divisions. Enrolment in school has increased, fewer girls are dropping out of school, and there has been a decline in the rate of child marriage. Immunization rates have increased. There is increased political participation and a large turnout for elections. Women have begun their own movement, numbering 1,200 members and is called the "Struggling Women's Committee for Emancipation." The entire process has been replicated in 9 out of 11 development blocks in the Chatra district. The benefits to individuals and the larger community relate particularly to SDGs 1, 2, 4, 5, 8 and 10.

Factors Hindering Effectiveness of Projects
Fewer respondents identified factors leading to ineffectiveness. Some of those that were identified are factors beyond easy control of projects, including droughts, poor health or migration of participants, and lack of funding. Agricultural projects are hindered by drought or other weather-related disasters.

A sustainable farming project in Delta State in Nigeria suffered from water problems. Some small businesses in a savings and loan project in Nepal failed due to inability to control the required temperatures to sustain mushroom growth that members had invested in.

The project serving families working in Indian brick fields commented that families seldom return to the same field the next year. As such, the project is serving new groups each year and cannot build long-term relationships. Poor health of participants hindered a project serving women with HIV/AIDS when they became too ill to repay their loans.

Lack of funding was mentioned by many projects as a barrier to effectiveness. Although some NGOs could do more to raise funds, serious obstacles exist. A programme in Ireland reported that the government had ceased all funding for informal education, leaving them few options. Moreover, in general agricultural and educational initiatives require more partnerships and funding from outside resources. A community-based agricultural enterprise project in Botswana said: "I see these grassroots initiatives are extremely fragile. They can only survive with both outside financial help and dedicated leadership." Projects with an education component in India and in Tanzania spoke of the need for financial support to extend their work with people who are marginalized and illiterate.

Lack of funding is a serious barrier to project effectiveness.

Poor planning and lack of staff with sufficient knowledge can interfere with success. In Botswana, a project that involved women in jewelry production said "without regular orders, the initiative collapses," indicating the need for successful marketing in advance. Finally, a few respondents noted lack of participation or commitment to the project, or interference by other outside actors, including government departments, as impediments to project effectiveness.

This project operates in 4 panchayats of the Maner Block in the Patna District and 8 Municipal Corporation constituencies in the Patna District of India's Bihar State. They organize at the local level and are in the process of organizing all 58 slums, so as to raise people's voices for shelter rights. Their priority is ensuring social security, especially food security, for the most deprived communities. They educate children in 6 villages in the area. They have adopted the bridge course, so the children receive foundations to move on. The project has about 10 youth groups comprised of both boys and girls, so that young people can develop their capacities. These groups have been able to respond to some of the youth's needs.

The initiative provides skills training to around 100 young girls and women each year. There are about 20 women's groups, in which women gather not only to save, but also to think about their life and the need to bring about change. Women have, to a great extent, brought about change in their way of life and have dared to move on in spite of challenges. To date around 700 women have been trained. At least 50% have become economically empowered and gone on to open up their own small businesses. LIAISON AND ADVOCACY with the government and bureaucracy has brought us to the macro-level of involvement. So, having micro-level experience at a rural level, and semi-macro experience at the urban level, we are able to move into the macro level. The SDGs directly addressed by this initiative include SDG 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 10,and 11.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The data from self-reports of the 70 grassroots projects reported here demonstrate **innovative, sustainable models for economic and social development** with useful lessons for the 2030 Agenda. The final report of the 54th session of the Commission for Social Development cited as the goals for the future to "end poverty by 2030, leave no one behind and build a life of dignity for all on a healthy planet" (United Nations, 2016). To achieve these will require deep commitment and intensive work by all stakeholders. The results of our survey underscore that grassroots projects have an important role to play. Indeed, as one respondent from Kenya put it, "small projects that are well managed may be more effective than major governmental initiatives."

This suggests the importance of interventions and indicators that encourage and capture the interrelated nature of social, economic and environmental development.

Projects that are community-based and develop at the grassroots are most likely to identify and engage those who have been left behind by other development efforts. Reaching the most vulnerable is very difficult and requires knowledge of local cultures and conditions and a sustained investment in the community. Most of the projects reported here are serving the most vulnerable groups. They include people living in extreme poverty and often further oppressed by stigma—those with HIV/AIDS, leprosy, or disabilities; Dalits and other stigmatized societal groups; migrants, people living in isolated rural areas; and illiterate women. These

We strongly recommend the use of a grassroots model in the 2030 Agenda.

groups are seldom engaged in mainstream social and economic institutions and therefore traditional approaches will continue to leave them behind and fail to meet the 2030 Agenda. However, community–based initiatives that engage **stigmatized groups** in responding to local needs have been shown to play an important role in fostering **attitude change** in the larger community.

Since 2012, women of diverse ethnicity in Newburgh, New York, have been perfecting craft and jewelry-making skills and marketing their products. Financially, all women who make and sell jewelry benefit. Socially, all benefit because classes are held at a place where women can learn new skills and enjoy the company of other women. The craft center is open to anyone who wants to be trained, with a stable six-member group maintaining the base. Currently, there are 6 women selling products and directly receiving the money. In addition to making new jewelry, the women repurpose donated jewelry.

Newburgh is an area in which persons of different ethnicities can experience tensions. This initiative demonstrates that women brought together to engage in peaceful, meaningful activity can form community and learn from one another in a non-competitive environment. One major issue with the initiative, however, is the fluidity of participants. There is no way to be able to determine if the women who teach will be able to return the following year due to changes in their circumstances. The initiative has potential to become completely economically sustainable, if teachers are available and adequate numbers of jewelry are made and sold, effectively advancing the 2030 Agenda through SDGs 1, 4, 5, 8, and 16.

The participatory, small-group approach used by grassroots projects is particularly effective in achieving social as well as economic benefits and enhancing social and financial inclusion. Improved self-esteem and increased community and political participation are indicators of a "life of dignity."

Many of the projects emphasized participation and leadership of women and achieved notable gains in women's empowerment and agency, having a positive impact on gender relations.

Engagement and self-esteem also seem to increase people's capacity to invest in caring for their physical environment. A number of projects include sustainable agriculture and care of local forest resources.

The goal of local economics projects at the grassroots is to facilitate family livelihoods that are sustainable and improve well-being over the long term. Project sustainability is an important interim step. The majority of the responding projects did, indeed, consider their efforts to be sustainable, especially with ongoing involvement from other groups. They also exemplify how resilience in times of shock is a strong indicator of the long term sustainability of community-based initiatives and holds the key to development. **Our findings lead us to strongly urge use of grassroots models to advance the 2030 Agenda.** However, that is not to negate the role of governments. The respondent from Kenya, who finds small projects more effective than large governmental initiatives, nonetheless urges partnerships: "government and other organizations could help by reducing taxes and restrictions on small business, by improving infrastructure so products can reach market, and by providing free training and education in small business, financial management and small scale agriculture." These policies would encourage scaling up of local projects and their replication.

Finally, the survey results strongly underscore the interrelated nature of the individual Sustainable Development Goals. Although they were initiated prior to formulation and adoption of the SDGs, the projects reported here all address multiple goals simultaneously and in an integrated way. They report progress towards SDGs 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, and 16, and in many instances integrate aspects of goals 3, 4, 6 and 15.

The initiative began in July, 2000, at the Paroda Mission in Goa, India, in a remote village predominately inhabited by aboriginal Kumbis and Gaudas. To date, 6 self-help groups, each with 15 to 20 tribal women, mostly of the same social and economic status, have been functioning within the community. Alongside educating the women on sanitation, human rights and the various government schemes available to them, training enabled the women to begin savings groups and micro finance initiatives. Every month Rs.200 are collected from each woman and two of the women share responsibility for depositing the money into a saving account. Loans are distributed on a needs basis, with the group assessing the most deserving case. The interest rate is much lower than that of money lenders, enabling women to escape from vicious money-lending practices and having to pay back excessive interest, practices which worsen their economic situation.

It was identified that in enabling women to have a better quality of life, they must first be empowered economically, (SDG 1,5 and 8) and through the groups they are able to fulfil daily needs and develop self-confidence. The group works with other NGOs on various civil and consumer issues, such as water, sanitation (SDG6), and road safety inter alia (SDG9), yet is in need of funding assistance to become economically sustainable. At present, a forum working on civic and consumer issues has been formed, with each member contributing funds.

The Kaoma Sustainability Project was originally developed, and continues to build on, the expressed need of local people, namely, hunger. Working with the most vulnerable people in the area, these projects help alleviate root causes of poverty by teaching people to help themselves through various forms of education.

Groups are comprised of some of the poorest persons in five areas who are willing to use methods of conservation farming, including composting rather than using commercial fertilizer, inter-cropping, rotating crops, and planting crops and trees that contribute nutrients to the soil. Because land is easy to obtain, but jobs are so scarce, farming is the only way that most local people will survive and become self-sustainable. Each group was given two oxen, an ox cart, a plow, and a reaper to assist them in generating income for their group. Fish is one of Zambia's primary foods. Property purchased for the pilot project features a natural spring. Fish ponds, which have been dug by hand, allow clients to learn to raise fish, which provides food and generates income for other needs. From December through February, there is great demand for fish due to a government ban on fishing in public lakes and rivers.

Originally begun as a programme for making school uniforms for poor, outlying schools, a tailoring initiative has expanded to include merchandise such as men's shirts, women's dresses, curtains, sheets and bedspreads. The group focuses on items not available in Kaoma, so as to avoid competition with local tailors. Not only do these items serve some of the people's needs, but they also generate income to help support the ministry of the Kaoma Sustainability Project.

Note on Survey Methodology and Limitations

The survey reported in this document was conducted to glean useful lessons from grassroots level local economies projects. The survey was not a scientific research project and no sampling methodology was used. Survey instruments were distributed to grassroots affiliates of organizations belonging to the NGO Committee for Social Development. Therefore, results are not intended to be generalizable to all NGO or civil society efforts. The responses represent a diverse array of types of projects, beneficiary groups, and come from all continents. The descriptions and perspectives provided should be useful in informing policy and future programming.

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Asia		
Cambodia	Takeo Integrated Comm Development Program (DC)	
India	Asansol Burdwan Seva Kendra: Self Help Initiatives (IBVM); Athmik Organizing Awareness Campaign (IBVM); Chetna Bharati: Self Help Group (SCN); Deepanjali: Empowering women through Self-Help Groups (IPA); Deepshikha: Empowerment Initiative (IPA); Holy Redeemer Hospital: Community Health Initiative (IPA); Howrah Danesh Sk. Lane Navadoy Seva Niketan (IBVM); Jan Kalyan Gramin Vikas Samiti: Learning Centres (IPA); Kushdan Community: Savings Groups and Micro Finance (IPA); Land and Education Issues for Musahar community (MMS); Maharashtra Pabodhan Seva Mandal (MPSM) - Sustainable Agriculture; Menhipathar Mutipurpose Cooperative Society (MMS); Naihati Prolife Community Development Programs (IBVM); Navjeevan Development Centre (SND); Navjyoti Women's Empowerment Programme (SCN); Sabuj Sangha: Pond-Based Integrated Farming and paddy cultivation (IBVM); Samachidhar - Savings Self Help Group (MMS); Seva Vardhini - Indigenous Community (IPA); Tagore Society for Rural Development - Rajnagar Khayrasol Project; The Hope Foundation: Jana Swasthya Suraksha (IBVM); Usha Multipurpose Cooperative Society (USHA) (IBVM); Varusanadu social service society (IPA)	
Nepal	Koshi Dekha Village Development Committee (SCN); Navjyoti Women Empowerment Program (SCN)	
Philippines	Small Scale Entrepreneurship Project (DC)	
Africa		
Botswana	Phomphokwe Women's Association (OSU)	
Burkina Faso	Tabor House Microfinance Project (DC)	
DRC	Kinzono Agricultural Project (RSCJ)	
Ghana	Microcredit women saving group (DC)	
Kenya	Income Generation Programme - Kitale (DC); Loreto Neema Project (IBVM); Y.E.S. - Youth Empowerment, Goat,Microfinancing Projects (DC)	
Nigeria	Community Plaintain & Fishpond Farming Initiative (DC); Dream- HIV AIDs service of St. Vincent's Hospital (DC); Ifeoma Cooperative Society for women (DC); Ile Maria Iwaro Oka Akoka Initiative : HIV orphans & vulnerable women (DC); Madonna Farm (DC); Marian Rehabilitation Home Combined Farming Initiative (DC); Oselumense Cooperative Society/Favour PWD Kerosene Enterprise (DC); Village Savings and Loans initiatives (DC)	

Africa (cont'd)	*Tanzania*	Notre Dame Osotwa Centre : Women's Self Help Groups (SND)
	Zambia	Conservation Farming in Kaoma West Province (IPA); Garden of Oneness (IPA); Mulongo Savings and Internal Lending Community Groups (IBVM)
	Zimbabwe	Bemhiwa Community Development Support Centre (RSHM); Caritas - Mt Darwin & Rushinga Community Water Point (RSHM)
North America	*Canada*	Centre de Services Communautaires Vanier (CSCV) - (UNANIMA-DW); St Mary's Home: School and Community Center (UNANIMA-DW); The Gathering Place (IPA)
	Mexico	Communidad Crece A.C. - Women's empowerment (RSCJ)
	USA	Proyecto Juan Diego (DC); Women's Craft Project - Newburgh (IPA)
Europe	*Albania*	Mary Ward Loreto Youth Foundation: Training & Employment (IBVM)
	Great Britain	Fenham Association of Residents (RSCJ)
	Ireland	Corduff Development Group (RSHM); An Siol Community Development Project - Dublin (RSHM)
	N. Ireland	St. Anne's One World Group - Ceili Dance Class (RSHM)
Central/ South America	*Brazil*	Assentamento 17 de Abril (Informal Settlement Project) (DC); Community Association of Urucu-Mairi, Bahia (RSHM); "Raios de Sol" Women's Group (DC)
	Ecuador	Canto a la Vida - (Hospital Padre Carollo Outreach Programme) (IPA)
	El Salvador	Proyecto Radio Comunitaria Jovenes (IBVM)
	Peru	DCPA Environmental Cultural Productive Development (IBVM); Lamud Huerto Agricultural Project - Luya district (IBVM); Sociedad Parroquial Botica "JUAN PABLO II" (IBVM)
Oceania	*Australia*	Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation (UNANIMA); The Sisters' Place: Outreach to Homeless Women (IPA)
	Fiji Islands	Nausori Women Recycling Craft (DC)

DC	Daughters of Charity	**OSU**	Ursuline Sisters	**SND**	Sisters of Notre Dame
IBVM	Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary	**RSCJ**	Society of the Sacred Heart		
IPA	International Presentation Association	**RSHM**	Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary	**UNANIMA**	UNANIMA International
MMS	Medical Missionary Sisters	**SCN**	Sisters of Charity of Nazareth		

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July 2016
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