Human Rights Based Approaches and Citizen-Led, Asset-Based and Community-Driven Development
Discussion paper

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1. Introduction and Rationale

Citizen-led, asset-based, and community-driven development (CLABCD) is at the core of the Coady Institute's philosophy. Human rights and human rights-based approaches (HRBAs) also underpin much of the Institute's work. As early as 2004, a gap was identified in terms of articulating human rights-based approaches (HRBAs) with the Institute's areas of focus (Pettit, 2004). While the two approaches are combined in a number of ways within Coady's existing programs, there has been no systematic, Institute-wide attempt to articulate the linkages between them. Doing so could contribute to developing greater synergies between different areas of the Institute, keeping in mind some of the tensions inherent in exploring these questions across the organization and its constituencies.

Part of the Institute's *Innovations* series, this paper aims to build on previous work done around similar questions, for example, political, economic, vertical and horizontal citizenship and agency. This knowledge-building process will engage Coady staff members, partners, graduates, and other practitioners in an exploration of these approaches, and how they connect or do not. To this end, the paper provides:

- a general overview of both approaches;

- a discussion of potential linkages between them, with reference to analytical frameworks and critiques that may shed additional light on these connections; and

- questions for further reflection.

The paper draws from perspectives and materials produced by the Coady Institute—particularly in the "Asset-Based and Citizen-Led Development" (ABCD) area—combined with other secondary sources. It has served as a platform for raising questions and generating discussion for further exploration during a three-hour workshop with Coady staff on September 5, 2017. Staff input, as well as additional external contributions gathered at two practitioner gatherings on HRBAs and HRE (November–December 2017) and ABCD (February 2018) respectively, will feed into the development of a final original thought piece.

2. Concepts, Approaches, and Principles

This section outlines basic definitions and/or interpretations of HRBAs and CLABCD approaches and their underlying principles, with specific reference to participatory approaches such as ABCD as one expression of CLABCD. Given the vast body of work in these two fields and varied interpretations, it is not intended to provide a thorough overview of their respective literatures. Rather, it aims to provide a basis on which to explore each approach in conversation and to unpack how the two interact.

2.1.   What are HRBAs?

The United Nations defines a human rights-based approach as:

> a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to analyse inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress (UN HRBA Portal).

In other words, the approach:

> integrates the norms, principles, standards and goals of the international human rights system into the plans and processes of development. It is characterized by methods and activities that link the human rights system and its inherent notion of power and struggle with development. [It recognizes] poverty as injustice and includes marginalisation, discrimination, and exploitation as central causes of poverty. In [HRBA], poverty is never simply the fault of the individual, nor can its solution be purely personal. However, [HRBA] also refuses simply to place the burden of poverty and injustice on abstract notions such as society or globalisation. Human rights claims always have a corresponding duty-bearer. A central dynamic of [HRBA] is thus about identifying root causes of poverty, empowering rights-holders to claim their rights and enabling duty-bearers to meet their obligations. In this way, [HRBA] calls attention to a number of central features of poverty and development. (Boesen & Martin, 2007, p. 9)

The following principles often guide how HRBAs are operationalized and how development projects and programs are designed and implemented. HRBA principles are drawn from the international human rights framework and have been presented or categorized in a number of ways (see, for example, Boesen & Martin, 2007; UNFPA, 2010; UN HRBA Portal). For example:

- **Universality:** *'Human rights are inalienable, in that they cannot be taken away from someone or voluntarily given up.'*
    - The universality principle is what distinguishes human rights from other acquired rights such as citizenship rights and contractual rights.

- **Non-Discrimination and Equality:** *'Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.'*
    - Human rights apply to everyone everywhere and under any circumstance.

- **Indivisibility**: *'Rights are indivisible and should be taken in a holistic way.'*
    - No one right is more important than another. For instance, we cannot negotiate with one group to get some rights and let go of other rights. Using RBA for development, we might set priorities to fulfil rights, but it does not mean that we let go of other rights.

- **Interdependence and Interrelatedness** *'All human rights are closely interrelated and interdependent and affect one another.'*

  o The right to education affects the right to work and the right to good health, and vice versa. This principle helps us to link the root causes of problems to the symptoms of the problems.

- **Participation**: *'Participation is an essential right.'*

  o This is stated in the first article of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development. It means that everyone is entitled to freely fully contribute to, participate in and enjoy political, economic, social, and cultural development of their communities. The right to participate needs to be protected and guaranteed by the state and other entities.

- **The Rule of Law:**

  o Rights must be protected by both strong legislations, as well as an independent judicial system to ensure the law is fair and is applied to all people.

- **Accountability:**

  o This principle is another key one for human rights. The whole idea about rights is that they must be delivered. In other words, there is an obligation to give these rights to their right holders. All people have rights and are called right holders. The people or entities who are obliged to deliver and ensure these rights are called duty bearers.

  o We can think of anyone as a **right holder,** as well as a **duty bearer**. However most of the time duty bearers are the governments and other bodies of state (hereafter referred to as the State). The rights-based approach also recognizes that other non-state parties could be duty bearers.

  o Accountability is achieved by having the State as the principal duty bearer do the following:

    ▪ Accept responsibility for the impact it has on people's lives;

    ▪ Co-operate by providing information, undertaking transparent processes and hearing people's views;

    ▪ Respond adequately to those views

  o This last principle, accountability, is a central piece in the rights-based approach as a framework for social justice advocacy. The accountability principle has contributed the biggest part in helping development workers to establish their involvement in politics as a legitimate activity, engaging with citizen groups in the political process.[1]

These principles have also been boiled down to the following key elements of a HRBA (see, for example, Boesen & Martin, 2007; Equitas, CCIC & Coady, 2014; Russell & Smeaton, n.d.). **Table 1** describes each element and provides sample questions to guide the implementation of an HRBA.

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[1] This list of principles was adapted from Norris, E. (n.d.). Introduction to the Rights-Based Approach. Unpublished manuscript. Retrieved from https://docplayer.net/19033857-Introduction-to-the-rights-based-approach.html

Table 1. Elements of HRBA[2]

Elements of HRBA	Questions to address (examples)
Direct links to human rights The goal of HRBA work is to use human rights standards as the foundation for all development work in all sectors and in all phases of programming, from planning to implementation, with the goal of promoting human rights and human dignity for all.	• What human rights are involved? • What are the applicable human rights standards, instruments, and mechanisms (national, regional, international)?
Participation HRBA creates channels for the participation of a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including poor and disadvantaged people, minorities, Indigenous peoples, women, children, and youth. HRBA promotes active, meaningful, and continuous voluntary participation; it stresses that developing capacities for participation is an important result in itself.	• Who should participate? • How should they participate? • In what decisions?
Accountability HRBA in programming demands that duty-bearers be identified and held accountable for the violation or neglect of human rights. In this sense, one of the fundamental contributions of the HRBA is the emphasis it places on challenging the power imbalance between duty-bearers and rights-holders	• Who is accountable? And to whom? How? • Who are the rights-holders and duty-bearers?
Non-discrimination HRBA gives particular attention to non-discrimination, equality, equity, and marginalized groups. A HRBA requires that the question of who is marginalized be answered locally. From this perspective, people are not seen as beneficiaries but as rights-holders.	• Who are the marginalized and vulnerable? • Who should be included? • How should they be included?
Empowerment HRBA aims to give rights-holders the capacity and the power to claim their human rights and hold duty-bearers accountable. (UNDP 2005).	• Who should become empowered? How?

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[2] Adapted from Equitas, CCIC & Coady International Institute. (2014). *Integrating HRBA and Equitable Partnerships into Development Programming: Operationalizing the Istanbul Principles.*

One way to recall these key elements is the acronym **PANEL.**

- **P**articipation

- **A**ccountability

- **N**on-discrimination and equality (equity and attention to vulnerable groups)

- **E**mpowerment

- **L**inkage to rights (inalienability, indivisibility and interdependence of human rights)

2.2.   What is CLABCD?

Over the years, the Coady Institute has articulated various ideas behind the concepts of "citizen-led," "asset-based," and "community-driven." In Coady's Diploma in Development Leadership course calendar, for example, an overarching description of community-driven development is as follows:

> Drawing on the principles of the Antigonish Movement, the Coady Institute works towards social and economic justice by strengthening the collective power of the disadvantaged and by drawing on the strengths of the larger community of which they are a part. Community-driven development is grounded in the belief that the common good is best served by opportunities for all to live well and responsibly, within the bounds of environmental sustainability. Fundamental to a community-driven approach are people who organize for change in their own communities and societies.
>
> For the Coady Institute, a program of action for community-driven development is, therefore, one that:
>
> - employs community-based adult education techniques to address the economic and social conditions of people's lives and enables them to mobilize their assets;
>
> - initiates and strengthens the various institutional forms of people organizing for change, so that people who have been marginalized can effectively control and manage their own livelihoods, and participate in the decisions that affect their lives;
>
> - links local initiatives to regional, national, and global institutions and networks that further those interests; and
>
> - leads to a restructuring of economic, social, and political systems that prejudice those interests at local, national, and global levels. (Coady International Institute, 2017, p. 6)

Below, we will explore the way in which CLABCD is articulated through the Institute's asset-based and citizen-led development (ABCD) work, recognizing that this is only one expression among many across the Institute.

2.3.   What is ABCD?

Asset-Based Community-Driven Development (ABCD) was originally coined by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) of the ABCD Institute at Northwestern University in Chicago as an alternative or critique to needs-based or problem-focused approaches to development. The Coady Institute has since put particular emphasis on the role of citizens, not only communities, acting out of a sense of civic duty in development processes. Even if people are not citizens in the formal sense, and even if they have few of the benefits and entitlements of formal citizenship, they are acting with others for others in order to build a better community. The Coady Institute often calls community-driven development "citizen-led" development for this reason.

The principles and practices associated with ABCD have been taken up by many local and international organizations across sectors including economic transformation, health, reclaiming Indigenous knowledge, working with people with disabilities, youth, and neighborhood revitalization. Kretzmann and McKnight argued that over time, needs-based and problem-focused approaches, despite the best of intentions, can result in community members internalizing this view of themselves and their communities. Such negative self-perception can lead to a sense of apathy and hopelessness and belief that external institutions—which include NGOs, government departments and the private sector—are largely responsible addressing these problems. This (over)reliance on institutions often undermines or replaces the informal social networks and the kinds of mutual assistance that in the past have helped communities meet opportunity or overcome challenges organically in the absence of outside institutions.

Further, the needs that are projected by community members are often categorized into the silos that are consistent with sector-specific institutions such as health, economic development, or education. These silos ignore the integrated and multi-faceted ways that livelihoods and well-being are composed, and to community members being treated as "clients" or "beneficiaries" and not citizens as agents of their own development entitled to rights but also with civic responsibilities.

Projects and programs of such siloed institutions are, therefore, often unsustainable and unresponsive to local realities and priorities. These unintended consequences of needs-based or problem-focused approaches have been well-documented in the literature (Bergdall, 2003; Burkett, 2011; Cameron & Gibson, 2001; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2017; Mathie et al., 2017; McKnight, 2005; O'Leary, 2007; Russell, 2009; Wilkinson-Maposa, 2009; Wilkinson-Maposa, Fowler, Oliver-Evans, & Mulenga, 2005).

These practitioners and academics argue for a new approach to engaging with communities. By using existing capacities and strengths of communities (social, natural, cultural, financial, physical, human, etc.) as the starting point, the approach acknowledges the contributions that have often gone overlooked or undervalued by development actors (Ashford & Patkar, 2001; Elliott, 1999) and builds on experiences demonstrating the responsibilities of citizenship, in particular. While not ignoring that needs and problems exist, the approach draws on positive psychology by identifying core community strengths and assets that explain what works and by exploring how to build on these for further action (Seligman, 2002, 2004). The role of the outside institution—whether a government agency or NGO—is thus one of a facilitator and responsive supporter or investor in citizen-led activity, as opposed to the instigator or the driver (Bergdall, 2013).

By highlighting the importance of integrating a variety of assets or ''capitals" to overcome vulnerability and shocks, as well as take advantage of opportunities, an ABCD process has also been used to operationalize the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA), originally articulated by Conway and Chambers (1992). Of all of the capitals articulated in this framework (human, social, financial, natural, and physical), the most significant for an ABCD approach is social capital as it is the relationships, networks, and associations between people that provide access to other types of assets (Bebbington, 1999; Krishna, 2002; Putnam, 1993, 2000; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). These assets do not only improve material well-being, but are intrinsic to a person's identity and provide the capability, control, motivation, and power to meaningfully act, engage and contribute as well as to challenge the structural causes of poverty (Bebbington, 1999; Sen, 1989, 1993).

This is not to say there is no role for outside institutions. The rights and entitlements to government services are important assets, and institutions that provide these services are, therefore, important players in community development—and in many cases, communities have to mobilise to hold these institutions to account. Also important, however, is the role of outside institutions, including local government, to respond to community-driven initiative in ways that acknowledge and encourage the agency of local groups organizing for social and economic purposes. In other words, local community organizing goes hand-in-hand with institutional responsiveness. It is not "either/or,"; it is "both/and."

The role of outside institutions in stimulating community-driven development, therefore, often requires a change from focusing on rigid, predetermined outcomes that coincide with their institutional mandate to one that responds to community-level priorities. These cannot necessarily be known at the outset, but when institutions respond rather than direct, there is a shift in power from traditional development institutions to citizens and their communities.

While there is no blueprint for introducing an ABCD approach, in the ABCD certificate course at the Coady Institute, facilitators introduce a number of practical popular education tools and methods that have been adapted from Participatory Rural Appraisal (Chambers, 1997). These methods often accompany an ABCD approach to help identify and mobilize various types of assets (Mathie et al., 2017). These include appreciative interviewing and storytelling, mapping associations, building capacity inventories, modelling the "Leaky Bucket" (Cunningham, 2011), and simple action planning for collective actions that groups of people can take with their own resources initially, before moving on to more ambitious activities over time with the support of outside institutions.

The course also draws on "positive deviants" (Tufts University, 2010); that is, exceptional communities that have managed to drive their own development despite living in similarly disadvantaged situations as other communities that have not been able to move forward. Research into such positive deviants (Mathie & Cunningham, 2008) shows the importance of:

- starting small and with locally available resources;

- social and technical innovation or adaptation;

- dispersed local leadership;

- people who can straddle the gap between associations and institutions and between generations of people;

- leadership that can appeal to community members' pride, sense of civic duty, or responsibility towards others or future generations;

- leadership that can keep people focused on opportunities and not only on problems and needs;

- relationships with outside institutions that are able to connect community groups to multiple supporters (e.g., "gateway" organizations rather than "gatekeepers"); and

- outside institutions being willing to "responsively invest" in community-driven development as opposed to/as well as to provide their own services and programs. (pp. 9–10)

In summary, an ABCD approach is a set of principles, or "a way of seeing" people, communities, and organizations. In particular, it focuses on building and nurturing the more "horizontal" (citizen-to-citizen) responsibilities of active citizenship, often, though not exclusively, around livelihood activities. The approach also focuses on valuing the formal and informal ways that people organize together to create meaningful change on their own terms starting with their own resources.

3. Linkages and Differences Between Approaches

This section introduces several analytical frameworks to stimulate thinking about the linkages and differences between ABCD and HRBAs. We acknowledge that these frameworks can be binary, simplistic, or reductionist. They can put ideas, approaches (and people?) into "boxes" when, in reality, these approaches are applied differently, and often in conjunction, depending on the context. We present them here, along with quotations—in which we highlight certain points in bold text—from authors who have begun to articulate these connections, as a way to stimulate further debate and discussion during the workshops.

3.1. The vertical and horizontal citizenship frame: Justice is achieved through associational and rights-based action

Citizenship is a broad term. For the purpose of this paper, we have drawn on Kabeer (2005) and Mathie (2017), who have associated citizenship with:

> …justice, recognition, self-determinations, and solidarity, and its combined sense of rights and duties. Expanded definitions include ideas of inclusion, empowerment, and agency as well as the idea of citizenship as community member, participating actively in mutually supportive relationships, especially where the state is too distant to be meaningful in people's lives. (p. 79)

As mentioned above, an ABCD approach is somewhat distinct from HRBAs because it often emphasizes horizontal forms of citizenship to improve livelihoods or to provide much-needed infrastructure and services with an emphasis on citizen-to-citizen accountability, at least initially. HRBAs, on the other hand, focus on horizontal forms of organizing (**P**articipation, **N**on-discrimination, and equality) as a means of building up political consciousness or agency (**E**mpowerment) to engage "vertically" with and/or hold governments to account (**A**ccountability) to secure rights and entitlements (**L**ink to rights). One way of visualizing the different dimensions of citizenship is presented in **Table 2** below.

Table 2. Economic, political, vertical and horizontal dimensions of citizenship.[3]

Political	• Civic engagement, civic duty	• Political inclusion, claiming rights and entitlements; • Formal political participation; • Policy influence
Economic	• Solidarity, social economy • Collective/cooperative enterprise (informal and formal) • Mutual support (unpaid)	• Economic inclusion in market economy, • Fair dealings with market actors, legal protection by the state • Federations of unions, cooperatives, SHGs
	Horizontal dimension of citizenship (mutual obligations, reciprocity, "the common good")	**Vertical** dimension of citizenship (claiming rights and entitlements)

This framework can help us think through where the starting points are in terms of how citizens engage and with whom, and where that engagement will eventually lead. Below are some examples of different trajectories.

First, many Coady partners engaging in ABCD work would situate their work as starting in the *horizontal–economic* quadrant above, which places more emphasis on mutual obligations and reciprocity between citizens. For instance, an ABCD graduate from South Africa illustrated how starting with the horizontal dimension (ABCD) can also lead to vertical action. Referring to rising crime rates, deteriorating infrastructure, and rampant corruption among government officials in Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape, she stated:

> If we want to build communities of excellence—when we want to act as true citizens, then we need to ask ourselves the questions: "To what extent are we responsible for the things we complain about?" "What can I do?" And then "How do I get others involved with me to apply the necessary pressure on officials who have roles and responsibilities that are clearly not being exercised?" (personal communication, 2017)

Second, the Coady's work blending ABCD with the People Assessing their Health (PATH) process and Community-Driven Health Impact Assessment (CDHIA) with two organizations in South Africa provides a way for organizations to start to mobilize around livelihood activities, and over time, build up the agency to create a more ambitious and holistic vision that includes the social determinants of health. Community groups have come up with action plans based on local assets as well as advocacy strategies to claim the rights and entitlements to achieve their vision of a healthy community.

In contrast, the following quotation from Action Aid shows that there may be evidence of rights-based action leading communities to adopt a more asset-based stance and approach:

> Action Aid in particular, an organisation which has adopted a rights-based approach to development globally, has demonstrated that this **awareness-raising training about active citizenship, ways to approach officials, and forms of advocacy can be very**

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[3] Adapted from Mathie et al. (2017).

effective in helping communities mobilise necessary resources and take control of their own developmental future. (Ware, 2013, p. 21)

The starting point for HRBAs, however, may not be so clear cut. The emphasis HRBAs place on linking development outcomes to rights aligns with the vertical dimension of citizenship, whether the rights being claimed affect the economic or political sphere. At the same time, the emphasis on ensuring development processes are participatory, inclusive, and empowering tends to bring citizens together around issues of common concern, which aligns with the horizontal dimension—again, in both the political and economic arena, depending on the issue (rights) at hand.

In sum, Table 2 helps us frame the different emphases ABCD and HRBAs place on certain dimensions of citizenship, and, therefore, on rights, entitlements, and responsibilities of citizens. Russell and Smeaton (n.d.) explained how both associational and rights-based work contributes to justice in their own way:

> The strengths of [HRBAs] hardly need to be stated. The challenge, though, lies in translating these laudable ideals into practical action at community level. […] The **ABCD analysis adds some interesting insights with regard to the determinants of justice**, in promoting citizens as producers or co-producers of justice. [It] argues that justice is not created solely by individuals or institutions of jurisprudence, but by communities working in associational ways to actively contribute to its emergence. Yet, **without rights-based values and principles, all practical approaches ring hollow.** (p. 13)

The dimensions of citizenship framework may be a useful lens through which to explore how HRBAs and ABCD differ, particularly in terms of their starting point. It can also show how they connect as practitioners shift focus from citizen-to-citizen to citizen-state accountability and engagement (and vice versa) and shed light on the potential complementarities between the approaches. As Mathie (2017) explained:

> In many societies, as Kabeer (2005) and others have noted, this horizontal citizenship is grounded in relationships in local communities and is much more meaningful and realizable than the often distant relationship with state institutions. It is associated with the idea of "active citizenship" explicit in the practice of asset-based and citizen-led community development (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993; Mathie and Cunningham, 2008). Tied to the notion of civic agency and mutual interdependence, this horizontal form of citizenship complements the citizen-as-rights-bearing-individual in a vertical relation to the state. (p. 79)

3.2.   The accountability equation: ABCD is a less risky 'entry point' for (eventually) claiming rights

Building on the above discussion, the fluidity of approaches becomes obvious. What consists of appropriate starting points and sequencing is of course dependent on a number of contextual factors, including the space that exists for citizens to organize to take action and exert voice, as well as a government's willingness and capacity to respond positively.
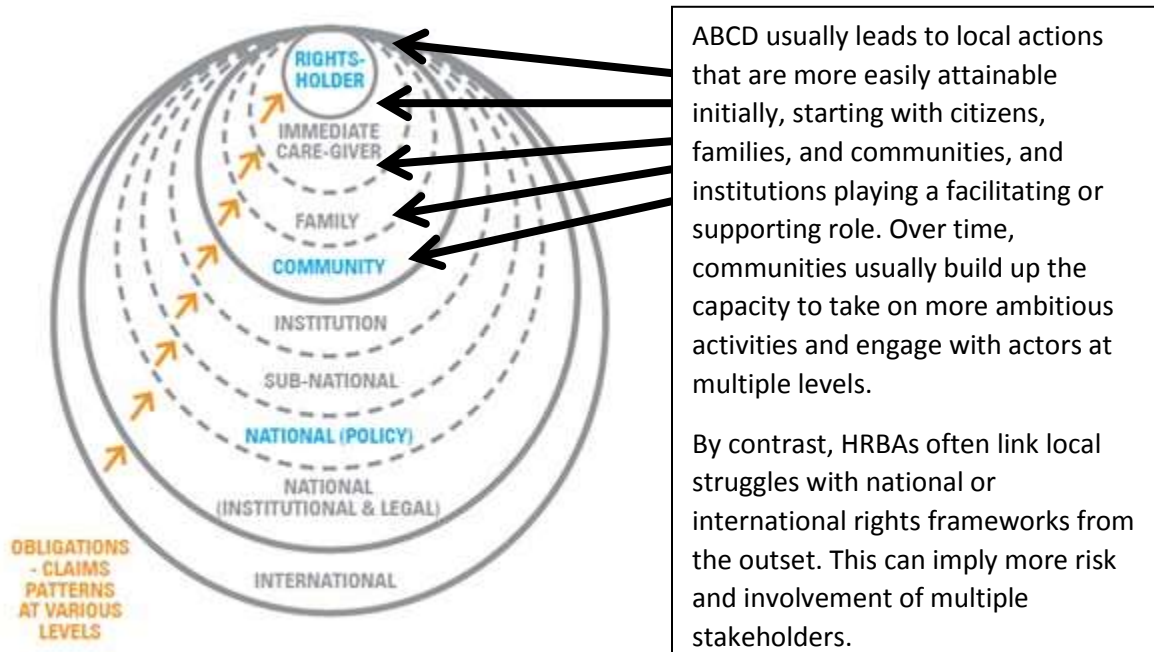
In places where governments cannot or will not respond to community-level action, an ABCD approach has sometimes been criticized for offloading government obligations onto communities. Yet where civic space is restricted and rights-based action and advocacy carry serious risks, ABCD can provide a more

accessible entry point to social change work, as it is arguably less threatening to institutions. In Ethiopia, for instance, ABCD has revived and built upon a strong history of mutual self-help to capture more from the value chains in which farmers are engaged by producing and selling collectively, as well as using collective action to provide community infrastructure. In contrast, in South Africa where civil society is relatively open and human rights discourses are central, citizens are not only organizing through associations to improve livelihoods, provide necessary infrastructure, and to look out for one another, but also to advocate for justice, rights, and entitlements. In both cases, however, it is worth mentioning that ABCD has, in fact, become quite risky or disruptive, particularly for development institutions, because of the shift in power from institutions to communities.

HRBAs acknowledge the state as the ultimate duty-bearer, responsible for "supplying" rights and accountability to citizens, who "demand" accountability. These accountability relationships can be conceptualized as chains, connecting a wide array of actors who have legitimate power and/or authority over, but also obligations and responsibilities towards these actors (see **Figure 1** for an example of accountability chains). The further "up the chain" actions and claims go from rights holders to duty-bearers, the more risk they carry in many contexts. With an emphasis at the associational/community level, ABCD relies less on engaging institutions (at least initially) to create change.

Figure 1 explains how an asset-based approach often starts with community members acting out of a sense of civic duty to one another, enacting the responsibilities of citizenship at a very local level, and moving on to more ambitious actions involving multiple stakeholders over time. This may carry less risk than HRBAs' engagement and claims-making with rights-regimes further up the accountability chain.

Figure 1. Chains of Accountability using an HRBA[4].

ABCD usually leads to local actions that are more easily attainable initially, starting with citizens, families, and communities, and institutions playing a facilitating or supporting role. Over time, communities usually build up the capacity to take on more ambitious activities and engage with actors at multiple levels.

By contrast, HRBAs often link local struggles with national or international rights frameworks from the outset. This can imply more risk and involvement of multiple stakeholders.

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[4] Adapted from UNICEF (2015). What is Human Rights Based Approach?: The pattern of duty-bearers and rights holders.

3.3.   The human rights lens: (Some) rights are assets

Another frame for understanding some of the differences and complementarities between ABCD and HRBAs is to look at rights as assets. From an ABCD perspective, Mathie (2008) stated the importance of "thinking about 'assets' in very broad terms: **rights**, capacities, capabilities, as well as access to natural, physical and financial resources to generate sustainable development" (p. 122).

To nuance this claim, it may be helpful to look at the different categories of human rights, as enshrined in the International Bill of Human Rights (UDHR, 1966; ICCPR, 1966; ICESCR, 1966). **Table 3** below provides examples of different 'categories' of rights.

Table 3. Categories of human rights.

CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
1. Right to life	1. The equal rights of men and women
2. Right to freedom from slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labor	2. Right to work, at work, and to form trade unions
3. Liberty and security	3. Right to social security
4. Freedom of movement	4. Right to food
5. Equality before the law	5. Right to health
6. Freedom of thought, conscience and religion	6. Right to education
7. Freedom of expression and peaceful assembly	7. Right to adequate housing
8. Right to vote and be elected	8. Right to water and sanitation
	9. Right of children to be protected from all forms of exploitation
	10. Right to take part in cultural life

Source: UNICEF (2015).

Using this lens, and based on our work with graduates in different parts of the world, we would situate an ABCD approach as largely leveraging civil and political (CP) rights (e.g., freedom of assembly, expression) to secure (mostly) economic, social, and cultural (ESC) rights. As Kretzmann (personal communication, 2016) put it, an ABCD approach could be a precondition, "necessary though not sufficient," for securing rights in some contexts.

In contrast, because HRBAs draw on the human rights principle of indivisibility, they support actions to claim both CP rights as well as ESC rights. Recognizing that rights should be understood holistically can lead us to this conclusion:

> In reality, the enjoyment of all human rights is interlinked. For example, it is often harder for individuals who cannot read and write to find work, to take part in political activity or to exercise their freedom of expression. Similarly, famines are less likely to occur where individuals can exercise political rights, such as the right to vote. Consequently, when closely scrutinized, categories of rights such as "civil and political rights" or "economic, social and cultural rights" make little sense (OHCHR, 2008, p. 10)

Again, this frame shows how the starting points for both approaches may be different in terms of which rights and entitlements are claimed, how, and to what end.

3.4. The power lens: ABCD builds alternative forms of power, which are necessary to change systems and structures

Power underlies many of the dynamics above, and power analysis (see, for example, Arendt, 1969; Chambers 2006; Cahill, 2008; Gaventa, 2006; Rowlands, 1997; Starhawk, 1988; VeneKlasen & Miller, 2002), which is commonly used in Coady programs, can provide insight into synergies and tensions between approaches.

Although ABCD usually does not initially address "power over" (structural and root causes of poverty) as directly as HRBAs, the approach seeks to build "power within," "power with," and "power to" in order to ultimately address "power over" in time. In an exploration of three case studies where an ABCD methodology was intentionally applied, Mathie et al. (2017) elaborated further:

> The instances of ABCD discussed in this paper illustrate how ABCD harnesses 'power within' (by reversing internalized powerlessness), 'power with' (by strengthening opportunities for collective action) and 'power to' (by emphasizing and building local capacity for action). These horizontal and associational relations add up to new ways of addressing relations of 'power over' that are often associated with the contexts in which ABCD is being applied. (p. 16)

In earlier work, Mathie (2006) offered another interpretation, stressing the importance of growing "power within":

> What does this have to do with social justice? **Belief in one's own capacity to act inspires the confidence** to bring about change and to seek out opportunity. Confidence in one's capacity to act is **also the basis for people to claim the rights** to which they are entitled by virtue of citizenship, or to exercise influence through the political process. Social justice is therefore achieved through judicious mobilizing of assets. (p. 3)

The above aligns with the element of "empowerment" that is core to HRBAs, whereby citizens develop greater awareness of their rights and a greater political consciousness (power within), often required as the first steps to act (power to), often collectively (power with) to claim their rights and entitlements.

3.5. Livelihoods, assets and agency: ABCD builds capital and leverage to claim rights?

The livelihoods, assets, and agency framework introduced in **Figure 2** below can help explore the dynamics between organized communities and their relationship with the state. It is another way of visualizing how an ABCD approach builds power (of associations) to engage with, or confront, power structures (institutions). It helps illustrate the relationship between communities mobilizing and growing internal assets (social, political, natural, financial, physical, and human) to create change as demonstrated in the left-hand pentagon. Over time, community organizing and asset-building (as indicated by the expanded dotted lines) leads to new forms of agency, confidence, and capacity to leverage financial or other types of responsive external investment and support for community-driven development from government institutions (right-hand pentagon). Similarly, this agency can also be

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used to exert voice to influence government decisions as well as claim the assets (or rights) to which citizens are entitled.

Figure 2. Livelihoods, assets and agency.
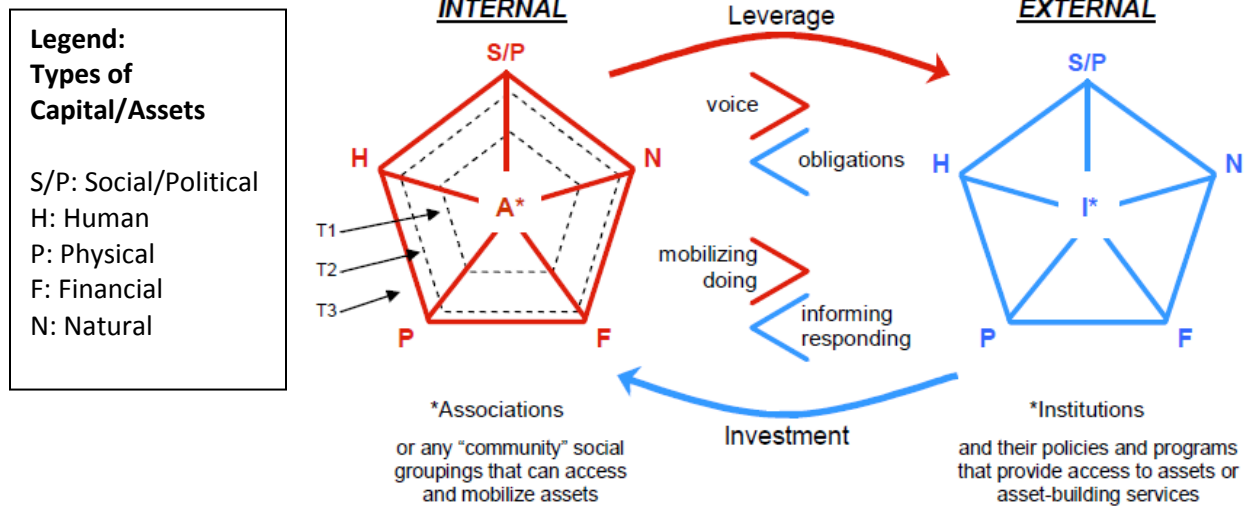
Ware (2013) offered examples of how this framework has played out among several organizations in Myanmar:

> Where support is achieved from government officials, this most often comes from seeking assistance after the community has demonstrated how much they have already achieved on their own (Ferretti, 2010). Communities that could demonstrate a self-reliant approach, that were well organised, and which had a long term plan for their village were more likely to have their requests taken more seriously by officials and other external actors (Löfving, 2011).

Context obviously matters here, and we are not suggesting that this diagram is representative of all situations, but it is a useful framework that illustrates how asset-based and rights-based approaches could be complementary.

3.6.   Alternatives to needs-based approaches: aligned in what they are not*?*

One of the few comparative analyses we have found of these approaches helps illustrate further similarities and differences. Although not an analytical framework per se, **Table 4** compares features of ABCD and HRBAs, both contrasted with needs-based approaches.

Table 4. Comparative table of development approaches.[5]

Approach	Needs- Based Approach	Rights-Based	ABCD
Orientation	External	Internal/external	Internal
Assessment	Needs, problems and what is missing	Assessment of human rights policy and practice	What has worked, community strengths and assets
Relationship between institution and community	Community as passive recipient of aid and programmes	Institution aims to empower and protect rights	Co-producers/ citizens
Development of solutions	Experts, externally driven	Citizens as centre of development process and directors of development	Citizen-driven Internal solutions
Capacity building	External, professional/ institutional	Institutional and citizen	Citizen and associations
Social capital	Not a deliberate strategy	Linking capital between institutions and citizens	Creation of bonding, bridging and linking capital

3.7.   Critiques and limitations

It is important to acknowledge some of the limitations and critiques of each approach and how they may—or may not—address each other's shortcomings. Some of these have been alluded to already and are summarized below.

Referring to ABCD, Burkett (2011), while arguing for the promise of ABCD, also pointed out that it "is not surprising that approaches built on economic discourses (i.e. assets and capital) gain popularity within policy frameworks shaped by neo-liberalism" (p. 573). Mathie et al. (2017) elaborated further on the kinds of questions that might be part of a critique that sees ABCD as an ally of neo-liberalism:

- By focusing on assets that people have, are we ignoring a focus on power and social justice?

- Does a focus on self-reliance mean that governments can do less, and markets do more (MacLeod & Emejulu, 2014)?

- Could ABCD be 'a fundamentally system-maintaining, social-order approach' (DeFilippis et al. 2010; Hyatt, 2011; Veltmeyer, 2011)?

- ABCD may work at the community level, but can it be "scaled up" to have broader impact (personal communication, Kretzmann, 2015)?

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[5] Adapted from Russell and Smeaton (n.d.)*. From Needs to Assets: Charting a Sustainable Path towards Development in Sub-Saharan African Countries*, pp. 13–14.

A number of challenges and limitations have been identified in using HRBAs as well. For instance, while HRBAs seek to engage the most vulnerable groups in society to participate actively in knowing and claiming their rights, there are often economic and livelihood barriers to participation, which an ABCD approach has often been effective at addressing.

Further, Vandenhoule and Gready (2014) highlighted the limited empirical evidence of the social impacts of HRBAs, as well as challenges related to bringing about the organizational changes required to effectively adopt HRBAs. They claimed the normativity of HRBAs (e.g., rights, legal frameworks) may be in tension with the focus on empirical evidence that is at the center of many development approaches. They asked: "How can we ensure that these norms themselves are grounded in struggles on the ground?" (p. 310). Again, community-driven, bottom-up approaches that are contextual to local realities, such as ABCD, may offer part of the answer to this question.

More recently, Roy Grégoire, Campbell, and Doran (2017) discussed the many ways HRBAs have been used, co-opted, and misused:

> At one end of the spectrum is [HRBAs'] potential to question asymmetries in social and political relations and to open new political space for the redefinition of the responsibilities, obligations and rights of the actors concerned, including those of citizens in their relations with each other and with the state. At the other end of the spectrum, however, is the possibility that RBAs amount to little more than a discursive strategy aimed at maintaining the status quo and re-legitimising intervention and conditionality (Matthews 2013), thus consolidating power asymmetries in general and in the field of aid in particular. (p. 170)

Bradshaw's (2006) study of women's movements in Nicaragua serves as an example of the latter, where the "rise of rights has been seen as reflecting the institutionalisation and professionalization of women's movements [and] the rights-based approach has been seen by some as depoliticizing" (p. 1330).

Finally, the human right system's focus on individual rights, as well as the backdrop of colonialism (vs. the right to self-determination) can pose further limitations in terms of the applicability of HRBAs in Indigenous contexts. The concept of Indigenous rights itself is in tension with the notion of a legitimate state as ultimate duty bearer: "[Aboriginal rights] are rights claimed against the colonial state, by virtue of the political and cultural precedence to the colonial state, without which there would be no need for the concept of [Aboriginality]" (Green, as cited in Green, 2014, p. 2). While Indigenous human rights have achieved legitimacy at the UN, they still need to be "recognized, supported and implemented by settler states. Only this can lead to the possibility of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and to decolonization" (Green, 2014, p. 13). Connected to this, we have learned anecdotally from some of our Indigenous graduates from Canada and other parts of the world, that an ABCD approach can resonate with a movement towards decolonization and self-determinations by reclaiming Indigenous assets, history, and tradition through storytelling, a lens of appreciation, and defining a community's own path based on its own context.

4.   Concluding Remarks and Reflection Questions

The intention of this initial paper is to summarize two approaches to development that influence key parts of Coady Education Programs: HRBAs and ABCD (as one expression of CLABCD). We explored potential linkages and areas of inconsistency through several concepts or frameworks. In many cases, we have introduced these under the banner of questions we hope will generate further discussion and exploration. Table 5 offers a summary.

Table 5. Summary of frames.

Frame of Analysis	Question: Is This the Link?
Vertical and horizontal (political and economic) citizenship	Justice is achieved through associational and rights-based action?
Accountability equations and varying risk of rights-based work (context)	ABCD is a less risky "entry point" for (eventually) claiming rights?
Human rights (civil, political, economic, social, and cultural)	(Some) rights are assets?
Power, power analysis, and alternative forms of power	ABCD builds alternative forms of power which necessary to change systems and structures?
Livelihoods, assets, and agency	ABCD builds capital and leverage to claim rights?
Alternatives to needs-based approaches	ABCD and HRBAs are aligned in what they are not?

We have laid out some reflection questions below to consider in preparation for workshop discussions.

5.   Questions for Discussion

You may want to consider the following reflection questions in advance of our discussions:

On the approaches:
- Do these definitions and principles correspond to your understanding of HRBAs and other participatory approaches such as ABCD?
- How do you operationalize these approaches in your work/teaching/research?
- Are there other principles/frames we need to bear in mind?

On links between the approaches:
- How do *you* connect HRBAs with other participatory approaches such as ABCD?
- In your view, what synergies and tensions (compatibility and incompatibility) are there between the approaches?
- What critiques do you have of these approaches? What are the limitations?

And finally:
- What questions are you left with that you would like to explore further?

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