IT TAKES A VILLAGE

How the world's most influential change agents mobilize for action

BY BILL CLINTON

Also: Jenny Amaraneni, Bill Gates, Mo Ibrahim, Christine Lagarde, Jean Rogers, Bunker Roy

In this together Former President Clinton visits Dares Salaam, Tanzania, where a Clinton Global Initiative project is teaching this community to save and manage money.
I've long believed that building networks of creative cooperation among governments, the private sector and nonprofits is the key to overcoming the challenges, both great and small, of our newly interdependent world. And it works—"We are all in this together" beats "You're on your own" every time. Through my years in public office and my work with the Clinton Foundation, I've seen many instances where the negative forces of our interdependent world, such as conflict and poverty, are overcome by people with good intentions, good ideas and the ability to work with others to implement them.

But it's not enough to just talk about solving the world's problems. A core principle behind the Clinton Global Initiative is what we call the commitment to action: our members work together to identify specific challenges and opportunities and then commit to finding local, sustainable solutions with the ultimate goal of working ourselves out of a job. Because solutions are effective only if they are implemented, this year our special emphasis is on rallying people, organizations and resources to do that. We're calling it mobilizing for impact.

To see what this looks like on the ground, consider the efforts of just two of our members working in Africa. Last year the Tony Elumelu Foundation committed to a five-year, $1 million effort to design and implement a technical and vocational training curriculum to tackle the skills gap and unemployment problems in Nigeria. They're teaming up with public, private and philanthropic partners to deliver innovative and low-cost courses paired with an apprenticeship program to help 12,000 students transition from theory to practice in such skills as masonry, carpentry, plumbing and electrical work.

Another example is a CGI partnership that includes Barclays, CARE International-U.K. and Plan U.K. This project, called Banking on Change, uses a community-led savings model where individuals join together in self-governing groups to save regularly, pool the savings and make small loans to members from the fund. Over three years, the partners aim to provide approximately 400,000 people with access to finance. I visited one of the Banking on Change groups in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, this summer and heard from the people whose lives and family stories have been improved through this program, and I visited one of the small businesses—a young woman's small hair salon on a crowded street—which had been expanded with loans from the community fund. I don't think I've met a prouder entrepreneur anywhere in the world.

And last year, INJAZ al-Maghrib committed to training 150 Moroccan students in entrepreneurship over three years. Through this program, INJAZ will coordinate with 25 corporatons to provide volunteers who will deliver the Junior Achievement Program directly to middle school, high school and college students. The volunteers will also mentor the students to create and manage their own small businesses over the course of a year.

These are just a few examples of the way CGI and our partners are helping people create better stories for themselves all over the world. In the next few pages, you'll hear from other CGI members on how mobilizing for impact helps empower people faster, more effectively and at lower cost than other alternatives. Some of their names will be familiar; some may not, but I think you'll agree that all of them have a unique and fascinating perspective on how best to bring together great ideas, good people and the necessary resources to solve the world's most pressing challenges.

Family matters: Clinton and his daughter Chelsea drive in to help young South Africans in Khamis Mushayri, part of the City Year Service Project