



**IBON**  
INTERNATIONAL

STRATEGIC PLAN  
2016-2020



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# BUILDING RIGHTS-BASED DEMOCRACY/ PEOPLE-POWERED DEMOCRACY

IBON International believes that addressing the roots of poverty, inequality, exclusion, environmental destruction and injustice entails a process of social transformation – a process of building Rights-based Democracy/ People-Powered Democracy (RBD/PPD) where people and their organisations assert their sovereignty and fully exercise their rights. RBD/PPD is a transformative framework that enables people to claim their rights and hold duty-bearers accountable, as well as self-organise and self-mobilise as development actors in their own right.

RBD/PPD is not only inclusive and empowering; it also gives full play to the people's exercise of their rights and sovereignty as the true foundation of democracy. It is premised on the people's full assertion/exercise of

all their rights – civil and political as well as economic, social and cultural. Further, the full exercise of the people's democratic rights include the right to self-determination and liberation, providing the foundation of people's democratic sovereign will that permeates throughout the conduct and institutions of governance.

Given historical and structural inequalities, persistent injustice, and social exclusion that violate people's rights and undermine true democracy, RBD/PPD necessarily goes beyond electoral participation and political representation. It entails people's direct participation in and benefit from all aspects of governance. It also means openness to redefining boundaries of democratic practice and institutional politics towards reconstructing

governance institutions for the expansion of citizen participation. It entails making governance institutions, mechanisms and processes premised on people's sovereignty, sovereign will and participation. It also entails making said institutions fully accountable and responsive to the needs of people, especially the poor, vulnerable and marginalised. It upholds people's sovereignty as immutable, superior, precedent to and not simply a function of governance.

It also means involving the whole citizenry to the fullest through exercise of their sovereign will/rights and through state processes/mechanisms in managing society's public affairs: from legislation and policy-making, including handling of public opinion; selection of state functionaries, administration

“It entails making governance institutions, mechanisms and processes premised on people’s sovereignty, sovereign will and participation.”

of state functions; to implementation, monitoring and evaluation of state policies/programs, and enforcement of laws. It requires effective participation in all units and instrumentalities of government, from the top to the grassroots level such as representation in different units by POs/CSOs, ensuring a system of meaningful and direct citizen participation in specific units of government.

Rights-based Democracy/People-Powered Democracy is likewise premised on people’s sovereignty in **economic democracy** – a socio-economic structure and a process that:

- secures an equitable distribution of economic power (ownership over productive resources and incomes) among the people;
- enables people to collectively exercise authority over the economic sphere (production, consumption, distribution) at multiple levels (workplace, community, country, globally); and

- ensures the well-being of all and enables the full realisation of human potential, including future generations.

Therefore, building RBD/PPD ultimately contributes to the realisation of:

- **People’s Rights** as it advances individual and collective human rights;
- **Equality and Social Justice** by ensuring the economic basis for the fair sharing of the fruits of labour;
- **Development and Social Transformation** as it helps lay down structural conditions for genuine sustainable development; and
- **People’s Sovereignty and Self-determination** as it raises the capacity of individuals, communities and nations to exercise independence and freedom.

## IBON International's contribution

IBON International contributes to the advancement of RBD/PPD through partnerships with people and their organisations exercising and claiming their rights and meaningfully engaging with other actors. It has long established its ability to support CSOs and peoples' movements through research, education and advocacy. It takes leading roles in various global advocacies, forwarding critical analyses and challenging states, non-state actors and multilateral institutions and processes to undertake change in policy and practice, and presenting

pro-people recommendations and alternatives.

IBON International's strategy is to help in empowering people and their organisations to engage governments to promote an enabling state and economic democracy. It promotes an enabling state with clear national accountability mechanisms in implementation of global commitments, ensuring inclusive review and monitoring processes in operationalizing commitments and achieving results.

A feature of the strategy to achieve this is to work for increased unities among

people's organisations and CSOs, Local Authorities & Parliamentarians in engaging the executive and the private sector on key issues of empowerment and economic democracy.

Similarly, economic democracy can be pursued with improved human rights-based accountability framework for economic actors especially transnational corporations (TNCs) nationally and internationally. This can be pursued through enhanced spaces for national and international multi-stakeholder dialogue and engagement on norms and policies for economic actors.

# DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES OF OUR TIME

## Persistent poverty and gaping inequality

By any measure, overcoming poverty around the world remains a tremendous challenge. In 2008, about 1.3 billion people lived below \$1.25 a day in developing and transition economies (World Bank 2012). This is less than the 1.75 billion people in the 104 countries calculated by the UN Development Programme's 2010 *Human Development Report* to be experiencing overlapping deprivations in health, education and standard of living (UNDP 2010).

Poverty persists despite staggering wealth. World economic inequality is intolerably high by any accounting. Credit Suisse's *Global Wealth Report* (Credit Suisse 2012) shows that 8.1% of the world's adult population control

US\$183 trillion in financial and non-financial assets, or 82.4% of the world's total wealth, while 69.3% or more than two-thirds only share 3.3% of it. Globally, workers' share of the economic pie is shrinking. In many countries, wages have held flat or fallen over the last 30 years. UNICEF estimates that at the current rate of inequality reduction, improving the bottom billion's share of world income to just 10% would take eight and a half centuries—at least 10 lifetimes—to accomplish (UNICEF 2011).

## Environmental constraints and tipping points

Current patterns of economic production and consumption, while benefiting a few and leaving many in poverty, have come at the cost of lasting damage

to the environment. Sixty percent of a group of 24 ecosystems are now degraded or exploited unsustainably (Millennium Ecosystems Assessment 2005). In 2008, human demand on the planet's capacity to generate resources and absorb waste overshot the planet's capacity to regenerate and absorb them by 50% (World Wide Fund 2011).

The poor are bearing the brunt of environmental change. They depend most on the environment for their livelihood (agriculture, forestry and fishing), and—with poor housing conditions, low income and no insurance—are most vulnerable to environmental shocks. Bogged down by politics and skewed priorities, intergovernmental efforts at arresting environmental decline are yielding little results. In the area of climate change, carbon emissions rise

unabated as major consuming and polluting countries refuse to commit drastic cuts. Meanwhile, in the face of environmental constraints, billions of poor people aspire to be lifted out of poverty. The challenge is to shift to modes of development that are both sustainable and equitable in order to secure decent living for the poor and the estimated additional two billion people to inhabit the planet in the next half century within safe planetary limits.

### Crisis, recovery, austerity

The economic crisis that resulted from the financial crash of 2008 drags on in the West. Stimulus and bank bailouts have averted financial collapse. But they have done little to bring the economy to health. Bank rescues, falling revenues and rising claims on social benefits have caused public debt to rise. The policy response quickly shifted to cutting public spending and reducing debt. This was supposed to regain the confidence of financial markets and inspire a return to growth. Just the opposite, it made the crisis worse. By increasing joblessness and

lowering wages, austerity has left economies weaker and public finances in no better shape. This is most acute in the Eurozone, where countries under threat of default have been forced to submit to severe austerity measures in return for financial help. Unless the right policies are taken, the rich world faces a long period of stagnation that threatens to drag the rest of the world with it.

Enabled by financial deregulation, financial institutions have been reckless, creating fictitious wealth, making bad loans and shifting them around with complex financial products. The crisis that they caused was the worst in 80 years. But it hadn't been too long since the follies of unbridled finance caused economies to crash elsewhere – from East Asia, Latin America and Russia. As before, banks are rescued and paid no price for their behaviour. And as before, little is done to reform them: to make sure they are well regulated; to make sure they are sound; to make sure they serve the real economy. Reforming global finance and the rules

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that govern it needs to be part of any agenda for recovery and development.

### Jobs crisis

Workers have been the crisis' main casualties. The jobs situation has gone from bad to worse, made worse still by labour deregulation measures undertaken as part of austerity programs in the West. Globally, 200 million people are unemployed, 27 million more than the start of the crisis. More than half of the addition came from developed countries. Youth unemployment is particularly severe. Seventy-five million youths under 25 years of age are unemployed, their future prospects perhaps forever eroded. Nine hundred million workers live on \$2 a day or less. Over one billion workers are engaged in precarious employment.

The massive loss of jobs means not only loss of incomes. It means an increase in vulnerability, especially in poor countries without comprehensive social protection. It means an increase in poverty among people who depend

on work for income. Between 40 million and 80 million people fell into poverty because of the crisis. It means a generation of youth with worse nutrition, health and education outcomes. And it means an increase in inequality and social discontent. In poor countries with small modern sectors, unemployment is endemic and informal work predominates. The world faces the challenge of creating 600 million jobs over the next decade, and over one billion jobs by 2050. These jobs will need to be productive, remunerative and sustainable.

### Feeding nine billion: not simply producing more

The projected growth of the human population has set off concerns about how to successfully secure food for a larger population by mid-century. Because of emerging constraints to food supply and rising demand, it is argued that we face a problem of supplying food to nine billion people, and that the purported solution is a new green revolution to grow more food without worsening climate change. The FAO

calculates that food production needs to increase by 70% to 100 percent.

This notion of the food challenge as a production challenge forgets that there is now enough food to go around for everyone, and that despite this, one billion people are hungry while an epidemic of obesity is afflicting rich countries. People go hungry not because food is in short supply, but because of poverty, inequality, wrong trade policies, and lack of support to farmers and consumers. Part of the food challenge, if not an indispensable one, is to shift to methods of farming that are at once sustainable, economically viable, and productive. But the rest of it involves lifting people out of poverty, curbing inequality, fixing world trade in agriculture, and having in place the right policies and sufficient support for small food producers and consumers.

### Gender: old inequalities in new times

Many gender disparities have narrowed thanks to struggles for gender equality by women's movements. In many countries, women have won equality

with men to formal rights under law. Women today face better opportunities than in the past. Despite progress in social outcomes, women are still behind men in terms of economic, social and political power.

Women make up the large majority of the world's poorest—70%—highlighting their lack of access to assets and income. Women also make up most of the world's unemployed. Although more women are performing paid work, they are often trapped in low paying, low productivity and vulnerable jobs. Legal barriers still exist for women in terms of owning property, divorce, and reproductive rights. Traditional gender roles still dictate women to carry the burden of household work. In general, women still have less power than men in decision-making, whether at home, at work, in the community, or over their own bodies. And they continue to face discrimination and violence from cradle to grave. For women facing other forms of exclusion – Southern, poor, rural, ethnic women and those in conflict areas – disempowerment and threats of violence are doubly worse.

“Despite progress in social outcomes, women are still behind men in terms of economic, social and political power.”

“At the losing end are the people, especially rural and indigenous peoples, who find their land and resources taken away or destroyed.”

### A scramble for what's left

The global economic expansion of the last century was made possible by the availability of abundant and cheap supplies of energy, minerals and other raw materials. This era is coming to a close. Reserves will be largely exhausted in the near future if current rates of depletion continue. Governments and corporations are aware of this and are engaged in plans to find and seek control of the world's remaining resources. As a result, competition and conflict over ownership and access to resources is on the rise. At stake is the continuation of economic growth for the system as a whole. For global powers, at stake is their individual economic and political strength. At the losing end are the people, especially rural and indigenous peoples, who find their land and resources taken away or destroyed.

This race for what's left plays out in various forms. Energy companies are venturing to ecologically risky locations to extract unconventional fuels. Mining firms are opening up frontier areas for unexhausted mineral deposits. Governments and corporations from cash-rich countries are acquiring control over vast tracts of land in poor countries to secure food or simply to profit, resulting to land-grabs that impinge on people's land rights and food security. Major powers are strengthening their military presence around resource-rich areas, supporting repressive governments, and even intervening to secure supplies of raw materials. This is most evident in the case of energy. The US, for example, has been fortifying its military presence in the Middle East and Central Asia, and went so far as to invade and occupy Afghanistan and Iraq.

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# OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

IBON international believes that inequality, bondage, oppression, war and strife are the main hindrances to achieving people's aspirations for development, peace and environmental sustainability. These hindrances violate people's individual and collective rights and prevent them from reaching their potential and living their life to the fullest. These also undermine the people's sovereignty to realize their aspirations.

A key to unlocking these aspirations is RBD/PPD that allows people and their organisations to exercise and claim their rights, exert their sovereignty to transform governance, and promote

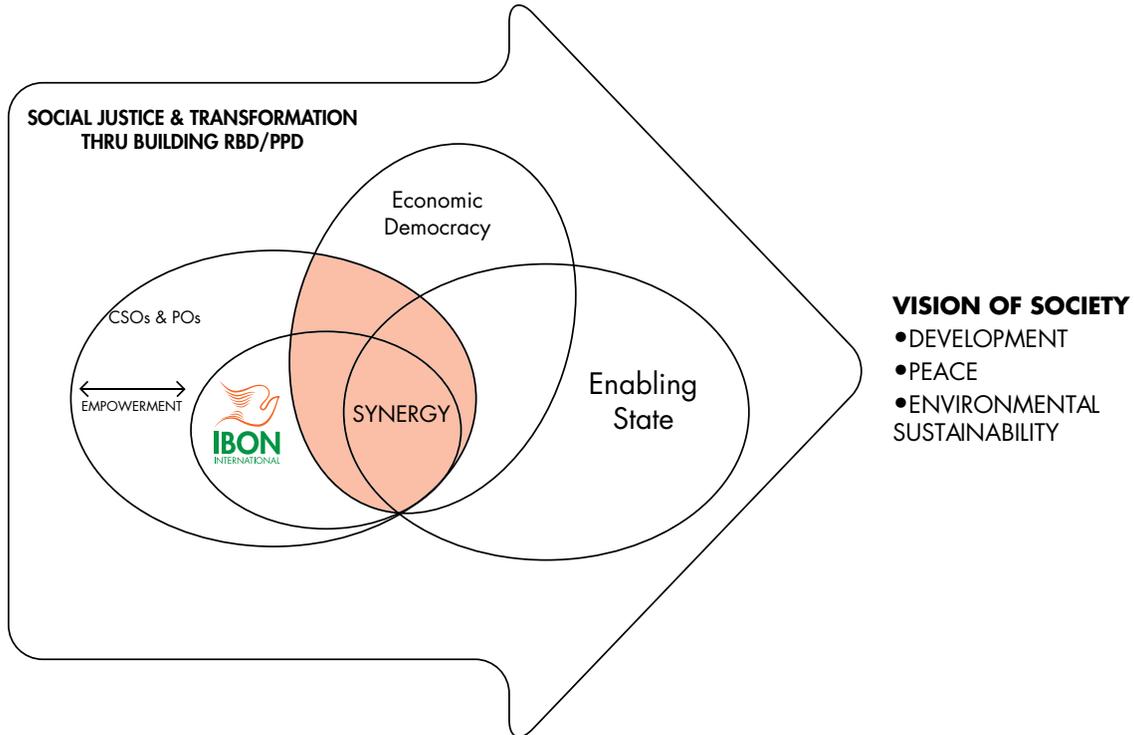
an enabling state and economic democracy.

An enabling state should be promoted with clear national accountability mechanisms in implementation of global commitments. This can be achieved through the assertion of people-oriented structures and processes that allow POs/CSOs and the public to review and monitor both implementation of the commitments and the results or impacts on the ground.

Concomitant to people's sovereignty is claiming inclusion and benefit from effective economic and industrial policies as well as ensuring regulatory frameworks to protect public welfare.

This also means holding TNCs to account for any abuse and providing effective mechanisms for remedy and corrective action.

The basis for this change and social transformation process is the empowerment of people and their organisations. The test of empowerment is the people's capacity to exercise their collective sovereign will. This empowerment is characterised by their increased level of awareness and over-all capacities from national to international levels; their organisation and consolidation into broad alliances; and, their sustained independent actions in defense of economic and social rights of the people.



# CHANGE AND HOW WE MAKE IT HAPPEN

Solidarity lies at the core of our work. This is reflected in our focus areas, partnerships and approaches in helping bringing about change.

IBON International works with a wide range of different groups, including grassroots groups, people's organisations, civil society organisations, policy makers and development organisations.

## How we work

IBON International implements a number of broad approaches in order to achieve its strategic objectives from one period to the next. These approaches include the following:

### **Programs for advocacy and campaigns**

We initiate and implement international programs for our advocacy and campaigns in different major arenas of concern, such as sustainable development, food sovereignty, development effectiveness, development finance, and climate justice, among others.

### **Building branches in the Global South**

To effectively implement the abovementioned programs on a global scope, we build, develop, and maximise regional branches in all Southern continents. We also rely on our branches to help establish long-term alliances and networks in all regions of

Asia-Pacific, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

At the same time, we give due consideration to our outreach in vast territories that cut across traditional continental boundaries but are bound by geographic, historical, cultural and other ties, such as the Arab world and the central Eurasian belt.

### **Developing and working through global, regional, and thematic platforms**

We build global, regional and thematic platforms that reach out to all the oppressed and marginalised constituencies. We work through long-term alliances that involve key people's organisations/CSOs in various platforms and regions, and

through partnerships with the various development actors supportive of our goals.

IBON International views networking and partnership as a basic and consistent approach in its many areas of work, particularly in mobilising constituencies and resources for campaigning and advocacy, in implementing projects, in engaging official processes, and in reaching out to more countries and CSOs, among others. Within each network or partnership, we consistently observe principles of democratic consensus, apply democratic systems of network animation, and strike a balance among various network interests that enhances mutual respect and common benefit.

Along these lines, we provide hosting or secretariat support, as well as different forms of political and other support, to various platforms and networks of a wide variety in terms of geographic, sectoral, thematic, and strategic scope. We host networks that are linked to IBON International's research and advocacy mandate such as the Asia

Pacific Research Network (APRN) and the Reality of Aid Network (RoA).

We also have partnerships with and provide assistance to movements and networks involved in campaigns and struggles such as the People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty (PCFS), Global Peoples' Surge (GPS), Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation (IPMSDL), International Fisherfolk and Fishworkers' Coalition (IFWC), International Women's Alliance (IWA), International Migrants Alliance (IMA), and the International League of People's Struggles (ILPS).

We are also involved in thematic advocacy networks like the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) and the Water for the People Network (WPN) for whom we provide secretariat functions, and Our World is Not for Sale (OWINFS).

### **Strategic policy research**

We undertake strategic and in-depth policy research to provide the

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backbone to critical analysis and policy alternatives. We undertake systematic study of our constituencies, their contexts and concerns as well as capacities, towards giving priority to key countries and key partners for capacity development initiatives such as political education, skills training, and others.

We help develop appropriate institutional frameworks for such efforts, such as the IBON Institute for International Development and regional networks for collaborative research.

#### **Linking international and national campaigns and advocacies**

We link international and national campaigns and advocacies in ways

that have resonance at the grassroots. Through such strengthened links between local and international initiatives, we help create space for people’s organisations and CSOs to express and build consensus around their concerns, engage official processes meaningfully, and forge cooperation for strengthened campaigns.

#### **Where we work**

These work are carried out through our main office located in Quezon City, Philippines, with satellite regional offices in Nairobi, Kenya; La Paz, Bolivia; Dakar, Senegal as well as a representative office in Brussels, Belgium.

# MISSION OBJECTIVES

## Objective 1: Protect People's Economic Rights in Trade & Investment

Trade and investments are figuring as important elements in job-creation, poverty eradication, and supporting the achievement of sustainable development. However, the international trade and investment regime governed mainly by the Bretton Woods institutions, International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB), and the World Trade Organization (WTO), have skewed the international trade and investment rules towards the benefit of large industrialised countries and their corporations at the expense of wider public interest and smaller economic enterprises especially those in developing countries.

The WTO remains as the most important mechanism to advance multilateral trade and investment liberalisation which have resulted in the maldevelopment of developing countries' economies characterised by collapse of small to medium local enterprises, privatisation of public services, resource grabs, job losses and job insecurity, low wages, and chronic poverty. Due to the negative impacts, demands to include 'development' in the WTO agenda by developing countries pressured developed countries to agree to come up with the Doha Development Agenda in 2001. However, negotiations have remained dormant until 2013 due to continuing disagreements and non-implementation of existing commitments. The decade-long deadlock in the Doha round led to the proliferation of bilateral

and regional trade and investment agreements.

Instead of providing mechanisms to correct the negative economic impacts and power imbalances created by the WTO, the bilateral and regional free trade agreements (FTAs) were utilised by large industrialised countries and their corporations to pursue their agenda that they have failed to achieve through multilateral means. This furthered unequal trade between developed and developing countries by becoming venues for the aggressive implementation of the liberalisation agenda of the WTO, and make developing countries commit to liberalisation standards higher than those existing in the WTO. Still, the expansion of trade and investment liberalisation through

“International trade and investment rules and institutions need to respect human rights, and uphold the principles of democratic ownership, solidarity, and complementarity.”

bilateral and regional FTAs did not deliver development for the poor. The number of those who belong to the conservative global poverty estimate of two dollars a day doubled since the last three decades and nearly reached half of the world’s population.

The rise of the so-called 21st century trade agreements, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA), the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA), will expand the liberalisation, privatisation, and deregulation agenda. These agreements are also reaching farther and deeper ‘behind the borders’ as they aim to directly control how governments make economic decisions such as regulations, competition, and investor protections. Corporate power will increase at the expense of people’s rights through these measures, especially through the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) that allows corporations to sue governments for enacting public interest laws that endanger their profits. Moreover, the negotiations are done in secret, without

democratic consultations of those who will be most affected, and without rigorous impact-assessments on human rights.

The international trade and investment regime needs to undergo fundamental changes if it is to benefit all, especially the marginalised groups in developing countries. International trade and investment rules and institutions need to respect human rights, and uphold the principles of democratic ownership, solidarity, and complementarity if they are to work towards creating economies that enable dignified lives, decent employment, living wages, provide opportunities for entrepreneurship democratically, and is not based on exploitation of people or natural resources or environmental destruction. This can only be achieved through peoples and their organisations aware of the impacts of trade and investments on their rights, and are capable of engaging the governments and institutions governing trade and investment policies and agreements at national, regional, and global levels, to promote their rights.

Promise 1. By 2020, IBON International will have supported the capacity of peoples and their organisations especially in the global South to engage trade and investment agreements/policies through awareness building and training.

Promise 2. By 2020, IBON International and its partners will have promoted the human rights impact-assessment of FTAs in key national, regional, and global arenas.

### **OBJECTIVE 2: Build climate-resilient communities**

The planet is experiencing a climate crisis of catastrophic proportions. Extreme weather events – from the severe floods in Pakistan and Russia, to super typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines – have vividly shown how these can bring entire countries and communities to a virtual standstill. Volatile weather extremes have severely damaged the environment and with it the destruction of lives and livelihoods – especially of the poorest and most vulnerable.

While there is scientific consensus that climate change is caused by human activity, the reality is that climate change has been caused by the historical exploitation of the world's resources and carbon by the wealthiest nations and individuals. Yet developing countries are said to bear some 75-80% of the costs of damages caused by the changing climate. And even if global temperature rise is limited to two degrees Celsius, the costs of adaptation for developing countries are likely to be in the range of USD75 billion to USD100 billion a year in the period 2010-2015. The latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC AR5) already warns of 'the irrevocable warming of the climate system', and yet climate negotiations have brought the world nowhere near the important goals of stabilising the climate and addressing the increasing impacts of climate extremes. Even worst is the fact that the crisis is seen as an opportunity to prop up the very production and consumption system that has brought the world to social, economic, political and environmental crises.

Climate change expresses, on a world-scale, the fundamental contradiction between capitalist development and ecological sustainability, which has now critically undermined the foundation for human survival. While the last centuries have been heralded for great strides in technology, production and human progress, these advances have precipitated global ecological disasters. On one hand, a privileged global elite engages in reckless profit-driven production and grossly excessive consumption. On the other, the mass of humanity is mired in underdevelopment and poverty with merely survival and subsistence production, or even less.

Building climate resilient communities is the pro-active response to the increasing threats that climate change brings. And it is important to underscore that resilience is more than just adapting to the impacts of climate change. Resilience entails people and communities defending their lives and livelihoods, and meaningfully participating, reshaping and taking

“Resilience entails people and communities defending their lives and livelihoods, and meaningfully participating, reshaping and taking ownership of development policies and programs.”

ownership of development policies and programs, among others.

Building climate resilient communities encompasses disaster risk reduction and management, relief and rehabilitation, humanitarian response, but also includes people’s participation and engagement in challenging and transforming systems founded on the exploitation of people and planet.

Promise 1. By 2020, IBON International will have supported the capacity of peoples and their organisations to engage their governments to deliver on climate change mitigation and adaptation commitments, disaster risk reduction and response, and policy actions in areas affecting the environment such as energy and extractives.

Promise 2. By 2020, IBON International and its partners will have contributed to building climate resilient communities able to challenge and participate in reshaping development policies through dialogues with parliament and executive branches of governments,

the private sector, scientific community, media, and others.

### OBJECTIVE 3: Ensure people’s development in the face of PPPs

The private sector in its many forms is becoming an increasingly important actor in development – in economic growth and the provision of public goods and services, the crafting of national development strategies, and international development cooperation. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are on the rise: around 180 deals are concluded per year since 2006 averaging US\$10B per PPP agreement in transportation, US\$4B in social sectors, and US\$2B in others. This trend is likely to continue in the ongoing aftermath of the global economic crisis that sees many governments strapped for cash and seeking alternative methods of meeting the increasing demands for investment in public sector development.

The cost to the public from these PPPs has often been huge. Governments and the public carry the overwhelming risk in PPP projects, while participating

private firms have their returns guaranteed with no risk. Priority and preference are also given to big business and multinationals in these partnerships, instead of prioritising development of domestic micro, small and medium enterprises. PPPs especially in developing countries have had severe ramifications on issues of equity and access, especially for the poor and marginalised. With their lack of paying capacity, combined with governments' default in ensuring safety nets, the poor ends up marginalised from basic social services that now increasingly 'come with a price'. PPPs have likewise facilitated human rights abuses, including land grabs and displacement of indigenous peoples, rural and urban communities.

Ensuring people's development in the face of PPPs has never been more crucial. In furtherance of this aim, and building on our experience in capacity development and policy advocacy, we will work with people's organisations (POs) in defending public control over basic public services, and in advocating for human rights-based standards in regulating PPPs. We will

undertake strategic and in-depth policy research to provide the backbone for critical analysis and policy alternatives on PPPs. We will engage official processes meaningfully, and forge cooperation with various development actors supportive of our goals for strengthened campaigns.

Promise 1. By 2020, there will be more POs undertaking collective initiatives that assert public control over essential services. More POs will likewise carry out initiatives calling for the enforcement of domestic policy and regulatory standards to ensure that PPPs adhere to guidelines on business and human rights.

Promise 2. By 2020, there will be more institutionalised mechanisms for participation of POs in PPP initiatives at the national level through our partners. More stakeholders will be advocating for accountability and regulatory frameworks anchored on human rights-based norms and standards in intergovernmental processes and agreements concerning PPPs.

#### **OBJECTIVE 4: Build a constituency that would help promote Rights-based Democracy/People-Powered Democracy**

Sustainable human development requires the realisation of human rights and democracy. Struggles for freedom around the world have advanced human rights and democracy over the past centuries yet serious deprivations and abuses persist. Millions continue to suffer from hunger, illiteracy, poor health, homelessness, and unsafe environments. Many also continue to suffer from discrimination, persecution, injustice, and violence in conflict and war. Political and economic elites capture public institutions; governance is distorted and abused to advance narrow interests. And the current pattern of globalisation has enhanced the freedoms and privileges of the multinational corporations and the wealthy at the expense of those of the poor and marginalised.

IBON International believes that addressing the roots of poverty, inequality, exclusion, environmental destruction and injustice entails a

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To build a constituency for promoting Rights-based Democracy/People-Powered Democracy, IBON International shall support and put forward new models of democratic governance and rights-based approach to sustainable development that maximise the participation of peoples organisations in decision-making. Together with allies and partners, IBON International shall advocate for the adoption of these models at various levels.

Promise 1. By 2020, there will be greater awareness among CSOs/POs and other development actors about people’s sovereignty and Rights-based Democracy/People-Powered Democracy

Promise 2. By 2020, we will have a number of shared positions with CSOs/POs, Local Authorities and/or Parliamentarians in engaging the executive and the private sector on key issues of empowerment and economic democracy.

Promise 3. By 2020, we will have expanded spaces for national and international multi-stakeholder dialogue and engagement on norms and policies for sustainable development.

# ORGANISATIONAL OBJECTIVES

To deliver on this strategy we will need to build a better governed, more strongly managed and mutually accountable organisation, driven by our strong collective values. Working together towards the following seven priorities will help us to achieve this:

**Priority 1: Deepen the impact of our work by having an effective programme framework that ensures integration, coherence and quality at all levels.**

We commit to:

- Develop and implement a common programming design and monitoring framework to support the development of closer-linked local, national and international work in line with the new strategy. These
- will ensure stronger programme design, monitoring and evaluation and support coherent linkages between local empowerment and solidarity work, campaigning, communications and fundraising work at all levels – in line with our key change promises.
- Elaborate and test our Theory of Change. Building on the theory outlined in this strategy and the description of Our Approach, we will invest in on-going work to deepen and enrich our theory of change. We will test our beliefs and develop an evidence base that substantiates our theory of change, ensuring that our practice is coherent with it at all levels.
- Become a more effective campaigning force. We will improve the quality of our campaigning work with movements of people that seek to address structural causes of inequality, bondage and oppression such as unfair policies or corporate practices. We will invest in the campaigning systems, skills, policy analysis and research, and tools to link, organise, and energise our partners and supporters at all levels.
- Strengthen our funding planning, making sure that we are programmed and that our financial and contract management systems are integrated with our programming and planning framework and are of high quality across all parts of the organisation. We will strengthen senior staff capacity to provide

financial oversight and establish common systems and standards, ensuring that we use unrestricted funds only for work that cannot be funded by other means and that we are more strategic in designing project proposals for restricted funds that cover a fair share of core costs.

**Priority 2: Raise our profile and increase our supporter base to half a million people around the world working towards achieving our mission.**

We commit to:

- Grow our supporter base to over half a million people, giving our organisation massive potential to increase our resources, influence and mobilisation across the world for progressive social change. Our supporters will be defined as sponsors, donors, campaigners, partner people organisations and volunteers who support our mission. We will deepen our relationship with them, enhance

their understanding of our mission, value their multiple contributions, strengthen our accountability to them and support their ambitions for justice, linking them with people in communities, other supporters and active citizens across the globe.

- Enhance our capacity for external communications, recognising that creating and occupying public space, with our partners and social movements is fundamental to securing changes in policies, practices, attitudes, and behaviours. Cost-effective means of mass communication will become a stronger part of our work everywhere, supporting our efforts to empower people to know and exercise their rights. Digital communication and campaigning will become central to our vision, with our website and social media strategy being key to achieving change and meeting the needs of our evolving, current and potential audiences and constituencies.

**Priority 3: Diversify and raise our global annual income to more than three million USD per year by 2017.**

We commit to:

- Build our funding strategy on clear regional and international funding plans, seeking to grow our funding in innovative and sustainable ways for the flexibility required to achieve our strategy.
  - » Raise income coming from individuals, including through enhancing our Adopt-a-School model and exploring other innovative fundraising schemes.
  - » Strengthen relationships with existing and revitalise connections with past funding solidarity partners. Further expand funding solidarity partners through coordinated international and regional appeals based on the new strategic directions and impact areas.

- » Find new and innovative sources of funds to ensure long-term income growth, including raising more (and more flexible) funds for disaster response.
- Set up regular fundraising committee under the Office of the Director to design, plan, implement and monitor implementation of the fundraising strategy.

**Priority 4: Streamline and build capacity of human resource complement designed as an organisation of experts geared to deliver on this ambitious strategy**

We commit to:

- Identify core staff necessary for delivery of strategy and design the organisation accordingly.
- Invest in capacity building: identify the core capabilities needed across the organisation to deliver on this strategy successfully and sustainably, particularly supporting

political (not just technical) capacity building for staff and partners on human rights-based approaches, power analysis, integrating participatory methodologies, effective programme design and monitoring and evaluation. We will also invest in skill development around policy analysis, people’s research, project management, funding planning, human resource management, communications, fundraising, financial management, internal governance, and leadership development.

- Support pursuit of staff individually or collectively to deepen roots with peoples’ movements and grassroots communities. Design and implement system of integration with communities and peoples’ movements and offer to staff that are interested and inclined.
- Support pursuit of individual staff to gain expertise, particularly those relevant to IBON International’s field. Encourage staff to pursue

learning activities within and outside the organisation.

- Provide an empowering and enabling environment that supports employee motivation, improves their well-being and helps them to fulfil their potential, so that together we have the maximum impact possible on realising RBD/PPD.
- Ensure mutual accountability: holding each other to account to make sure that we uphold our responsibilities to ourselves, to our strategy and to our reputation; to rights-holders, movements, communities; and to our partners, donors, and our supporters. We will encourage collaborative behaviour in working towards our common objectives, breaking the mentality of working alone in silos and maximising the cooperation between all the different areas and functions in our organisation.
- Implement effective performance management: encourage staff to openly recognise and manage risks;

set clear standards for managing our reputation and relationships; improve communications internally and support transparency in decision-making processes at all levels.

- Increase our creativity in the pursuit of impact: making sure we demonstrate the courage of our convictions; encouraging a constant focus on solutions and results; incentivising innovation among our staff in the search for alternatives that will impact on realising Rights-based Democracy; building our capacity to demonstrate the impact of our work; and valuing the production and creative sharing of knowledge.
- Set up a regular human resource development (HRD) committee under the Office of the Director to design, plan, implement and monitor implementation of HRD strategy.

### **Priority 5: Strengthen management of hosted networks and platforms, with support from effective international and regional secretariats.**

We commit to:

- Strengthen our unique network management approach. Further developing the capacities and representative/broad nature of our networks, enhancing our legitimacy, credibility, and effectiveness. We will endeavour to make sure that alliance building is seen as a political and not just a technical project, collectively working to prevent it from becoming over-bureaucratised, and focusing on how, together with our allies, we can have a positive impact on people living in poverty.
- Deliver on this strategy through effectively structured Secretariats that will be designed to make sure it is able to fulfil its full obligations cost effectively. Hosted networks should meet their full costs and be

able to contribute financially to the core costs of the organisation.

- Facilitate strong linkages, collaborative working and mutual accountability among the various axes of network members; strengthening our outward facing engagement, generating knowledge, supporting cross-country campaigning, and promoting alternatives.
- Develop effective systems of delegating responsibilities to network members, recommitting to the principle of members working directly together and working to strengthen each other – and creating a web of interconnecting ownership, where there are significant opportunities to enhance quality and impact.

**Priority 6: Strengthen operations of regional offices strategically to advance our mission**

We commit to:

- Consolidate our work in Europe, Africa and Latin America. Strategically work at expanding operations as an essential part of adjusting to a fast-changing world, helping us to secure the resources, partnerships, skills, and political influence to achieve our strategic ambitions. We will review operations based on their potential for:
  - » political influence, programme impact and mobilisation of resources
  - » partnerships relevant to furthering our mission and objectives
  - » raising IBON International's general credibility, visibility and profile
  - » bringing in significant knowledge, skills, experiences
  - » forging mergers with like-minded organisations
- Thoroughly test the fundraising potential of all regional offices in advance of any expansion of operations – establishing a strong business case.
- Explore potential mergers within existing organisations, where our ability to grow is limited by our resources or where our ability to increase our influence is constrained, looking for like-minded organisations to create a stronger regional presence that is better able to deliver on this strategy.

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