

COMMUNITY ACTION FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (CARD) STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK (2026–27 to 2028–29)

1. Introduction:

Community Action for Rural Development (CARD) is a non-governmental organization committed to improving the quality of life of marginalized communities in Tamil Nadu. With over four decades of experience, CARD works across education, health, sanitation, livelihoods, and environmental development.

This three-year Strategic Framework (2026–2029) outlines CARD's vision, priorities, and implementation approach to achieve sustainable and inclusive rural development.

2. Vision, Mission, and Values:

Vision:

Empowered rural communities with equitable access to education, health, livelihoods, and a sustainable environment.

Mission:

To promote community-driven development through inclusive, participatory, and sustainable interventions that enhance the socio-economic status of marginalized populations.

Core Values:

- Equity and inclusion
- Community participation and ownership
- Transparency and accountability
- Gender equality
- Sustainability and environmental responsibility

3. Strategic Context:

Rural communities continue to face challenges such as:

- Limited access to quality education, especially STEM learning
- Poor health and sanitation facilities
- Unemployment and low-income opportunities
- Environmental degradation and climate vulnerabilities
- Gender disparities and social exclusion

CARD aims to address these issues through integrated, scalable, and community-led approaches.

4. Strategic Goals (2026–2029):

Goal 1: Improve Access to Quality Education.

- Strengthen STEM education in rural schools through labs and experiential learning
- Enhance digital literacy among students and teachers
- Promote girl child education and reduce dropout rates

Goal 2: Enhance Community Health and Sanitation.

- Improve access to preventive and primary healthcare
- Promote hygiene, sanitation, and nutrition awareness
- Strengthen community-based health systems

Goal 3: Strengthen Livelihoods and Economic Development.

- Promote skill development and vocational training
- Support women's self-help groups (SHGs) and micro-enterprises
- Facilitate market linkages and financial inclusion

Goal 4: Promote Environmental Sustainability.

- Implement climate-resilient agricultural practices
- Encourage water conservation and natural resource management
- Promote renewable energy and eco-friendly practices

Goal 5: Strengthen Institutional Capacity and Governance

- Enhance organizational systems, monitoring, and evaluation
- Build staff capacity and leadership
- Strengthen partnerships and resource mobilization

5. Strategic Approaches:

5.1 Community-Centered Approach.

- Active participation of beneficiaries in planning and implementation
- Strengthening local institutions such as village committees and SHGs

5.2 Gender and Social Inclusion.

- Focus on women, children, and marginalized groups
- Gender-sensitive program design and implementation

5.3 Partnerships and Collaboration.

- Collaborate with government departments, donors, and NGOs
- Engage corporate partners under CSR initiatives

5.4 Innovation and Technology.

- Integrate digital tools in education and monitoring
- Promote innovative livelihood models

6. Key Programs and Interventions:

Education.

- Establish STEM labs in rural schools
- Teacher training and capacity building
- Scholarship and mentoring support for students

Health & Sanitation.

- Health camps and mobile health services
- Sanitation infrastructure and behavior change campaigns

Livelihoods.

- Skill training in trades aligned with local market demand
- Entrepreneurship development programs

Environment.

- Tree plantation drives and watershed management
- Climate awareness programs

7. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL):

- Develop a robust results-based monitoring framework
- Conduct periodic evaluations and impact assessments
- Use data-driven decision-making
- Document and share best practices and learnings

8. Resource Mobilization Strategy:

- Diversify funding sources (international donors, CSR, foundations)
- Develop strong grant proposals and donor relationships
- Enhance visibility through communication and reporting

9. Risk Management:

Key risks include:

- Funding constraints
- Policy changes
- Community engagement challenges
- Climate-related risks

Mitigation strategies:

- Diversified funding base
- Strong stakeholder relationships
- Adaptive program design

10. Expected Outcomes:

- Improved learning outcomes and STEM engagement among students
- Enhanced health and sanitation practices in communities
- Increased income levels and livelihood opportunities
- Improved environmental resilience
- Strengthened organizational capacity

11. Conclusion:

This Strategic Framework provides a roadmap for CARD to achieve sustainable and inclusive rural development over the next three years. Through community participation, innovation, and strong partnerships, CARD aims to create lasting impact in rural Tamil Nadu.

Approved in the Executive Committee meeting held on 12.03.2026.

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