

# The 3C Model for Grassroots-led Development

## *Lessons learnt and ways forward*

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### Introduction

Promoting bottom-up approaches to development is a major challenge different development actors face. How to institutionalize, sustain and scale-up grassroots participation in development projects? To answer this question, a new model for grassroots-led development (GLD) has been developed building on fieldwork conducted in Egypt and Senegal. The model goes beyond 'context matters' to *explaining how and why context matters*. The aim of the model is to allow communities to play a meaningful role in development processes and to enhance the role that the state, development practitioners and donor agencies can play in supporting these grassroots-led processes.

### The 3C Model

The 3C model for Grassroots-led Development identifies three main processes for successful GLD:

- (1) *Conscientization at individual level;*
- (2) *Conciliation at communal level and*
- (3) *Collaboration at institutional level.*

The model emphasizes the importance of behavioral change, collective agency and local institutional reforms for more sustainable, scalable and successful grassroots-led processes.

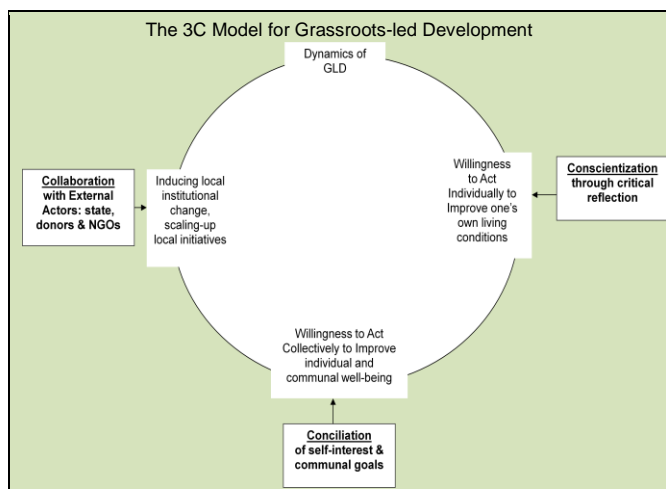


Figure 1. The 3C model for GLD

The figure shows how conscientization allows for critical reflection, conciliation links individuals' self-interests and communal goals and collaboration nurtures local institutional reforms to sustain GLD.

### Dynamics of Grassroots-led Development

Grassroots-led development (GLD) is defined as *an improvement in one or more aspects of human wellbeing brought about by people acting as agents of change in collaboration with other development actors at the grassroots level*. The 3C model shows that grassroots-led processes can be promoted and sustained by inducing behavioral change at the individual's level, nurturing agency at the individual and collective levels and supporting local reforms at the institutional level.

*Conscientization* allows citizens to think critically about their lives and nurtures their 'capacity to aspire' for better ones. *Conciliation* blends individual and communal interests and renders them mutually reinforcing. *Conciliation* builds a common vision for the initiation and sustainability of GLD. Collaboration creates and supports working and inclusive partnerships between local communities and other development actors to promote local institutional reforms and enhance the scaling-up and long-term impact of GLD.

### Tostan's CEP and the 3C Model

The model has been developed based on empirical work on three case studies of grassroots-led initiatives in Egypt. In 2014, it has been applied on Tostan's community empowerment program (CEP) in Senegal. Tostan's program includes three components which align with the 3C-processes: (1) Human Rights education classes (conscientization); (2) community management committees (conciliation) and (3) organized programme diffusion for accelerated social transformation (collaboration).

### Application of the 3C Model in Senegal

Exploring the dynamic processes of conscientization, conciliation and collaboration through Tostan's CEP in rural villages in Thiès and a semi-urban area in Kaolack, the fieldwork aimed to explore the following:

- **Changes** witnessed at individual and communal levels as a result of the human rights classes
- Role of the **CMC** in creating a communal vision
- **Role of NGOs, Donor Agencies and the State** in GLD
- **Communal needs** and how they can be addressed
- **What Works (or not) for GLD** and why

## Findings from Senegal

Applying the 3C model on Tostan's CEP revealed the following findings:

On the **Conscientization** front,

- **Behavioural change** is pre-condition for GLD, it takes time to induce it, but it helps sustain GLD.
- Understanding **rights is not enough**, without gaining the required skills (problem-solving, financial management and income generating activities).
- Promoting a **non-confrontational & long-term** approach; and dealing with setbacks are essential.
- Helping individuals **aspire for better lives** and working them to reach these lives - a process of understanding *'who they are'*
- Increasing **self-confidence** and showing respect to **local knowledge** and local culture.
- Human rights classes as spaces for **deliberation and discussion of rights and responsibilities**
- **Changes in intra-household relations** between husbands and wives; mothers and their children.
- **Role of Facilitator** is crucial to resolve communal conflicts and be catalyst for conscientization process



Image1. Village facilitator of Keur Mbaye Seyni, Thies with research collaborator Ben Cislighi and translator, Malik Ba.

On the **Conciliation** front,

- **Creation of a communal vision** is crucial for GLD.
- Process of reconciling individual and communal interests **starts in the classroom** and has **spill over effects** on decision-making processes within the household and within the community and between communities and state officials.
- **Creation of a collective awareness** and need for to **'unlock the communal imagination'** for them to realise that *'joint effort brings them further'*.
- **Financial sustainability** is crucial to ensure the continuity of communal activities.
- Role of **local and religious leaders** is indispensable for conflict resolution and communal mobilisation

- **Changes in power relations** result from inclusive decision-making processes and public deliberation.
- The **Role of the CMC** is essential to plan, act and resolve communal conflicts



Image 2. Village members of Keur Mbaye Seyni, Thies.

On the **Collaboration** front,

- The **State acts as a 'door-keeper'** providing 'political cover' for NGOs to work with local communities
- **The Role of NGOs as facilitators/mediators** to raise communal awareness and **'preparing the terrain'** for more effective development interventions at the grassroots.
- **The Role of CMC federations** is crucial for enhancing the bargaining power of local communities and their access to funds.
- **Scaling-up NGO activities and their integration in local development policies** is difficult but much needed for the sustainability of GLD.
- **NGOs need to coordinate their activities** for more effective support to grassroots-led processes.

## Impact and Ways Forward

The project findings will be shared with Tostan national coordinators from 6 African countries – Senegal, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania and The Gambia. Donor agencies and development practitioners will also participate in an impact workshop to share knowledge on the challenges and potential of grassroots-led processes and how to effectively support them. The workshop will result in a practitioner's guide on 'What Works for Grassroots-Led Development'.

## More Information

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