

ABOUT THE SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR LOCAL DEMOCRACY



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STRENGTHENING LOCAL DEMOCRACY FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD

There is a large number of documented reports and research indicating that change happens at the local level. Local governments are at the core of democratic development around the world, and it is the everyday work carried out by villages, towns, cities, municipalities and regions that creates the change that is fundamental for an equitable, inclusive and sustainable global world. That is why ICLD use Swedish Municipalities and Regions as change agents to support democratic development at the local level.

OUR GOAL

Our goal, in all our countries of intervention, is to strengthen local democracy by increasing:

- ➔ the influence of marginalized groups and young people on local decision making,
- ➔ the number of women in decision-making positions in local governance,
- ➔ the openness, transparency and accountability of local governments.



Photo: ICLD

ABOUT ICLD

ICLD is a non-profit organisation and has since its start in 2008 developed experience and expertise within local democracy. Our operations are financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). We are about 20 employees located in Visby, Sweden with an office in Stockholm. We focus our work in our priority countries in Africa, Europe and Latin America.

The ICLD board is composed of SALAR, Lund University and the Region Gotland. ICLD also has an advisory body, the Advisory Group (AG), consisting of Swedish and international researchers who are consulted regularly to provide input related to the development of ICLD's operations.



The network for Democratic Resiliens. Photo: Alina Matviiv.

OUR APPROACH

ICLD supports Swedish Municipalities and Regions to be engaged to design and **implement sustainable democratic change projects - municipal partnerships** - through **city-to-city peer learning** thematic networks and **capacity building programmes**. The core of ICLD's activities consists of the collaborations between Swedish municipalities or regions and local governments in ICLD's partner countries - the municipal partnership.

A partnership design and implement sustainable democratic change projects through city-to-city peer learning, often within any of the ICLD networks. Through our networks we strengthen partaking local governments through:

- North-south, south-south and north-north peer-to-peer learning partnerships
- Tailor made international training programmes
- Transdisciplinary research and knowledge production

Ensuring Measurable change: from an individual to a societal level through organisational change

ICLD support the municipal partnerships with different activities with the ambition to implement democratic and institutionalised change projects that aim to increase citizens' opportunities to have influence on issues that affect their everyday lives. ICLD measures this change and impact every step of the way, on individual, organisational and societal level, thereby ensuring continuous learning and effectiveness.

OUR NETWORKS

Municipal partnership networks are a form of cooperation where selected municipalities receive increased support from ICLD to conduct their international projects. ICLD currently oversees networks on the following themes:



We design our networks and their focus based on local needs and we are willing to expand our portfolio upon request.

OUR PRIORITY COUNTRIES IN AFRICA, EUROPE AND LATIN AMERICA

- **Europe** – Bosnia and Hercegovina, Kosovo, Serbia, and Ukraine
- **Latin America** – Colombia, Guatemala
- **Africa, East Africa** – Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda
- **Southern Africa** – Botswana, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe



A FOCUS ON FOUR CORE VALUES

The foundations of democracy are based on freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, universal and equal suffrage, equality before the law and the principle of non-discrimination. ICLD's core values are based on the foundations of well functioning local democracy and are expressed under the following headings: equity, participation, transparency and accountability.



Photo: ICLD

EQUITY

Citizens must be treated in an inclusive and fair manner. All citizens should have equal opportunity to express their needs and be considered based on their different circumstances. Efforts to ensure that no discrimination or abuse occur, and that the needs of vulnerable groups are taken into account, with a particular focus on the position of women, are examples of measures that are seen as success factors. There must be clarity in terms of power and responsibilities in a wellfunctioning democracy. There must be possibilities for sanctions and accountability.



TRANSPARENCY

Transparency in decision-making processes, planning and policy-making is crucial for citizens to be able to participate in local issues in a wellinformed way, and for a socially sustainable local democracy. For citizens, increased transparency means that politicians and officials act in an open and predictable manner. Measures that ensure increased transparency, openness and predictability are therefore necessary in order to strengthen local democracy.



PARTICIPATION

Local governments have a responsibility to actively promote a high level of participation in local decision-making processes concerning the design of public policies and services. Different approaches to increase citizens' participation and influence in decision-making processes should be applied. Examples of steps in this direction are the development of instruments for increased dialogue, greater responsiveness and adaptation to civic needs.



ACCOUNTABILITY

There must be clarity in terms of power and responsibilities in a well-functioning democracy. There should also exist opportunities for sanctions and accountability. As it is not always possible for citizens to participate directly in decision-making, responsibilities must be made visible so that accountability can be demanded during ongoing processes, not just during elections. For the ICLD, signs that local governments are providing citizens with greater opportunities for accountability are when they're making information available that shows how decisions are made, who is responsible, how citizens can appeal decisions and what the consequences are for misconduct.



THE GLOBAL GOALS

CONTRIBUTING TO SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND THE GLOBAL GOALS



Photo: ICLD

ICLD's operations are part of Swedish development cooperation. ICLD therefore integrates all five of Sida's international development priorities: human rights-based approach, conflict sensitivity, gender equality, multi-dimensional poverty and environment and climate change. All perspectives are integrated into all of our organisation's operations and change projects that local governments carry out with strong support from ICLD.

GROUNDING ON LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND PARTNERSHIP

Knowledge and understanding of decentralisation processes and local democracy
ICLD has acquired strong knowledge of decentralisation processes and local democracy, and collaborates actively with local experts and research institutions to ensure this knowledge is continuously built upon and kept up to date. ICLD's Advisory Group also plays a key role in ensuring that ICLD has a deep understanding for global decentralisation and local democracy trends.

ICLD AND THE GLOBAL GOALS

The role of Swedish municipalities and regions
Local governments play a crucial role in the world reaching The Global Goals. Sweden's long experience of high levels of decentralisation and local self governance means that Swedish municipalities and regions have been particularly well placed to institutionalise and contribute significantly to The Global Goals. ICLD strongly believes that it is essential to share this invaluable experience globally, if the world is to meet the Global Goals.

NATIONAL AND LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

ICLD continuously strives to deepen collaborations and relationships with relevant partners nationally and locally in our priority countries to ensure program relevance and sustainability. ICLD cooperates above all with local governments, but also with various local government associations, relevant NGOs, and the Swedish embassies in the partner countries. Contextual knowledge is also provided through ICLD's national mentors.

ICLD operations

ICLD has identified five goals to which its operations contribute positively and significantly to. They are the following:



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