COMMUNITY-BASED INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY FOR IMPROVED SOCIAL WELL-BEING

5-7 December 2017

[Based on an ESCWA study under preparation]
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1. INTRODUCTION
Introduction

Motivation

• To learn from previous mistakes
• Top-down approaches did not achieve inclusive development
• The objective is to explore CBI for improved social well-being
• How can innovation and technology alleviate social issues
• To understand the importance of engaging local stakeholders at the community level
• To present recommendations on how to integrate and encourage CBI
• CBI is not a panacea, but it is a key part of the solution
Introduction

Defining Community

A community is a group of people in a specific geographical locality sharing common local challenges and using collective action for solving problems facing these issues.
Defining Innovation

Offering new or substantially improved products, services, processes, organizational routines, and production and distribution methods, in terms of their characteristics, capabilities, user friendliness, components or sub-systems.

In the context of a community, the focus of innovation is on bottom-up approaches, such as grass-roots innovation, crowd-sourcing innovation, social innovation or citizen innovation, stemming from the community, its members and civil society.
Introduction

Defining Community-Based Innovation

Community-based innovation is grounded in community needs and aims to achieve positive change for the community and particularly its most vulnerable members.

Such projects mobilize the resources of the community for the greater benefit of its members. It is a process that can result in new organizational, process or marketing innovation or policy and/or it could be manifested as an outcome such as a new or improved product or a service. It directs collective or individual creativity to answer the community’s needs.

Therefore, we consider innovation and technology to be both a process and an outcome.
Case Study

GIRAT (Canada)

The rural/urban digital divide in Canada, whereby both public and private sectors cannot justify economically such expensive investment.

GIRAT is a community-based organization created in 1998 by local population, local authorities, as well as the Algonquin Anishinabek indigenous community who inhabit this region.

GIRAT network is comprised today of over 1500 km of cables, touching 47 communities. The impact of such a project goes beyond the region as it allows to reduce the rural/urban digital divide, allow local schools and libraries to have access to internet, connect the region with other regions as well reduce mobility and rural migration.

SDG 4 – Quality education
SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and infrastructure
SDG 11 – Sustainable cities and communities
2. SDGs AND CBI
SDGs and CBI

Goal 1: No poverty

- Social insecurity impacts about 80 per cent of the global population
- 1.4 billion people live in poverty, i.e. less than $1.25 a day
- SDG goal 1 is a call to end poverty in all its forms by 2030, including extreme poverty
- Arab region witnessed an increase in poverty from 22.7 percent in 1990 to 23.4 percent in 2011
- Increase could be traced back to the ongoing violent conflicts
- Poverty rates have reached disturbing levels at 83 percent in Syria, 54 percent in Yemen, 47 percent in Sudan, 41 percent in Djibouti, 31

Did you know that...?
- 27% of Lebanese are considered poor, spending less than $270 per month.
- In 2015, 70% of Syrian refugees in Lebanon spent less than $120 a month, 65% of Palestine refugees in Lebanon spent less than $210 a month and 90% of Palestine refugees from Syria spent less than $80 a month.

People are Lebanon’s most important resource, and reduced poverty can help ensure that the country benefits as much as possible from its human capital. Through targeted support for the poorest and renewed efforts to increase economic growth, Lebanon can lift many of its most vulnerable out of poverty.
SDGs and CBI

Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being

Globally, maternal mortality and the under 5 children mortality rate have declined, between 1990 and 2015, by 44 percent and 50 percent respectively.

We are witnessing ongoing alarming health trends such as the obesity wave, the occurrence of certain chronic diseases or increasing fiscal pressures on health-care systems.

For developing countries there is a “double burden”, i.e. malnutrition and infectious diseases added to low health services.

The Arab region has the largest number of refugees. These underprivileged refugees fleeing from war settle in already poor hosting communities increasing the severity of the health situation.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<td>OECD</td>
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SDGs and CBI

Goal 5: Gender Equality

The equal enjoyment by women and men of socially-valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards, a state which can result from gender empowerment

By 2025, women participating in the workforce will reach 40 percent—250 million additional individuals entering the workforce. This will change the workforce scenery as it will have a significant economic impact across both developing and developed nations

Barriers to gender equality need to be eliminated: gender discrimination; enforcing laws and eliminating violence against women; empowering youth and young girls by eliminating harmful practices...

Only 25.2 percent of the women in Middle East and North Africa are in the labor force compared to 50 percent in other developing countries
SDGs and CBI

Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

In 2014, 30% of the global urban population lived in urban slums and 50% is exposed to air pollution levels at least 2.5 times above the standard of safety.

Resilient cities are a key part of ensuring that progress on poverty is maintained (Goal 1). At the same time, reducing air pollution in cities will considerably improve human health (Goal 3).

Cities need to plan and implement for new initiatives to become more environmentally friendly, safe, inclusive, and thus sustainable by integrating smart solutions.

The Arab region is one of the most urbanized regions. With overpopulation comes poverty, pollution, violence and instability. Therefore, community-based innovation is essential in solving the problems of conflict arising from human displacement, poor infrastructure, and eventually achieving sustainability.
SDGs and CBI

Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Half of children under five were not registered in LDC. goal 16 is connected to a number of goals and some are prerequisites for its achievement. For instance, reducing poverty will necessitate dealing with violence and conflicts. On the other hand, gender equality is a basic enabler for just, peaceful and inclusive societies.

6 billion people are directly impacted by corruption. Therefore, community-based innovations enhances the role of institutions and that bridge the gap between officials and communities provide solutions to countries that are lagging behind in development.

Arab countries fall short with accountability, political stability, government effectiveness, and control of corruption leading to civil unrest. For instance, corruption is a major obstacle to development and a danger to stability.
SDGs and CBI

Integrated Approach to CBI

**Health**
- Providing health services remotely
  - Telemedicine assistance for children
  - 250 physicians benefitted from continuous medical education
  - 5 teleclinics

**Entrepreneurship**
- Boosting economy in the digital era
  - 6 e-marketing courses for small and medium enterprises
  - 20 e-market portals have been created to promote Siwa's agricultural products and handicrafts on the internet

**Literacy**
- Empowering women
  - Siwa Oasis is one of the most isolated communities located in the western desert of Egypt. UNDP and the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology are working together to empower the community through integrated ICT tools, providing essential services and enhancing the role of women in local development

**Education**
- Modernizing schools
  - The project has established a complete ICT infrastructure at schools, providing computer labs and connectivity solutions
  - 6 smart schools
  - 10 literacy instructors trained
  - 120 women trained
  - 1,700 hours of training
  - 1.120 students trained on ICT skills
  - Dropout rate has decreased by 5%
  - Innovative tools: 3 interactive CDs, illiteracy eradication, syllabus orientation

**Siwa Connecting the Oasis**

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Case Study
I Paid a Bribe

Petty corruption is prevalent as ease payments in India.

Citizens stepped in and started to use innovation in the road to fight corruption.

An anonymous website has become a model for change that asks the public to aid in the process towards eliminating corruption by placing their reports on applications and online podiums.

“If one looks at today’s governance problems … we face a terrible lack of trust. … Governments have not been able to adapt to the changes in technologies that force these interactions for participation to have a different nature and reform for creating conditions for a government to interact in a modern way for societies is, I think, a crucial area of reform.” (António Guterres)

SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth
SDG 16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions
Case Study
Rekonstrukce Statu

In the Czech Republic “grand corruption”, is a serious problem for the country, with favoritism being especially challenging. With the spread of corruption and absence of any hope of improvement, citizens of the republic have taken an innovative approach to tackle the issue.

In 2013, NGOs asked citizens to address their representative Members of Parliament (MPs) and ask that they pledge support for implementation of the nine specific anti-corruption measures into legislation.

The campaign “Rekonstrukce Státu” (Reconstruction of the State), holds MPs accountable for their promises by posting their positions on the campaign website.

This approach proved successful as the campaign resulted in five of the nine laws being passed within three years.

SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth
SDG 16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions
3. TYPES OF COMMUNITY-BASED INNOVATION
Types of CBI

**Grassroots Innovation**

Systems of individuals and organizations cooperating to come up with new and **bottom-up solutions** to reach sustainable development and social well-being. These innovations **build on local needs**, considering local interests, values and culture of the targeted community. It must **start from inside and then spread** outside to external assistance and then become scaled up.

- People external can be included
- **It should not send signals to minimize state responsibility**
- Grassroots initiatives face participation issues
- The low levels of financial resources and absence of government support are barriers
Types of CBI

**Social Innovation**

Social innovations are approaches that generate novel solutions or systems that are directly linked to a specific social need.

It is addressing SDG's as they work on existing social, cultural, environmental, and economic challenges for the good of the community and environment.

Since citizens have a deep knowledge of their community, their engagement plays a critical role in the implementation of social innovation.

The critical stage in the social innovation scaling to reach the greater number of the vulnerable population.
Types of CBI
Crowd-sourcing Innovation

Crowd-sourcing initiatives are a group of activities based on the concept of the public providing information to leaders and innovators. Similarly, crowd-funding is a specific case of crowd-sourcing where the crowd provides financial support in the field of innovation. Crowd-sourcing entails a broad range of activities and actions that are part of every type of community-based innovation.
Case Study

**Ushahidi/HarassMap**

In Egypt, a **HarassMap** was created with the purpose to engage the Egyptian society to create an environment where sexual harassment is not tolerated.

Created in December 2010 by four women, the initiative was born as a response to the persistent problem of sexual harassment on the streets of Egypt where very few cases were denounced.

**Using Ushahidis crowd-mapping** system, it allows victims of sexual harassment to pinpoint the location of the incident on a **Google Map** and describe the assault anonymously.

HarrassMap creates local neighborhood teams and trains volunteers who are responsible of **building awareness and changing cultural sensibilities**. Moreover work is done with local businesses, schools and universities to create safe areas.

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**SDG 5** – Gender equality

**SDG 9** – Industry, Innovation and infrastructure

**SDG 11** – Sustainable cities and communities
4. CBI IN CONTEXT
CBI in Context

**Community Readiness**

- Lack of grounding in the community may be a major reason why innovations fail
- Informing the community is essential
- Willingness to be open to change within the community
- Leaders of change are preferred to be from the community
- Appropriation and local ownership are important since results will not be in the short-term and positive social impact is a long-term investment
- Identifying and amplifying local networks within a community
CBI in Context

Innovation in Times of Crisis

Shift from the traditional humanitarian aid, towards initiatives that empowers and gives choice to the vulnerable populations.

More participatory approaches are being used to involve stakeholders and beneficiaries of aid in determining their own priorities and coming up with solutions that are context specific.

In the past decade, a number of community-based innovations have surged aiming to tackle problems within camp settings, but as well for host communities and for refugees and IDPs in urban settings.
Creative social spaces such as incubators, accelerators, hackerspace, hacklab, or fablab are emerging around the world. These different names are used to describe a community space equipped with technological tools such as computers, 3D printers, or numerically controlled machines, where people can meet to engage in creative projects.

Many of those creative spaces have been created with the main purpose of tackling societal problems, as their mission is to present social innovations aligned with the SDGs.

Creative spaces exist in the region, for instance Elevate, a collaboration between AltCity and UNICEF in Lebanon; Dare Inc., in Morocco; Makani in Jordan, as well as programs such as Safir Lab, a laboratory and a catalyst for social innovation targeting youth in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Yemen, Libya, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan.
CBI in Context

SE Regulatory frameworks

LEGAL FORMS - SPAIN

Cooperativa de Consumidores y Usuarios (1.5%) 19%
Cooperativa de Trabajo Asociado (17%)
S.L. (Sociedad Limitada) (15%)
S.L.N.E. (Sociedad Limitada Nueva Empresa) (15%)
S.R.L. (Sociedad de Responsabilidad Limitada) (1%)
Sociedad cooperativa de seguros (5.5%)
Other (5.5%)

LEGAL FORMS - ROMANIA

S.R.L. (Societate cu răspundere limitată) (5.5%)
Other (2%)

LEGAL FORMS - UK

Community Interest Company (10.5%)
Industrial and Provident Society (1.5%)
Co-operative (1%)
Charity (36%)
Private company limited by shares (Ltd.) (92.5%)
Nonprofit (5.5%)

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CBI in Context

SE Financing

**Sources of Financing - UK**
- Fees and Sales: 63%
- Investments: 29.5%
- Grants: 2%
- Donations: 1%
- Loans: <0.5%
- Membership Fees: 2.5%

**Sources of Financing - Romania**
- Fees and Sales: 28.5%
- Investments: 26.5%
- Grants: 12%
- Donations: 0%
- Loans: 1%
- Membership Fees: 9%
CBI in Context

SE Innovation barriers

INNOVATION BARRIERS - UK

- Finance-related: 60%
- Organisation-specific: 23%
- Market-related: 7%
- Other: 7%
- Regulation- and institution-related: 3%

INNOVATION BARRIERS - CHINA

- Market-related: 39%
- Organization-specific: 32%
- Cost-related: 15%
- Other: 9%
- Regulation / Institution-related: 5%

INNOVATION BARRIERS - SPAIN

- Finance-related: 44%
- Market-related: 31.5%
- Organisation-specific: 15%
- Regulation- and institution-related: 6.5%
- Other: 3%
5. ENABLERS AND DRIVERS OF CBI
Enablers and Drivers of CBI

Barriers

In some cases, innovation has pushed the world away from achieving the SDGs

Innovation (including community-based) is not a panacea for all our societal problems. It itself can be a source of divide, accentuate problems and might have negative externalities

Access to technology, internet and other services in urban areas, has led in some cases youth to migrate to cities; increased the rural/urban digital divide; and increased inequalities, inclusive within communities

Social and cultural barriers in the communities themselves might be the major reasons behind the failure in innovation

Innovation faces challenges such as financial, poor infrastructure, shortage in the skills of the human capital, and corruption

Many of the community-based innovations are local and cannot be scaled

Social innovations are most often services and not traditional commercial products, requiring a lot of commitment and resources and time to diffuse them and insure their applicability in vulnerable areas
Enablers and Drivers of CBI

Drivers and Enablers

**Supportive Culture**

Technical skills and short programs are mostly offered by public and not-for-profit to level up and build local human capital. For instance, UNICEF works on such programs with Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon, while Shanti in Tunisia works with women in rural areas to revive ancestral craft.

**Citizen engagement**

Organized and well planned social inclusion is a driver to any community-based change. When an organization such as RuralEntrepreneurs in Lebanon or IFAD in Egypt wants to train youth and women in rural areas, it works with local authorities.

**Technology**

In urban areas, we are seeing an exponential number of creative spaces such as co-working spaces, all over the Arab region. This type of network is crucial to create a sense of belonging and reinforce ties between community-based change makers. For instance Chefchaoun in Cairo, Egypt and Dare Space in Rabat, Morocco, AltCity in Beirut, Lebanon, Impact Hub in Dubai, UAE, are co-working spaces with a strong social mission.

**Human capital**


**Social networks**


**Accountable and legitimate institutions**


Case Study

Malô

Malô, a social enterprise founded in Mali, was created to tackle two key problems faced by the community, i.e. malnutrition and inefficiency in rice production.

SDG 1 – No poverty
SDG 2 – Zero hunger
SDG 12 – Responsible consumption and production

RICE DEPENDENCE
When global prices of rice tripled in 2008, riots erupted from India to the West Indies. The World Bank estimated that a 100 million people fell back into poverty given rice’s key position in total household budget expenditures. West Africa is heavily dependent on rice imports from Asia which is cheaper than local rice.

MALNUTRITION
In terms of malnutrition 83% of Malian children under 5 and 65% of women are anemic.

POOR STORAGE
INEFFICIENT MILLING
MARKET ACCESS

LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY
In order for rice to be edible, the hull or the husk needs to be removed. We build facilities equipped with machines set up in a customized processing line designed to minimize waste and enhance the nutritional content of white rice. The machines we employ cleans, sorts, and polishes the rice so that the milled rice is consistent and high quality. Grains that do not pass our rigorous quality control standards are ground into rice flour, mixed with micronutrients such as iron, zinc, folic acid (Vitamin B9), and Vitamin B12 and reshelved into fortified rice kernels (FRKs) using extrusion technology. The FRKs are blended with rice grown by our farming partners at a 1:100 ratio.

CREATE PRODUCTS

Supermalô™
RIZ FORTIFIÉ

African food brands are rare. We package and distribute fortified rice products directly to urban consumers and retailers under the brand name Supermalô. We also sell our byproducts. Rice husk (22%) and rice bran (13%) are sold to chicken coop owners and animal feed manufacturers, respectively.

REWARD FARMERS
Rice cultivation is hard work. Expecting smallholder farmers to also excel at milling, logistics, and sales is unrealistic. We reward farmers for their dedication by purchasing their harvests at a premium. For farmers, having a guaranteed buyer reduces their risk and workload given they no longer need to engage in processing, marketing, and distribution. Getting paid fairly at harvest also enables them to pay back old loans for inputs, plant a second rice harvest, purchase livestock, or grow high-value, nutritious vegetables. Our farming partners also commit to improving their production practices and along with our NGO partners, we provide them with technical and capacity building support.
6. RECOMMENDATIONS
Recommendations

Capacity Building

• Encourage innovative education and skill building such as digital literacy
• Promote technical and vocational training
• Encourage experiential learning including failures
• Provide opportunities for researchers to investigate this emerging field
• Build long-term training and capacity building programs with local communities
Recommendations

Role of Public Authorities

- Give a bigger role to local authorities
- Local authorities provide open-space for mapping and fostering local needs and innovations
- Protect innovation and give incentives for communities and individuals
- Broaden the public funding approach
- Encourage social innovations through ethical/social public procurement
- Create legal frameworks to facilitate and encourage the formalizing of CBI
- Appropriate digital infrastructure in rural areas
- Brake dependence – Not replicate the NGO model
Recommendations

Scaling-Up

- Create an ecosystem for social innovation
- Encourage failure as much as success
- Create and reinforce local networks
- Provide support for incubators and other support organizations
- Encourage innovative financing models such as hybrid and impact investing
- Not all CBI are scalable!
Recommendations

Measurement

- CIS measures innovation in EU measured based on the Oslo Manual (Eurostat)

- CIS in Flanders Belgium is done by KU Leuven

- For CIS 2015 we added 2 new sections for Flanders:
  - DEVELOPED A MODULE ON SOCIAL INNOVATION AND INCLUDED IT IN THE CIS2015 FOR FLANDERS
  - EXPANDED THE SAMPLE WITH 992 NON-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS LOCATED IN FLANDERS, WHICH WERE SELECTED BASED ON THEIR LEGAL FORM (SELECTING NON-FOR-PROFITS AND COOPERATIVES).
THANK YOU