



Community Systems Foundation

The world is going through an unparalleled transition affecting the way communities live and work together. More people now live in cities than ever before. The balance of power is shifting from the west to the east. Extreme poverty has decreased while inequalities are widening across the world. Glaring gaps exist between the “haves” and the “have-nots” as we all compete for scarce natural resources. Women and girls still remain a high proportion of the vulnerable sections of society deprived of the basics of education, health and freedom from poverty. Climate change threatens the future of our planet.

Good outcomes

Sustained by responsible development processes

In this strategic setting, CSF is challenged to engage in the debate to rethink development. We must strive to expand community options by building capacities and opportunities in ways that lead to good development **outcomes** sustained by responsible development **processes**. We must address the process of enlarging people’s choices by expanding their capabilities and opportunities in ways that are sustainable from the economic, social and environmental standpoints, while benefiting the present without compromising the future.

The challenge is to help communities rethink their own development strategies to use the technology and resources available to reduce poverty, eradicate polio, save the lives of under-fives, and fulfill their basic needs above a minimum threshold of well-being. CSF is in a position to make the most of this momentum to leverage innovations for change, while helping communities mitigate risk and reduce inequalities.

Sustainable development is the way forward and emerging technology is an important part of the solution. CSF has a proven ability to influence policy and build capacity through transfer of appropriate technology to communities to help them address the long-standing challenges of human development. We must aim for sharper focus and more effective operations in order to reach more communities and continue to be relevant

The CSF strategic plan addresses the five key human development issues: poverty eradication as the greatest global challenge, sustainable development, gender equality, transitions from relief to development, and resilience, the latter two being particularly relevant in disaster and post-conflict settings. Resilience is the inherent, as well as acquired condition, of being able to manage risks within communities in ways that sustain development. These risks include natural disasters and conflict that may both disrupt development progress and inflict community losses.

The strategic plan of CSF builds on our core strengths to help communities eliminate

poverty while reducing inequalities and exclusion. This vision is within reach and can be achieved within a generation if the communities of the world unite together to harness the resources and technology currently available to achieve this outcome.

The desired outcomes of the CSF strategic plan are: 1. Sustainable development using innovations that create livelihoods for all; 2. Systems of democratic governance; 3. Communities have universal access to basic services for human development; 4. Communities implement policies of gender equality; 5. Communities are able to reduce conflict, lower the risk of natural disasters

The CSF strategy is implemented in line

with the following principles that reflect our approach to sustainable development and for which we will be accountable.

CSF will be guided by participation with communities to build local ownership of development initiatives that build the capacity of communities to make decisions on how best to meet their own aspirations and needs.

CSF recognizes the intrinsic value of the body of economic, political, social, civil and cultural rights established by the United Nations that are pursued through the human rights-based approach to development.

CSF will follow a plan for sustainable human development where our contributions are grounded in the process of expanding the opportunities of communities to benefit themselves in the present while not compromising the future. CSF believes gender equality is a pivotal condition for achieving sustainable community development. CSF will implement a strategy of community participation to address issues of equitable access to opportunities for development gains. CSF will continue to pursue its advancement of South-South cooperation in the implementation of sustainable development initiatives. CSF will continue to leverage the power of access to open data for all to enable communities to understand their development challenges more clearly and to use data to support their own plans, policies and actions.

Technological solutions that leave no one behind

Our **vision** is to increase opportunity and equity for those most in need through solutions that protect and promote well being in every community. Our **mission** is to improve quality of life through applied research and technical assistance to communities by pioneering technological solutions that yield measurable results that leave no one behind. We pursue our mission with entrepreneurship, creativity, and originality. We are humble and mindful in our actions and words of the insights and counsel of diverse opinions. We seek to learn how to tap the great potential of science and technology to improve lives around the world.

We believe that it is only in partnership with the community that experts can begin to bring the tools of modern science to bear effectively on efforts to improve the quality of life. We demand ethical behaviour of ourselves and our partners. We make every effort to explore and examine issues with objectivity and neutrality. We strive for excellence through continuous quality improvement. We are accountable for the decisions we make and the work we perform.

The cornerstone of our strategic approach is the development and application of techniques to help communities gain a better understanding of their environment and to thereby help determine how to attain their goals. A common element in our repertoire of techniques is community learning which involves members of the community in all program phases--problem definition, program design, resource procurement, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation--with the ultimate objective of vesting in the community the skills and knowledge necessary to attack not only the problem at hand but also the unanticipated problems of the future.

We treat important human development problems and their potential solutions, as systemic community issues which are usually not served well by existing institutions alone. We help communities decipher complex development problems that from the outset are usually not framed properly nor well understood. We strive to design and implement engaging educational exercises and programs devoted to promoting accurate images of commitments and needs throughout the world. We help provide access to timely and relevant information that is necessary for solutions. We help close data gaps and improve data quality. We help transform data into information, information into knowledge and knowledge into wisdom.

We are committed to the long haul: we pay attention to going beyond writing up a report and leaving to go on to the next problem. We endeavour to be as flexible and timely as possible in working with existing institutions even though we start with the assumption that we all are often as much “part of the problem” as “part of the solution.”

We find out how to attract, aggregate and multiply resources through a lean, efficient institutional infrastructure. We believe it is vital to find partners that have similar inclinations and do not proceed by telling them what to do. We help them do what they want to do, always trying to ask them challenging but supportive questions along the way. We help diverse groups and interests discover common solutions that work.

What sets CSF apart?

These characteristics differentiate our organization from others and uniquely position our team to work with our partners to develop and implement innovations for human development.

Non-Profit Organization. CSF's focus on applied research, training and technology transfer is at the core of the organization's mission. Our non-profit business model, which has been independently evaluated and approved by the UN system, maximizes the use of resources in the best interest of programme objectives while keeping overheads on administration exceedingly lean and efficient.

Decentralized Management Approach with a Global Reach. CSF is based in the USA with Technology Partners through long term agreements for software development and technical support in India, Singapore, Brazil and South Africa. Several success factors contribute to our organizational structure and management approach. We build management and technical teams to implement our portfolio of projects based on three key principles. First, we create, train and support our technical teams with cutting-edge technology to ensure the timely delivery of high-quality products and services. Second, our management teams implement lean and efficient work plans and budgets with low overheads based on our doctrine of social responsibility. Third, we decentralize programme implementation with emphasis on regional support teams while minimizing the role of centralized functions and staff time. The goal of our management approach is to transfer appropriate technology to communities through the most effective means possible. These methods include capacity building through training and technical assistance missions to deliver cutting-edge technology via low-cost, low-maintenance solutions.

Public Sector Programmes in Cross-Cultural Settings. CSF has a history of 50 years of successful implementation of public sector programmes around the world. CSF has spearheaded the implementation of donor-funded programmes in more than 130 countries. CSF has created and nurtured a wide network of highly quality technical

support staff that live and work in various places around the world. CSF has a successful track record of working with many donors and development agencies, including UNDP, UNDG, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, UNAIDS, UN Habitat, UN Statistics Division, WFP, WHO, USAID, DFID, US Library of Congress, and The World Bank.

Global Software Technical Product Support. CSF has extensive experience in providing global technical support to software development projects related to statistical data analysis, application development (desktop/web), and monitoring and evaluation. For example, during the period 2004-2013, CSF's project management team successfully increased the deployment of the United Nation's DevInfo database system to more than 120 countries where national statistics offices, government line ministries and UN agencies are using the software to monitor human development indicators.

International Management and Quality Assurance Standards. CSF's software development and technical support are carried out through Technology Partners in compliance with international standards for quality management and software development.

South-South Partnerships. CSF has a proven track record for fostering partnerships between developing countries. The long-term relationship with software development activities in South Asia has resulted in hundreds of South-South exchanges in the form of local advanced training and seminars at the Delhi lab.

Proven Success in Transfer of Technology. CSF's goal is to motivate long-term and sustainable partnerships in information technology solutions for human development by building government capacity to own, maintain and operate their own database systems. CSF distributes its software solutions royalty-free and without any obligation to use CSF's services for maintenance and technical support. CSF believes in providing solutions that use the most appropriate technology for the given country setting.

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INFORMATION SYSTEMS DESIGN

- Management information systems design
- Software application development
- Data management and analysis for research projects
- Geographic information systems
- Grant management systems

PLANNING AND MONITORING

- Implementation of planning systems
- Key performance indicator monitoring for social development
- Sustainable Development Goal monitoring
- Data quality assurance
- Real-time data capture

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND CAPACITY BUILDING

- Transfer of technology through hands-on training
- Senior level management training in evidence-based planning and monitoring
- Technical training in the design, implementation, and evaluation of information systems