

WHY?

Ecovillages become a breeding ground for innovation, regeneration and information-sharing that spin off technologies and systems for in-country scaling up. GEN's long established network, reaching out to 10,000 communities around the world, brings a wealth of inspiring examples and pre-tested solutions to the table. Hubs from different pilot countries can share data, resources, and skills regionally and internationally, causing a sort of positive snowball effect.

The Ecovillage Development Programme will be designed to be SMART in nature, employing Specific Measurable, Achievable action, focused on Results with Timelines for implementation. It will be monitored on a regular basis and evaluated after two years by independent specialists to verify that it was achieving its objectives.

Social entrepreneurship allows ecovillages to raise living standards and invest in their own development. Ecological restoration, pride in cultural heritage and social resilience further increase inner and outer wealth.

In past years, the government of Senegal has adopted a radical national program to transition 14,000 villages into ecovillages and this process is well underway. Zimbabwe and Morocco both signed an MOU for large-scale ecovillage expansion with GEN. Burkina Faso has decided to implement 2000 ecovillages by 2020. In all, 22 Governments have already expressed an interest in large scale ecovillage development.

We believe the EDP represents a radically different, scalable, and effective new approach to meeting SDG targets and implementing the Climate Change Agreements.

Contact us to explore next steps for your region of your country:

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THE ECOVILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

- Catalyzing Community-led Change
- Eradicating Poverty
- Restoring Natural Environments
- Achieving Climate Resilience
- Implementing the SDGs

The EDP catalyses the power of community for the national implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Climate Agreements.



GLOBAL
ECOVILLAGE
NETWORK

WHAT?

For the past 20 years the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN) and its regional affiliate, GEN Africa, have been developing a transformative model for regeneration. GEN uses an integrated, community-led approach to transition communities to resilience and restore their environments.

The Ecovillage Development Program is designed to radically reform current development practices, putting communities, sustainability, and wealth creation at the heart of the development process. Recent studies show that financial support for community-led development is more efficient than conventional, top-down interventions¹. The full and inclusive participation of communities on the ground in the conception and implementation of activities, together with the sharing and transferring of expertise and grounded experience is fundamental to GEN's work.

Communities who want to regenerate their natural environments, preserve cultural heritage, increase social resilience and improve livelihoods become powerful agents of change. The Ecovillage Development Programme brings together local, community owned development, with transformative, region or nation wide change.

HOW?

The Ecovillage Development Programme is adapted to local contexts, but will typically involve:

STEP 1: INVITING AND PARTICIPATING – A baseline study for a particular region or country is conducted, identifying existing legal and regulatory frameworks, outlining measures governments could take for an 'enabling' environment' and mapping existing ecovillage projects and supportive organisations. During a GEN Consultancy visit, inspirational ecovillage solutions from around the world are shared, showing how ecovillage is a process, not an outcome. Communities decide whether they wish to participate in the Ecovillage programme.

STEP 2: PLANNING AND INTEGRATING – A Process of Regenerative Ecovillage Design is facilitated in each of the Pilot Villages, allowing local stakeholders to identify assets, needs and leverage points for their community. In a participatory process, the community formulates Phase 1 of their Ecovillage Development Plan, building on and adding to a recognised palette of best practice solutions in all four dimensions of sustainability: ecology, economy, the social and culture, integrated into a whole systems design.

STEP 3: TRAINING AND IMPLEMENTING – Demand-driven trainings might be required during the implementation of Phase 1 of the Ecovillage Development Plan. While some of the technologies used may be complex, there is a focus on low tech solutions that can be installed, repaired and maintained by local teams, thus providing local ownership, employment and long term sustainability. GEN works in close partnerships with relevant local NGO and CSO networks so that skills and resources can be shared in a synergetic and systemic way.

STEP 4: EVALUATING AND CELEBRATING – The end of year 1 is marked by monitoring and evaluating the outcomes and impact of Ecovillage Development in each of the pilot communities. An Ecovillage Open Day or Conference is organised where wins, inspiration and change stories are celebrated and feedback is gathered. Typically, a next round of communities will be inspired by the positive changes and gain interest to become involved, as evidenced in countries like Senegal, Tanzania and the Gambia.

STEP 5: REFINING AND SCALING – The first circle of Ecovillages refine and expand their Ecovillage Development Plan - Phase 2. As skills, capacities and income within the communities grow, more opportunities become available. Now that these Ecovillages are up and running and regenerative Ecovillage development is well underway, the next round of communities who wish to be part of the programme are identified and the process starts again.

1. https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/Final_LEAPP_Briefing_Paper.pdf