

Our strategic plan enables CLASS to make sure that we are achieving change in partnership with the communities we work with and meeting our charitable objectives as laid out in our constitution. This strategic plan sets out how we will move from our present position to the one we aspire to reach by 2023.

Our mission: CLASS enables women-led savings groups to work together, and with other stakeholders, to achieve community-led change that reduces urban poverty and inequality.

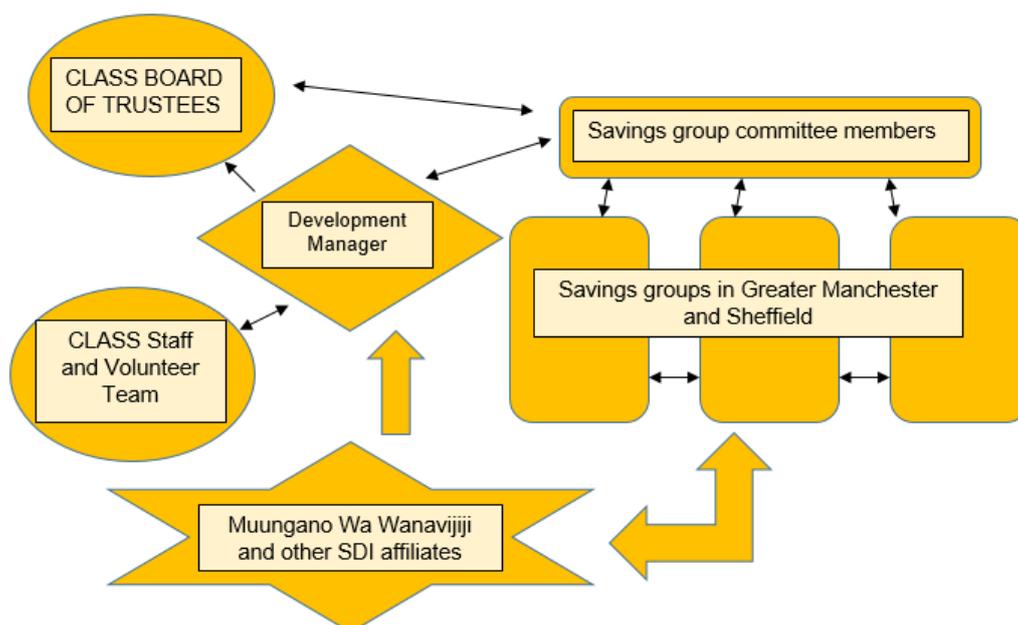
Our alliance: the partnerships that define what we do

The independent organisations which make up the savings network are constituted women-led savings groups. Savings groups choose to network together to form the Community Savers network.

Savings group committee members make up the leadership of the Community Savers network and interact regularly with CLASS staff and trustees, acting together to achieve community-led change that leads to poverty reduction.

CLASS and the Community Savers network have been inspired by, and continue to be mentored by, Muungano Wa Wanavijiji and other national affiliates from the Shack/Slum Dwellers International movement.

CLASS and the Community Savers network are majority women-led.



Our ethos and values: why we believe our work matters

- ❖ Poverty is perpetuated by unequal economic, social and political power relations and negative social stereotyping.
- ❖ Low-income women are disproportionately affected by poverty. They understand how people experience and negotiate poverty and the social dynamics of their community but experience intersecting inequalities that constrain voice and leadership potential.
- ❖ When people work collectively through women-led community associations which are actively involved in developing solutions to poverty, these solutions are more effective because they address the needs of low-income women in their approaches and impacts.
- ❖ We know this from the experiences of savings-based movements like Shack/Slum Dwellers International focused on women's leadership, co-production and voice.
- ❖ Women should be supported to play lead roles in developing collective solutions for increased wellbeing and poverty reduction.
- ❖ To reduce urban poverty, processes of co-production are required which recognise community expertise and promote professional-community partnerships involving the sharing of power and resources.
- ❖ Many traditional forms of collective action in the UK have become fragmented in response to wider political, economic and social change.
- ❖ Savings-based organising approaches like SDI's have great potential for rebuilding collective identity among low-income communities and catalysing women-led and coproduced solutions that work.

Our goals: what we want to be different about the world

- **Women's leadership:** more low-income women from a diversity of backgrounds are in community leadership positions developing local initiatives and guiding interventions by other stakeholders
- **Stronger community associations:** more people (particularly women) are working together within place-based and resident-led associations which have more ambitious agendas that are successfully realised
- **Financial resilience:** People (particularly women) in low-income areas have more savings, less debt and are better able to cope with set-backs
- **Wellbeing:** People (particularly women) living in low-income areas have improved mental and physical health
- **Family wellbeing:** Families have more stability with less children taken into care; women have the confidence to leave abusive relationships
- **Positive communications:** There is less class- and place-based discrimination against people living in lower-income areas
- **Co-production and voice:** Communities are making gender-sensitive plans for their areas in partnership with local government and other stakeholders which are then implemented; public interventions in neighbourhoods are more effective; there is less inequality in access to resources, services and infrastructure across different neighbourhoods.

Our strategic priorities 2021 - 2023

- 1. Strengthen and expand the women-led savings network in Greater Manchester and Sheffield with a focus on equality, diversity and inclusion.**
- 2. Enable savings groups to share ideas and work in partnership with others to develop gender-sensitive initiatives that reduce poverty and inequality.**
- 3. Strengthen the network's relationship with Muungano Wa Wanavijiji and SDI in support of a stronger movement and global grassroots solidarity**
- 4. Raise the profile of the savings movement among funders, policy makers and practitioners in England including through effective monitoring and evaluation, documentation and reporting, and communications.**
- 5. Acquire the financial and human resources that we need to progress these strategic priorities**

Our objectives: how we will put our priorities into practice

SP1. Strengthen and expand the women-led savings network in Greater Manchester and Sheffield with a focus on equality, diversity and inclusion.

- Strengthen the skills and knowledge base of the women-led committees in relation to running and managing their savings group and increasing reach and inclusiveness
- Build the 'network leadership' capacity of committee members ensuring groups are supporting each other, holding each other accountable, holding CLASS accountable and setting the strategic direction of the movement
- Mobilise at least two new savings groups each year in new areas of Greater Manchester and Sheffield (including among BAME communities or in neighbourhoods with a high proportion of BAME residents)

SP2. Enable savings groups to share ideas and work in partnership with others to develop initiatives that reduce poverty and inequality

- Enable savings groups and community associations in GM and Sheffield to learn from each other's experiences and practices, and community action elsewhere, and increase understanding about issues of concern
- Work in partnership with at least two savings groups per year to develop small-scale gender-sensitive precedent-setting projects grounded in community data gathering and co-production

SP3. Strengthen the network's relationship with Muungano Wa Wanavijiji and SDI in support of a stronger movement and global grassroots solidarity

- Increase opportunities for savings group leaders in England to interact with savings group and national leaders in Kenya
- Increase opportunities for CLASS staff and trustees to learn from other support agencies in the SDI network

SP4. Raise the profile of the savings movement among funders, policymakers and practitioners, including through effective monitoring and evaluation, documentation and reporting, and communications.

- Develop and refine a monitoring and evaluation framework that supports CLASS and Savings Network learning while also supporting the servicing of funder requirements
- Raise the profile of the savings movement with multiple stakeholders through effective documentation and communications

SP5. Acquire the financial and human resources that we need to progress these strategic priorities

- Build a profile of effective grant management and impact, incrementally increase size and scope of applications over 18 months from Feb 2021- July 2022, diversify funding sources
- Attract a substantial three year grant (including Development Manager salary and running costs) from a charitable trust or foundation by the end of 2021.
- Develop a strong and diverse board with a relevant range of knowledge skills and experience

Agreed by CLASS trustees on: 2 February 2021

Agreed by Community Savers network on: 17 March 2021