Brighter Communities Worldwide

Formerly Friends of Londiani

Strategic Plan 2019-2024

CREATING BETTER FUTURES

Creating better futures

www.brightercommunities.org

A world where strong, healthy communities can thrive, building sustainable livelihoods and brighter futures.

Cover photo: This is Ishmael Kipchumba from Ndubusat Village, Kenya. Ishmael's family were one of the first families in the village to engage with the Healthy Village programme.

Inside cover: Participants from across 91 communities attend a partnership seminar in Londiani, Kenya, June 2017

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Foreword from the CEO

Brighter Communities Worldwide's Strategic Plan for 2019-24 sets out a pathway for sustained growth for the organisation. *Our Impact Report – 15 years of Community Development* published in 2017 provided evidence that our model of working in partnership with local communities delivers results. We are receiving requests from other communities in Kenya and beyond to work with them and this plan sets out how we can respond to this demand, while recognising there is still work to do in the communities we are currently working in.

We are committed to being part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development developed by the United Nations with civil society, NGOs, business, academics and others. This Agenda encompasses the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the aim to 'leave no one behind'. The level of inequality, rates of poverty, hunger, the degradation of the environment, access to energy, jobs and good health are everyday challenges in the communities we serve. Our approach and programmes follow this Agenda, and we are actively contributing to the SDGs.

This plan has been developed from an evidence base as highlighted in the Impact Report. Our evaluation tools enable us to improve our current programmes, and identify new programmes to be developed in response to community needs. We also look to other organisations with expertise that we can bring to the communities we work with as we recognise we cannot do everything ourselves.

At the heart of our ways of work is a commitment to building effective strategic relationships. We work hard to maintain and evolve our existing relationships. As we discover emerging needs, work in new areas and require additional resources, identifying others with complementary skills and resources is key. It takes time and effort to build these effective relationships, and we are committed to extending our network of partners in the coming years.

To expand our work with others, we need to ensure we are building the capacity and capability of our organisation and our teams. Our Boards, staff and volunteers are passionate and committed individuals, and we will continue to develop their skills, experience and knowledge to meet the changing context in which we work. Growth in the organisation means we also need to update key systems and processes to work more efficiently and effectively.

As with other NGOs, we recognise the expectation on us for good governance, transparency and accountability to stakeholders. Brighter Communities Worldwide has received positive feedback from external reviews and donors on our governance, and we are committed to evolving these practices in accordance with the standards and expectations of those we work with and for.
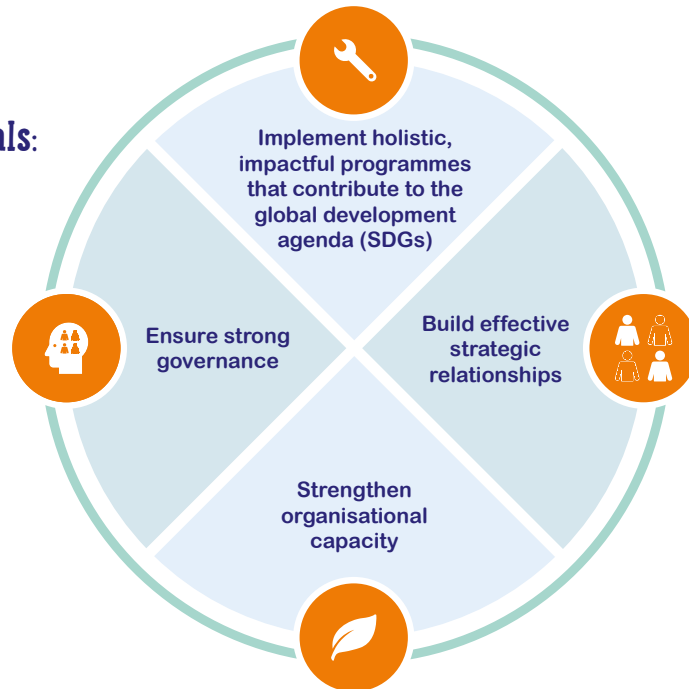
A Strategic Plan is designed to provide a roadmap for the future. The process of preparing this Plan has been invaluable – as we spend time reflecting on what has been achieved in recent years, and what needs still to be addressed. I would like to thank all of our stakeholders – our volunteers in Kenya, Uganda, Ireland and throughout the world, the Government ministries we work with, other NGOs, our staff team and many others who were so generous with their thoughts and ideas. We have tried to capture and respond to your feedback, and to prioritise the key areas of work for the years ahead.

I am excited about what we can achieve as we work together in the coming years to deliver on our Vision for a world where strong, healthy communities can thrive, building sustainable livelihoods and brighter futures

Martin Ballantyne
Chief Executive Officer

Overview

Our Strategic Plan for 2019–2024 has four goals:

Implement holistic, impactful programmes that contribute to the global development agenda (SDGs)

Ensure strong governance

Build effective strategic relationships

Strengthen organisational capacity

What guides us:

We have a number of tools which guide the work of the organisation

Vision, Mission and Values – are enduring

Our Model/Theory of change & approach – describes the change we want to see and how to deliver it

Strategic Plan: 2013-18 Outcomes inform future plans

Strategic Plan: 2019-24 How we prioritise our work

Business Plan: Organisational strengthening for growth – the how

Operational Plans: Kenya – the details

Operational Plans: Ireland – the details

About Brighter Communities Worldwide

Our vision

A world where strong, healthy communities can thrive, building sustainable livelihoods and brighter futures.

Our mission

The mission of Brighter Communities Worldwide is to work in partnership with communities, to deliver programmes that enrich their lives and help create better futures for them and their families.

Our values

Our values underpin everything we do, every decision we make and also help communicate the way we work and how we do things.

- **Integrity** We are an organisation built on integrity and good governance with a track record for success.

- **Passion** We work passionately in all that we do to realise our vision across communities.

- **Togetherness** We work together with all our stakeholders; all programmes are based on community needs as identified by themselves.

Our values are based on the way we work:

- As **advocates** to amplify the voices of those we work with

- In **partnership** with local people, officials, NGOs and governments

- Giving people the **tools** to build on their existing skills and expertise

- **Building** on the traditional way of doing things to improve lives for everyone

- Working together to **create brighter communities worldwide**

How we will achieve this

Brighter Communities Worldwide considers the whole community, enabling individuals and communities to be authors of their own development, building brighter communities for all. Our model creates an enabling environment for communities to realise change and uses a partnership-based approach to deliver relevant programmes to meet the needs of communities and individuals.

Family from Tulwapmoi village, Kenya with members of the Brighter Communities Worldwide team

Our Theory of Change

The change we want to see: as authors of their own development, the people with whom we work lead healthier lives and apply their increased education and knowledge to creating sustainable livelihoods and stronger communities.
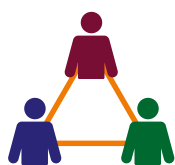
WHAT we will achieve:

Improved community health	Improved educational opportunities	Increased household incomes

What we will deliver

- Increased number of healthy homesteads
- Improved student-led learning environments for children and teachers (HECA)
- Every community serviced by an effective Community Unit
- Girls and women more actively involved in addressing issues which impact their physical and mental health wellbeing
- Increased household income
- Increased retention at school
- Enhanced understanding of development through increased knowledge and partnerships
- Increased access to capital for business and income generation projects
- Increased tourism to the area

HOW we will deliver

Partnerships

Community solutions (empowerment)

Equal access for all

Sustainability

People are central

Volunteerism

Gender

Alignment with national and global agendas

THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development

Working with people

Women & girls

Families

Men

Children & youth

The vulnerable

Government agents

Communities

Our Unique Approach

Clean water supply

Water pipes, clean water, bringing water to communities for the first time

Toilets and washrooms in schools which also help to keep girls in schools

Girls for Girls Programme to learn about menstrual health, income generation, and the importance of staying at school every day of the month

Alternative Rite of Passage

Completed education

Educational bursaries to help young people finish school

Bee keeping

Table banking loans between women to encourage business development

Jobs and income

Business courses

Sustainable Tourism

Health clinics in underserved areas

Capacity building in hospitals

National community health strategy development

Healthy schools programme

Vaccination programmes

Maternal health shelter in Sub County Hospital

Outreach clinics

Maternal health education

Smokeless stoves

Good, affordable healthcare

If we have access to clean water, my family will not get ill as often, my daughters will not have to walk miles every day to collect water and they can attend a school with good hygiene.

Education is important if I am going to provide for my family. I want the opportunity to learn new skills so that I can work and for my children to finish their schooling.

I want to be able to provide for my family today and in the future. I want to learn about business, find ways to support each other and help our local economy grow.

I want to feel safe in childbirth and to protect my children from diseases. I need to be able to reach a clinic without walking for days, care for my elders and cook in a smoke free home.

Creating brighter communities means ensuring:

- Access to good, affordable healthcare
- Education to help people find a job and be able to articulate their needs
- An income that can sustain a family
- Healthier lives with a supply of clean water and better facilities

Founded in 2002, Brighter Communities Worldwide has operations in Ireland and Kenya with a pilot project in Uganda. Our model of community development has evolved and adapted to our changing environment and the changing needs of the communities we work with.

We have worked in partnership with many stakeholders in designing, developing and implementing a development approach to address specific aspects of poverty and provision of essential services. We continue to build on our learnings and experiences over the past 15 years.

Brighter Communities Worldwide takes a holistic approach to the needs and priorities of a community. Empowerment is key and people are at the centre of our approach as *"authors of their own development"*. Our approach is multi-faceted and focuses on the key areas of health, education and economic empowerment.

We have proven this model and achieved positive impacts and results over time.

Our value for money approach

Working with communities to improve lives means being financially responsible. We ensure the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcomes – and we use a balance of three principals to achieve this – economy, effectiveness and efficiency.

We scrutinise our expenditure at every step and ensure benefits can be passed on and multiplied over time and costs shared whenever possible. We also benefit through the commitment and input of our international and local volunteers and local resources.
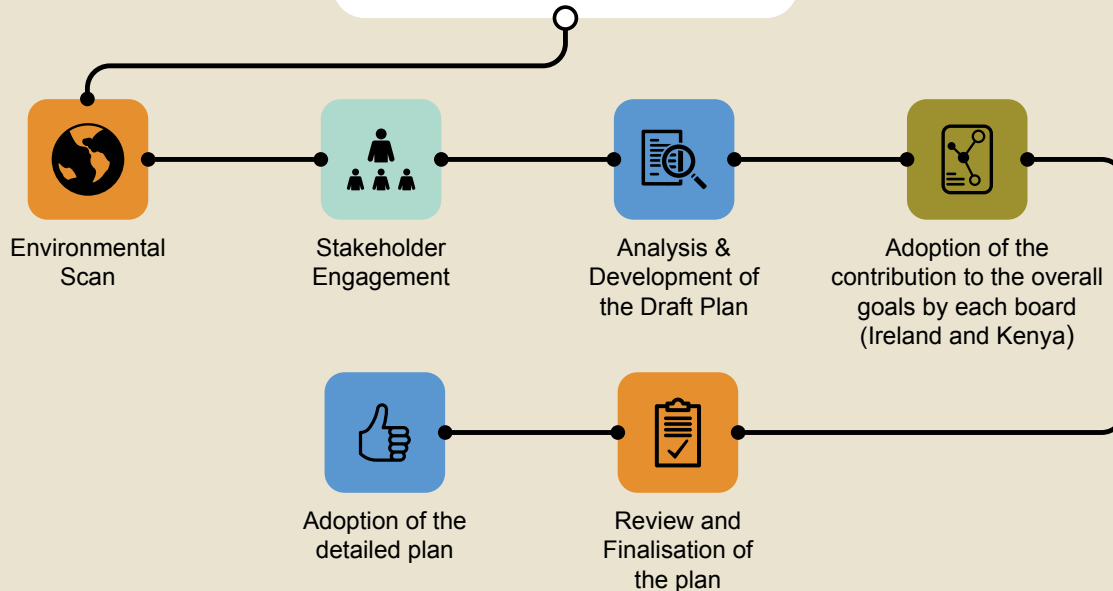
Our programmes have a strong focus on good management, financial discipline and monitoring and evaluation systems reducing waste, improving efficiency, and most importantly delivering better outcomes.

- **People are central to Brighter Communities Worldwide's approach which is based on community-led solutions with local partners**

- **Brighter Communities Worldwide believes that stronger people make stronger communities, and that stronger communities make a better world**

- **Brighter Communities Worldwide sees itself as a catalyst for change; it kick-starts development and enables communities to prosper and grow through creating connections and empowering people**

- **Priority is given to vulnerable groups particularly women and people with disabilities, and Brighter Communities Worldwide endeavours to ensure its approach is all-inclusive**

- **Brighter Communities Worldwide focuses on the whole person and the whole community**

- **Sustainability is key, and is integrated across Brighter Communities Worldwide's approach – design, development and implementation**

- **Partnership is essential with all stakeholders including government ministries and communities**

- **Gender equality, the environment, HIV/AIDS and good governance are mainstreamed across the approach**

- **Our work is not a single intervention: it tackles issues impacting the whole community**

- **We make sure that the right resources are used in the right quantities and the right way to gain the right results**

- **This approach is the most effective way to achieve our desired outcome because it is all-inclusive, needs-based, beneficiary-focused and aligned with development strategies**

Developing our Strategy

The development of this plan began in November 2017

Environmental Scan

Stakeholder Engagement

Analysis & Development of the Draft Plan

Adoption of the contribution to the overall goals by each board (Ireland and Kenya)

Adoption of the detailed plan

Review and Finalisation of the plan

Environmental Scan
This involved reviewing the context in which we operate in Ireland, Kenya, Uganda and globally. Details of the findings are included in the Context Section.

Stakeholder Engagement
Using Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions stakeholders were consulted in Ireland, Kenya and Uganda. The engagement included Government Ministries, Partner organisations, Community Representatives, Staff, Volunteers, Donors, and Board members.

Analysis & Development of the Draft Plant
The feedback from the environmental scan, and stakeholder engagement was analysed with common themes emerging which fed into the development of the direction of this plan

Adoption of the strategic goals by each board (Ireland and Kenya)
The goals were adopted by the boards of Brighter Communities Worldwide in Ireland and in Kenya. The Plan was then finalised ready for implementation at the start of 2019.

The Context

Kenya has a population of almost 48 million; is ranked 145th on the Human Development Index (HDI) (0.548); 46% of people live below the poverty line and it has a Gender Inequality Index of 0.552 (an index of 1 shows gender equality). Brighter Communities Worldwide works in Kericho County (population of 944,842) in North West Kenya. This is a remote region and scores below the national average on all key indicators.

Key Indicator	Definition	Ireland[1]	Kenya[2]	Kipkelion[3]
Child Mortality	Under-five mortality rate is the probability per 1,000 that a new-born baby will die before reaching age five, if subject to age-specific mortality rates of the specified year.	3.6	49.4	55
Maternal Mortality	Maternal mortality ratio is the number of women who die from pregnancy-related causes while pregnant or within 42 days of pregnancy termination per 100,000 live births.	8 per 100,000	510 per 100,000	550 per 100,000
Births attended by Skilled Health Staff	The percentage of deliveries attended by personnel trained to give the necessary supervision, care, and advice to women during pregnancy, labour, and the postpartum period; to conduct deliveries on their own; and to care for new-borns.	100%	61.8%	21%

Kericho County

- Communities in Kericho County lack access to basic services including water, sanitation, energy and health and many households (up to 60%) are living below the poverty line.

- Access to essential health services is difficult, particularly for rural and remote communities (due to poor infrastructure, terrain, education etc.)

- The prevalence of **maternal mortality** is high (circa 500 per 100,000 live births).

- The county **perinatal mortality rate** is 63 per 1,000 meaning that that 1 in every 15 infants die in birth or within their first 7 days of life.

- Children face challenges from birth, and often do not reach their 5th birthday (child mortality circa 55 in 1,000) due to lack of immunisations, poor environmental conditions, poorly educated parents etc.

- 16% of Kericho County residents have no formal education and 22% of Kericho county residents have a secondary level of education or above.

- Educational challenges include early school dropouts, child marriages, Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C), and inadequate school facilities (particularly in the areas of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), and Menstrual Health Management (MHM). Girls often miss up to 5 days a month due to lack of sanitary products.

[1] WorldBank Data Bank 2012

[2] Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

[3] Kipkelion refers to Kipkelion East and West Sub Counties (population 228,000) where Brighter Communities Worldwide focused up to 2017

- Gender inequality is endemic. Women and girls do the bulk of unpaid work (such as caregiving, household tasks) and lack access to essential services including reproductive health, education and maternal health. Girls and women are more likely to be subjected to physical, sexual or emotional violence – ranging from female genital mutilation (FGM) to unwilling prostitution to violence in the home and the practice of early marriage.

- Kericho County has a child rich population, where 0-14 year olds constitute 44% of the total population. This is due to high fertility rates among women as shown by the highest percentage household size of 4-6 members at 42%.

- Household environmental conditions are poor with circa 55% of households lacking access to safe water, and up to 80% of households without latrines. 84% of households rely on traditional methods of cooking which involve using wood as fuel, and respiratory illnesses are widespread. Only 11% of households use electricity as their main source of lighting.

- Economic opportunities and access to finance are not equally distributed and infectious diseases such as HIV and AIDS, TB and Malaria impact the poor and vulnerable (only 13% of children under 1 year of age sleep under a malaria net; 3.5% of the population are HIV positive; and the TB rate is 127 per 100,000).

- People with disabilities (mental, physical) are often ignored, and there are little to no services available to them. As a result they often opt out of society with families keeping them isolated from the community.

Inequality

Globally inequality is rising, and whilst economies in Africa are improving, extreme poverty has not been eliminated and inequality has not only persisted but deepened. Inequality has a negative impact on poverty, economic growth and the stability of a country. Economic growth in unequal societies tends not to reduce poverty as quickly as in more equal societies. Greater inequality can lead to greater violence within countries and a lack of access to essential services like education leads to continued poverty and vulnerability.

According to the *Society for International Development*, inequalities in Kenya are extreme. Kenyans living in different regions have completely different lifestyles and access to services. Geographical location is a major determinant of vulnerability and deprivation of essential services. Lack of access to essential services like education leads to continued poverty and vulnerability. Women are disadvantaged or marginalized.

In **Uganda** inequality is also on the rise. According to the "*Who is growing; Ending inequality in Uganda*[1]" report the percentage of national income held by the country's poorest has shrunk. At the same time, the percentage held by the richest has swelled and inequalities between and within regions have deepened. The richest 10% of the population enjoy 35.7% of national income; while the poorest 10% claim 2.5% and the poorest 20% have only 5.%. The key drivers of inequality in Uganda include economic policies, inequitable access to productive resources, gender issues, conflict and instability.

The incidence of poverty is far higher in rural areas, at 22.8% of the population compared with 9.3% in urban locations. Geographically, development has been biased towards the central and western regions and towards urban centres, and poverty levels remain highest in the northern and northeastern parts of the country, which have suffered decades of conflict.

Women are more marginalized than men and women find themselves at the bottom of the development pyramid. Most are employed in the agricultural sector and other low-paying sectors such as mining

Households in Ayira village, Uganda where Brighter Communities Worldwide are working in partnership with Adraa Agricultural College

[1] Who is growing? Ending inequality in Uganda; Oxfam 2016

Students from Siret Secondary School present the Global Goals to delegates at the Water, Engineering and Development Centre capacity development workshop in July 2018

and teaching. While they constitute over 70% of the agricultural workforce, they own only 7% of the land. 60% of the population are aged under 18. As children grow into young people, many will struggle to find work – nearly 20% of young people aged 18-30 are unemployed.

A third of Ugandan children have stunted growth. Infections such as HIV, malaria, diarrhea and pneumonia account for 70% of deaths amongst under-fives, while HIV and AIDS are the main cause of death amongst adolescents, killing 300 people every day. 30% of households have no access to safe water, with children in rural areas disproportionately affected.

Ireland

The context in Ireland continues to evolve. In recent years, there have been a number of issues within the Charities Sector that have prompted a strengthening of regulations and expectations. This includes the establishment of the Charities Regulator and changes which mean that charities are now governed by the Companies Act of 2014. This requires greater vigilance on the part of Boards whose Directors are required to act in accordance with higher standards of governance and conduct. The Charities Regulator requires charities to report annually and comply with governance best practice.

Alongside these regulatory requirements are the expectations of the public who are demanding greater transparency and accountability from Charities. There is an expectation that organisations will disclose what proportion of payments goes to beneficiaries and what impacts or outcomes are realised through an organisation's activities. They also want to know that organisations have competent leaders and follow good governance and operational practices. Safeguarding practices today, and the historical management of any issues, is also at the forefront of public attention.

Organisations are needing to ensure they have strong policies and procedures in place, along with a high level of awareness and proactive culture for all those who work, volunteer and are associated with the organisation.

#GlobalIreland – Ireland's footprint to 2025 is a re-commitment to reaching the goal of giving 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) to Overseas Development Aid (ODA) by 2030. This is a strong commitment within a debate about the balance between addressing national issues and supporting other countries. Brighter Communities Worldwide engages in this public debate on the importance of development assistance and creating strong, stable societies around the world. Issues like environmental sustainability, climate change, human rights and inequality are seen as global issues that do not respect national borders. Therefore, governments, civil society, NGOs and individuals have a key role to play. This includes in the area of volunteering where people are balancing the reality of busy lives with a desire to 'make a difference'. Organisations need to continue to adapt to expectations, and also the needs they may have for volunteers to contribute to their work.

Volunteers from Ireland with Brighter Communities Worldwide Staff in Kenya, November 2018

Our Changing Environment

Trends in International Development

Fast moving changes in the global context over the next ten years and beyond are likely to have profound implications for Brighter Communities Worldwide. The 'Mega Trends for Development' include opportunities and challenges for the organisation. Knowledge of these trends feeds into our programme design and development. These are summarized below:

1. Climate Change and Planetary Boundaries

Scientific evidence shows that the Earth's systems are being pushed towards their biophysical limits. This will affect all NGOs whether working in an environmental area or not. Vulnerable populations are more at risk to the consequences of climate change, and as a result could be subject to human rights infringements.

2. Demographic Shifts

> **1** **Climate Change and Planetary Boundaries**
>
> Scientific evidences shows that **Earth systems** are being **pushed towards** their biophysical **limits**

In 2000, for the first time, there were more people over the age of 60 in the world than children under five. By 2050, four-fifths of older people will live in developing countries. This will have implications for all programmes.

3. Urbanisation

Rapid rural-to-urban shifts are taking place. By 2050 62% of Africa's population and 65% of Asia's population will be urban dwellers. This has implications for both the urban and rural populations. How will resources be divided between urban and rural areas?

4. Natural Resource Scarcity

As resources become more scarce, commodity prices will increase and reach levels where people may not be able to afford basic commodities. Again, scarce resources inevitably means vulnerable populations lose out, and human rights will be infringed.

5. Geopolitical Shifts

The axis of the world's economic and hence geopolitical power has shifted, and will continue to shift, from West and North to East and South. Poverty patterns are changing, and donor policies are changing alongside them. Declining overseas development assistance to middle-income countries, and new donors entering the landscape are reshaping the nature of aid. Brighter Communities Worldwide needs to be aware of these shifts, and leverage the opportunities that may arise, but also analyse the challenges that they bring.

6. Processes of technological transformation and innovation

The world is becoming 'hyper-connected'. Technological changes and the rapid diffusion of information and communications technologies, particularly amongst young people have also broken down many of the old barriers between Northern and Southern public. This can bring both challenges and opportunities to the work of NGOs. How can we leverage such transformation and innovation to the advancement of our mission and vision? This will also have digital security implications and we need to ensure we continue to advance and innovate in this area.

7. Inequality

Rising GDP per capita in middle income countries should not mask a number of enduring challenges – including rising inequality, weak social protection, poor infrastructures, environmental degradation, and rising citizen expectations. Inequality has a significant negative impact upon health and educational outcomes as well as security. It will have multiple impacts on human rights, and hence human rights defenders. The at-risk groups may expand to take account of new inequalities that arise; the volume of advocacy work will increase and more negotiation and discussions around inequality will take place.

> **7** **Inequality**
>
> The 85 richest individuals have the same wealth as the bottom half of the world's population
>
> 85   3.5 billion
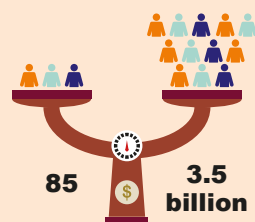
From Tomorrow's World: Megatrends in development, *published by Bond 2015*

The Global Goals

In September 2015, global leaders committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development called *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. This agenda includes 17 global goals to transform our world – these are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The Global Goals aim to improve the lives and future prospects of everyone, everywhere. In essence they seek to end extreme poverty, fight inequality and injustice and solve climate change.

Six essential elements are necessary in order to deliver the goals including:

- **Dignity**: to end poverty and fight inequalities

- **People**: to ensure healthy lives, knowledge, and the inclusion of women and children

- **Prosperity**: to grow a strong, inclusive, and transformative economy

- **Planet**: to protect our ecosystems for all societies and our children

- **Justice**: to promote safe and peaceful societies, and strong institutions

- **Partnership**: to catalyse global solidarity for sustainable development

The Global Goals aim to "leave no one behind" and have a vision of a *"just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met"*. The Global Goals are also universal in that they call for action by all countries, poor, rich and middle-income to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. They recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and addresses a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection.

How we are contributing to the Global Goals

We will take our learnings in this changing environment and leverage them to strengthen and grow our impact into the future.

Brighter Communities Worldwide is well placed – our model works, and there is a growing body of evidence that supports this view.

- We are committed to contributing to the achievement of the Global Goals through our strategies, programmes and ways of work.

- We will use our expertise, skills and capabilities to develop and strengthen partnerships which will enable us to effectively reach more communities.

- Our strengthened results-based management enables us to show tangible results.

- We will leverage the changing funding environment to strengthen the organisation.

- Our impact is way beyond the value reflected in our balance sheet – we want to capture this and share in a way that will enable us to leverage more resources, and extend this impact to other communities.

  - There is a need to be lean, and respond to the emerging needs in an innovative way.

  - Volunteering is changing – both in needs of Brighter Communities Worldwide, and the expectations of volunteers.

Stakeholders discuss the SDGs at the partnership seminar held in Londiani, Kenya, March 2016

Key Impacts of our Previous Strategic Plan

- In collaboration with the Ministry of Health we rolled out **23** new Community Units serving **23,000** households or more than **115,000** people. Community Units act as gateways to key community health initiatives that include local outreach clinics, smokeless stoves, maternal health, menstrual hygiene management and FGM abandonment resources.

- We ran 670 outreach clinics, with **39,429 people** attending. We ran 105 public health field days with **46,140 people** attending. Since 2016 we have implemented a community health project in Uganda in partnership with Adraa Agricultural college – this represents the first time that we have applied our development model and experience in another country.

- Through our FGM/C Abandonment Programme **65,654 members of the community were sensitised** on the harmful effects of FGM and **9,810 girls have graduated from an Alternative Rite of Passage** which provides a culturally appropriate alternative to FGM.

- Through our business courses, **37 community groups (particularly women's groups) have access to finance** which contributes to an increased level of income for their families. Business networks have been set up across the county to enable businesses to support and learn from each other.

- Our smokeless stove programme led to an **85% reduction in respiratory illness** in communities where they were installed. Households that installed stoves experienced a **27% reduction in fuel costs**.

- Maternal, neo natal and child health have improved. There has been an increase of **85% in the number of mothers delivering in health facilities** and a **58% reduction in the perinatal mortality rate** in Londiani Sub County Hospital. The implementation of the maternal health shelter in Londiani Sub County Hospital, supported by Irish Aid and Mayo University Hospital in 2016 has contributed to this success.

- Through our Healthy Schools programme we have reached **180 schools** (38,144 students) and have have seen a **7% increase** in attendance across these schools.

Mother and her baby attending a post-natal clinic in Londiani Sub-County Hospital, Londiani, July 2018

Students from Kokwet Secondary School, Kenya which is one of the schools participating in the Healthy Schools and Girls for Girls Programme, January 2018

Reuben Koske, Field Officer at the intake of the gravity water scheme in Ndubusat, Kenya which provides water to 11,000 households

Building on these impacts, together with the findings of our planning process, our new strategic plan will take us forward. This plan is outlined on the following pages.

Our Strategic Direction

Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have two key principles:

- Leave no-one behind
- Universality

Leave no-one behind – The commitment to "leave no one behind" is the essence of the Sustainable Development Goals. The gaps between rich and poor are growing across the world (OECD 2015). It is not just the level of income in a community that matters, but how this income is distributed. Rising inequality in the world has a significant negative impact upon health and educational outcomes as well as economic growth. Extreme poverty, conflict, displacement and climate change disproportionately impact women and girls – thus requiring a greater focus.

Brighter Communities Worldwide reaffirms its commitment to the poor and most vulnerable. We will strengthen our commitment to targeting inequality through focusing on universal access to basic services with a particular focus on gender equality.

Universality – This implies that all countries will need to change, each with its own approach, but each with a sense of the global common good.The goals were developed by all, for all.

Statement of Intent[1]

The principles of the Sustainable Development Goals sit at the foundation of our plan:

- Responding to current and emerging needs
- Being an effective partner

Responding to current and emerging needs

- We will continue to focus on the needs identified by the communities in which we currently work – with the ambition that all individuals and families can create a sustainable livelihood.
- We will adapt our programmes to meet the emerging needs for vulnerable groups in these communities while also developing responses to other identified issues.
- We will also respond to the needs of other communities where we identify partners aligned with our approach.

Being an effective partner

- To respond to evolving needs, we must strengthen our own organisational capacity to be an effective partner for the longer term.
- Strong partnerships and the role of volunteers (both in Kenya and Ireland and elsewhere) remain at the heart of our approach

Our four strategic goals:

- Implement Impactful Programmes
- Build Effective Strategic Relationships
- Strengthen Organisational Capacity
- Ensure Strong Governance

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[1] The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet.' Synthesis Report of the Secretary-General on the Post-2015 Agenda, December 2014

"We owe it to ourselves and to the next generation to conserve the environment so that we can bequeath our children a sustainable world that benefits all"

Wangari Maathai

Goal 1 – Implement Holistic, Impactful Programmes that Contribute to the Global Development Agenda (SDGs)

Brighter Communities Worldwide in partnership with local communities operates programmes that focus on health, education and economic empowerment. Our initiatives take account of whole communities, enabling individuals and communities to be authors of their own development. Service priority is given to vulnerable groups, particularly women and people with disabilities. All programmes contribute to the global development agenda, through alignment with one or more of the Sustainable Development Goals.

How will we achieve success:

- Continue to evolve our model, based on evidence from our Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning processes
- Maintain a needs-driven approach, informed by ongoing engagement with stakeholders
- Continue to strengthen our results based management approach to demonstrate tangible results, and inform programme development
- Establish learnings from one community or programme and apply across many communities/programmes.
- Maintain our long-term commitment: change takes time, and involves multiple stakeholders in order to be sustainable

In Kenya, stakeholders have asked us to focus more on youth unemployment, climate change, growing inequality and the inclusion of people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. This is in addition to evolving existing programmes as they remain relevant and key to the development of communities.

In Ireland, we will focus on new activities around global citizenship education as part of wider initiatives on development. We will continue to seek ways to describe more effectively the impact of our work to new stakeholders, particularly those who have not travelled to Kenya to participate in our work. We will work to ensure volunteer experiences are impactful for those who contribute in different ways in Ireland, Kenya and elsewhere, and attract new volunteers.

A number of objectives have been set to achieve success under this goal which are divided into contributions by Ireland and Kenya and outlined below.

Objectives to achieve success
• Evolve existing programmes to adapt to a changing context • Develop new programmes to respond to community needs • Evolve monitoring and evaluation process to enhance impact

Kenya contribution	Ireland contribution
i. Evolve programmes to respond to specific needs of young people, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups	i. Actively engage stakeholders in the global citizenship education
ii. Ensure stronger environmental and gendered focus into all programmes and ways of work	ii. More effectively communicate the impact of Brighter Communities Worldwide work to existing and new supporters and stakeholders
iii. Evolve Monitoring and Evaluation approaches to ensure robust platform to evaluate and improve programme effectiveness	iii. Ensure volunteer experience remains relevant and impactful and attracts new supporters (in Ireland and abroad)

Goal 2 – Build Effective Strategic Relationships

Since its foundation, Brighter Communities Worldwide has worked as a partnership based organisation. This includes partnerships in Kenya, Uganda, Ireland and around the world. We believe that partnerships are fundamental to the strong local ownership of all our programmes and hence the long-term sustainability of interventions. The importance of partnerships as part of the global development agenda is captured in SDG 17.

How will we achieve success:

- Continue to build strong partnerships with local based community groups, government Ministries and other stakeholders.
- A focus on teamwork to deliver programmes – across countries, across communities – which enables us to grow
- Identifying new partners who are aligned with our approach, and who complement our current programmes in existing locations or offer opportunities to work with new communities.

In Kenya, communities whom we work with have asked Brighter Communities Worldwide to help identify partners with expertise in water and agriculture to service more locations. We have also begun to work with partners who can help build capability and capacity in some of our current programmes. We are sharing our practical experience and expertise with the County government as they assume greater responsibility for policy and service delivery.

In Ireland, we actively participate in networks of NGOs and development organisations and contribute to national policy discussions, awareness and advocacy campaigns. To sustain the organisation and support our growth plans, it is critical that we expand our network of active supporters.

A number of objectives have been set to achieve success under this goal which are divided into contributions by Ireland and Kenya and outlined below.

Objectives to achieve success
• Strengthen existing relationships through clear alignment of objectives and shared workplans • Engage new partners to meet emerging needs

Kenya contribution	Ireland contribution
i. Engage partners to enhance with core programme areas	i. Maintain strong relationships with key NGO/ development organisations
ii. Engage partners to support community needs for water and agricultural based livelihood programmes	ii. Continue advocacy on key development issues working with other key stakeholders
iii. Actively develop working relationships with County Government and key ministries in line with evolving ways of work	iii. Extend network of active supporters

Goal 3 – Strengthen Organisational Capacity

Brighter Communities Worldwide has undergone significant growth over the last number of years as we have successfully executed our plans. To maintain this growth we will strengthen a number of key processes to ensure the organisation is fit for purpose, and able to deliver on this strategic plan. These processes include Human Resources & Competencies, Systems and Infrastructure, Resourcing, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning.

How will we achieve success:

- Uphold our values of integrity, passion and togetherness across the organisation – in systems, programmes and ways of work. These values remain relevant, and need to be maintained as we grow, bring in new partners and expand our network of supporters.
- Actively evolve the role of volunteers in Kenya and Ireland as they are at the core of how we work.
- Build our capacity across the organisation to deliver on our growth plans (e.g. resource mobilisation).

We need to build on the momentum of recent times in resource mobilisation in Kenya through building our knowledge, expertise and networks. Core to this will be raising our profile as the leading NGO with a track record of success in Kericho county, and working with other NGOs. We will execute on our plans for staff capacity building to deliver on current programmes, while also meeting emerging needs.

In Ireland, we will have a greater focus on fundraising to support the needs of the communities we work with. We will expand and sustain our 'core' volunteer team to support our committed staff as we grow our profile. We are well positioned to share our practical experience and evidence-based results as we exchange good practices with other NGOs and the wider development community.

A number of objectives have been set to achieve success under this goal which are divided into contributions by Ireland and Kenya and outlined below.

Objectives to achieve success
• Build capacity and capability of human resources (staff, Boards, volunteers) • Implement new finance system to meet changing requirements • Adapt systems and processes to support the growing organisation

Kenya contribution	Ireland contribution
i. Increase resource mobilisation within Kenya ii. Build capacity of expanding staff team to effectively deliver work programme and leverage partnerships iii. Increase profile as leading NGO within Kericho County, facilitating engagement with other development stakeholders	i. Implement fundraising strategy ii. Build 'core' volunteer base to support staff team iii. Increase profile as leading effective NGO through focus on sharing insights, ways of work and on-the-ground impact

Goal 4 – Ensure Strong Governance

One of the core values of Brighter Communities Worldwide is integrity – we are an organisation built on integrity and good governance with a track record for success. We have complied with key Codes of Governance since its inception. Each year it strengthens its governance, and is very aware of the changing environment in which it operates. We have a responsibility to take account of the expectations of all our stakeholders including programme participants, staff, volunteers, supporters and donors.

How will we achieve success:

- Maintain compliance as regulatory frameworks continue to strengthen and change. In both Kenya and Ireland we must continue to stay ahead of the curve, and ensure alignment and clarity of roles & responsibilities between Ireland and Kenya

As Brighter Community Worldwide continues to grow and is invited to work with partners in other locations we need to evolve our current governance model and organisational structure. This will be a significant project for the Boards during this period, working closely with our key stakeholders.

In Kenya, the regulatory environment for NGOs is evolving, and the work done in recent years means we have strong foundations to develop the capacity of the board so they can continue to discharge their roles.

In Ireland, the regulatory environment and expectations of stakeholders means we must maintain our high standards of governance and accountability. This will include retaining a high level of assurance for all programmes/projects funded through the Irish organisation and delivered in other locations.

A number of objectives have been set to achieve success under this goal which are divided into contributions by Ireland and Kenya and outlined below.

Objectives to achieve success	
• Evolve governance model to strengthen the effectiveness of the organisation • Ensure transparency and accountability to meet stakeholder expectations • Ensure clarity of accountability through reviewing organisational structures and processes	
Kenya contribution	**Ireland contribution**
i. Develop capacity of the Board to discharge roles as Directors meeting legal and regulatory frameworks ii. Review structure of organisation to meet expanding needs	i. Retain highest standards of accountability and transparency in line with legal and regulatory frameworks and best practice codes ii. Review structure of organisation to meet expanding needs iii. Conduct assurance of all programmes /projects funded through the Irish organisation

With thanks to Kava *www.kavacommunications.com* for producing our Strategic Plan document.

"The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow"
Nelson Mandela

Children from Ndubusat,
Kenya, November 2018

Help us Create Better Futures

- Volunteer your skills, services or time in Ireland or in Kenya
- Volunteer in Africa with our Harambee projects
- Join in our fundraising events
- Make a donation
- Workplace giving
- Leave a legacy
- Host a coffee morning
- Buy gifts from our online shop

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