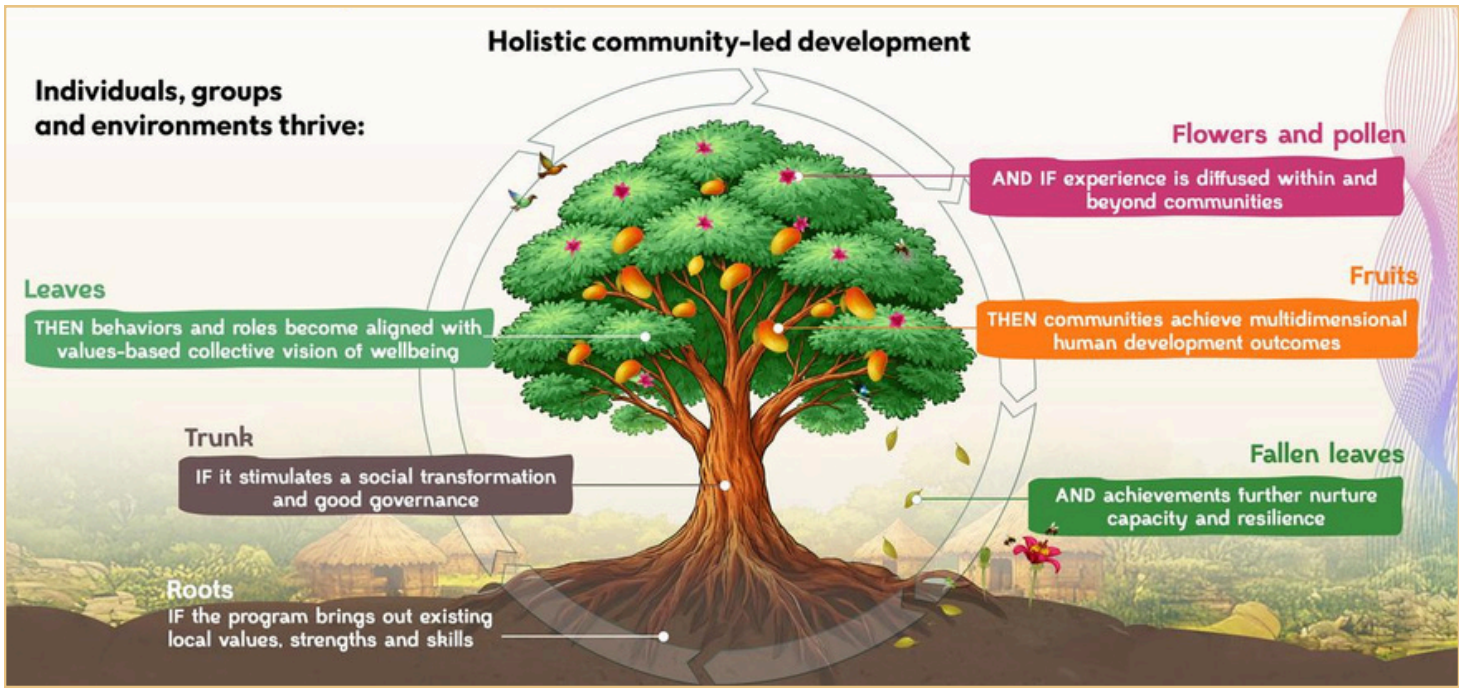
FULL SPECTRUM
EVIDENCE AND LEARNING INITIATIVE

Scaling impact and wellbeing through the study and application of holistic, community-led development

*There is growing recognition of the need to integrate community voice, vision and decision making into the design and delivery of development programs. The **Holistic, Community-Led Development (HCLD)** approach has demonstrated this integration can work in practice. HCLD supports communities to collaboratively create a collective vision of the future they seek and to work together to achieve that vision. Despite its success, there is limited understanding of this approach and of its effectiveness.*

The Full Spectrum Evidence and Learning Initiative (FSELI) is a collaboration of NGOs, grassroots practitioners, and researchers committed to enabling a systemic shift in how HCLD is understood and implemented. At its core are two organizations—**Tostan** and **One Village Partners**—that have witnessed participatory social transformation firsthand over decades. Alongside them are researchers from **Institute of Development Studies** with support from **IDInsight**. First catalyzed by **Legado**, the initiative is now moving into a multi-year, multi-country, mixed-methods evaluation that will identify ***how*** and ***why*** HCLD works.

Theory of Change



Our collective experiences show that the HCLD approach brings out and reinforces the existing strengths and capabilities of partner communities.

The shared HCLD approach reinforces and, critically, regenerates and sustains social transformation and human development outcomes. HCLD is not a linear process, but one that is iterative, building on actions and impact as it grows in an organic way. This theory of change guides our research and our collaborations.

What we are learning...

We already have significant evidence that the HCLD approach results in multidimensional outcomes that span social, economic, wellbeing, and other human development outcomes. Now, we want to deepen our understanding of this approach through a rigorous evaluation of HCLD programs, in ways that support other practitioners to refine their programs and methodologies, but also in ways that support decision-making by policy makers and changemakers. This will help the HCLD scale and accelerate a social change, leading to more thriving communities in more places.

Research Questions:
(1) Whether HCLD contributes to social transformation, governance, and human development outcomes; (2) how change happens, including mechanisms and contextual conditions; and (3) how change is sustained and scaled.

...why it matters...

As we develop increased knowledge on HCLD, as well as the practical tools to put this knowledge to use, we are building collaborations with practitioners and grassroots actors. Our aim is to open up this evaluation, to share learning as we discover it, and to share tools for collaborators to test and adapt in their own programs and context. This simultaneous field building exercise will refine the tools even as it contributes to our learning. We hope this will accelerate the practical application of HCLD approaches everywhere.

..and what you can do.

Now is the moment to catalyze broader change in the sector by rigorously studying *how* and *why* this approach works, and by making that learning valuable to practitioners and funders alike. Doing so will help realize the genuine shift in power that localization has long emphasized but rarely enacted—one in which a community's voice and decisions become the defining anchor of any social intervention.

This vision can be realized with your help. Join the collaboration with Full Spectrum Evidence and Learning Initiative: amplify our work, engage with the tools, and help us generate the evidence we need to scale this approach globally.

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institute of development studies

Tostan
Dignity for all

IDinsight

One Village
PARTNERS