

# Epicentres for Self-Reliance

A sustainable strategy for gender-focused, community-led development in rural Africa.

Created in Africa, by Africans, for Africa.



Start with Women



Mobilise Everyone



Partner with Local  
Governments

## IT TAKES MORE THAN A VILLAGE

Epicentres unite 10,000 to 15,000 people from a cluster of villages, creating a space where communities build the confidence to become leaders - in equal numbers of women and men - of their own development, unlock local capacity for change, and achieve progress on the Sustainable Development Goals.



Animator at Iganga Epicentre, Uganda,  
2017 Photo Credit: Rebke Klokke

## AN EPICENTRE'S JOURNEY TO SELF-RELIANCE

- 1) **PHASE I: MOBILISATION**  
Communities are mobilised to create a new vision - shifting mindsets away from patriarchy and clientelism. Trained volunteers, or 'animators', work with their communities to achieve this shared vision.
- 2) **PHASE II: CONSTRUCTION**  
Community members mobilise construction materials and labour to build the epicentre building. This quickly becomes a vibrant centre of community action and a symbol of positive change.
- 3) **PHASE III: PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION**  
Once the building facilities are operational, training courses and other programme activities occur, including training sector-specific animators, who will lead most of the trainings at the epicentre.
- PHASE IV: TRANSITION TO SELF-RELIANCE**
- 4) The Hunger Project ends its financial and staff support for the epicentre's programmes once the epicentre meets our data-driven thresholds for self-reliance. We continue to monitor progress to ensure structures and processes are in place for future growth.



Malaria Animator at Majete Epicentre, Malawi, 2018  
Photo Credit: Maria Thundu

In 2018, our  
programmes reached  
**16 million**  
people globally.

## CONSORTIA FOR SCALE

No single organisation - not even government alone - can end hunger and poverty. Our goal is to build a consortium of organisations that co-create a shared methodology based on the epicentre model, and then mobilise resources to replicate it. This consortium can then advocate for the specific decentralisation policy changes needed at the national level to take this method to scale across the country.

Countries that have brought community-led development to scale have done so through consortia of NGOs working in partnership with government, bilateral and multilateral donors.

## VISION COMMITMENT AND ACTION WORKSHOPS

THP leverages Vision, Commitment and Action (VCA) workshops to mobilise epicentre communities. The training emphasises leadership, creates a vision of the future, and generates commitment and action at the individual and community levels to achieve the sustainable end of hunger and poverty. Change of mind-set, stimulated by the VCA workshops, is the first and most important step to successfully mobilising the community to take charge of their own development.

## DATA FOR THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE.

The Epicentre Strategy uses a participatory approach to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) that empowers participants in our programmes as both collectors and consumers of data. Participatory M&E requires including community voices in monitoring and evaluation and building the capacity of community members to become active partners in this process. Regular data is collected by trained M&E animators and is shared with communities, which promotes transparency and accountability between staff, communities, and investors.

This community-led, informed analysis allows community members to identify their needs, set their own development priorities, and participate in tracking their progress on these goals over time.

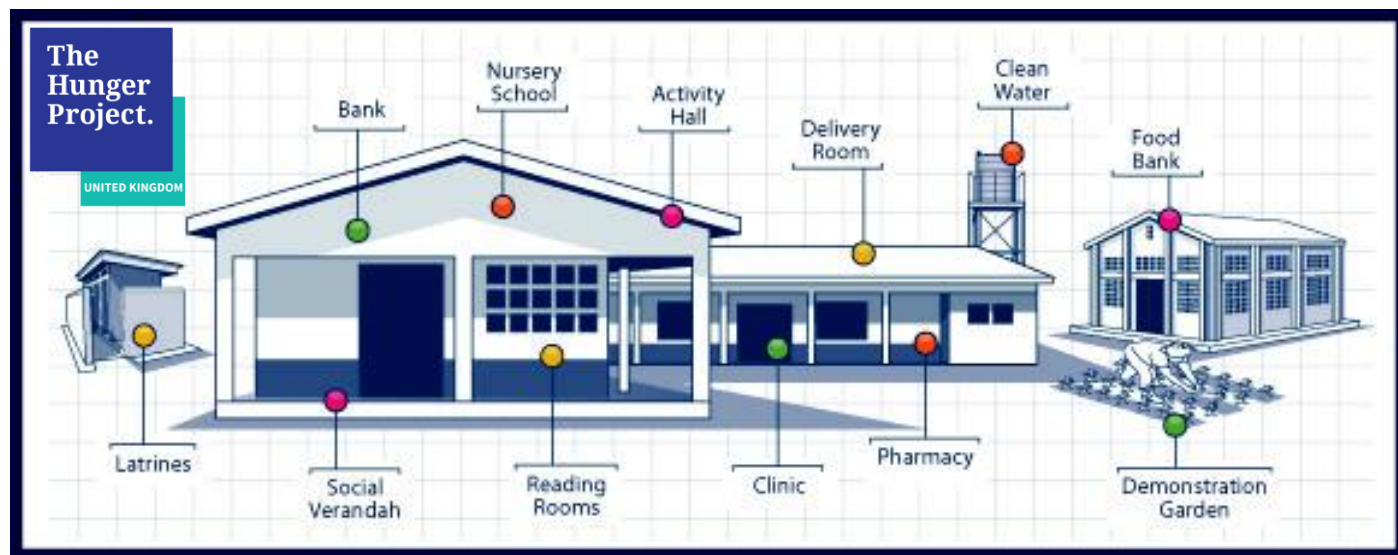


Moringa Farmers at Mesqan Epicentre, Ethiopia,  
2017 Photo Credit: Johannes Odé



# Epicentres for Self-Reliance

The Epicentre Strategy leverages key sectoral programmes to help the community address its needs.



- Women's Empowerment**  
 Women's leadership is key to every aspect of the Epicentre Strategy. Empowerment animators are trained to conduct workshops to promote gender equality, access to micro-finance, legal rights education, reproductive health rights and leadership skills.
- Reducing Poverty**  
 The Microfinance Programme is a savings and credit programme to promote women-owned businesses, off-farm household income, the establishment of Village Savings and Loans Associations and training in business.
- Climate Resilience**  
 Each epicentre focuses on maintaining biodiversity, ensuring the sustainable use of resources, and promoting renewable sources of fuel and energy.
- Education & Literacy**  
 Epicentres run both pre-school and adult education programmes to improve all aspects of life in the epicentre communities. Instructors are identified by the community and trained by the government.
- Food Security**  
 Farmers are trained to improve land productivity and resilience of smallholder farmers through new technologies, techniques and increased access to agricultural tools. Food banks safely store harvests to support communities during lean periods throughout the year.
- Health & Nutrition**  
 The epicentre health centre localises primary health services and provides a place where women can safely give birth, families receive nutrition counselling, children are immunised and community members have access to medicines, including birth control and antiretroviral therapy.
- Water, Sanitation & Hygiene**  
 Trained animators increase community awareness of hygienic practices. THP works with the community to build improved sanitation facilities, drill new boreholes, and improve school water and sanitary services access.



Women leaders at Kissamey Epicentre, Benin, 2019

## In 2018...

### UNLOCKING LOCAL CAPACITY

- 95,562 trained in our Women's Empowerment Program in 1,765 workshops
- 69,981 participants in nutrition training
- 80,927 participants in HIV/AIDS & Gender Inequality Workshops
- 60,149 participants in Food Security Workshops

### EDUCATION FOR ALL

- 2,601 animators trained in literacy and education
- 4,492 children enrolled in early education
- 9,219 individuals enrolled in functional adult literacy classes

### BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

- Over 184,000 partners accessed health services at epicentre health clinics
- Over 77,000 children were weighed and monitored at epicentre health clinics
- Clinic staff delivered nearly 70,000 vaccines
- 21,552 women accessed antenatal services close to home, at epicentre clinics
- 12,704 people accessed HIV services at epicentre health clinics
- 14,002 bed nets were distributed to prevent malaria

The Hunger Project.  
UNITED KINGDOM

For more information about THP's Epicentre Strategy, visit [www.thehungerproject.org.uk](http://www.thehungerproject.org.uk), or [www.epicentertoolkit.org](http://www.epicentertoolkit.org) for in-depth implementation resources

The Hunger Project UK is a registered charity in England & Wales 1164839 and a company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales 9583057

## OUR IMPACT IN AFRICA

THP's Epicentre Strategy reached 1.4 Million people in 2018 across 8 countries in Africa.

- Over the course of the year, 11 epicentres, serving 142,839 people, declared themselves self-reliant.
- 113,465 people came together to create a clear vision for the future during Vision, Commitment and Action Workshops.
- 619,700 kilograms of food were stocked in food banks by community partners for use during lean times.



Small business owner, Ghana, 2018

Moringa Animators at Iganga Epicentre, Uganda, 2017  
Photo Credit: Rebekke Klokke

