Road Mapping
towards self-reliance

A Step-by-Step guide for community development practitioners
Road Mapping: Towards self-reliance
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Road Mapping: Toward self-reliance is the product of many peoples’ efforts.

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In 2015, ChildFund New Zealand and our long-term Local Partners developed a community development planning tool, the Road Maps, to support their goal of becoming self-reliant. It was our Local Partners—community-based organisations (CBOs) in Kenya, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, and Zambia—who identified self-reliance as being vital to the development of their communities, and now they are leading their communities through the Road Mapping process. For ChildFund New Zealand, supporting CBOs and their communities to realise self-reliance is central to our programme philosophy which aims to strengthen and develop livelihoods, reduce vulnerabilities, and end long-term dependency on external interventions.

Today, our Local Partners’ Road Maps act as strategic plans, support funding proposals, serve as communication tools, and have been demonstrably adopted by the communities who created them. The Road Map in Sri Lanka, for example, is referred to as the ‘Mother Document’, while communities in Zambia track their progress against these plans, and organise support and local contributions to achieve their objectives.

A key feature of the Road Mapping process is Graduation. This is the point at which the community has determined they will be self-reliant. Graduation is a significant milestone in the development of a CBO and their community. This event, therefore, must be owned and celebrated by the community because the stakeholders have achieved their long-term goal; which signifies that they are stronger, more united, and independent with the capabilities to plan and deliver their own development well into the future.

While developing an exit strategy is not new to community development practice, we believe it is important to document our experience in developing Road Maps for the following reasons.

First, the motivation of our partner communities to set their own goals and plan their development towards self-reliance shows that working towards independence is a valuable process to promote. Second, the Road Mapping process is true to community development principles because the communities drive this work, which supports empowerment, localisation, and sustainability. Third, our process consists of simple and logical steps that are achievable by a range of actors with varying levels of resources. Finally, development practitioners from community, national, and international spheres have expressed interest in, as well as a desire to, replicate our Road Mapping process.

In the same way that the Road Maps were designed by communities, representatives from our Local Partner organisations provided the content for this Guidebook. In 2018, a group of Road Map developers met in Malaysia to discuss the steps they had taken to design their Road Maps as well as their challenges and successes in implementing them. This Guidebook is the output of this meeting and a testament to our Local Partners’ continuing commitment to building sustainable community development programmes and the realisation of their communities’ goal of self-reliance.

From the design to implementation phase, Road Mapping is a continuous process towards Graduation which requires reflection and adjustments along the way. Our hope for this Guidebook, in addition to supporting communities achieve self-reliance, is that it will also contribute to community development thinking about empowerment, sustainability, and localisation, as well as provide development practitioners with a starting point, user guide and/or tools to support a range of communities to achieve a goal, whether it be self-reliance, or a sectoral/theme-based objective.

1 We define ‘self-reliance’ as the economic and social ability of a community to meet its needs in a sustainable manner, with dignity.
This Guidebook provides simple and logical step-by-step instructions on Road Mapping. In partnership, ChildFund New Zealand, ChildFund Country Offices, and our Local Partners designed this Guidebook for a wide range of development practitioners, including CBOs, country offices, and international development organisations or funders. Using this manual, practitioners will be able to move through activities and processes in order to support a CBO and their community to realise a long-term goal, such as self-reliance.

Road Mapping is a two-phased process, with each phase culminating in a milestone. The first milestone, the creation of a Road Map, is achieved through a design phase. This involves communities identifying their needs, priorities, and the solutions required to achieve their long-term goal. These agreed priorities and objectives are then collated and organised by sector or theme into a planning document: the Road Map.

The second phase is the implementation of the Road Map. This is completed when the community reaches Graduation. The implementation phase involves setting budgets, planning projects, building capabilities, and preparing for Graduation.

In what follows, the first section of the Guidebook discusses the inception and significance of Road Mapping, roles and responsibilities of those involved, as well as the meaning of Graduation. The second part of this book details each step of the process, from the Road Map design and implementation phases undertaken by our Local Partners, through to Graduation. With each step, examples and reflections of Local Partner experiences are provided together with templates and checklists.

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2 ‘Local Partner’ refers to the community-based organisation (CBO) that ChildFund New Zealand partners with to deliver community development programmes in Kenya, Zambia, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam.

3 We define ‘self-reliance’ as the economic and social ability of a community to meet its needs in a sustainable manner, with dignity. Our programme approach is committed to strengthening and developing livelihoods, reducing vulnerability, and ending long-term dependency on external interventions.
ChildFund New Zealand’s programme approach involves working collaboratively with communities to determine shared, long-term development plans and joint-commitments to end poverty and to enable children and youth to thrive. Our Road Mapping process therefore integrates development principles and approaches, values, and a wide range of community development experiences and expertise. With Road Mapping, how we do things is equally as important as what we do. Through Road Mapping, ChildFund New Zealand aims to empower communities to lead their own long-term development planning processes and to bring other organisations and stakeholders into this work by making joint commitments and investments towards shared development goals.

Partnerships and inclusiveness are therefore significant to our work. Helping to guide our organisational culture and values are the principles of Tikanga Māori (Māori customary practices or behaviours). ChildFund New Zealand is committed to these principles because we believe that the indigenous values of our own country, Aotearoa New Zealand, have a meaningful place in informing our work, and by promoting these values, we also consciously respect traditional views, values and ways of the communities we work with.

ChildFund New Zealand is also dedicated to preventing and responding to violence against children and youth, from government to grassroots, and from civil society to the private sector. In order to reduce violence against children, we utilise the World Health Organisation’s INSPIRE Strategies\(^4\), which are a group of strategies based on the best available evidence to help countries and communities intensify their focus on prevention programmes and services.

Our work is delivered through an Adaptive Programming approach which is a series of tools we have found to work effectively. Adaptive programming recognises that even the best-laid plans need constant review, and that often new information and change happens during a project’s implementation that necessitates it being tweaked. This in turn may affect activities, budgets and timelines. Ultimately, the outcomes and our overarching goal of what we are setting out to achieve, remains constant. Adaptive Programming includes ensuring that activities are always SAFE: Sustainable, Appropriate, Feasible, and Empowering.

\(^4\) WHO INSPIRE: https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/inspire/en/
Enabling children and youth to thrive

As a child-focused organisation, ChildFund New Zealand’s Road Mapping process places children and youth at the centre. Each Road Map sets priority targets, identifies what is required, and what the contribution of each stakeholder will be towards achieving the results. During implementation of the Road Map, ChildFund New Zealand works with country offices and Local Partners to track and measure progress against the plan and indicators. The Road Mapping process centres on ChildFund New Zealand’s thematic and strategic priorities, outlined in the above diagram. Of particular interest to ChildFund New Zealand is how we address child protection and how to best support youth. Theories of change have been developed for these key areas of our work to help guide how we get from ‘A’ to point ‘B’.

Thematic & Strategic Priorities

This guide describes the Road Mapping process only. Further information on our Adaptive Programming Approach has been included in the appendices.
Overview

What is the purpose of Road Mapping?

Fundamental to Road Mapping is the end goal. This could be self-reliance, which marks the end of a long-term partnership between a CBO and a funder (which is the case for ChildFund New Zealand and our Local Partners). Alternatively, it could be a strategic goal that a CBO is working to achieve, by itself or in collaboration with a country office. Setting up an ‘exit strategy’ may be daunting to funders, country offices, and CBOs, however, to genuinely support community empowerment and localisation, funding relationships must evolve so that dependency does not result from prolonged development aid. There are also many benefits that can be derived from Road Mapping, which include:

- Improved programme outcomes because goals are identified, plans are created, and progress can be tracked;
- The participatory process encourages commitment from a range of stakeholders (government, local institutions, and the community) to achieve goals;
- The process strengthens transparency and trust between a CBO and their community, which can support their relationship well beyond the end of the Road Mapping process;
- It helps to clarify roles and define responsibilities of CBOs, country offices, and international funders;
- The process is empowering; it gives voice to a range of stakeholders including young people, people of different genders, and persons with disabilities;
- It supports processes of localisation because CBOs have a tool with which they can attract and apply for funding directly, rather than through country offices or international partners;
- It can support an organisation’s (local, national, or international) theory of change and/or programmatic approach; and
- Funding partners (country offices and international partners) can more effectively plan and adapt their programming and fundraising efforts as their partner communities move towards Graduation.

Please note that this Guidebook has been developed to assist a CBO’s journey towards achieving a goal and does not provide instructions on how Road Mapping development partners (international development organisations and country offices) should plan internally throughout the process. It is recommended that Road Mapping development partners create their own operational plans, and ensure they are aligned with the steps and milestones in the Road Mapping process, including (but not limited to) communications, fundraising, and financial strategies.

5 It is possible that the donor may form a new funding relationship with Local Partners (CBOs) after the completion of the Road Maps. For instance, a new relationship will be based on a new funding model, such as stand-alone grants, and will need to negotiated and agreed upon by all parties.
A central aspect of Road Mapping is the deep and collaborative relationship between organisations. For this reason, it is important for all organisations to consider if a Road Mapping Partnership is right for them.

As demonstrated in the diagram below, the Road Mapping Partnership develops from a transactional relationship, where funding tends to be provided for standalone projects. Reporting is one-directional to the donor, and risk sits with the funding organisation. From a transactional relationship, undertaking a Road Mapping Partnership can be considered and negotiated.

For instance, ChildFund New Zealand recently upscaled its relationships with Pacific Island communities with the view of implementing the Road Mapping process. At commencement, the relationship between ChildFund New Zealand and the CBOs was not purely transactional, but yet to become wholly collaborative. Even so, ChildFund New Zealand’s project design was conducted in the spirit of collaboration and partnership; still involving stakeholders, still taking a back seat with regard to voice, direction and decision-making. Trust, of course, cannot be turned on with a switch. It must be built. Time and shared purpose, and working together on a common project, will help determine if a Road Mapping Partnership is the right next step for those involved.

It is important to note that Road Mapping may not be the right step for a variety of reasons. It is, therefore, completely acceptable to stay on the transactional end of the Partnership Continuum.

If it is decided to undertake Road Mapping, then moving into a collaborative relationship involves the co-creation of a programme or projects; mutual accountability between organisations as well as communities; individual relationships strengthened between each organisation’s staff (from CEOs to the project staff); and shared investments and risk. The Road Map document will determine the length that organisations stay in their collaborative relationship, as well as provide a plan for the Road Mapping partners shared investments, activities, and engagements.

As the goal of Road Mapping is eventual self-reliance, partners should adhere to the Road Map plan and be prepared for their relationship to change at the point of Graduation. When an organisation graduates, it will be strengthened and independent, capable of renegotiating the original relationship, as well as seeking a range of new partnerships.

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**Transaction**

- No Road Map
- Project based
- Linear accountability
- Funding relationships
- Transferred risk

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**Collaboration**

- Road Map activities co-created
- Mutual accountability
- Layered organisational relationships
- Shared investment and risk

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**Graduation**

- Road Map completed
- Localised control
- End of Road Mapping partnership
- Independent CBOs seek new relationships partners
- CBOs independently manage risk

*Adapted from Partnership Brokers Association’s Partnership Continuum.*
What is a Road Map?

A Road Map is a planning tool that is developed from the goals, priorities and outcomes agreed upon by a CBO and their community during the Road Mapping design phase. This plan is then made into a document and can have a title that is appropriate to its community’s objectives. For instance, ChildFund New Zealand supported its Local Partners by collating the information produced from their Road Mapping design phase into books, which are organised into sectors, such as Water and Sanitation, Livelihoods, Child Protection, Education, and Health (see above right). Each section details past achievements, future objectives, approximate budgets required to deliver projects, and a visual tracking system.

ChildFund New Zealand recognises that in order for a Road Map to be endorsed by its community, it must be borne from a genuinely participatory and empowering design stage. We have seen firsthand the successful creation of Road Maps, which were led by our Local Partners and designed in partnership with their communities.

As a result of these participatory design stages, communities have invested in, are the owners of, and are the ones who will realise the goals of their Road Maps.

Once agreed upon and finalised, a Road Map then becomes a practical tool with which a CBO can implement their plans and goals. A Road Map can:

• Act as a strategic plan that can be shared with stakeholders, including government and local or national institutions, in order to collaborate to achieve community goals;

• Be used to attract funding opportunities because it shows that communities have a shared direction, are organised, and committed to realising their goals;

• Serve as a communication tool, where progress is tracked against objectives and disseminated to stakeholders; and

• Promote transparency and accountability throughout the CBO and the community it serves.
What is Graduation?

Planning for self-reliance

Graduation, or the end of the Road Mapping process, must be negotiated, defined, and agreed upon by all partners. The end goal of Road Mapping could be the completion of a programme, such as a youth programme operating at a national level where there are a series of outcomes sought. Alternatively, as in ChildFund New Zealand’s experience thus far, Graduation is the point at which a CBO and their community have determined that they will be self-reliant, and that they will complete their long running partnership with our organisation. A new relationship may be negotiated which may or may not involve funding support. Note that ChildFund CBOs (our Local Partners) each operate in distinct geographic location and deliver a range of community development initiatives.

The Graduation of the CBO, therefore, does not signify the end of its operations. Rather, through this process the CBO will have deepened its relationship with its community, realised change, achieved development goals, and become stronger technically and organisationally. Furthermore, after completing the Road Mapping process, the CBO may go into partnership with different organisations, or instead undertake another Road Mapping exercise independently in order to achieve its own strategic goals.

Most importantly, Graduation is an achievement that must be celebrated by all Road Mapping stakeholders. It is a significant moment that marks the realisation of goals as well as a strengthened organisation that is experienced and prepared to take on challenges and seize opportunities.

“SELF-RELIANCE IS THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ABILITY OF A COMMUNITY TO MEET ITS OWN NEEDS IN A SUSTAINABLE MANNER, WITH DIGNITY.”
Road Mapping involves two clear phases, each culminating in a milestone. First, the design phase is where the CBO and community determine their development goals and priorities. This phase is completed with the creation of a Road Map. Second, the implementation phase carries out the plans and goals agreed upon in the Road Map. This phase’s completion is marked by a community’s Graduation.

Both the design and implementation phases have clear and logical steps that are necessary to achieving each milestone. These steps were identified by our Local Partners, who have successfully created Road Maps and are now working towards Graduation. Details of each step are provided in the second section of this Guidebook with examples, templates, and reflections from our Local Partners.

How organisations undertake Road Mapping and move through these steps, in terms of timing and accuracy will, of course, differ depending on their goals, stakeholders, and socio-political contexts. Working through this entire process, however, means that communities will identify their long-term development priorities and will be empowered to be leaders of their own development.

How the process is facilitated and how investment decisions are made are key to the end results that will be achieved (the outcomes and outputs). This document will guide organisations on how to facilitate the Road Mapping process effectively.
Steps to completing the Road Mapping process

**Design**

1. Develop communications plan
2. Identify stakeholders

**Road Map Design Workshop**

3. Set the goal
4. Agree on themes, outcomes and outputs

**Implementation**

5. Set annual budgets
6. Plan the projects
7. Build capacity towards Graduation
8. Track progress and impact
9. Plan for Graduation

**Graduation**

Self-reliance
Who is involved in the process?

Community-based organisations, country offices, and international development organisations

There are no strict rules regarding the organisations that should be involved in Road Mapping, except that the community must be front and centre in all aspects of every step. Having communities significantly involved in designing the changes occurring in their world, ensures that the process is participatory and empowering. This process encourages communities to drive the changes they are seeking in such places as their schools, youth groups, and health centres, and sustain and build upon the positive outcomes well after the Road Mapping process is completed.

It is important to have roles and responsibilities articulated prior to beginning the Road Mapping process, which could be achieved by signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or a Terms of Reference (ToR).

This Guidebook is designed to assist a CBO alone, or working together with a country office and/or international development agency, to undertake Road Mapping. ChildFund New Zealand’s experience was that all three agencies worked together throughout this process (CBO, country office, and ChildFund New Zealand). Working in partnership, our respective agencies undertook the following roles and responsibilities shown on page 13.

These roles are mutually beneficial and promote rewarding partnerships. As a CBO acts as the representative for the community, it is necessary that they are the Road Map Lead. However, there are myriad ways that the responsibilities can be divided. For instance, it is possible for a CBO to undertake this process alone in order to create their organisational strategic plans, but it would still need to fulfill all the responsibilities of each role. In the same way, the Road Mapping process may be undertaken with a CBO and just one other partner, or with multiple country offices and/or multiple international partners.

Roles and Responsibilities for each step are detailed in this step-by-step guide to the Road Mapping process.
Road Map Lead

The leader of the Road Mapping process is the CBO. In this role, the Road Map Lead must mobilise their communities; ensure that all stakeholders and groups are involved and heard; clearly communicate the process, goals, and outcomes; and document, consolidate, and fairly represent the intentions of their communities.

Once the Road Map has been produced, the Road Map Lead works with the community and their stakeholders to implement their stated objectives and track their progress. This will include liaising with the country office and/or international development partner to gain technical support and secure funding.

Community Development Technical Advisor

The Technical Advisor is the country office. The Technical Advisor supports the Road Map Lead by providing expertise in a range of areas, including but not limited to, community development sectors, such as water and sanitation, education, and health, as well as technical support in safeguarding, health and safety, procurement, budget oversight, and project management.

The Technical Advisor supports the Road Map Lead to build relationships with government and local and national institutions; to attract and apply for funding; and to deliver communication, monitoring, and reporting activities. The Technical Advisor also supports the capacity building of the CBO.

The Technical Advisor contributes resources, including staff, materials, and facilities; and may contribute funding.

Road Map Facilitator

The Road Map Facilitator is the international development partner. In this role, the Road Map Facilitator works with the Technical Advisor and Road Map Lead to move through the steps of the Road Map process. The Facilitator may provide technical expertise on each step of the process; help to develop materials and resources; support capacity building and learning exchanges; and provide oversight in managing the process.

The Road Map Facilitator may also provide funds to support the process and to create, disseminate, review, and regularly update the Road Map document.
What to expect from the Road Mapping Phases

Phase 1: The Road Map Design

Upon completing this phase of the Road Mapping process, a Road Map document will be produced that includes the following elements:

**Key elements to cover in your Road Map**
- Goal for the community
- A Graduation date and plan
- Priority sectors or thematic areas identified
- Objectives identified for each sector or theme
- An intervention and investment plan for each objective
- Results measurement system with targets
- Activities to achieve objectives, and sequencing of activities, where relevant

**Key documents you will produce**
- A Road Map design document
- Three-year programme budget by theme/project
- Phase 1 project designs (results frameworks, budget and detailed implementation plans)
- Annual detailed budget for projects
- Communications plan
- Capacity building plan
- Monitoring, evaluation & learning plan
- Beneficiary reach table

Once drafted, the Road Map can be turned into a published report that can be shared with stakeholders and used for fundraising. As a finished document, organisations have found this to be valuable as strategic plans, to support funding proposals, or as a communication tool. Communities also feel a great sense of ownership over these documents and use them to track progress and plan future projects.

Phase 2: Implementation of the Road Map

The implementation phase is not just about delivering the plans set out in the Road Map. This is also a time of setting short-term plans, regular reviews and reflections, tracking progress, revisions, and building organisational strength and capacity, as CBOs move towards Graduation. This should be mapped out at the beginning of the implementation phase.

As Road Maps can span many years, it is necessary to review, reflect upon, and update these plans. For a ten-year Road Map, we suggest a three-year Road Mapping Programme Cycle, as seen in the diagram, below.

The reviews and updates must also be led by the CBOs and involve the communities they serve. Messaging about achieving the Road Map plans and Graduation should be reiterated throughout the implementation phase to ensure that communities are celebrating their successes, planning for future projects, as well as getting ready for Graduation and the next phase of their development journey.

Graduation is a cause for celebration and all who participate in Road Mapping should take time to reflect, learn, as well as rejoice. But it is not the end of the community’s journey or ‘development’, or even necessarily the relationship with the organisations involved. As this point, a CBO can restart the process with greater independence, confidence, and with renegotiated relationships.
For the complete step-by-step guide to ChildFund New Zealand’s Road Mapping process, please contact Shona Jennings at shona@childfund.org.nz