



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

THE HUMAN FACE

of the Communities
Leading Development
(CLD) Project



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of the Communities Leading
Development (CLD) Project





LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADESJU	Association for Sustainable Youth Development
AVANCSO	Association for the Advancement of the Social Sciences
BDS	Business Development Services
CDP	Community Development Plan
CLD	Communities Leading Development
COCODE	Community Development Council
CODEDE	Departmental Development Council
COMUDE	Municipal Development Council
CRS-USCCB	Catholic Relief Services-United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
MARN	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
MSME	Micro, small, and medium enterprises
NCBA CLUSA	National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International
SEGEPLAN	Presidential Planning and Programming Secretariat
SILC	Savings and Internal Lending Community
SNIP	National System for Public Investment
TIP	Technical Implementing Partners
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene



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PRESENTATION

Upon the completion of the Communities Leading Development (CLD) project in 2023, USAID and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) decided to compile the project's key programming, methodological, and human aspects into a publication titled The Human Face of the CLD Project.

The CLD project was created as a response to the pressing development needs of the communities in the Western Highlands and the push factors of migration. This initiative is also aligned with CRS guiding principles of working for the poorest and most vulnerable populations and contributing to building a more just and resilient society that can move above the poverty threshold.

Phases I and II of CLD focused on strengthening community organization, enhancing community leadership skills, and designing inclusive planning for community development. In phases III and IV, the project underwent some modifications to implement high-impact and sustainability projects for community development. These projects were based on the Community Development Plans (CDPs) and involved collaborating with Technical Implementing Partners (TIPs) who brought specific expertise in areas such as water and sanitation, economic and business development, and entrepreneurship.

To respond to the priorities and needs identified in the 203 CDPs, CLD mobilized over \$36.3 million leveraged by the private and public sectors through implementing over 666 community projects, directly benefitting 16,575 families.

As demonstrated in this publication, USAID and CRS achieved significant achievements through 25 alliances. These achievements include community producers gaining access to new markets, increased technical capacity, new investment opportunities, increased women's leadership across all project activities, strengthening 38 MIPYMES; 727 youth trained in entrepreneurial skills, as well as the creation, and training of 43 community water commissions, benefitting more than 30,000 people through access to potable water.

These successful results encourage us to invite donors, business people, municipal mayors, public sector organizations, and civil society to replicate and continue the empowerment, funds-seeking, and investment actions directed at communities that have created a Community Development Plan to achieve their vision of community development.

This is just the beginning!

PART I THE HUMAN FACE OF THE PROCESS

“The Community Development Plans offer the opportunity to envision a brighter future for men, women, youth, and children in our communities. These plans give us a voice on our path to development. We hope that together we can make a change for the future that we dream of. I encourage the central and local governments, international cooperation, and others to join our vision for development. We will work to ensure that these plans do not become a mere document but a plan of action for those who can change lives.”

Ofelia Sánchez

Member of Community Development Council
Duraznales, Concepción Chiquirichapa,
Quetzaltenango



I. Communities Leading Development Project Overview



The Communities Leading Development project worked in 203 communities in the Totonicapán, San Marcos, Huehuetenango, Quetzaltenango, and Quiché departments to improve the quality of life for target communities, including women, Indigenous Peoples, youth, and people with disabilities in some of the most marginalized communities in Guatemala.

The project was implemented by USAID and Catholic Relief Services-United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (CRS-USCCB), in consortium with Caritas San Marcos and Caritas Los Altos, Mercy Corps, and NCBA-Clusa. The latter two partners made contributions during the first phase of the project.

Geographic area and target population

203 communities in 30 municipalities in 5 departments

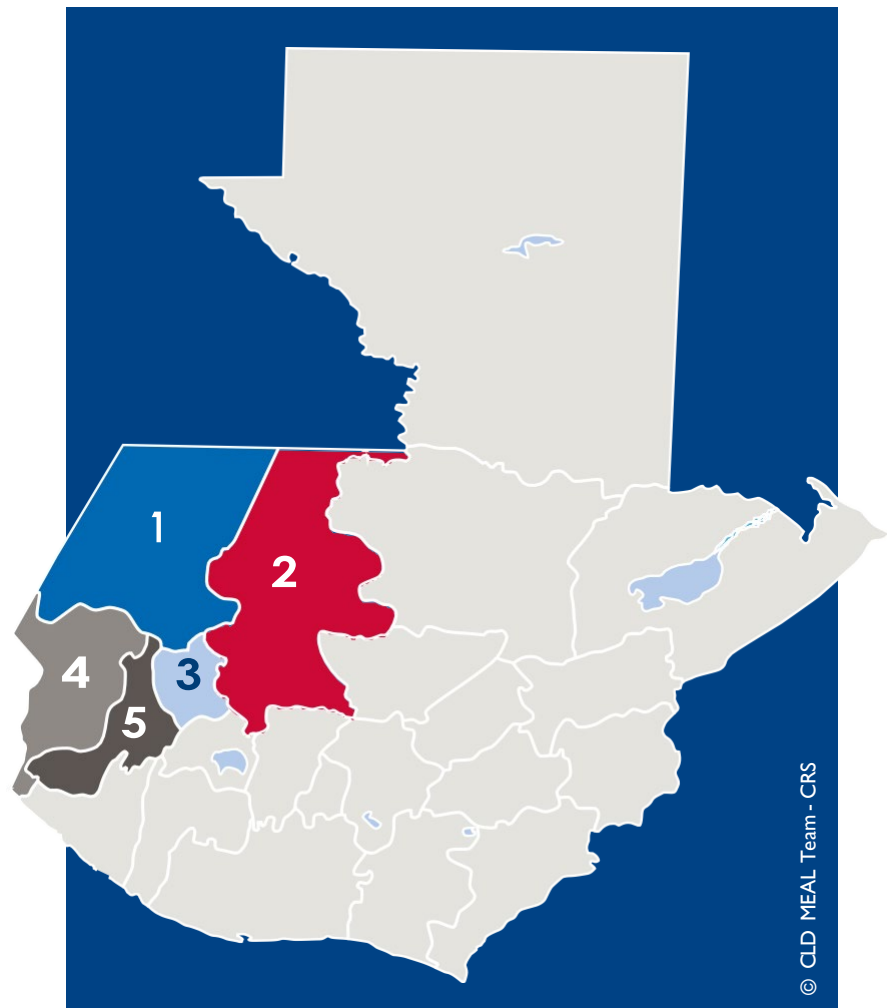
Over 213,000 individuals in 203 communities in the following municipalities per department:

1- Huehuetenango:

- Chiantla
- San Sebastián
- La Libertad
- La Democracia
- San Antonio Huista
- Jacaltenango
- Concepción Huista
- Todos Santos Cuchumatán
- Barillas
- Cuico

2- Quiché:

- Cunén
- Uspantán
- Nebaj
- Chajul
- San Juan Cotzal
- Chichicastenango
- Sacapulas
- Zacualpa



3- Tonicapán:

- Momostenango
- Santa Lucía La Reforma

4- San Marcos:

- San Rafael Pie de la Cuesta
- El Rodeo
- Nuevo Progreso

- Sibinal
- San Miguel Ixtahuacán
- Tajumulco
- San Pablo
- San Lorenzo

5- Quetzaltenango:

- San Juan Ostuncalco
- Concepción Chiquirichapa

Project objectives

The Communities Leading Development project started in 2016. CLD main objectives:

<p>1. Citizens empowered through participation in the development and implementation of Community Development Plans.</p>	<p>2. Quality of life improved through the development and implementation of Community Development Plans.</p>	<p>3. Long-term sustainability of community development improved by leveraging¹ local and external resources.</p>
<p>EMPOWERMENT</p>	<p>QUALITY OF LIFE</p>	<p>SUSTAINABILITY</p>
		

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¹ Leverage is defined as licit resources that third parties bring for the implementation of community development plans without necessarily providing them directly to CRS or other CLD consortium members. Leveraged resources are new resources for community development that would not have been available in the absence of the project.

The CLD Theory of Change, below, illustrates the project roadmap to bringing about a significant change in the target communities:

If communities increase their social and economic capital through strengthened community organizational and financial management;

Then they will inclusively address their own local priorities, leveraging public and private resources and mobilizing local resources and institutions, resulting in improved quality of life;

Because studies and experience show that community-driven development increases trust in community institutions and that economic empowerment is intricately intertwined with social empowerment and change.

THEORY OF CHANGE & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

By increasing social and economic capital, CLD communities will address priorities and leverage resources, resulting in improved quality of life.

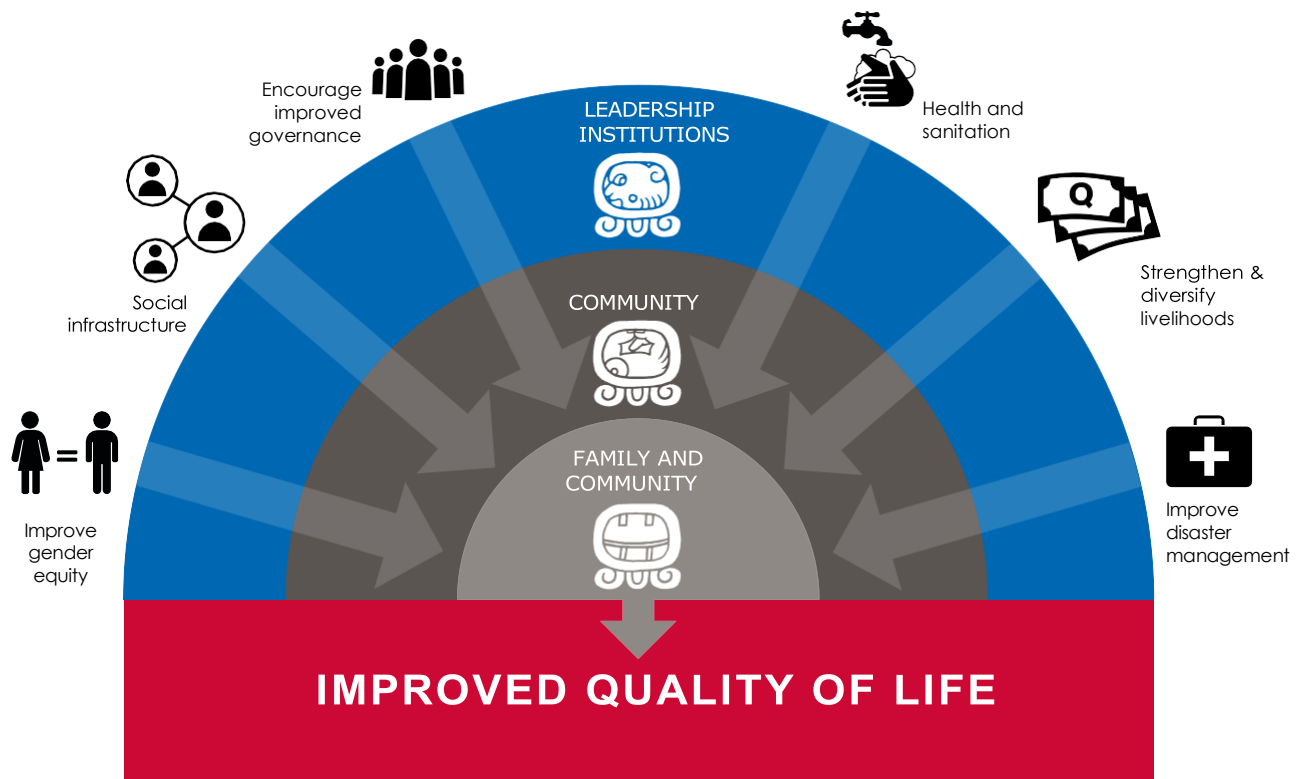


Figure I: Key elements of CLD Theory of Change



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II. CLD Project Phases

The CLD project has undergone a series of phases since its inception, continually adapting to address evolving community needs. The chart below illustrates the sequential implementation of these phases to accomplish the project's objectives.

CLD Project Phases



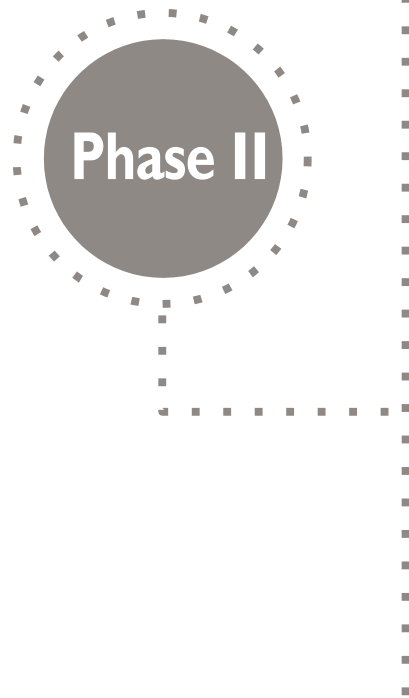
September 2016 – April 2019

INCLUSIVE AND PARTICIPATORY CREATION OF CDPs

Local authorities and groups empowered for leadership and community planning. 203 communities selected in 30 municipalities and 5 departments. 203 Community Development Plans developed and approved in community assemblies.

72 CDPs developed under the leadership of the local Community Development Councils (COCODEs).

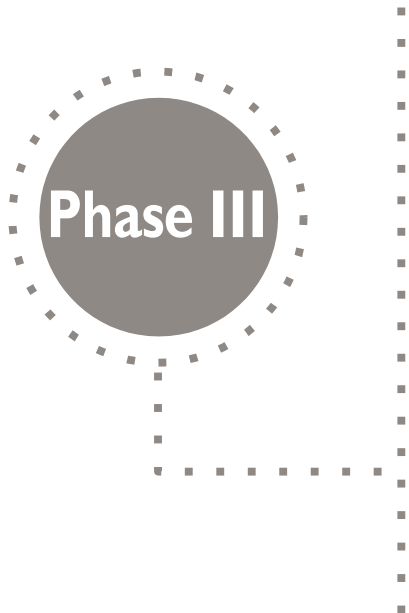
128 additional CDPs completed. 1,554 COCODES members trained, resulting in 222 women playing key roles within the National System of Development Councils.



May 2019 - September 2020

PROJECT PRIORITIZATION, PROFILING, AND MANAGEMENT

Priority community projects were identified. A project portfolio was created. This process involved conducting feasibility studies to assess the viability of each project and actively seeking strategic alliances. Short-term, high-impact projects implemented; CLD leveraged efforts and resources through linkages with the private and public sectors and other organizations.

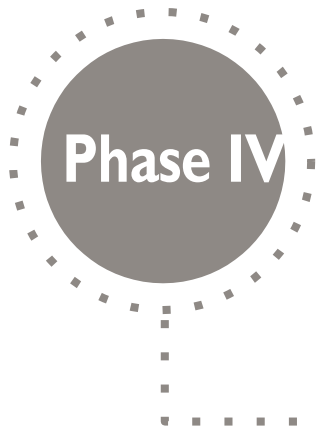


October 2020 - September 2022

IMPLEMENTATION OF PRIORITY AND HIGH-IMPACT PROJECTS

Public and private resource mobilization strategy implemented to improve the quality of life in target communities.

666 community projects and actions implemented.



October 2022 - September 2023

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESTART OF THE COMMUNITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT CYCLE

CLD will:

- Consolidate processes at community level
- Seek linkages with local governments and the private sector
- Complete the implementation of high-impact projects promoted by CLD.
- Document and publish learning processes
- Establish linkages for sustainability of the communities' vision of community development.

Figure 2: CLD project phases timeline

III. Community-Based Development Methodology used in CLD project



One of the key objectives of the CLD project was to empower communities by actively involving them in developing and implementing their own community development plans. This process started with identifying and prioritizing community needs and assets. Next, the project focused on strengthening the capacity of the COCODEs to lead the creation of the CDPs and engaging local groups to implement projects that aligned with the CDPs. All these actions are through the implementation of inclusive and relevant community planning methods.

Considering the limited capacity for community planning at the local level identified during Phase I, it became crucial to develop a comprehensive community development planning methodology. After conducting a comparative analysis of existing community development planning methodologies in Guatemala, CLD selected the AVANCSO Community Life Plans due to their proven successful experience implementing these life plans in 35 communities in the Western Highlands. CLD adapted this methodology to the context of target communities and used it as a foundation to create 203 Community Development Plans.

The CLD Community-Based Development methodology focused on:

- Contributing to strengthening a set of conditions where a rationality of life prevails.
- Building an integral life project, based on the history of the community and their dreams of making their own decisions and building their own community model.
- Collectively identifying alternatives for sustainable development.
- Serving as a proposal for action and community outreach as it conveys the dreams and goals of the community of building alternatives for a dignified life in the short, medium, and long term².

The methodology included robust efforts to strengthen leadership skills for inclusive and participatory community development planning.

- Strengthening community leadership

The community empowerment approach used by CLD supported the self-determination of each community to achieve its shared vision of community development and adopt a community-driven approach to alliances and leverage.

² CLD systematized the methodology and process used to create the CDPs in the document *Planes de Desarrollo Comunitario, un plan del presente para construir el futuro*.



CLD supported the identification, training and organization of community members, leaders and local groups that represent the needs and interests of the community and lead inclusive and collaborative development planning. This involved working with COCODEs and other community leaders to strengthen their development planning skills to support the creation of the CDPs and raise awareness about the significance of inclusive and participatory planning processes. The project also worked with key local groups such as local water commissions and farmer groups to strengthen their technical and leadership skills, enabling them to contribute to implementing community development projects.

Through this process, CLD documented increased participation of women in community assemblies and trainings, as well as in COCODEs and sub-committees; with 1,554 COCODE members, including youth, women and community leaders playing key leadership roles. This participation has fostered the inclusion of women’s perspectives into the community development process and created more opportunities for their professional development and leadership.

- Inclusive planning

The CLD project has promoted the creation of conditions at the community level to facilitate the gradual articulation between communities and the national planning system through their participation in the National System of Development Councils. This process begins with the communities

themselves and their specific needs and extends to the local, municipal, and departmental levels within the Development Councils System. The CLD project made concerted efforts to address the rights and needs of all populations in the planning process, with a particular focus on those who had experienced social and economic exclusion within the community, including vulnerable groups such as women, youth, and people with disabilities.



As a result, 203 communities across 30 municipalities in the San Marcos, Quetzaltenango, Huehuetenango, Totonicapán, and Quiché departments completed the community planning process needed to create the Community Development Plans.

Stages involved in the creation of the Community Development Plans and the application of the methodology

The process of creating the CDPs involved five distinct stages, each with distinct characteristics, methodologies, and instruments.

- Geographic plan for the selection of communities
- Community assessment (quantitative and qualitative)
- Collaborative identification of strategic actions
- Drafting the Community Development Plan
- Approval of the Community Development Plan

The charts below illustrate the progression of actions in each stage:

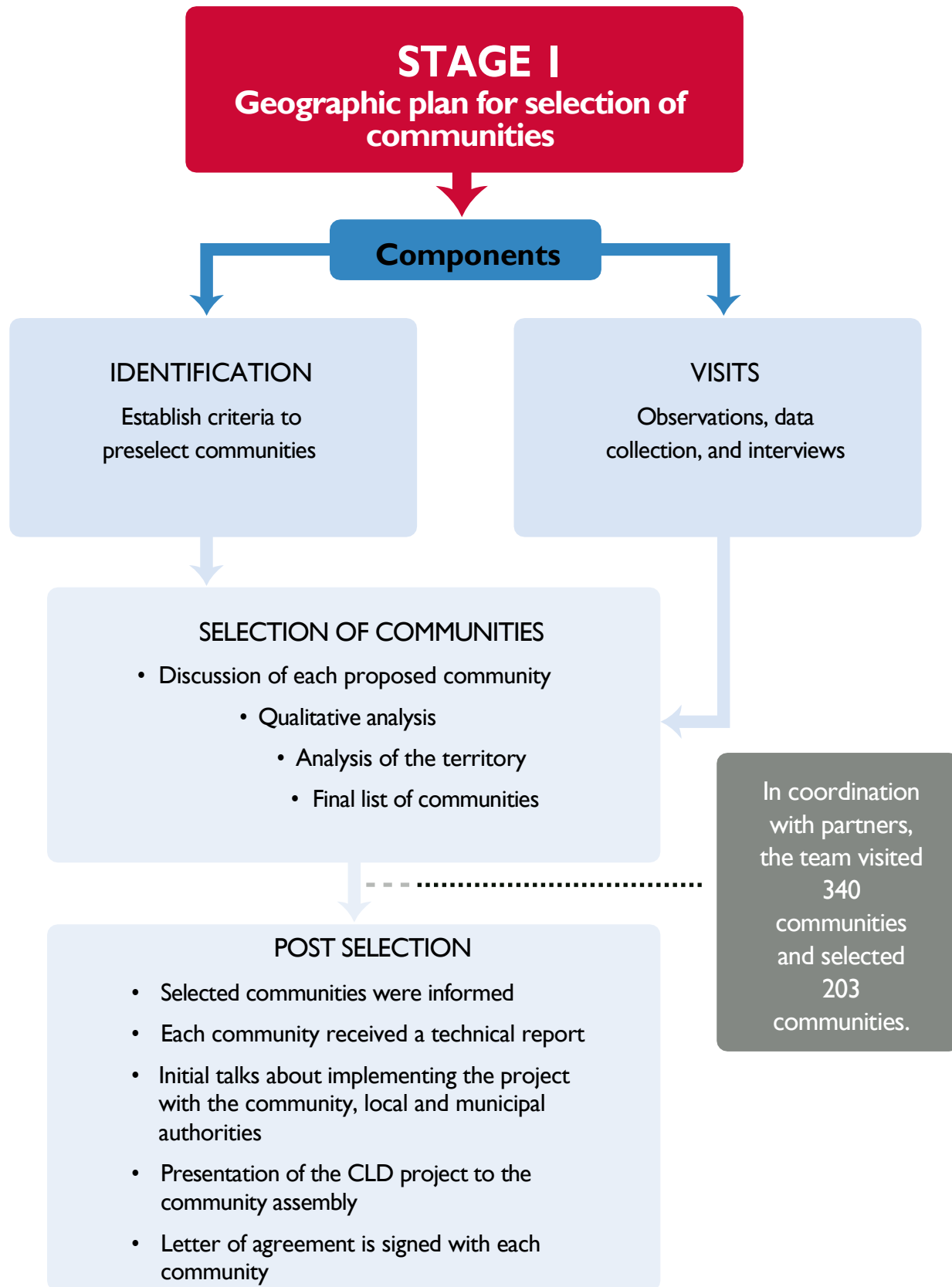


Figure 3: CDPs Creation Process - Stage I

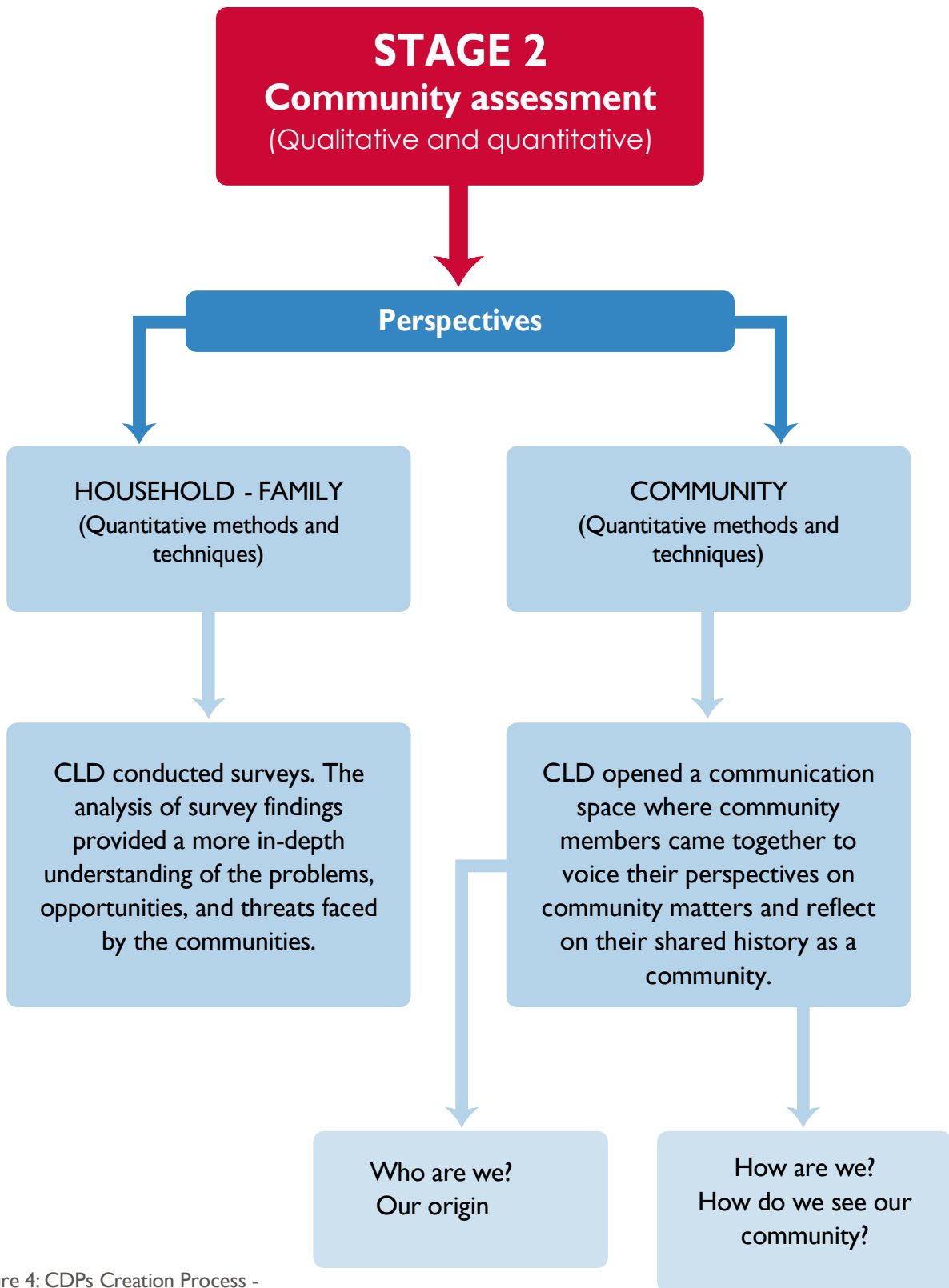


Figure 4: CDPs Creation Process - Stage 2

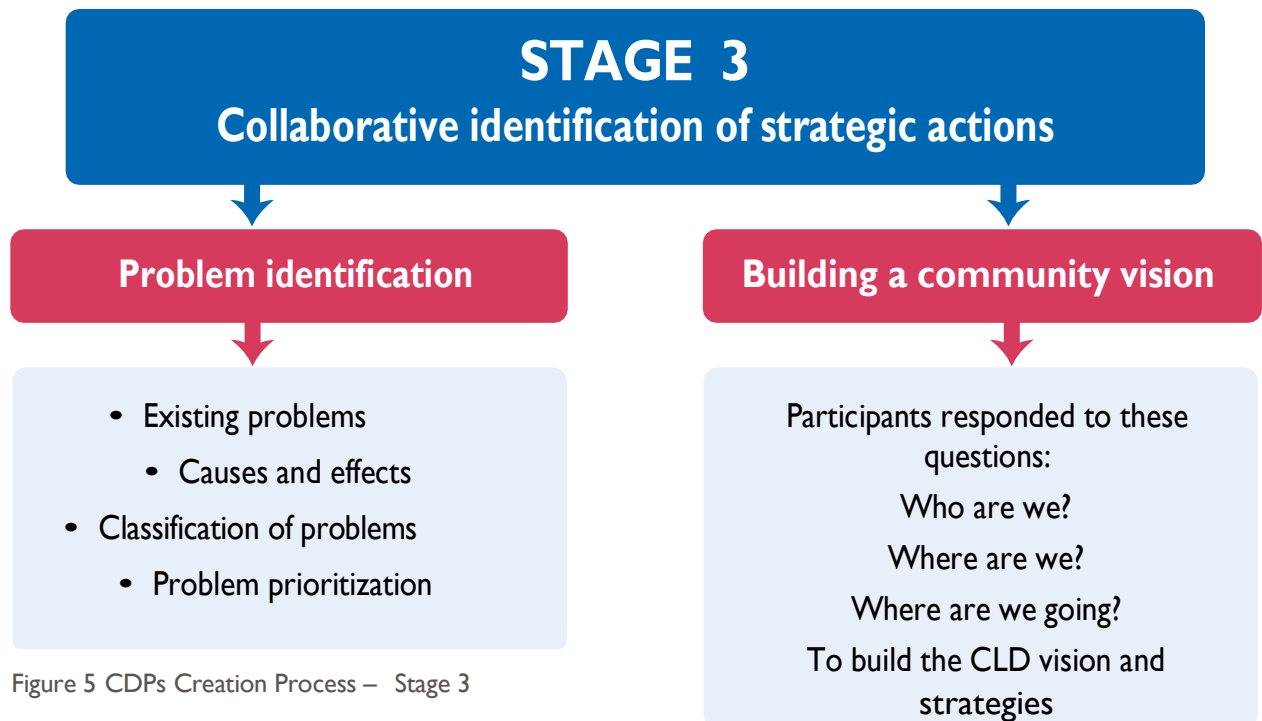


Figure 5 CDPs Creation Process – Stage 3

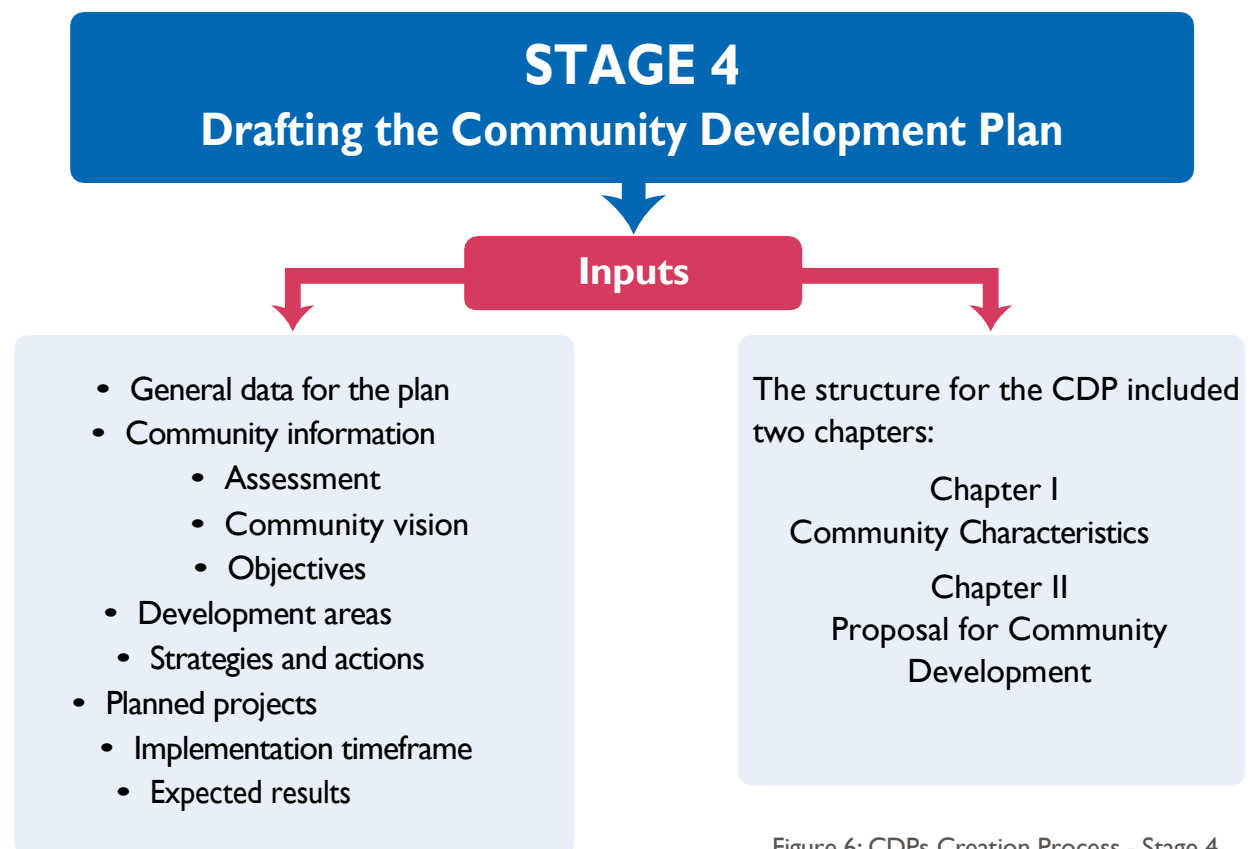


Figure 6: CDPs Creation Process - Stage 4

STAGE 5

Approval of the Community Development Plan

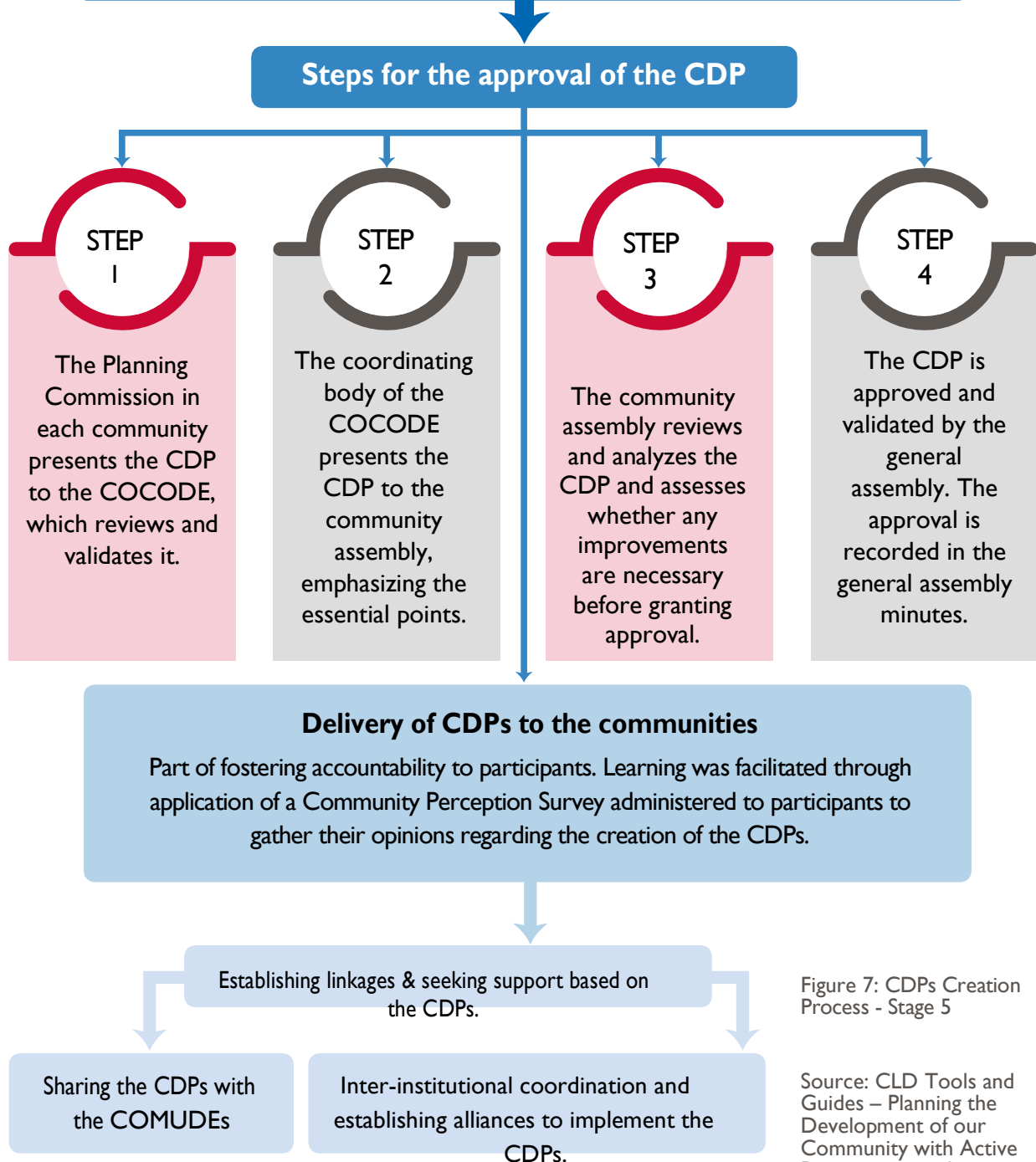
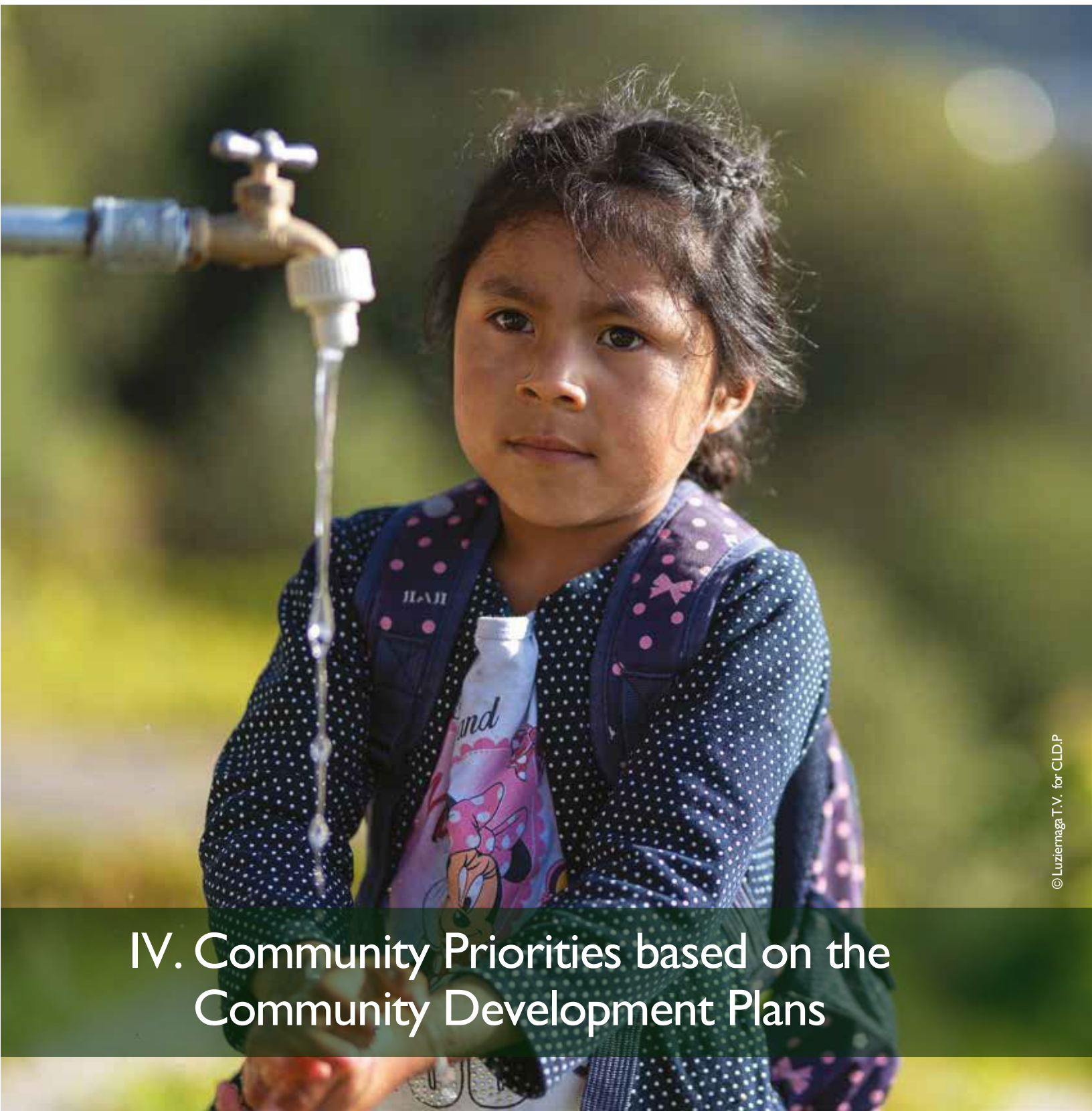


Figure 7: CDPs Creation Process - Stage 5

Source: CLD Tools and Guides – Planning the Development of our Community with Active Participation and Inclusion. (2019)



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IV. Community Priorities based on the Community Development Plans

The Community Development Plans focused on five strategic areas discussed and agreed upon in each community with the active participation and inclusion of men and women. These areas defined and guided the community's actions towards achieving progress that aligns with their long-term vision.

Summary of each strategic area:

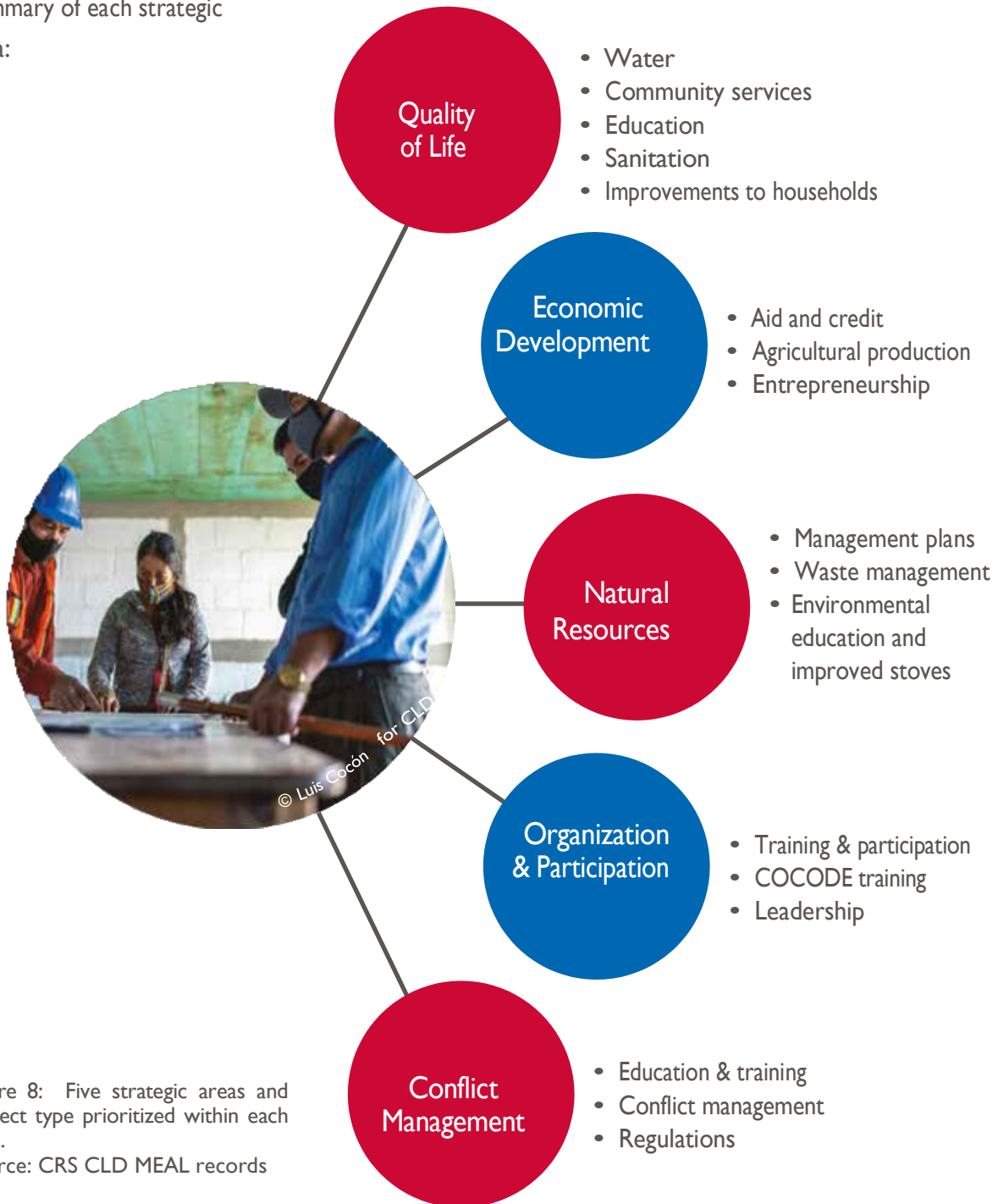


Figure 8: Five strategic areas and project type prioritized within each area.

Source: CRS CLD MEAL records











I. QUALITY OF LIFE



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This strategic area is one of the essential pillars of human development. The quality-of-life strategic area proposes to improve the living conditions in the short, medium, and long term, through access to basic services at the household and community level.

Projects prioritized for the Quality-of-Life strategic area
Source: CRS CLD MEAL records

Type of Project		Number of Projects
Water		247
Community services		227
Education		171
Sanitation		167
Improvements to households		79
Food security		73
Roads		71
Health		65
Energy		37
Training and participation		29

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



The economic context is one of the causes of poverty within the communities and of the lack of satisfaction of basic needs. The economic development area focuses on efforts aimed at improving people's productivity and agricultural activities while strengthening their knowledge and expertise to boost the local economy and foster community development.

Projects prioritized for the Economic Development strategic area

Source: CRS CLD MEAL records

Type of Project	Number of Projects
Aid & credit	338
Agricultural & livestock production	172
Entrepreneurship	64
Market studies	47
SILC	19
Irrigation	8
Tourism	5

3. NATURAL RESOURCES










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The wealth of natural resources has been an important source of survival; therefore, this strategic area promotes the conservation, recovery, and proper management of natural resources to ensure the well-being of the population and future generations.

Projects prioritized for the Natural Resources strategic area

Source: CRS CLD MEAL records

Type of Project	Number of Projects
Management plans	 128
Waste management plans	 125
Environmental education	 106
Soil conservation	 74
Energy	 58
Risk management	 28
Tree nurseries	 20

4. ORGANIZATION AND PARTICIPATION


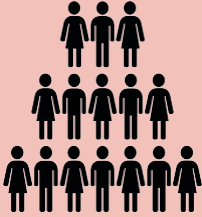




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The main purpose of this strategic area is to enhance the organization and inclusive participation of the community, as well as to ensure governance by promoting empowerment and advocating for their participation in decision-making processes.

Projects prioritized for the Organization and Participation strategic area

Source: CRS CLD MEAL records

Type of Project	Number of Projects
Training and participation 	264
COCODE training 	144
Leadership 	54
Local governance 	51

5. CONFLICT MANAGEMENT



Focused on conflict resolution through dialogue, this area proposes strategic actions to contribute to preventing violence and insecurity at the community level.

Projects prioritized for the Conflict Management strategic area

Source: CRS CLD MEAL records

Type of Project	Number of Projects
Education & training	 50
Conflict management	 45
Regulations	 17
Boundaries	 11
Project management	 7
Elevate community ranking	 7



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V. Intervention Strategies

Due to the political and financial contexts and the COVID-19 situation during the project, the CLD project team designed strategies to support its goals by implementing a third phase of high-impact and sustainable projects, aimed at generating market opportunities, alliances, and leverage to maximize the utilization of available funds.

These strategies are based on two core components:

1. Market-driven Initiatives focused on improving water systems and economic development, including agricultural value chains and household income generation.
2. Alliances and Resource Mobilization focused on community-driven alliance and resource mobilization, financial mechanisms, and shared value initiatives with the private sector and other stakeholders.

These intervention strategies have played an essential role in CLD's successful experiences, responding to the priorities and needs of the community development plans.

As can be seen in the following description, the strategies are interrelated to produce a comprehensive effect. The strategies are detailed below under their respective core component.

CORE COMPONENT I: MARKET-DRIVEN INITIATIVES

These initiatives focused on improving water systems and services and economic development programming, including support to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and youth entrepreneurship through agricultural value chains and rural business enterprises.



1.1 AZURE:

Strengthening community water governance capacities to ensure water and sanitation services are managed effectively and for the long term.

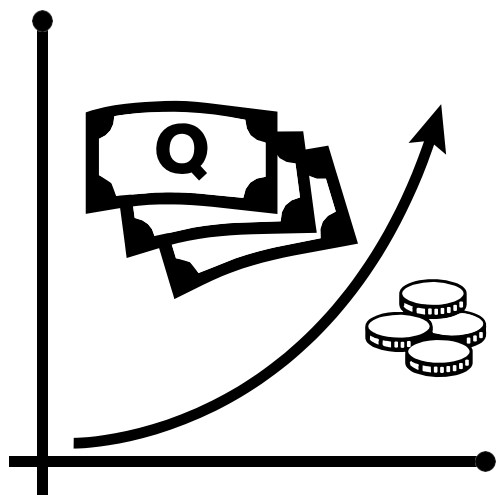


The newly implemented water systems provide safe, accessible and sustainable water to 2,240 individuals in underserved populations.

- 17 rehabilitated systems, benefiting 7,312 individuals
- 11 technical studies
- 58 Water filter projects/families
- 61 MARN instruments
- 19 Water usage regulations
- Community leaders with strengthened capacities

Figure 9: Progress made by AZURE in FY 2022

Source: CRS CLD MEAL system, end of FY2022



1.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

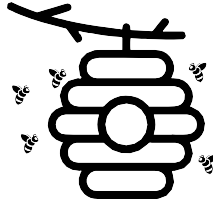
a) Agricultural value chains:

The objective of this component is to support the economic empowerment of over 2,000 producers in 48 communities through a holistic approach to agricultural value chains, in collaboration with strategic allies to strengthen business linkages for the selected products.

VALUE CHAINS

RESULTS

Honey



240 honey producers received training and technical assistance.
730 hives were distributed to honey producers.

Coffee



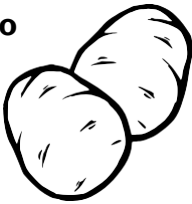
673 farmers benefited from training and technical assistance in agronomic management, fibers, fertilization, processing and added value.

Macadamia



192 farmers received training, technical assistance, and materials related to managing tree nurseries, grafting, fiber, and soil analysis. They also received support in the macadamia shelling process.

Potato



Support was provided to 354 farmers to encourage more efficient use of inputs and promote crop varieties such as Loma Roja and Soprano.

Hibiscus



CLD assisted producers with access to improved seeds; provided training on post-harvest management technologies, such as the use of African beds to improve drying and market connections with local buyers. A total of 39 farmers involved in the hibiscus chain received support.

Chickpea



75 chickpea farmers supported with training in water-smart agriculture practices, crop production and post-harvest management practices, creation of a business network, facilitating organizational and commercial processes. A total of 55 quintals (2,500 Kg from 5 hectares) of chickpeas were harvested and sold.

Figure 10: Value Chain Results in FY 2022
Source: CRS CLD MEAL system, end of FY2022

b) Youth entrepreneurship:

Strategies to support youth, aimed to improve their quality of life within their communities, generating youth-led initiatives using methodologies implemented by partners such as ADESJU and Neumann Climate Pioneers.

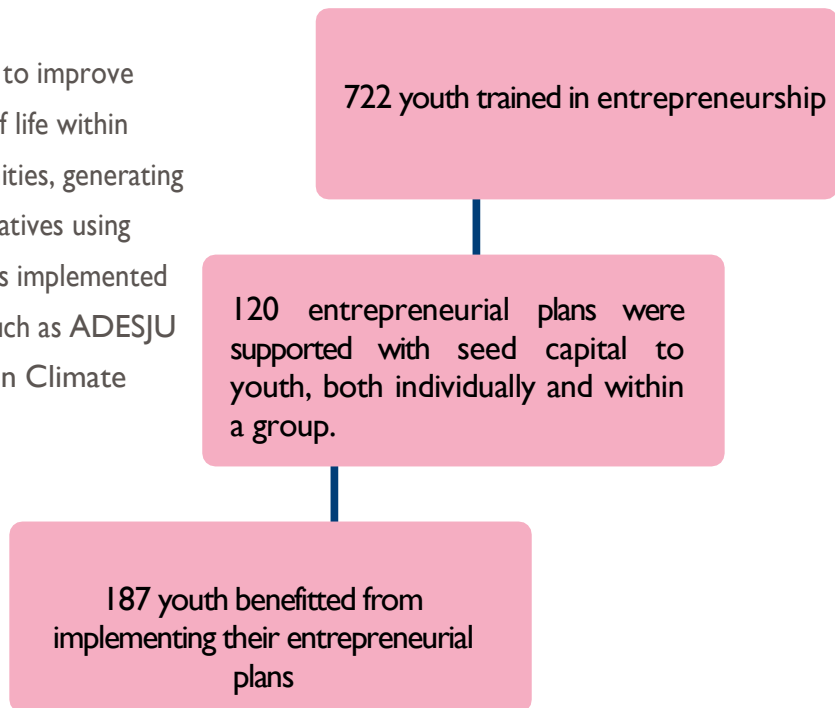


Figure 11: Youth Entrepreneurship Results in FY 2022
Source: CLD Annual Performance Report FY 2022

c) Rural business enterprises:

Strategies to generate income for more dignified and productive livelihoods, promoting rural businesses, supporting

small-scale agricultural and livestock production and marketing to strengthen the capacities of women, youth, and vulnerable families.

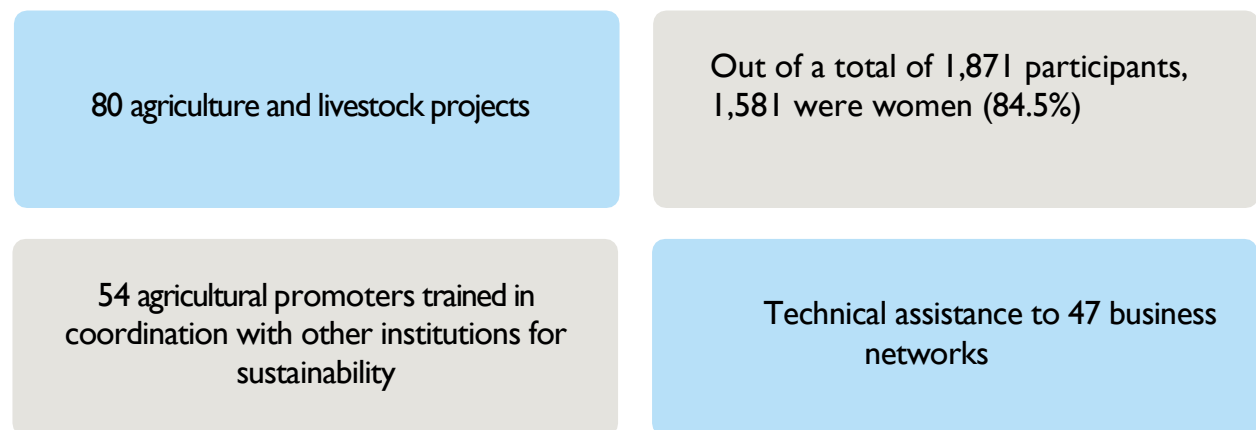
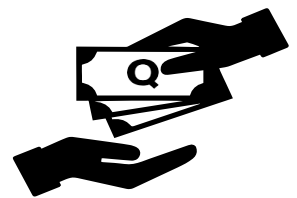


Figure 12: Rural Business Enterprises - Cumulative Results as of FY 2022
Source: CRS CLD MEAL system, end of FY2022

d) MSMEs and Business Development Services

CLD works with MSMEs to strengthen local economies, considering that associations, cooperatives, and agricultural enterprises serve as a link between communities and more profitable and attractive markets and

services. A strong MSME has a cascading effect on the rest of the communities in the area, through the creation of new jobs, better prices and an increased demand for other products and services.

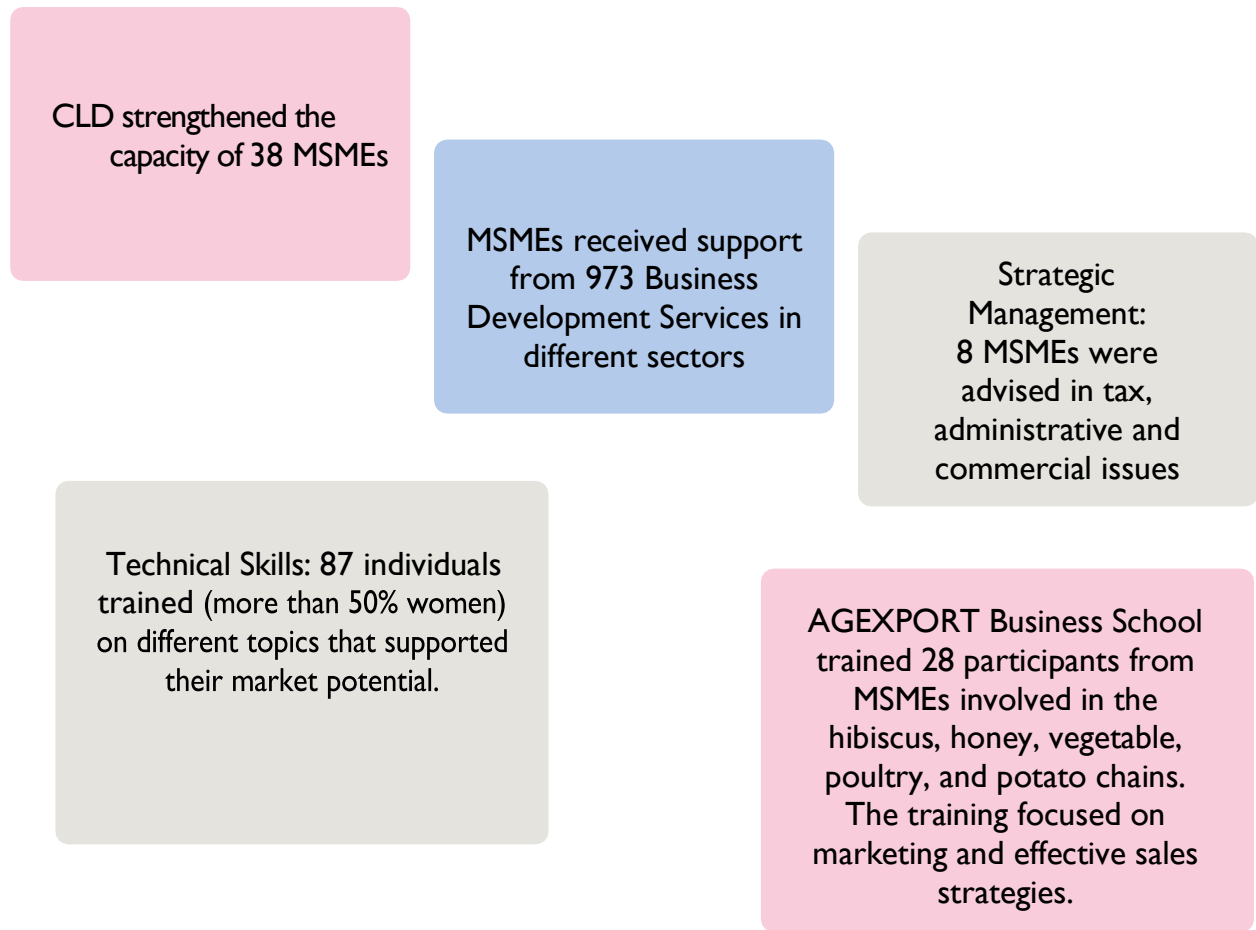


Figure 13: MSMEs and Business Development Services Results in FY 2022
Source: CRS CLD MEAL system, end of FY2022

CORE COMPONENT 2: ALLIANCES AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

These strategies promote participatory empowerment through inclusive planning and resource mobilization that strengthen social cohesion and rootedness by fostering local leadership committed to propelling community development projects.



As part of the process of developing strategies to establish linkages with the private sector (the Leverage Strategy and the Private Sector Alliances Strategy), CLD carried out a mapping of economic stakeholders that helped visualize three key sectors:

- Investors
- Large-scale companies
- Small and medium enterprises

The results of the private sector partnerships and leverage strategies have become valuable resources in identifying alternative financial sources. These contributions have been used to implement community development projects, especially in the context of reduced funding.

Leverage strategy

Types of leverage resources:

- Financial contribution
- In-kind contribution
- Equity investments and credit
- Purchase contracts

Categories of leverage sources considered:

- Communities
- Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILCs)
- Municipal governments
- Private sector at the municipal and regional level
- International private sector
- Financial institutions
- Investors
- International cooperation
- Central-level government
- Direct institutional contributions

Achievements of CLD Leverage Goals for 2017-2022 per category of leverage sources:

Annual funds leveraged by CLD per year in US dollars

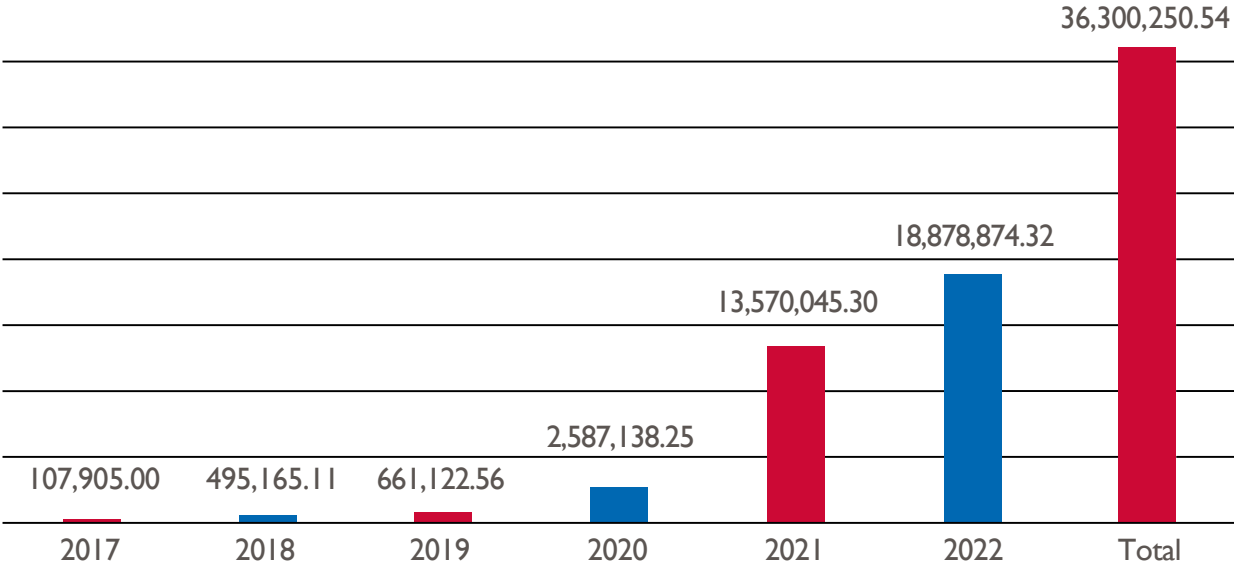


Figure 14

CLD created a value proposition that was presented to potential leverage partners. This proposition is based on organized information transformed into an innovative platform accessible to companies, investors, institutions, and local, municipal, and central governments.

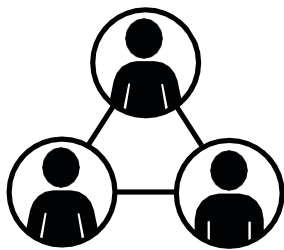
The key elements of this value proposition include:

- Completed comprehensive Community Development Plans
- Project portfolio with projects ready for investment (including project design and technical studies)
- Proven and contextualized methodologies
- Pre-positioned specialized technical and operational base
- Access to the communities
- Linkages with local government and the private sector
- Flexibility to incorporate investments in different manners
- Attractive pre-investment and investment opportunities

The platform contributed to mitigating the effects of COVID-19 given the slowdown in investments and commitments from potential partners and as a tool for mobilizing resources and responding to the pressing needs of the community during this challenging time.



2.1 Community-driven alliances and resource mobilization



The primary focus was to train and accompany community leaders to motivate them to mobilize resources for

community development projects that were prioritized in their CDPs and to establish connections with local stakeholders that could support the communities to respond to identified needs. This aim was accomplished by strengthening the links between the community, leaders, municipal authorities, and technical service providers.

a) Resource Mobilization:

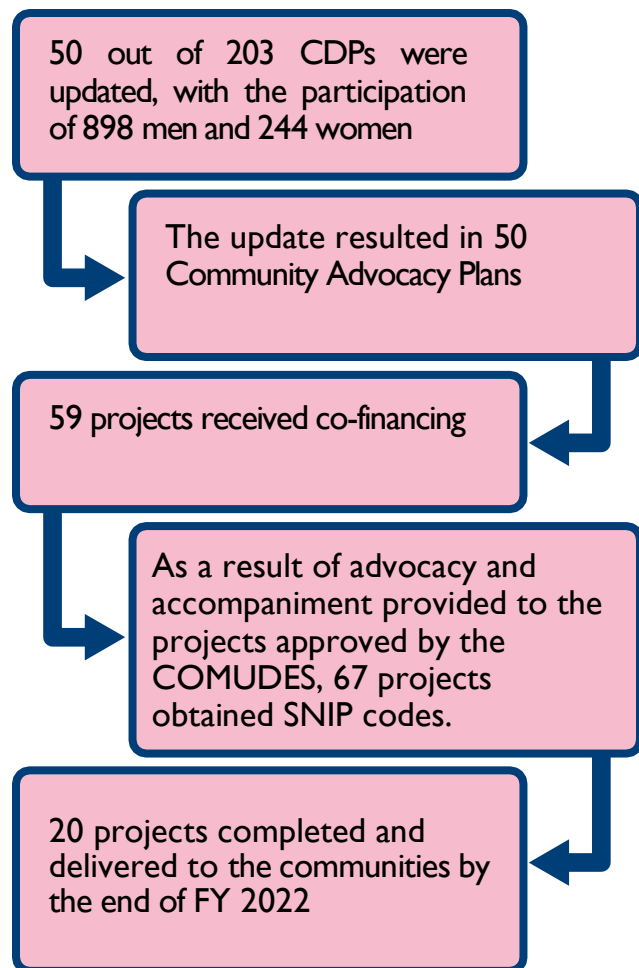


Figure 15: Resources Mobilization Results in FY 2022
Source: CRS CLD MEAL system, end of FY2022

b) Co-investments in essential community services projects:

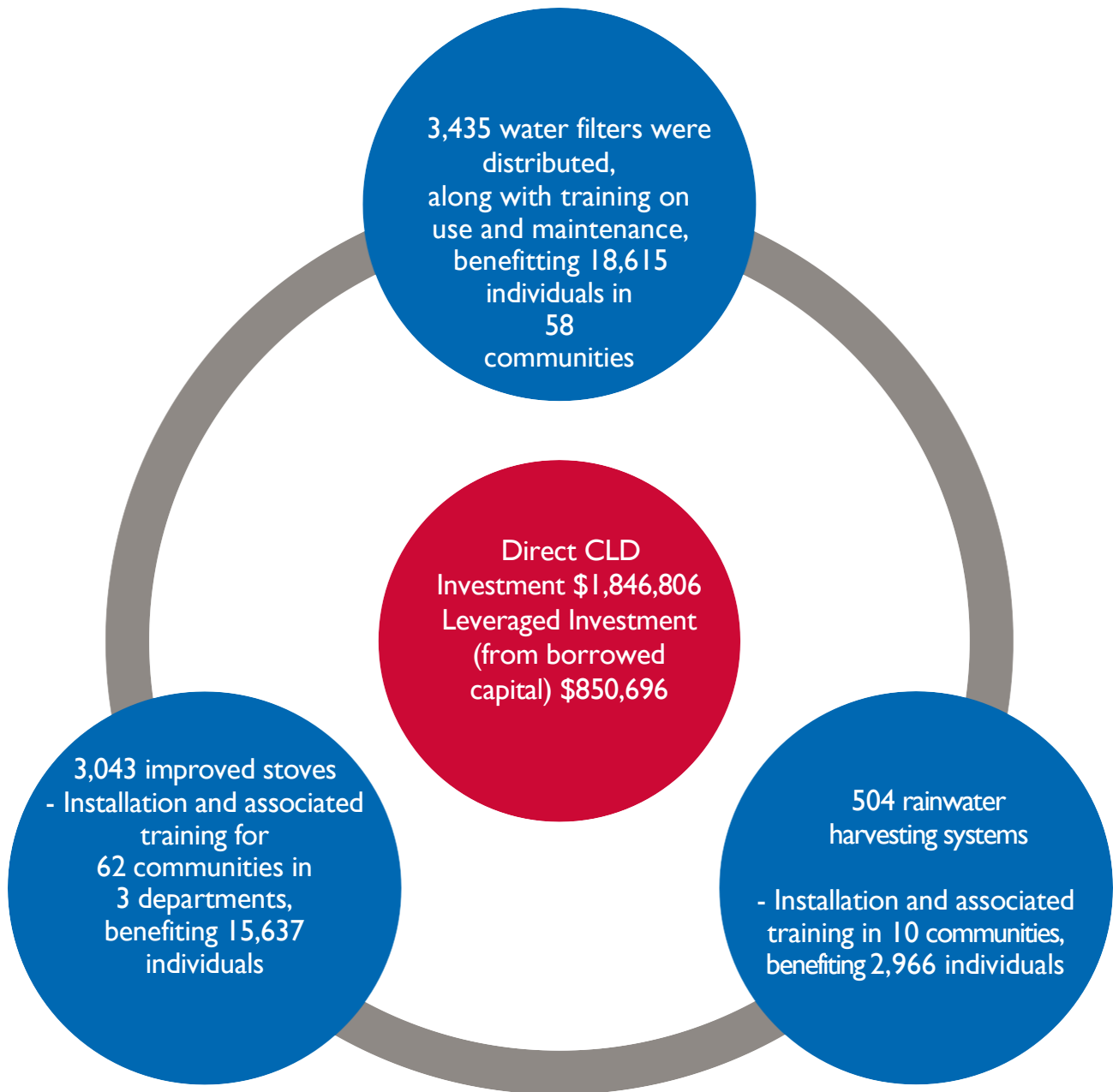


Figure 16: Co-investments in Essential Community Services Projects - Cumulative Results as of FY 2022
Source: CRS CLD MEAL system, end of FY2022

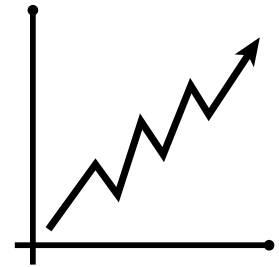
2.2 Financial mechanisms

Project	Description	Result
<p>Isidro Social Impact Investment Fund through CRS</p>	<p>Five agricultural organizations supported by CLD gained access to credit in reimbursable capital used for labor, machinery, and infrastructure improvements</p>	<p>Investments in reimbursable capital for \$775,000.00 as of FY 2022</p>
<p>Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Lab</p>	<p>CLD is actively supporting the project funded by IDB Lab, <i>“A private partial guarantee scheme to promote the use of sustainable agricultural technologies and practices with small scale farmers in Guatemala”</i></p>	<p>To date, the project is implemented in 32 municipalities and 249 communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 municipalities and 90 communities in Huehuetenango • 17 municipalities and 90 communities in Quetzaltenango • 8 municipalities and 71 communities in San Marcos. <p>1,112 producers are enrolled (73% women and 27% men)</p> <p>\$520,833.00 reimbursable capital</p>

Results of Financial Mechanisms in FY 2022
 Source: CLD Annual Performance Report FY 2022

2.3 Shared value initiatives

The CLD project focused on strengthening established relationships that continue providing goods and services that communities need to thrive, as well as income opportunities for dignified livelihoods. The project maintained collaborations with allies interested in making social investments in the Western Highlands.



CLD achieved the proposed goal of establishing five new partnerships for FY 2022 and signed agreements with the following organizations:

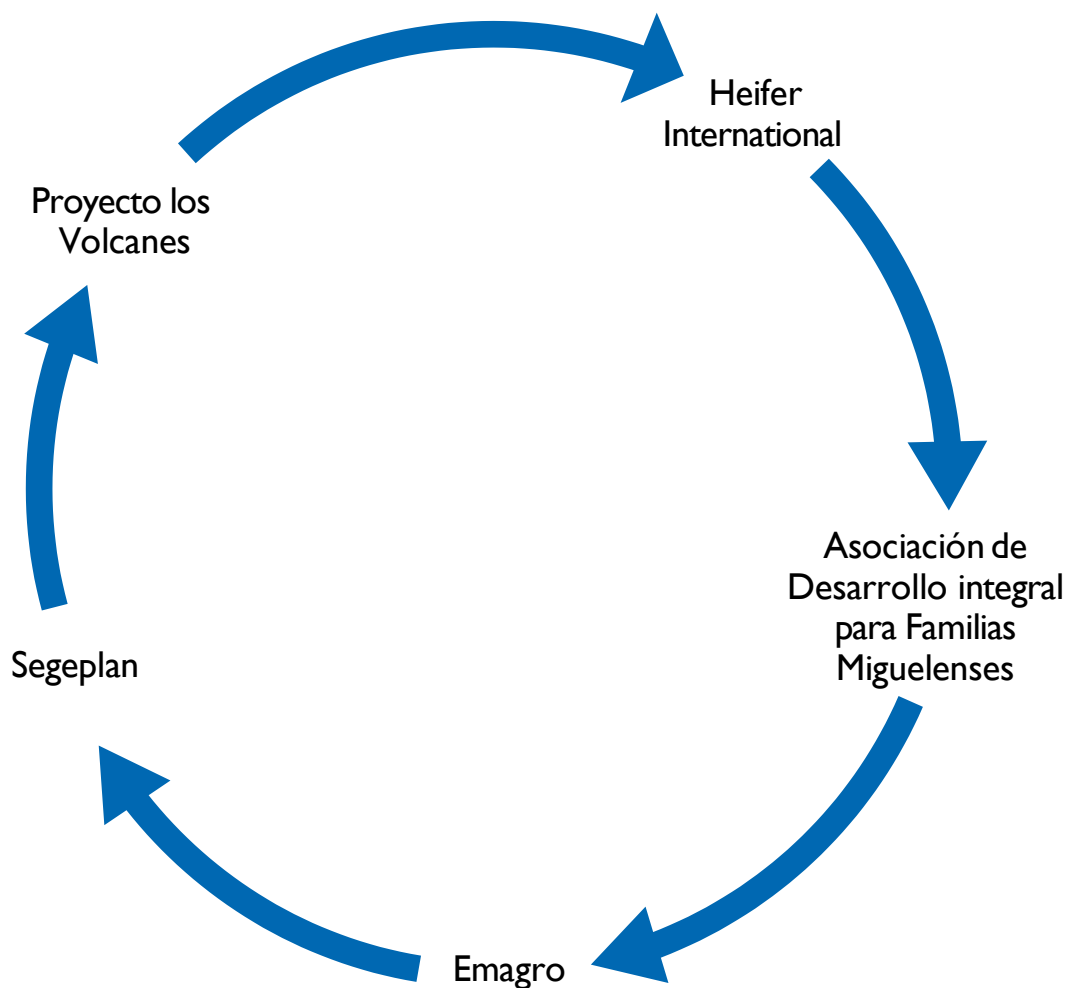


Figure 17:
Co-investments in Essential Community Services Projects - Cumulative Results as of FY 2022
Source: CRS CLD MEAL system, end of FY2022

CLD continued progress with the agreements previously signed with these organizations:

AGRECA promoted reforestation activities, conducted training sessions on citizen participation, and provided support for reforestation initiatives.

COSAMI supported reforestation, environmental awareness, technical training for youth, financial education, and access to credit.

Cementos Progreso, in collaboration with its commercial subsidiary Construfácil, implemented a pilot project in Totonicapán, Quetzaltenango and Huehuetenango. The project focused on training private service providers in the areas of construction products, farm tools and housing accessories.

AGREQUIMA, in coordination with CLD, coordinated with other private sector companies and organizations such as Bayer, Nutrivisa, Asesoría, Capacitación y Servicios Agrícolas (ACYSA), Asesoramiento y Distribución de Fitosanitarios y Fertilizante (AGROCAMPO) and Popoyán to establish demonstration plots, train potato producers, deliver inputs and provide technical assistance to improve potato production and evaluate new varieties.

Habitat for Humanity designed and delivered energy-saving stoves and water filters and provided training on the sustainable and proper utilization of these resources. Community leaders were also involved in the training to ensure they could offer timely follow-up to community members.

Yummus Foods purchased 20 quintals of chickpeas to 75 farmers supported by CLD.

Results of Shared Value Initiatives in FY 2022
Source: CRS CLD MEAL system, end of FY2022

PART II

CLD's SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCES: THE HUMAN FACE

“At first, the President of the COCODE did not want to work with us because we were women. One day, we pulled him aside and talk to him and told him there were so many things we could do as women. With the CLD project, we have learned that both men and women have the same rights and that we should participate to improve our community. Now he calls us and listens to what we have to say.”

Maridalia López
COCODE member
Arroyo Grande, La Democracia,
Huehuetenango





CORE COMPONENT: Market-driven Initiatives AZURE

Water for future generations

Juan Aurelio Tizol lives in San Antonio Las Nubes, Chiantla, department of Huehuetenango. He is a member of the community water commission. The community's water infrastructure was very old and leaking, to the point that they were losing about 96 thousand gallons of water per year. As a result, many families lacked access to water. Juan shares, *"The pipes were at least 60 years old."*

The Communities Leading Development project provided support to repair and rehabilitate the community's water system, with the participation of the municipality of Chiantla and community members. *"I'm now satisfied that we're taking better care of our water; we want to conserve our water for future generations. This is a wise investment,"* Juan commented.

In addition, as part of the effort to enhance community management through the Wash +I component, the CLD project has actively promoted the establishment of Community Water and Sanitation Offices (OCAs). These offices serve as physical spaces that leaders of water system user groups can use to manage, maintain, and repair the water system. Additionally, the offices provide a location for users to make regular fee payments or settle any outstanding payments.

With the donation of computer equipment and office furniture, and with the support of the COCODE, which provided a dedicated physical space, the village of San Antonio Las Nubes successfully established a Community Water and Sanitation Office.

CLD has contributed significantly to improving the water systems by rehabilitating the systems and enhancing the administrative, operational, and maintenance capacities of the water commissions to ensure the long-term sustainability of the systems. The project has also promoted the use of the SIGA (Integrated Water Management System) software developed by

CARE. Víctor García, President of the COCODE in San Antonio Las Nubes commented: *“We made a commitment to contribute with labor and construction materials because we desperately needed to fix our old system. It was sad to see all that water going down the drain.”*

The mobilization of community resources was key, as they contributed \$38,854 of the project cost. The municipality also provided support by contributing \$22,848 in materials, facilitating environmental processes, and involving the municipal technical offices. The CLD project contributed \$57,151, and \$21,251 was leveraged from the private sector, resulting in a combined investment of \$140,106. As a result of these collaborative efforts, 83 families, representing 432 users (including 215 women), have improved their access and availability of safe drinking water.





CORE COMPONENT: Market-driven Initiatives Economic Development

- **Agricultural and livestock production
- Poultry farming**

A business opportunity

Ana Bernal lives in Chemal, Chajul, Quiché. She is the secretary of the community egg production group. Ana shares: *“I’m currently earning a monthly family income of Q600.00 to Q650.00 that helps me purchase essential products. I’m also saving some of these funds to buy chickens.”*

Ana, along with other women colleagues, are actively seeking ways to sell their egg production to generate income. They primarily sell their products to the local school within the community and sell the remaining eggs at the local market on Tuesdays and Thursdays and through small neighborhood stores (tiendas) in the municipality of Chajul.

Another participant, María Batz Pacheco, along with her husband, recognized a promising business opportunity within the egg value chain. As the president of the board of the egg-production group in her community of Sotzil in Chajul, María shares that initially, there was some hesitation among the beneficiaries to participate. This reluctance originated from previous experiences of egg production failures in other projects and organizations that lacked sufficient accompaniment during implementation.

However, with the CLD project, community members gained trust in the technical, administrative, and commercial support provided to obtain optimum production outcomes. CLD supported the process of organizing egg-producing groups, donated materials, equipment, and the birds for the establishment of the chicken coops.

The project also established Farmer Field Schools to train and empower producer groups. These schools serve as a valuable tool to strengthen the skills of livestock promoters, who are responsible for following up on productive activities. Their role will be particularly significant once the CLD project concludes its direct interventions.

In 2020, the CLD project conducted training sessions with 26 community leaders in Quetzaltenango, Totonicapán, Huehuetenango, and Quiché to introduce them to the Paravet model. This training facilitated implementation of livestock production projects in that area.

Paravets are service providers trained in integrated poultry management to prevent and control poultry diseases. Through the training, these individuals acquired essential skills to identify diseases and offer poultry health services, including administering vaccines, antibiotics, and vitamins. They also received information on animal health, preventive measures, and the use of veterinary aid kits.

"I learned about caring for turkeys, hens, and chickens. I will share my new skills with the people in my community," expressed Julia Itzep, one of the participants, reflecting on her experience after completing the training.

In Chajul, 113 households benefited from the native poultry and *chompipollos* projects. Four groups of poultry producers were organized for selling eggs.



© Rony Arriola for CLD



CORE COMPONENT: Market-driven Initiatives Economic Development - Technical Assistance

Macro tunnels for growing tomatoes and peppers

Urbino Aguilar, a farmer residing in the community of Mulebac in San Miguel Ixtahuacán, San Marcos, is one of the recipients of the 135 macro tunnels that were distributed in four communities. These tunnels were specifically designed to enable families to enhance vegetable production and achieve higher yields. Urbino shares,

“The land and climate conditions here in Mulebac don’t allow us to cultivate crops like tomatoes and peppers, but with the macro tunnels, we can grow different and more profitable crops. Now that I’m growing tomatoes and peppers, I’m earning double or even triple compared to growing traditional crops like maize and beans. A quintal (100 pounds) of tomatoes is sold at \$54, while peppers sell for \$40”.

The CLD project provided construction materials and technical support to ensure the successful implementation of the macro tunnels. These tunnels create an optimal environment that safeguards non-traditional crops from heavy rains in these geographical conditions.

The macro tunnels fostered economic growth within the families and the community. The produce from the tunnels provides more consistent quality and increased yield, all while maintaining environmentally friendly conditions. Additionally, local vegetable production contributes to mitigating food security concerns, as families are encouraged to consume their own produce to complement their traditional diet of maize and beans.

To ensure optimal production, 17 farmers in the village of Mulebac received CLD training on irrigation, fertilization, and pest control using macro-tunnel farming. Families contributed labor and construction materials to build the tunnels and establish the planting system. The project's

supported farmers organize into groups, enabling them to secure better prices for agricultural inputs so that they can access new market opportunities in the future.





CORE COMPONENT: Market-driven Initiatives Economic Development

- **Technical Assistance**

A long-cherished dream

The primary economic activity among the groups served by CLD is agriculture. Coffee producers engaged in shade-grown coffee production, commonly complement their coffee with the cultivation of cocoa, macadamia, and bananas. Combining coffee with macadamia has helped some coffee growers mitigate losses in coffee productivity during periods of declining local and international coffee prices.

CLD selected small-scale macadamia producers in the communities Nuevo Edén, Nuevo Porvenir, Emanuel, and Nuevo Progreso in the San Marcos department to establish a value chain by partnering with the Empresa Importadora y Comercializadora Agrícola Alianza S.A. for marketing conventional, transitional, and organic macadamia.

Traditionally, small-scale macadamia producers in Guatemala have no access to international buyers, as the market is dominated by three main exporting companies. Their inability to access better markets forces farmers to sell their products at lower prices, exacerbating inequality and reducing community productivity.

To address these issues, the project decided to work with Alianza S.A. through its inclusive value chain program to empower and address farmers' financial needs to improve their production and export capacities. CLD connected Alianza S.A. with the Isidro Social Impact Investment Fund through CRS. This collaboration provided small-scale macadamia producers with access to a \$155,000 loan to establish and equip a processing plant with drying and nut-shelling facilities to enable them to sell macadamia kernel to international markets. The plant's machinery and equipment were also partially financed by USAID's and Popoyán PRO-INNOVA project, thanks to the coordinated efforts between the CLD project and PRO-INNOVA.

Javier Amado Jiménez, Alianza, S.A. General Manager, expressed his excitement about the plant, *“The construction of the macadamia processing plant brings immense joy to the community and farmers as it represents development. The plant will generate employment opportunities for many community members. We have dreamed about this for more than 20 years and now the dream is a reality.”*

This investment not only reduced transportation costs and nut rejection but also stimulated employment and livelihoods in the area. Through these actions, USAID and CRS supported the development of small-scale farmers, in line with the U.S. Strategy for Addressing the Root Causes of Migration by directing investments towards community projects that directly address the identified needs of the community.

In addition, Alianza S.A. conducted a technical intervention specifically aimed at supporting macadamia producers in the San Marcos department. The intervention focused on providing technical assistance and training on both conventional and organic management practices for macadamia cultivation. The macadamia nut shelling and cracking projects implemented in the municipality of Nuevo Progreso benefitted 176 individuals and 43 families.



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CORE COMPONENT: Market-driven Initiatives Economic Development - Technical Assistance to MSMEs

Growing our business

Candelaria Gutiérrez, a member of an MSME called COPIRED in Totonicapán, shares her experience: *“I come from Totonicapán and represent a group of men and women who are egg producers in the COPIRED cooperative. Today, we learned how to become a more effective organization, how to manage costs and build customer loyalty, and how to develop an effective sales strategy to grow our business.”*

Candelaria also participated in a training on effective sales strategies organized by the CLD project, in collaboration with the Guatemala Exporter Association (AGEXPORT). The event trained 26 members of 11 MSMEs from the departments of Quetzaltenango, Totonicapán, Huehuetenango, and Quiché. The MSME representatives also learned valuable skills such as analyzing market prices, creating powerful sales presentations, conducting effective interviews, and closing business deals. These MSMEs are involved in various value chains, including honey, eggs, macadamia, vegetables, hibiscus, and amaranth.

As part of the economic development strategy, the CLD project offers Business Development Services (BDS) like this training to strengthen MSMEs. CLD facilitates the training of local businesses and fosters economic growth that translates into community development.

As of 2022, 38 MSMEs had received 632 Business Development Services, with 120 focusing on enhancing strategic business management and 156 concentrating on developing business linkages. These efforts resulted in 44.7 million dollars in sales, including 2.8 million dollars in sales to international companies including Intelligentsia, Coffee Bird, and ECOTerra.



© Martha Rodríguez for CLD.



CORE COMPONENT: Market-driven Initiatives Economic Development

- Entrepreneurship and Vocational Training

Opportunity for youth entrepreneurship

Helen Pacay lives in the municipality of San Juan Ostuncalco in the Quetzaltenango department. Like many young Guatemalans, she has been unable to find employment, but she has excellent ideas for opening a business. Until now, she lacked the funds to turn her ideas into reality.

Regarding her business idea, she said, *"I will give a second chance to used clothing by designing and creating new garments from secondhand pieces. The idea of opening a business has been on my mind for a long time, and now with the financial assistance provided, I have the opportunity to put my business plan into practice. Young people in communities like mine don't have money to turn their ideas into a reality."*

Helen was granted seed capital (\$670) by the CLD project to launch and pursue her business idea after successfully completing a five-month training process and crafting a good business plan. Her plan stood out among the entries in a contest that involved 168 young entrepreneurs from Quetzaltenango, Huehuetenango, Totonicapán, and Quiché, all presenting business ideas related to agricultural, livestock production, handicrafts, and services.

This project, implemented by USAID and CRS, aims to address the lack of employment opportunities for youth by promoting investments in young men and women and creating development opportunities within their communities.

Through implementing entrepreneurship training, over 700 young individuals have acquired new skills. Some have even secured seed capital by submitting their business plans, further enhancing their opportunities for progress within their communities.

In the end, this initiative launched 90 entrepreneurial ventures, enabling these young entrepreneurs to generate income, fulfill their aspirations, and support their families. Additionally, some of them have started creating employment opportunities, both full-time and

part-time, for other young individuals. Their low schooling level did not hinder young individuals from undergoing training and showcasing their well-defined entrepreneurial visions through business plans. It is expected that their businesses will serve as concrete alternatives for young people to stay in their communities and pursue their life goals.





CORE COMPONENT: Alliances and Resource Mobilization Household Assets

Uk'u'x Ja: Heart of the home

Estela Baten Sarate is a mother who lives in Jutacaj, Momostenango, Totonicapán, who benefited from an improved stove. She comments,

“I’m happy because my family finally has a space where we can cook, eat, and talk. I’ve been married for 14 years and this is the first time we have a pleasant gathering place in the kitchen.”

In Guatemala, over two million families rely on firewood for cooking, and the majority lack proper chimneys to eliminate smoke. This situation leads to various health issues, including ear infections, cataracts, and respiratory diseases.



© Luis Cocón for CLD



To address this challenge, CLD in partnership with Habitat for Humanity Guatemala created a stove model known as Uk'u'x Ja, which in the K'iche language means "heart of the home." The design of this model considered technical, economic, environmental, social, cultural, and anthropometric aspects, as well as functionality and sustainability. Most importantly, the design specifications included the opinion of users, primarily women.

The CLD project assisted families in constructing these stoves, which not only save firewood, but also reduce smoke emissions. Furthermore, families received training on stove construction, usage, and maintenance, along with education on other important topics such as healthy households, self-esteem, financial literacy, disaster risk reduction, and nutrition.

Juana Ajanel Tzun, another mother from the village Jutacai, shares her experience, saying,

"We used to cook on stones with the fire on the ground, but the stove has improved our mood. It is different now, as we no longer have to cook on the ground, and it feels good to sit around the stove with my family."

Through the installation and training on the use of improved stoves and water filters, the CLD project delivered essential household services to 238 families, benefitting over 1,200 individuals in the communities of Jutacaj and Racaná, in Momostenango, in the Totonicapán department.



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VI. Lessons Learned

CRS defines lessons learned as:

*"(...) Experiences that can be gained from a particular project context to improve programming in diverse situations."
(Hagens, 2015)*

CLD Lessons Learned:

The quantification of community contributions to implement their projects fostered community buy-in and sustainability.

The communities have actively participated by providing community labor and local materials, facilitating the material transfer, purchasing rights of way, and acquiring land for water sources and distribution tanks. The level of community contribution has exceeded initial expectations.

The quantitative assessment and accountability of these community contributions helped increase community buy-in, allowing participants to understand the extent of their contributions to the projects. This raised awareness about the responsible use, care, operation, and maintenance of the solutions implemented. Documenting community contributions and including them as cost-sharing in the budget of each project is essential. Sharing these quantified results with the community, donors, and other involved organizations is also vital to acknowledge and recognize the assets and contributions made by the communities towards the projects through an accountability mechanism.

Seeking strategic allies and documenting intervention strategies is crucial to enhance the replicability of CLD small-scale infrastructure at the household level.

CLD documented the installation process of household assets, including for installation, education, community management, costs, plans, and technical specifications. The project has manuals for wood-saving stoves and rainwater harvesting systems, which will serve as practical guides for replication at a larger scale in other regions of the country. Further documentation of the intervention strategies is recommended to inform and facilitate replication and attract other stakeholders who can contribute financial resources, offer technical assistance, and provide the necessary support for similar initiatives.

Collaborating with Technical Implementing Partners (TIP) streamlined the technical, administrative, and financial execution processes.

This model resulted in increased leverage opportunities and shorter implementation times,

thus promoting agility, replicability, and greater impact. The accumulated expertise of the TIPs played a vital role in ensuring a more secure and efficient implementation process. It is recommended to work in alliance with TIPs with experience in specific topics.

Effective systems and tools ensure appropriate documentation of additional resources leveraged for development projects.

Leverage is defined as licit resources that third parties bring for the implementation of community development plans without necessarily providing them directly to CRS or other CLD consortium members. Leveraged resources are new resources for community development that would not have been available in the absence of the project.

Initially, there was a perception among the CLD project team and community leaders that involving external actors and the private sector could prioritize their needs over those of the community. Hence, it was essential to undertake internal and external awareness-building processes to educate them about the concept of leveraging and the benefits of potential alliances and leverage opportunities.

An agile system is recommended for registering additional resources obtained for the project, not only within CRS but also within partner organizations and for community leaders. The project team should also be consistently acknowledged and rewarded for achieving leverage targets. Furthermore, conducting awareness and education processes on leveraging strategies is advisable at all levels, including within the internal project team and with external stakeholders who may not be familiar with leverage concepts.

One of the main roles of community leadership has been seeking financial support for projects to improve the living conditions of the communities.

CLD identified that community leaders were performing this role in an empirical and disorganized manner and that they usually had no say in public investment decisions. Empowering the leadership of community authorities was a key factor in ensuring effective and successful actions aimed at seeking support to meet community needs. The project strengthened community leaders' capacities through several strategies: a) implementing a leadership training and capacity building model; b) accompanying each community to develop their Community Development Plans through a participatory and inclusive process; c) creating tools such as the Community Advocacy Plans and basic project profiles; d)

providing assistance so that community leaders could seek support from the local government, private sector, and other stakeholders to address their specific needs.

The evidence of community empowerment in successfully seeking support can be seen in the approval of 65 projects with an approved budget from the Public Investment System (SNIP) and securing 60 projects with funding from external organizations. To sustain this progress, it is crucial to establish a robust system and provide adequate tools to assist community leaders in effectively seeking support to meet their community needs.

The CLD project made significant efforts to increase the inclusion of women and youth in their communities.

Initially, a preliminary survey conducted during project design revealed that women's and youth perspectives were being excluded from visions for community development. To address this issue, CLD implemented a gender inclusion advocacy strategy, actively involving women and youth in project activities.

Through inclusive planning processes, youth showcased their capabilities to assume leadership roles within their communities, and 187 of them have initiated their own entrepreneurial ventures. Furthermore, 222 women have taken on leadership positions. This shows a substantial increase from the initial survey findings where only 6% of women were engaged in community development committees (COCODE), compared to 15% at the project's conclusion. To further promote inclusivity, it is recommended to implement empowerment initiatives specifically targeted at women and youth.

Access to relevant information about their businesses is essential for providing effective guidance to young entrepreneurs.

This information includes market insights, profitability analysis, and scalability opportunities. After recognizing the need for information, the CLD project collaborated with Technical Implementing Partners (TIPs) experienced in entrepreneurship. Currently, business plans are evaluated based on predefined criteria, such as profitability, addressing community needs, growth potential within and beyond the community, and the entrepreneur's relevant experience. It's recommended to select TIPs with specific expertise, foster connections between entrepreneurial activities and other project components, and strengthen the soft skills of entrepreneurs.

Business Development Services (BDS) require a well-planned follow-up process to ensure successful implementation.

Although CLD conducted the work plan with Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) inclusively and tailored the BDS products to the specific needs of each enterprise, some MSMEs faced challenges in implementing these services. To address this issue, it is advisable to include a follow-up phase after the activities, post-training, and delivery of BDS products.

To enhance the sustainability of BDS initiatives, it is advisable to include a sustainability component in the work plan. The leverage actions and post-service contributions should also be included in the letter of agreement signed between the project and the MSMEs, and annual accountability letters can be used to emphasize the impact of Business Development Services.

VII. Good Practices



CRS defines good practices as:

“An intervention, approach or process that works well and appears to improve programmatic impact and quality. It is a practice that promises a good outcome.” (Hagens, 2015)

CLD project has identified several good practices, including:

A multilevel approach is needed to ensure the long-term sustainability of the provision of water and sanitation services.

The multilevel approach includes motivating the participation of local stakeholders at the community level (e.g., water commissions and COCODES), municipal level (OMAS), institutional level (Environmental Sanitation Inspectors -ISA- of the Ministry of Health), and national level (RASGUA, Agenda for Change -A4C-). CLD experience has shown that this collaborative involvement across different levels is not only replicable but also instrumental in achieving project sustainability.

Municipalities' involvement in implementing community projects.

Municipalities have provided construction materials, acted as counterparts in dealings with public institutions, promoted the execution of phases of construction projects, taken care of legal processes, and offered technical support. They have also provided political, social, and economic support to community projects through activities such as community planning, conducting feasibility studies, and strengthening Community Water and Sanitation Offices and Municipal Water and Sanitation Offices. To be considered for municipalities' support, the community leaders are required to submit feasibility studies for the consideration of municipal authorities.

Establishing alliances with governmental entities is instrumental in ensuring sustainability.

The methodology for developing CDPs was extensively tested, resulting in the creation of 203 CDPs. This methodology was proposed to the Presidential Planning and Programming Secretariat (SEGEPLAN) for their adoption and use to strengthen the Law on Urban and Rural Development Councils. The advocacy process involved demonstrating to the authorities the feasibility and benefits of adopting this methodology at the national level.

The advocacy process included SEGEPLAN and the municipalities, through the National Municipality Association (*Asociación Nacional de Municipalidades*), as well as other entities affiliated with the central government and local communities. A symbolic event was

organized, where a woman community leader who participated in CLD presented the methodology and outlined its benefits. Attendees included Guatemalan government authorities. The event also garnered the support of the U.S. Government through the presence of the U.S. Ambassador and the Director of USAID in Guatemala.

This event facilitated coordination with SEGEPLAN's technical teams and departmental delegations to transfer the methodology. It is recommended to identify opportunities for collaboration with other stakeholders and propose strategies for their development.

Inclusive planning, involving key sectors such as community leaders and vulnerable groups (e.g., women, youth, and people with disabilities), has been instrumental in fostering community ownership of their vision for development and ensuring the sustainability of actions.

CLD integrated this good practice into every component and phase of the project.

Community and stakeholder mapping is a valuable tool to support community planning.

With the support of the CLD project, rural communities engaged in mapping exercises to chart their territories, identify needs, and prioritize actions as part of the community development planning process. The mapping exercise was conducted during the assessment phase to identify community assets, needs and priorities, enabling a more informed prioritization of needs and interventions.

Active participation and inclusion of community members in the mapping exercises have resulted in the creation of community maps that facilitate the identification of assets, potentials, needs, and the prioritization of actions outlined in the CDPs. Moreover, through the process of seeking support and collectively developing project profiles and advocacy plans, communities have been able to identify stakeholders with the capacity to invest in the projects.



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VIII. Achievements and Impact

Results

16,675 families reached



667 community projects implemented that respond to CDPs.

US\$ 36,300,250.55 in co-investments as of 2022



25 public-private alliances

1,538 indigenous youth and people with disabilities are playing key roles in COCODEs and commissions



3,503 individuals trained in the operation of COCODEs and commissions (2,933 men and 570 women)

1,554 COCODE members attended training sessions (1,247 men and 307 women)



222 women are participating in leadership roles within the COCODEs

38 MSMEs strengthened as of 2022



43 community water commissions trained

727 youth trained in economic entrepreneurship



Communities successfully secured 67 impact projects with public funds through the municipalities. Total value: US\$ 8,897,853.39

30,746 individuals have access to potable water



1,030 individuals received cash assistance to face the effects of Covid-19



973 business development services delivered to 38 organizations



20 projects with a SNIP code implemented with leveraged funds of US\$ 1,897,034.64



Documents developed during the implementation of the CLD project

- Community Handbook- Our participation, inclusion, and organization, the road to community development
- Community Handbook- Planning the development of our community, with active participation and inclusion
- Improved Stoves Manual
- SCALL Manual (rainwater harvesting systems)
- Guide for animal health and use of livestock veterinary kit
- Guide for fundamental math operations for livestock promoters
- Guide for poultry production costs and profitability
- Guide for poultry management
- Guide for macadamia post-harvest handling
- Safe handling of macadamia pesticides with personal protective equipment (brochure)
- Occupational health and safety guidelines for coffee and macadamia processing (brochure)

Acknowledgments

ALIANZAS SOSTENIDAS

Consortio



Socios Técnicos Implementadores



Aliados Técnicos



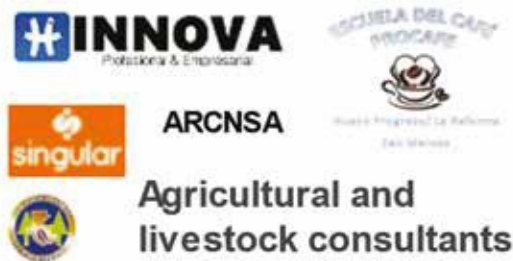
Aliados Gobierno, Academia y ONGs



Aliados Sector Privado



Proveedores de Servicios



Compradores



Stakeholders participating in the CLD project, by partner type



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