Local Voices Global Change

Connecting civil society across drylands to ground global policy action in local knowledge





drynet Both ENDS IUCN gef UNCCD CSO Panel United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

Civil Society for Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality





What is CS4LDN?

The Strengthening Civil Society Role in Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (**CS4LDN**) project is a Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded initiative implemented by IUCN in partnership with Drynet, Both ENDS and Indigo.

Launched at UNCCD COP16 in 2024, CS4LDN is a 36-month project that strengthens civil society organisations (CSOs), Indigenous Peoples and local communities worldwide to influence and implement Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) policies and investments. Through advocacy, knowledge exchange, training and enhanced access to finance, it connects local initiatives with international processes. CS4LDN promotes a more inclusive and effective approach to promoting sustainable land use.





CS4LDN Achievements

Emerging Leaders Connected

The CS4LDN mentorship programme paired 19 emerging leaders (12 women and 7 men) from 19 different countries with experienced and knowledgeable Drynet members. This has enabled them engage in to design their own professional development pathways, built confidence and created opportunities to international policy debates so as to advance Land Degradation Neutrality in collaboration with their peers.

CSOs Engaged and Educated

CS4LDN has delivered two **webinar series** reaching over 500 participants around the globe. The first series equips CSOs with enhanced knowledge and tools to advance LDN, while the second focuses on advocacy and communication skills. Together, they have strengthened participants' ability to engage effectively with stakeholders, policymakers, and international processes.

Democratic Voices Enhanced

The CS4LDN project supports the work of the democratically-elected UNCCD CSO Panel to inform, represent and provide leadership to the global UNCCD CSO community. The Panel facilitates the elaboration of consensual positions amongst CSO Observers at UNCCD negotiations.

Drynet Visibility Enhanced

CS4LDN has enabled Drynet to renew its online presence to better serve the global CSO community addressing dryland opportunities and challenges: a refreshed visual identity, an updated **website**, a relaunched **newsletter**, and a **LinkedIn page**. This has provided access to valued resources and increased the visibility and engagement of the network and its members across digital platforms.

Finance Opportunities Unlocked

Based on survey evidence, CS4LDN published the **Unlocking Finance for Land Degradation Neutrality guide**, a practical resource addressing the finance gap facing CSOs, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities working on land restoration and LDN. An annual webinar series, regional workshops and donor roundtables support CSOs in accessing funding opportunities for LDN.

Photo: Cenesta



About Drynet

Drynet was founded in 2007 and has since grown into a well-recognised global network of 26 CSOs dedicated to promoting sustainable land use and livelihoods in the drylands. Its members advocate for the interests of dryland communities to create long-term change and transitions. With a strong presence in global forums such as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), it has ensured that the realities, practices and knowledge of local communities inform and shape action and policies at the international level. **dry-net.org**

About IUCN

Created in 1948, the International Union for Conservation of Nature is the world's largest and most diverse environmental network, harnessing the knowledge, resources and reach of more than 1,400 Member organisations and 17,000 experts. This diversity and expertise makes IUCN the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it. **iucn.org**





Photo: Luli Sosa Benintende

About Both ENDS

An international environmental Justice NGO, based in the Netherlands, founded in 1986, that works across global and local levels to promote equitable environmental governance, sustainable livelihoods, and inclusive decision-making. Partnering with civil society organisations in resource-rich regions worldwide, particularly in the Global South, Both ENDS supports grassroots initiatives advocating for communities' and women's rights to land, water, and natural resources. By facilitating partnerships, research, capacity building and policy dialogue, it strengthens civil society's voice and agency in creating fair and sustainable environmental solutions. **bothends.org**

About Indigo

Indigo is a South African NGO based in the arid Northern Cape Province. Founded in 2000, Indigo works with local small scale farmers and youth to support adaptation to climate change, conservation of the unique biodiversity of the area and advancing LDN. Indigo links the local realities and processes to global dialogue and policy in collaboration with its network partners. Indigo currently hosts the Secretariat of the Drynet network. **indigo-dc.org**