

The rise of community philanthropy

Jenny Hodgson and Barry Knight

In this special feature on community philanthropy, we propose a new paradigm called ‘durable development’. This involves shifting power closer to the ground, giving agency to local people and their organizations on the principle that they should have greater control of their own destinies. The growing field of community philanthropy has much to contribute towards such a paradigm shift because it marks a distinct break with many of the conventions – and resulting distortions – of mainstream development. The ‘three-legged stool’ of community philanthropy combines asset development, capacity building and the strengthening of trust between multiple local and external stakeholders. Durable development follows John Ruskin’s maxim – ‘when we build, let us think we build forever’.



Jenny Hodgson is director, Global Fund for Community Foundations. Email jenny@globalfundcf.org



Barry Knight is adviser, Global Fund for Community Foundations. Email barryknight@cranehouse.eu

In 2010, we wrote a report called *Beyond the Poor Cousin? The emergence of community foundations as a new development paradigm*.¹ The essential message was contained within the title. Despite its potential and the emerging evidence base that supported it, community philanthropy was either unseen or ignored by the big players in development aid and institutional philanthropy. Local people mobilizing local resources for development processes was largely regarded as supportive of, but not as essential to, effective development – a niche or boutique feature of the development landscape, but a long way from being a retail, let alone a wholesale staple.

The rise of community philanthropy

How things change. Six years later and community philanthropy no longer languishes in the shadows. As the external environment for civil society and donor funding undergoes dramatic changes, community



philanthropy and its emphasis on local resources and local accountability has assumed a new relevance as a central pillar of a framework for effective development shaped by new principles.

There is now a Global Alliance for Community Philanthropy, a Community Foundation Atlas, chairs in community philanthropy at two universities and recognition among key funders that the aid architecture needs to change. At the same time, the language of ‘localization’ among funders and International NGOs (INGOs) also suggests a growing focus on strategies that shift power closer to people on the receiving end of development.

This progress has been accompanied by the rapid growth of the community philanthropy field globally over the last two decades. The growth has been organic and hence somewhat messy and unorganized, characterized by the nuances of local context and by emerging community philanthropy practice and values. It has also marked a healthy loosening of tight definitional ties to the US community foundation model – signifying a shift from the close relationship of siblings to that of a larger extended family.

Although there is still work to be done to strengthen a common narrative that captures both the essence and diversity of the field, there is a new enthusiasm among different stakeholders to unite in pursuit of a shared purpose. The basis of the common narrative is the ‘three-legged stool’ framework of assets, capacities and trust, as identified by an analysis of data

collected through the Global Fund for Community Foundation's grantmaking. Applying 20 indicators measuring bonding, bridging and linking social capital to GFCF grant partners – which include a mix of community foundations, women's funds, environmental funds, grassroots grantmakers and public foundations – shows that these three factors are of central importance.

This edition of *Alliance* coincides with the Global Summit on Community Philanthropy – an event that marks the coming of age of the field. The meeting will bring together 300 people from over 50 countries, including the community philanthropy field in all its diversity, a range of public and private funders, and others from the broader development space, to consider how we can shift the power and create durable development.

The end of aid?

The context of international aid is shifting. As Danny Sriskandarajah points out in his article, the days of rich Northern countries delivering large amounts of official development assistance (ODA) to poor countries in the global south are numbered.

This may be no bad thing. Only one per cent of official aid goes directly to the global south, with the remainder being passed through northern-based intermediaries. A similar pattern is found among foundations. So, while money flows to the South, power remains vested in the North.

As Jennifer Lentfer points out, such an approach does not work. For decades the money flows from the North have provided resources for development but have ignored, subsumed or done harm to already existing mechanisms for mutual accountability. Projects have come and gone, but have disappointed every time. Hilary Gilbert notes in her article drawing on work in Sinai: '... people the world over are tired of being told what to do by "experts" who don't understand, tired of seeing money poured away.'

It is now clear that the idea of project-based sustainability is an illusion, merely fostering an elite of skilled proposal-writers and supporting an NGO sector that has been hard-wired to exist on a hand-to-mouth basis, with organizations crossing their fingers that the next grant will come in and always at the ready to adapt

their work towards the latest donor interest. This has produced an NGO sector whose orientation is upwards and outwards towards their external donors, leaving them with weak local constituencies. In the meantime, local people who are marginalized stay marginalized. The result is 50 years of failed development projects.

Donors themselves are recognizing the need for change. Some practical examples of changes can be seen in USAID's 'Local Systems Framework' and in the UK's Big Lottery Fund's vision of 'People in the Lead'. In his article, David Jacobstein from USAID says: 'There are many places where staff are experimenting with these ideas and our updated guidance provides a new opportunity for principles related to community philanthropy to be mainstreamed.' The Global Alliance for Community Philanthropy is a group of diverse funders who are trying to get to grips with these issues by deepening their understanding of community philanthropy as a field and asking questions about how external donors can develop programmes and apply resources in ways that foster – rather than undermine – more bottom-up approaches.

Lighting a candle

While donors get their act together, local people are not necessarily sitting on their hands. In her article, Larisa Avrorina describes how in southern Siberia, an area with no big business, no money, low incomes and a faded sense of community, a musical event sparked off collaborations between different organizations and resulted in the formation of a community foundation. 'It's like lighting a candle,' she says.

Similar developments can be found in other contexts. In Latin America, Luz Aquilante describes how the Women's Fund from the South recruits supporters for women's rights work through direct person-to-person outreach on the streets of Argentina. Andrés Thompson describes how community philanthropy is modernizing the Latin American concept of philanthropy and its associations with beneficence, charity and social assistance from the church. In Palestine, Aisha Mansour describes how the Dalia Foundation has inverted the power pyramid in philanthropy by making grants the community wants through a participatory decision-making process with the community: difficult work, but deeply significant in a context where development aid has created a heightened sense of disempowerment and voicelessness among local communities.

Hand pump
borehole
at Terchire
community park
(see Mary Fifield
article on p51).



A new approach

Individually, these examples from Russia, Latin America and Palestine may seem like one-off feel-good stories. Collectively, however, they symbolize a new approach to development, sharing as they do the assumption that all communities possess assets, ideas and a readiness to engage. What tends often to be missing, however, is the 'spark' to make that happen. Similarly, they are all illustrations of what occurs when you choose to reach deep into communities and engage multiple views and voices through conversations, events and small grants to local initiatives. Rather than working through a handful of strong professionally-managed NGOs to deliver programmes – which looks cost-effective on paper – community philanthropy organizations deliberately seek to build up multiple local groups around issues that affect them in a networked way that devolves resources (and so power) to the very local level. Rather than every member of the community having to subscribe to a single overarching vision or objective, this strategy allows community philanthropy organizations to engage with multiple different perspectives and to reach the most marginalized parts of the community, whose voices are often lost. As Wendy Richardson points out, this is a model of shared power described by one grant partner of the Global Fund for Community Foundations: 'We don't work on troubled youth, we work with troubled youth'. Such an approach builds capacity, it develops assets from within a community and – above all – it builds trust between different parts of a community.

Such durable development is in sharp contrast to the project-saturated mindset in which outcomes are measured within finite resources and timeframes and measured in a logframe. It is time for us to rid ourselves of the illusion that three-year projects using

outside resources can unravel complex inequalities and system failure. Addressing such problems requires the patient creativity of people involved in the local systems to build what they want from resources they already have and what else they can muster. External resources must be applied in accord with local people's plans, not according to a blueprint laid down in Washington or London.

Another important dimension of this development relates to the growing trend towards devolution and local self-governance, and the extent to which community philanthropy can be seen as a strategy for facilitating communities to take a more active role in local decision-making, particularly in contexts where local government itself lacks capacity. In Kenya, note Irūngū Houghton and Constant Cap, there are growing calls by public interest campaigners to embrace strategies that involve the mobilization of both public and community resources to tackle systemic causes. The Kenya Community Development Foundation's Pamoja4Change programme, as described by Caesar Ngule and Janet Mawiyoo, views resource mobilization by community-based organizations as a critical part of a process that strengthens communities' ability to make claims on government to deliver services.

It's all about power

Power is the key to durable development. Power matters because efforts to solve a problem only last while people with the problem take responsibility for it.

This is the topic of the Global Summit in Johannesburg. The preparations and follow-up to the summit are as important as the event itself. The purpose of the summit is succinctly described by Hilary Gilbert when she says 'The Global Summit's #ShiftThePower challenges donors to cut through discredited norms, take a deep breath and invest in something better.' In preparing

for the summit, we have identified eight pillars that people suggest for shifting the power (see box).

Developing durable development

So where do we go from here? Well, the first step is to recognize the new paradigm by capitalizing on trends that are already evident and to begin to explore possible opportunities for further development. One important starting point is the emerging field of community philanthropy organizations, diverse but bound by a shared essence, and grounded within their constituencies, which is gradually starting to realize the power of its collective voice.

Another starting point is among those development actors who are starting to look to the principles of community philanthropy as a strategy for strengthening the participation of people in decisions and the allocation of resources around issues that concern them. There is growing realization that local, participatory philanthropy is a critical piece of the new landscape for civil society, because it combines money as well as the dimension of horizontal accountability (see page 52). As civil society globally sees increased restrictions on its ability to operate freely, including an increased criminalization

Rather than a linear silver-bullet approach, a better way forward involves nurturing the ecosystem in which community philanthropy organizations operate.

of activism and an overall reduction of traditional sources of support, it offers new insights and strategies for local constituency building for issues of rights and social justice.

Once we have recognized the importance of this new paradigm, we can then move on to developing it. The question is how? Evidence from developing the field to date suggests that top-down plans and fixed blueprints should be avoided because to do this would itself be inimical to the paradigm.

Rather than a linear silver-bullet approach, a better way forward involves nurturing the ecosystem in which community philanthropy organizations operate. Many such organizations are small and fragile and the appropriate way of developing them is to support their development according to the rules and priorities they set themselves, rather than norms and standards set from outside.

We will now consider how this might work for the three main constituencies involved – the community philanthropy field, funders and international non-governmental organizations.

Community philanthropy field

It is important that community philanthropy organizations feel confident that their day-to-day efforts, which can at times seem messy and challenging, are

EIGHT PILLARS OF COMMUNITY PHILANTHROPY

Participation and mobilizing people People-based development is central to shifting the power

Added value We need to strengthen the link between processes (how development programmes are delivered) and outcomes (what is delivered)

Resources We need to use resources in different ways, test new models and assumptions

Evidence and data We need to build evidence for the work and use data to grow and drive it

Governance. We can enhance the work of other institutions (including public) by demonstrating alternative forms of governance and decision-making

Effective interventions Our methods can bring better results (emergent practice)

Narrative and communications Words and meanings matter and we need new and better descriptions

Architecture and hybridity. Structure matters and we need to encourage new and emerging forms while reforming existing institutions looking to go local



part of a new paradigm that is holistic, organic, and fuelled by the energies of local people. It is also important to feel the power of a networked approach to development, looking for shape and structure without imposing it, and keeping the right balance between tangible and intangible results. For money to translate into good development, it needs other inputs, including trust, confidence, and a sense of agency.

While intuition, values and gut instinct are important in developing the work, it is also important to develop rational systems to deepen the evidence base for it. The field needs to develop better measures of its performance and to answer questions about the development field's obsession with replicability and scalability – perhaps developing evidence-based answers derived from scaled up networks and measures of distributive leadership. Susan Wilkinson Maposa's 'horizontal gauge' offers a new way of thinking about this. It is important to help external donors understand what the field is trying to do and how their support could help.

Donors

Donors need to 'think jazz' – be flexible, willing to improvise and get beyond self-imposed limitations. It is important to take time to understand the community philanthropy field and avoid assuming that donors' own systems and structures should be projected onto local organizations. Bilateral donors need to get beyond their short-term view and accountability mechanisms and widen the development tools they have at their disposal. Perhaps they could take a long hard look at the balance between the need to get significant funds out of the door and the larger development imperatives based on principles of social justice, equity and democracy, and be prepared to retune their strategy. Private philanthropies – both international and domestic – can use the power of their long-term and flexible funding.

For bilateral donors in particular, who say that community philanthropy is new and unfamiliar, taking them beyond their comfort level, they should reflect on their common practice of creating 'pooled funds' or 're-granting intermediaries'. Although these are often called 'foundations' with local boards and other trappings of independence, they are often so only in name: in reality they tend to be mini-versions of the donors that established them, with systems and structures cut and pasted from the mother ship and with little investment in thinking through long-term sustainability and local ownership, which leaves such

organizations vulnerable and fragile when the donor funding comes to an end.


International civil society, including INGOs

There is soul-searching to be done about the business model that has sustained 'development' since the term was first coined in 1949 by President Truman. Fundraising has been a rather one-dimensional tool to secure money in order to do the real work. This is unsustainable. NGOs have been existing in ways that we would never recommend to each other as people, hand-to-mouth, year-to-year, with no strategies for saving and a development environment that rewards spending out every last penny. Are these the NGOs – entirely dependent on external resources and so external power – that local people really want?

It is now imperative that international civil society organizations begin to think in more blended, integrated ways, where community philanthropy and local asset mobilization becomes part of a strategy for local constituency building and community development. In this way the divide between 'donor' and 'beneficiary' can be broken down in favour of the idea of 'co-investment' where different actors bring different strengths and needs to the table in a more reciprocal way. And there are still uncomfortable conversations that need to be had by and within INGOs about their real willingness to give up power.

Conclusion

This brings us straight back to power and the discussion to be held at the Global Summit on Community Philanthropy. Our starting point for the summit is that six years ago, community philanthropy was the proverbial tree that fell in the forest: invisible, unheard because big development was not there to hear it. Now, community philanthropy is turning into an oak with ambitions, to borrow a phrase from the civil rights movement, to 'stand tall'.²

In conclusion, we can think of no better comment than that made by Sean Lowrie in his piece on rethinking humanitarian aid when he comments that the original goal of development aid was not to hold power but to develop people. He says: 'It is time to stop fretting about control and think instead about maximising impact. The first humanitarians sought neither power nor control, but impact. They measured this in lives saved and suffering spared – and now so should we, their successors.' 

1 <http://tinyurl.com/GFCFreport>

2 *Standing Tall* is a poem by James McKenzie about Martin Luther King.

#ShiftThePower: it's about time . . . Hilary Gilbert

I once interviewed a Bedouin man in a small settlement, a long jeep ride from South Sinai's only road. There was a crumbling school but no teachers. No clinic, no doctors. No shop, no work. Almost everyone lived in deep poverty, their needs ignored by the state. 'So, Amm Hussein,' I asked him, 'are there any projects here that are helping people?'

'Oh no', he replied, 'there are no projects here. No-one is helping us.'



Dr Hilary Gilbert is research fellow at the University of Nottingham and chair, South Sinai Foundation. Email hilary.gilbert@nottingham.ac.uk

Yet, in patches of dried-up garden there was the familiar blue sign of the World Food Programme, and its logo was stencilled onto the cement wall of his own house. Evidence of a US-funded programme to stamp out drugs cultivation, and a major EU initiative, the South Sinai Regional Development Programme (SSRDP) were also visible in the area. But as far as Amm Hussein was concerned they brought no benefit to him. Development programmes served their own concerns. The development juggernaut rolled over him, squandering millions but leaving his needs unmet. Top of the list was the need to be recognized, as a citizen and as a human.

There are thousands of similar snapshots in the history of development. The top-down approach of large bi- or multilateral donors, private foundations and the large international NGOs they may partner with, too often sees 'experts' in city offices apply their technical know-how to solving the problems of the poor. External development bodies 'educate' local people on the art of living in environments they have inhabited for centuries. The SSRDP installed foreign-made solar panels in the desert to power hi-tech water pumps. Sadly, it failed to identify funds for the ongoing purchase of imported parts, and neglected to train local people to maintain them. Most now lie idle, while the gardens built at great cost and effort by local people close to the new water-sources have withered and died away. Problems are often framed in terms of community deficiencies, ignoring community knowledge and culture, discounting community assets, and defining problems in technical, rather than political terms. The reluctance of donors to tamper with the political status quo means development interventions are often framed as addressing social issues, leaving power relations and inequality untouched.

Externally-defined, donor-driven interventions grounded in western rationalism assume neat, linear chains of cause and effect – 'If we do *this*, then *that* will happen'. But the social and environmental systems in which development interventions happen are

A Bedouin garden sponsored by the WFP. Project funds bring short-term relief but Bedu need lasting change.



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Abandoned solar panels from a big development project in south Sinai. Local people could not afford imported parts and were not trained to maintain them.

complex. It is reckless to assume that they will behave predictably and are open to interventions that can be replicated or scaled up to fit any number of contexts. Donors and international NGOs adopt complicated 'logframes' (a methodology mainly used for designing, monitoring, and evaluating international development projects) in the hope of generating orderly progress towards goals, and of controlling development outcomes. However, the common traps of prescribing change with inadequate local knowledge, and of measuring only what is simple to measure, mean that projects may record success while making no positive change or even making things worse.

A community philanthropy alternative

What's the alternative? At a workshop run recently by the Global Fund for Community Foundations, one participant commented: 'I knew community philanthropy was an alternative to traditional philanthropy – but I've only just realized it's an alternative to traditional development.' So what characterizes community philanthropy, and why can it deliver successful development in diverse global settings?

Community philanthropy as a recognized movement is a spur of the community foundation 'family tree' rooted in North America. For a century now these varied organizations have built endowed funds

It soon emerged that across the world people had spontaneously created systems for pooling and distributing local resources without ever having heard of a community foundation.

from the pooled gifts of local donors, becoming in the process both locally-embedded institutions and that Holy Grail of community development: a sustainable funding source. Once established, income from their investments traditionally provides funds both for core costs and grantmaking to meet local priorities. Hunger for this sustainability in a time of shrinking public services and grants drove the rapid development of community foundations in the UK and much of Western Europe from the late 1980s. Meanwhile, the urge to strengthen civil society in post-Communist Europe, and in parts of the global south, led to several large donor initiatives to 'seed' community foundations – often with mixed results. It became clear that the North American model could not be rolled out unchanged across multiple settings (in many of which building endowments was an impossible aspiration). More importantly, it soon emerged that across the world people had spontaneously created systems for pooling and distributing local resources without ever having heard of a community foundation. Such grassroots initiatives or community philanthropy organizations (CPOs), sometimes characterized as 'horizontal philanthropy' or 'poor-on-poor philanthropy', are often overlooked by bigger players in the fields both of philanthropy and development, but they occupy a distinct niche in the development ecosystem.

According to the Global Fund for Community Foundations, a CPO must be part of civil society;

#ShiftThePower: it's about time...

organized, independent and amenable to local adaptation. These features are common to many NGOs; but a CPO must also use its own money and assets (either for local redistribution or grantmaking, or to leverage external resources); and its members must take mutual responsibility for building an inclusive and equitable society. It must combine local resources – time, expertise, money and other assets – in the service of inclusive community development.

'Now they do it themselves'

Why should these features enable CPOs to 'do' development better than other agents? Because of the way sustainable change happens. Recent work on change theory suggests that effective development must involve building agency – encouraging people's awareness of their right to take action. Lawrence Mwangi of the Kenya Community Development Foundation says of the Maasai community: 'They have cracked the mindset of "who does development": previously people expected outsiders to do it. Now they do it themselves.' It must involve genuine participation in planning and action; learning and adapting based on experience rather than slavish adherence to pre-set goals. Relationship and network building must be central, permitting collaborations in pursuit of common aims. All these shape CPOs' priorities around what is appropriate in their own local context, and local people buy in to them in the most practical way. Sharing scarce resources with neighbours to achieve common goals is a real act of faith, ensuring legitimacy and accountability that are arguably more real than the accountability conferred by western norms.

But there's the rub. While many CPOs conform to accepted practice, others may be able to work only within local norms and constraints, cutting them off from the support of risk-averse donors. Some donors, it seems, are now giving more consideration to trusting local communities to get things right in their own way, even if risk is involved. In the interests of achieving real change, can other major donors be persuaded to give up 'failsafe' grants in favour of the 'safe-to-fail'?

Joanna Hendricks of South Africa's West Coast Community Foundation has observed: 'Philanthropy happens when people are reminded of their own

Sharing scarce resources with neighbours to achieve common goals is a real act of faith, ensuring legitimacy and accountability that are arguably more real than the accountability conferred by western norms.



Marchers for gender equality in a campaign launched by Tewa as the Nepalese constitution was being debated.

value as human beings.' This is the point where philanthropy and development converge, creating the conditions for people to assume agency, to empower themselves to change their communities for the better. Like Amm Hussein in Sinai, people the world over are tired of bad development, tired of being patronized or ignored, tired of being told what to do by 'experts' who don't understand, tired of seeing money poured away. The Global Summit's #ShiftThePower challenges donors to cut through discredited norms, take a deep breath and invest in something better. @

CASE STUDY

Philanthropy in disaster: work 'twice blest'

Rita Thapa

The disaster relief work we have done following the April 2015 earthquake in Nepal has convinced Tewa and its sister organization Nagarik Aawaz (NA) of the value of altruism in philanthropy. When all is lost, funding is needed but without love and care, the trauma is less likely to be healed. We learned that this work, as Shakespeare's Portia remarks in *The Merchant of Venice*, 'is twice blest'. It benefits both the giver and receiver.

Tewa joined hands with NA for the disaster response work because it meant that the money was pooled. Both organizations worked beyond their capabilities by calling on volunteers, in Tewa's case, and youth 'peace ambassadors' in that of NA. Between them, they

mobilized over 250 people who undertook four or five outreaches a day into the affected rural areas in the first six weeks following the earthquake.

As a pilot initiative, Tewa's volunteers continue working to shadow women's groups and women in the affected districts. This has entailed cleaning rubble, rebuilding, farming, essential housework, and the care of children, elderly, and the ailing. And the double blessing? Not only did our women and communities find it easier to regain some level of normality, but the volunteers reported a great change in themselves – of feeling fulfillment and finding new meaning in their lives.

The most inspiring aspect of doing this work was that everywhere Tewa/NA went during

their outreach, the hospitality of the affected community was undiminished. When asked if they would contribute a small part of the money they received to a disaster relief fund, the answer was a resounding yes! From then on, we made philanthropy in disaster a part of our outreach. Those affected taught us that despite the shock and dislocation they had undergone, altruism remains their core value. When they give, they don't just build community assets and trust, they also feel true happiness.



Rita Thapa is founder of Tewa and Nagarik Aawaz. Email ritathapa.patan@gmail.com

CASE STUDY

Community controlled grant-making at the Dalia Association

Aisha Mansour

I had served at the Dalia Association for about four months when we organized a women's community evaluation meeting to discuss the last round of the women supporting women programme, our largest grantmaking programme.



Aisha Mansour is chief executive of the Dalia Association Palestine. Email aisham@dalia.ps

I met a women's group from the Farkha village who had received a small grant through the programme. The group president explained how they had used the grant money to purchase tables and chairs. *Huh? Why on earth would they buy plastic tables and chairs with the grant funds? What was the community of women*

thinking when they voted for this 'project'?, I thought to myself as I smiled back. But the president went on to explain that previously they had to travel to a nearby village to rent tables and chairs every time they had a large community event. Now, the group rents out its chairs and tables within its own village, and donates them occasionally for community events such as the recent two-week training on developing an eco-village in Farkha. So the simple idea of purchasing chairs and tables enabled the group to ensure a source of income as well as provide a community service. Through the Dalia Association's community programmes, the community identifies the priority or initiative that should receive grant support. We believe in the

community's right to control its resources and its development. Within this framework, community-controlled grants are awarded to resolve issues and priorities identified by the community through an open and transparent democratic voting process. Our community organizers work with the local community to make the process inclusive, ensuring that everyone in the community is aware of an open public meeting and invited to participate. Once the community votes for the organizations and projects to receive the grant funds, a community monitoring committee is established to oversee the implementation of the grant. It is the community's right to hold the grant recipients accountable.

CASE STUDY

Never mind control, think about impact

Sean Lowrie

The 2016 UN World Humanitarian Summit demonstrated a groundswell of voices with a clear message: that power is too far away from the people, and from the local and national first responders who are best placed to meet their needs. These voices came from people affected by disaster and from humanitarians alike.



Sean Lowrie is the director of Start Network. Email sean.lowrie@startnetwork.org

Plan International, Mali. Fingerprinting the list before receiving food assistance.

In our globalized ecosystem, power imbalances and outdated control mechanisms are hindering effective joined-up humanitarian responses everywhere. Why? First, compliance with donor rules and risk management protocols is prohibitively expensive for local NGOs; second, NGOs can lack the capacity to deliver humanitarian aid effectively in increasingly complex environments; and third, donors have limited means to handle the transaction costs

associated with so many local grant recipients. Ultimately, the governments and supra-national institutions that are the main sources of humanitarian funding are nervous about giving up their control.

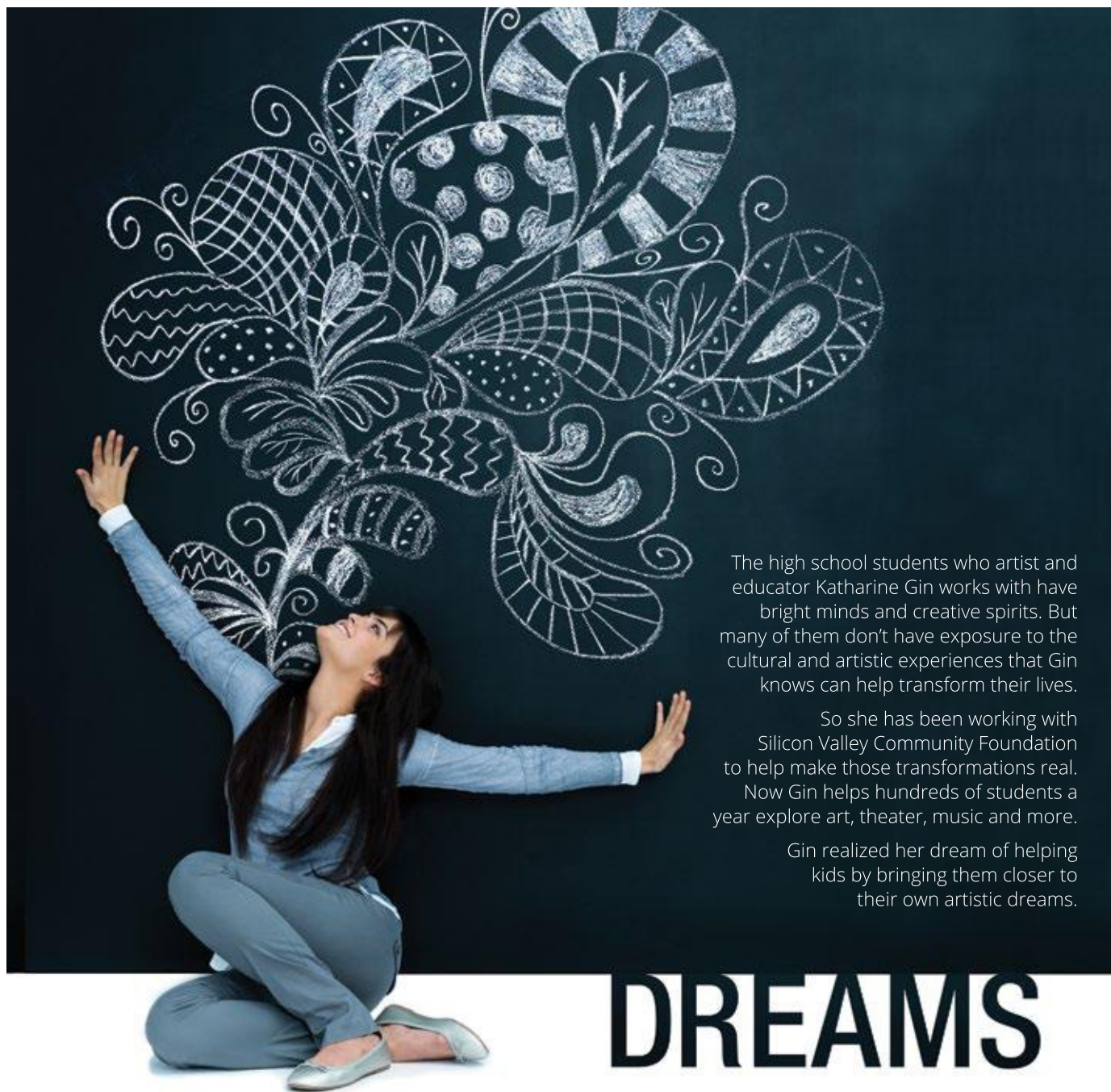
Start Network, through its members – 42 aid agencies across five continents – is tackling the challenge on all three fronts. It is running 13 disaster preparedness projects aimed at testing improvements in humanitarian financing, decision-making, capacities, planning and action across countries in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. This includes redefining terms or finding innovative ways of meeting donor compliance standards, and transforming the bureaucracy of national and international NGOs. The current system creates limited incentives for organizations to work collaboratively and the 13 projects foster connectivity

between civil society and public and private sectors in pursuit of common goals. Being better prepared for resilience to shocks is also crucial to the projects, as are the needs of vulnerable groups. Too often, their power to act has not been recognized and, as a result, they are excluded from crisis response. We are challenging long-held notions of where capacities lie in all parts of humanitarian action.

The Start Fund is another step to shifting power. With support from British, Dutch and Irish governments, this pooled fund rapidly delivers support to people in smaller-scale emergencies. Crucially, all decision-making is delegated: a members' committee decides whether to respond to a crisis alert, at arm's length from the donors. Specific projects are selected in country, by local staff of international NGOs, and by national agencies and their local partners. By the end of 2016, the Start Fund will have created 12 more permanent national-level, standing decision-making groups for this purpose.

All this challenges the status quo – not only for big donors but also for the international NGOs who are accustomed to calling the shots. It is about sharing power more equally, which ultimately means ceding control. This may seem unpalatable to those unused to thinking outside the box of the current outdated system. It is time to stop fretting about control and to think instead about maximizing impact. Early generations of humanitarians sought neither power nor control, but impact. They measured this in lives saved and suffering spared – so should we, their successors.





The high school students who artist and educator Katharine Gin works with have bright minds and creative spirits. But many of them don't have exposure to the cultural and artistic experiences that Gin knows can help transform their lives.

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Gin realized her dream of helping kids by bringing them closer to their own artistic dreams.

DREAMS

From helping those in need to encouraging better science and technology education for students, SVCF's donors – including Katharine Gin – believe in a world of possibilities. In 2015 our donors gave \$394 million nationally, making us the largest community foundation grantmaker. They also awarded \$27 million to charitable organizations internationally.

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Possibilities start here.

Where the horizontal meets the vertical

Caesar Ngule and Janet Mawiyoo

From 1997 to 2010, Kenya enjoyed a significant share of foreign aid with many organizations depending entirely on it for their operation. Following the recession and the subsequent reclassification of Kenya as a low- to middle-income country, aid flows have fallen off. Through these changes, Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF) and similar groups have persisted in promoting a model that seeks to entrench local giving and to support this horizontal form of philanthropy by using the funds it raises to catalyse funding from external sources.



Caesar Ngule is team leader – livelihoods, environment and climate change, KCDF. Email caesar.ngule@kcdf.or.ke



Janet Mawiyoo is chief executive, KCDF. Email janet.mawiyoo@kcdf.or.ke

An illustration of the way this works is our Pamoja4Change programme (P4C) for community-based organizations. The idea of P4C is to promote, through local giving, sustainable community-driven projects which then lead to greater self-reliance in that community. It brings together horizontal and vertical forms of giving. Supported by a matching grant, communities pool their own resources to begin projects and are mentored and assisted with organizational development by KCDF to promote local giving from a range of sources, including low-income individuals, giving from the better-off and local government funds.

One recipient was the Malaa Self Help Group (MSHG). This community's greatest problem is lack of access to clean potable water. Initially, the group had struggled to raise funds locally, but, following a two-day training session by KCDF, MSHG was able to rally support for a borehole project, first among the parents of students at the local secondary school, where the lack of water was particularly felt, then among other local institutions like churches and shopkeepers, and finally among key external stakeholders such as the Water Services Trust Fund and the county government. With KCDF's pledge, 2.9 million Kenyan shillings (US\$28,600) was raised to successfully implement and launch the water project.

'Our fundraising strategy really bore fruit. We also had approached professionals who come from Malaa and are based in Nairobi to support the initiative by either making cash donations or helping to mobilize for more support,' says Charles Munyao, secretary of the water committee and project manager. Community members were excited to see what their local fundraising efforts yielded and even volunteered to give their time and labour in digging trenches and laying pipes.



MSHG's water project: Makueni County governor Prof. Kivutha Kibwana sampling the water.

Through P4C, 167 projects have been implemented since 2012. In total, some 34,697,325 Kenyan shillings (US\$342,126) has been raised locally, with a similar amount leveraged by KCDF through international funders such as Wilden Ganzen of Netherlands (Wild Geese Foundation) who have supported the promotion of horizontal giving, which was used to match the amount raised locally.

Our experience of P4C shows that vertical philanthropy can dovetail with its horizontal forms to spur community-based development. Our belief is that, to ensure a growing mass of community organizations in the future, a deliberate shift in investment is required from philanthropic individuals and institutions in both the global north and south. Special attention should be given to following three core pillars:

- ▶ **Capacity building in local resource mobilization** which is aimed at supporting organizations to acquire more knowledge, skills and a positive attitude to local fundraising, effective communication and marketing skills for their organizations.
- ▶ **Organizational capacity development support** in the areas of leadership and governance programme planning, monitoring and evaluation, and financial management, which will enhance their local credibility.
- ▶ **The capacity of CSOs to influence decision-making** or policies affecting grassroots level organizations, their beneficiaries and their work, with a view to using that influence so that decision-makers and other stakeholders respond to the communities' identified priorities. It's important that communities are helped to see their governments as having the key responsibility in service delivery matters. The community foundations of the future therefore need to be able to broker these kinds of vertical and horizontal relationships if they are to meet community needs effectively. @

Latin American community philanthropy in the vanguard

Andrés Thompson

*In **Democracy in America** Alexis de Tocqueville remarked on ‘the general equality of conditions’ in the United States. He didn’t travel to Latin America. If he had, he would have seen a very different picture: a sub-continent in the aftermath of the struggle for independence from Spanish and Portuguese rule, led by an oligarchic elite and supported by the Church that was laying the basis for one of the most unequal societies on earth.*



Andrés Thompson is executive coordinator, Social Justice Philanthropy Network, Brazil. Email andres.thompson5@gmail.com

With few exceptions, democracy, the rule of law and equality of conditions are still in the making today and experiencing many setbacks. Recently, however, a new force – community philanthropy – has appeared in the region and is helping to spearhead progress towards these ideals.

Historically, Latin American ‘philanthropy’ was the province of the Church or of the very rich, and in either case was more to do with charity than social change. Only in the late 20th century did institutional philanthropy begin to develop, alongside the growth of civil society during the process of democratization after a long period of military rule in several countries. However, because it was dominated by corporations in whose interest it is to maintain the status quo, it, too, sought to palliate, rather than solve social problems.

Enter community foundations or funds. CESE, an ecumenical non-profit in the city of Bahia in Brazil, started with micro-granting to grassroots indigenous groups some 20 years ago, but it was the emergence of the ELAS Fund for Women, the Brazil Fund for Human Rights and Fundo Casa for the Environment, all of them a decade ago, that set the pace for this phenomenon.

Community philanthropy is more than just philanthropy: it is about politics and structural social change; it is about people-led development.

In contrast with corporate philanthropy, these funds are strongly political in the broader sense: they have a more comprehensive approach to sustainable development that questions economic growth as its engine and puts the protection of the environment at the centre; it

stresses freedom and democracy, human rights, social justice, equality and diversity, giving voice to the poor and excluded and providing tools for their empowerment. These funds seek structural social transformations. An example of this kind of work is provided by Instituto Rio, a community foundation created in 2000 for the purpose of supporting and strengthening initiatives that promote social development in the West Zone of Rio de Janeiro. One of its flagship programmes is the Community University of the West Zone. The aim of the ‘university’ is to create a new public space in the region that brings together local networks and organizations, and grassroots groups to share local knowledge and practices and, through it, a number of initiatives have been launched to expand access to human and citizenship rights (sexual and reproductive rights, environment protection, creative economy).

Social justice philanthropy performs its role by giving money differently from mainstream traditional philanthropy in two clear ways: by supporting grassroots organizations, civil society organizations (CSOs) and social movements that address causes that others usually neglect, and by providing tools, expertise and relationships that can strengthen their organizations. For those simple but fundamental reasons, community philanthropy is more than just philanthropy: it is about politics and structural social change; it is about people-led development.

Brazil is perhaps the best example of what we are talking about. More than any other country in the region, independent funders emerged during the last decade in the fields of human rights, women’s rights, the environment, indigenous rights, racial equity and HIV/AIDS with the purpose of supporting activists and movements struggling in the frontline of communities. Together with three well-known community foundations (Rio de Janeiro, Florianópolis and Maranhão) they created the Social Justice Philanthropy Network in 2012 after two years of informal collaboration. The Synergos Institute was initially the institution that convened the various organizations to explore the idea of building a network. A new, democratic, community-based philanthropy is now emerging. It puts people first in development and, in so doing, challenges the old patriarchal and elitist philanthropy of the past. @

New developments in community philanthropy emerge in Italy

Carola Carazzone

Between 2000 and 2006, the first group of Italian community foundations was established in Northern Italy. A lot has been written about the model of community foundation promoted by Fondazione Cariplo and some other enlightened foundations of banking origin. Important in themselves, these groups have also become a catalyst for the further development of community foundations in the country. Here, I want to focus on some new fascinating examples of community philanthropy emerging in Italy that are still not well known and put an emphasis on different kinds of assets, including social enterprises and social investments, and on mobilizing long-term community participation.



Carola Carazzone is secretary general of Assifero, the national association of Italian grantmaking foundations. Email c.carazzone@assifero.org

For instance, in Sicily, there is a community foundation which has demonstrated that an alternative to mafia is possible; that a way out of systemic economic crisis is feasible; and that local, long-term social economy programmes can be sustainable. Established in 2010, the Fondazione della Comunità di Messina invested its €500,000 baseline endowment in a renewable energy photovoltaic system in order to produce an environmental and social impact, as well as a financial return to fund social projects. Hundreds of families, farmers and local organizations allowed the foundation to put solar panels on their roofs, got clean energy in return, and gave the surplus back to the foundation to sell to fund its social programmes. Today, it provides a return to the foundation of €500,000 euros a year in one of the most deprived areas of southern Italy where the unemployment rate is 23 per cent. One of the foundation's recent investments mobilized local donors, private equity investors and banks to transform a century-old, almost abandoned brewery into a sustainable social enterprise that today employs around 150 people.

People's trust has played a major role in the success of the foundation. That trust was based on 20 years of community work and social engagement by its promoters, among whom is Gaetano Giunta, the foundation's CEO, who led civil actions in 20 trials against mafia. But standing against mafia was the starting



Opening of a social enterprise employing around 150 people. Fondazione della Comunità di Messina mobilized local funds to convert an old brewery.

point, not the end. The foundation is creating a participatory platform for collective, innovative action and impact, more sustainable and durable than the traditional stand-alone projects approach.

In Sanità, Naples, in one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Europe, Fondazione di Comunità di San Gennaro, established in 2016, is using the arts to transform society. The endowment is half constituted by an art collection, but it is the use of street art and the way the magnificent artistic heritage of the San Gennaro Catacombs is used, that is impressive. The foundation is a real platform for innovation and transformation through art for people of all ages that involves the people themselves as co-investors.

Far in the north-west of Italy, in the Canavese region, the Fondazione di Comunità del Canavese is another newly established community foundation. It was initiated and supported by a mixed group of stakeholders comprising banking foundations, local councils, local business, non-profit organizations and individuals, and it is already a platform offering organizational and networking support to smaller associations to strengthen their position as grantees and/or partners for larger, more structured entities.

Canavese, Messina and San Gennaro: these examples are teaching an important lesson, over and above their individual achievements. They are different from the traditional American model with its focus on building an endowment, distributing the returns in the form of grants, and the promotion of giving with a stress on donors' needs and services. They show that while assets, capacity and trust are fundamental requirements for all community foundations, there is no single model. Thriving community philanthropy organizations can and should make their own way through creative use of local resources and, above all, they should be deeply rooted in the local context. @

Using the power of philanthropy in the public interest in Kenya

Irūngū Houghton and Constant Cap

Kenya, like the rest of Africa, is not overpopulated. It is just over-concentrated and deeply inequitable. At the same time, it is home to innovation, young industry, a growing internal consumer market and a middle class with disposable incomes. New opportunities for philanthropy exist in these new conditions.



Irūngū Houghton is chairperson, Kilimani Project Foundation. Email chairperson@kilimani.co.ke.



Constant Cap is coordinator, Kilimani Project Foundation. Email coordinator@kilimani.co.ke.

In July 2016, Yetu, a community philanthropy initiative set up under the auspices of the Aga Khan Foundation USA and USAID, organized a twitter campaign (#KOT) which discovered that 93 per cent of Kenyans give.¹ New narratives are also emerging. Dr Alex Awiti, director of the East African Institute at the Aga Khan University, tweets of philanthropic giving as an expression of sovereignty, the stirring of a society that wishes to be free of foreign development assistance. Public interest campaigners are also increasingly articulating the need for philanthropy to embrace governance, public spaces and public participation issues. They argue that mobilizing national and community resources to tackle systemic problems is a more effective response than development assistance.

Kilimani: an emerging model for community foundations

The Kilimani Project Foundation emerged out of the recognition that choice, livability and community empowerment were missing in one of Kenya's high-density suburbs. While the area was a melting pot for brand companies, restaurants, malls, creative information technology hubs and arts centres, it was not yet an integrated neighbourhood.

In the face of aggressive private investment, it suffers from overstretched public utilities. Residents remain uninformed about their rights and responsibilities. There is private security everywhere, yet most perceive themselves as insecure. There are regular electricity and water outages but no integrated public information system. As Kilimani's population grows, ironically small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are being displaced. There is no skills building or market support for informal or small entrepreneurs despite growing potential markets. While diverse, the

community is also divided. Most of the residents are walking complaints. Their experience of community is shrinking to their homes and wifi.

Community foundations have the power to transform this. The Kilimani Foundation has organized street festivals that have deepened a sense of relatedness in the community and an appreciation of small businesses. Residents have made use of the foundation's social media platforms to express their concerns, offer new ideas and discuss their experiences. In a recent example, residents responded to noise pollution by nightclubs, construction, and even places of worship by rallying to #ICantSleep twitter campaigns to enforce local government bylaws.

Calls for residents to support government street clean-ups, raise funds for a new school canteen or donate trees for local public schools have seen new levels of generosity. While the foundation is yet to manage any form of endowment or generate a capacity to offer grants to community initiatives, this may not be very far off.

Two years ago, the world marked the first centenary of community foundations. As community foundations continue to grow in the global south, they must expand their financial sustainability base and remain rooted in the communities they serve. In this way, they will continue to bridge the space between citizens and the state. They can create the will and the means for communities and policy-makers to act collectively in the public interest. @

¹ Yetu (2016) *Why Kenyans Give*. <http://tinyurl.com/KenyaGiving>

Street festival in Kilimani, Nairobi.



Community philanthropy's 'burning issues'

Wendy Richardson

Supporting environmental activists in Mexico who face a climate of violence and insecurity. Exploring the use of shared spaces in Northern Ireland to address disadvantage and division, particularly across religious affiliation. Equipping and encouraging youth groups in Kosovo to become more active and positive contributors to their communities.



Wendy Richardson is operations and communications director at the Global Fund for Community Foundations. Email wendy@globalfundcf.org

These were some of the topics raised in response to the Global Fund for Community Foundations' (GFCF) call for proposals for 'Burning Issues' grants in early 2016. Despite the enormous range of issues being addressed by community philanthropy around the world and the organizational differences among the 13 eventual recipients, there are strong similarities across the cohort.

First and most obvious was the repeated focus on socially excluded populations. But beyond simply working to improve the circumstances of such groups, the universal view was to allow them to speak up and determine their own way forward. For example, the Community Foundation of Greater Florianopolis (ICOM) in Brazil is aiming to ensure that the voice of local homeless people is heeded when policies affecting their future are determined, by linking the homeless groups with local authorities and providing them with regular technical and logistical support. Another example is in the Kiseljak region of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was once a popular destination for recreation, but in the last 20 years has seen growing problems of environmental degradation, unemployment and social cohesion. These problems are often blamed on the 10 per cent of the population that is Roma. In response, the Tuzla Community Foundation is setting up a working group for Kiseljak,

involving Roma and other civil society groups, to work together to identify points of division and concrete ways to overcome them. As one grant partner succinctly put it: 'We don't work on troubled youth, we work with troubled youth.'

I heard someone quip recently that there is a difference between really listening and just waiting for your turn to speak. This notion of genuinely listening was another thread throughout the Burning Issues grants. Several focused on reconnecting with communities to gain a more solid appreciation of local challenges. The Community Development Foundation Western Cape in South Africa felt it had not reacted adequately to a spate of local violence against women earlier in the year. With its grant it plans to organize an intensive series of community dialogues, to reconnect with those it aims to serve so that when the next crisis hits it will be better prepared to act as leader, convener and supporter. Meanwhile, in Ukraine Moloda Gromada is using its grant to develop an app with a similar aim, which provides a virtual space for citizens to draw local authorities' attention to existing and potential problems. It has been so well received that the authorities involved plan to use the technology this winter to mobilize rapid support for people affected by snowstorms.

But if I had to pick one word that tied all the Burning Issues grants together, it would be brave. The community philanthropy organizations that we are proud to support are taking on – while trying to build a culture of local philanthropy around – unpopular social justice issues, often in political environments increasingly hostile to progressive discussions, and in some cases at great personal risk. There is also the consideration of scale: while many of the organizations have modest annual budgets and limited human resources, they routinely, and courageously, punch above their weight. In its grant application, Romania's Covasna Community Foundation described its ongoing environmental work and its battle against an enormous foreign-owned local timber factory as a 'David and Goliath' type struggle.

In promoting the Global Summit on Community Philanthropy, we have been widely using #ShiftThePower. Consciously ceding control in order to give voice to the voiceless, listening and allowing communities to define priorities and not backing down (even with Goliath breathing down your neck): it's easy to understand how this set of grants was part of the inspiration behind that hashtag. @

The Covasna Community Foundation in Romania is continuing its environmental work with a Burning Issues grant.



It begins and ends with trust

Jennifer Lentfer

If you want community philanthropy to work, you have to start with trust. Yet many of the elements in funders' relationship with grantees – evaluations and reporting requirements – are based on scepticism. They have become deep expressions of doubt and mistrust. Granted, it's not easy to create trust. The history of global development is littered with failure and misunderstanding, and we are all carrying assumptions from our past, even if we're not aware of it. So how can we build trust? Here are steps to help you as you embark on supporting community philanthropy.



Jennifer Lentfer is creator of how-matters.org and director of communications at IDEX. Email jennifer@idex.org

You may have good intentions and be 'doing everything right' in your estimation of your partnership. You share all information about your application and reporting requirements. You respond promptly to enquiries. You go on site visits. You've developed a good rapport. It doesn't mean trust exists.

For decades, international assistance has ignored, subsumed, or done harm to already existing mechanisms for mutual accountability at the community level. The result has too often been that money came and went, disappointing both grantmakers and everyday citizens. As I advise programme staff before they visit communities, 'you don't just represent our foundation, you represent 50-plus years of failed development projects.'

Accept that you, too, must be trusted

Ask yourself what makes you worthy of trust? Your money? Surely it's not that late tranche of funding, or that ignorantly offensive (even if inadvertent) comment you made at the last meeting? Those engaged in community philanthropy must be consciously building grantees' trust in them – constantly and consistently.

Learn about colonial history and the legacy of white supremacy

What will it take to dismantle the structures that perpetuate inequality and bigotry? How are you confronting the racism that prevents philanthropy's shift in power? Asking challenging questions of ourselves is only a start. The denial of dignity to people in our history, in our sector

today, and in our interpersonal behaviour, conditioned by years of assumption and false perceptions, is insidious. Sure, I'm uncomfortable talking about this, but unless we open up the conversation on racism, sexism and privilege in our sector, we will continue to perpetuate the same, tired system.

Building trust can start with acknowledging that there is a lot of work to do.

Focus on feedback

You need to get good at giving feedback, but also at receiving it. People will disappoint you from time to time. You will also let people down. And both parties need to know about it and learn from it.

Building functional and practical feedback mechanisms – that is, closing the loop between funders and funded and creating the institutional incentives to ensure feedback continues – must be a priority of those that care about community philanthropy. Relationships within international philanthropy are no different from our personal relationships: we have to re-commit every day to making them work.

Give it time

Most funders give money in one- to three-year project cycles. At IDEX, we invest in our grassroots partners for as long as it takes, because social transformation takes time.

When initiatives to make others' lives better spring from communities and are built on existing relationships, people have a very different stake in, and long-term commitment to, the success of their efforts. Funders must have this long-term commitment, too.

Community philanthropy is a powerful expression of accompanying people who are finding solutions to their own problems, and backing those ground-up solutions with capital. At IDEX we have found that trust is a prerequisite and a result of such an approach.

Although the ability to build trust with people may be considered a 'soft skill', it's probably the most challenging and most important skill for philanthropists to develop. Our respect, positivity and ongoing encouragement is the basis of authentic and productive relationships in community philanthropy – and that ultimately results in a more just and sustainable world for us all. @

For decades, international assistance has ignored, subsumed, or done harm to already existing mechanisms for mutual accountability at the community level. The result has too often been that money came and went, disappointing both grantmakers and everyday citizens.

Finding ways to make 'community' mean more than 'us'

Monika Pisankaneva and Boris Strečanský

New forms of community philanthropy have joined older, more traditional ones in the Central and Eastern Europe region following the democratization of the 1990s. However, the emphasis of community remains on 'us' and very often excludes 'them' and while some community philanthropy organizations (CPOs) are finding diplomatic ways to deal with this, they are doing so in a situation which is becoming increasingly competitive.



Monika Pisankaneva is philanthropy development manager at Workshop for Civic Initiatives Foundation. Email mpisankaneva@wcif-bg.org



Boris Strečanský is an expert on philanthropy at the Centre for Philanthropy, Slovakia. Email strecansky@changenet.sk

Modern forms of CPO were brought into the region after the opening of the borders in the 1990s, and were picked up by a new generation of civil society activists seeking to modernize society and looking for alternative ways to do it. It was a generation of activists that also had a greater concern for human rights and democratic instincts.

Despite this, and like the traditional forms of community philanthropy, many of these CPOs are primarily concerned with 'us', not with 'the other'.

There are some practical reasons for this. They are in the early stages of development and, in order to build up a donor base, they need to follow the mainstream, less contentious issues that will attract local donors. In doing so, they often make compromises with what they, as civil society activists, would like to do. Controversial issues, such as accepting diversity, enhancing equality and protecting the rights of minorities, are not usually on the agenda of local giving events or the fundraising efforts of community foundations. Even projects that address issues, such as reducing violence at schools or gender-based violence, have been developed in a way that excluded the most marginalized groups, such as Roma, LGBTI and other minorities.

Difficult issues are divisive and create tension in the community and there are implications for trust and for risk when CPOs engage with them. They are inevitably political and involvement means that the CPO is seen as political in an environment where politics is distrusted.

Finding a way: playing down difference

However, there have been instances where CPOs have negotiated thorny issues successfully. For example, the Community Foundation of Varna, Bulgaria announced the creation of a scholarship fund to support access to higher education for students from the city's Roma communities. The communication strategy to promote this fund emphasized Varna's pride in its image as a university town, and that increasing the diversity of students would have many positive effects for the community. So the framing of the idea in a way that did not stress Roma identity was key to its acceptance by the local donors.

This has typified the response of community philanthropy initiatives to these difficult issues where they have engaged with them. They have concentrated on promoting cohesion in the community, while avoiding conflict and approaching the issue in a non-confrontational manner, stressing humane and charitable aspects over the rights-based and advocacy ones.

A 'softly, softly' approach

Recent discussion among community philanthropy practitioners from several European countries identified the following elements of good practice in addressing difficult issues: creating and maintaining networks of people and movements of shared values; keeping a low profile; and quietly building a critical mass of supporters. Community foundations address difficult issues by involving different actors without making too much noise. They are changing the landscape of local giving in Central and Eastern Europe in a humble way.

Rocky road ahead

However, there is a greater difficulty looming in the background. While CPOs inspired by the Western model are slowly moving from 'bonding' towards 'bridging' social capital development, other forms of community giving increasingly support hate-based groups, which are becoming stronger with the rise of radical nationalisms and anti-systemic politics in the region. These have been just as successful in engaging local donors as CPOs have been – but in their case, around the values of national security, respect for tradition and maintaining the national identity. So the challenge for us in Central and Eastern Europe is not only to build a constituency in favour of tackling difficult social issues at community level, but to disarm a growing movement that promotes division and discord and sees 'the other' as a threat. @

From communities to constituencies for human rights

Mona Younis

As a human rights advocate I am grieved by our limited success in building strong and active human rights constituencies even in places where promoting human rights is not dangerous. Indeed, we have yet to effectively reach and engage the vast majority of the world's communities in embracing – let alone claiming – human rights. To do so, there is much we can learn from the work of community philanthropy organizations (CPOs). There is also much that we can contribute to their vital efforts.



Mona Younis is a human rights advocate and consultant. Email mnyounis@gmail.com

I'm going to make a bold claim: communities that are hostile or indifferent to human rights either do not know what they are or benefit from denying others the rights they already enjoy themselves. In that enormous space of communities that simply *do not know* there is tremendous opportunity for us to make genuine advances by simultaneously building human rights constituencies and supporting CPOs to realize inclusive and resilient communities.

However, first we must tackle some pervasive misconceptions that contribute to delaying the widespread public embrace of human rights, including in the global north. Two in particular have been especially damaging, both of which, regrettably, have been perpetuated by human rights practitioners, but both of which, community philanthropy can help to dispel.

The first is the view that human rights is practised primarily in courts, in capitals or in UN bodies, far from where people live, work, raise families, age and die. Communities that never have an opportunity to see human rights practitioners at work are unlikely to know, let alone value, what these advocates do on their behalf. By contrast, CPOs' priorities and concerns revolve around communities' wellbeing, including jobs, housing, health, education, the environment. By helping those communities see the elements of justice, equality and other rights in those questions, CPOs can help demonstrate that human rights are everybody's concern, everywhere.

A second factor is the dominant and distorted version of human rights that puts civil and political rights above economic, social and cultural rights. This has hobbled our efforts to reach and engage communities effectively. CPOs already have that reach and that engagement and the questions that concern them and their constituents are as likely to involve economic, social and cultural considerations as they are to involve political rights. It's up to us as human rights activists to make use of the access they provide to communities.

These practices and misconceptions together have delayed communities' appreciation of the relevance and value of human rights to their lives. Governments and others have been only too eager to fill the gap, reducing human rights in people's minds to the protection of criminals and terrorists, support for 'the other', promotion of foreign values or furthering foreign interests. Human rights advocates must help correct these and other distortions that delay communities' embrace of human rights in the global north and south equally.

In fact, the cost of weak or absent human rights constituencies is increasingly apparent in both North and South. In Europe, challenges to the European Convention on Human Rights and the rise of a xenophobic right that is mobilizing communities against immigrants and refugees are evidence of the fragility of communities' embrace of human rights. These are also indications of the limits of liberalism that is wrongly treated as synonymous with the universalism of human rights. And, throughout the world, women, minorities and poor people continue to be marginalized and excluded from larger communities.

Clearly, as human rights advocates we need to invest our attention, efforts and resources there, inside communities, learning their concerns and priorities and building their capacities to act on these together. This is precisely what CPOs do, and we have much to learn from their vital work to empower communities by cultivating local assets and building local capacities. For their part, human rights advocates can support CPOs to address the discrimination and inequality that fuel exclusion and marginalization and weaken the community as a whole. By doing so, we can demonstrate the vision and value of human rights, including in building inclusive, healthy and cohesive communities that do not fear diversity and recognize equality as the basis of genuine security – human rights constituencies in action. @

As human rights advocates we need to invest our attention, efforts and resources there, inside communities, learning their concerns and priorities and building their capacities to act on these together.

Is equality really on the menu? Tobias Jung

On the shelf of philanthropic playthings, community philanthropy sits like a teddy bear. Next to the die-cast action figures of scientific and venture philanthropy, it feels soft, flexible and comforting; compared to the precious and fragile porcelain dolls of antique philanthropy, it feels sturdy and huggable. However, as anybody who has seen *Toy Story 3* will know, the cuddly image of a teddy bear can be deceptive. Thus, when community philanthropy evokes images of equality, equity and inclusiveness, how far do these reflect reality?



Tobias Jung is director of the Centre for the Study of Philanthropy & Public Good at the School of Management, University of St Andrews. Email tj3@st-andrews.ac.uk

Notwithstanding the definitional challenges surrounding community philanthropy, there is an overarching feeling that it encourages equality. It moves philanthropy from a top-down perspective towards a horizontal, inclusive and reciprocal approach; it mobilizes a community's own resources to promote, build, empower and improve that community. That an emphasis on horizontal and reciprocal philanthropy necessarily leads to more equality seems, however, to be an overly romanticized perspective. As Feerman's *Reciprocity and Assistance in Precolonial Africa* shows, reciprocity, caring and community frequently sit alongside dominance and the maintaining and reinforcing of inequalities. Similarly, Layton,¹ examining practices of community philanthropy in different countries, questions the extent to which

those practices actually differ from more traditional philanthropy: in the end, both appear to entrench established social relations.

If equality is not the forte of community philanthropy, what about equity? Not only is the idea gaining prominence and traction in the philanthropy field, but its pursuit is considered a central tenet of community philanthropy. While equality focuses on similarity and sameness, equity stresses fairness and the appropriateness of provisions and opportunities. The former is thus relatively mechanistic, the latter contextual and subjective. As such, it is hard to assess. Studies of community philanthropy that directly refer to equity, like Kuljian's *Philanthropy and Equity: The case of South Africa*, point to a paucity of research and to the need for a more robust evidence base. They also highlight the challenges of equity within traditional organizational forms of community philanthropy, such as community foundations. Their US expressions, in particular, seem to have overemphasized endowment building. Thus, their potential for addressing equity issues has not necessarily been fulfilled.

While its relationship with equality is tenuous, and with equity uncertain, there is little doubt that community philanthropy can address another important issue: inclusiveness. Recent work combining relative deprivation research, social psychology and legal studies highlights the importance of procedural justice in allocating resources: the process on which a decision or outcome is based is often considered to be as important as the end result.² As part of this, opportunities for participation and 'voice', the feeling of empowerment, establishing trust through personal knowledge, and mutual treatment with dignity and respect have been identified as important contributors. Obviously, there are caveats in applying these ideas to community philanthropy. Process and substance should not be conflated. Furthermore, there are ongoing debates about the relative importance and practical implementation of these elements. However, it is easy to see how the more inclusive and broader casting of community philanthropy can start to address these issues more easily, and potentially more effectively, than its siblings on the philanthropy shelf. @

¹ M D Layton (2016) 'Philanthropy at the community level. Supporting community empowerment', in *The Routledge Companion to Philanthropy*.

² Dolan et al (2007) 'It ain't what you do, it's the way that you do it: Characteristics of procedural justice and their importance in social decision-making,' *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 64(1): 157–170.



Managing natural resources: how far can community philanthropy go?

Mary Fifield

The need for thoughtful, holistic, democratic stewardship of natural resources has never been more critical. Community philanthropy can play a big part in the management of large-scale natural resources, but it faces challenges in doing so. What can be done to help it overcome obstacles and to amplify its power in this role?



Mary Fifield is principal of Kaleidoscope Consulting and former director of Amazon Partnerships Foundation. Email mary@meetkaleidoscope.com

Two community foundations, the Newmont Ahafo Development Foundation (NADeF) in Ghana and a newly forming trust in Malawi's Shire River Basin, provide insight into both the challenges and opportunities for communities to build collective ownership of assets and ensure appropriate, democratic governance of natural resources. A look at three key areas – decision-making, small donor investing and sustainability planning – illustrates how community philanthropy could succeed at a larger scale.

Unlike institutions funded and managed by corporations and transferred to communities later, in these examples communities are principal decision-makers from the outset. NADeF, with a US\$13 million endowment from gold revenue, was established through an agreement between Newmont Mining and ten communities affected by mining activities in the Brong-Ahafo region. Six of the nine board members are elected community representatives; the elected board chair is a community member nominated by Newmont. A social responsibility forum of more than 40 people represents all stakeholders and approves NADeF's budget and development strategy. Community-led sustainability committees identify funding priorities. The NADeF board is considering a special investment fund for past scholarship recipients and a donor-advised fund for Ghanaians abroad. While the amount of revenue may be small, the act of investing instils a sense of shared ownership.

Through an agreement between the US and Malawian governments, the Mount Mulanje Conservation Trust (MMCT) in Malawi has convened 24 stakeholders, ranging from grassroots leaders to elected officials, to design a grantmaking institution to manage

conservation of Malawi's largest reservoir. The trust will be supervised by an elected board of individual ratepayers, smallholder farmers, corporate water users, government officials and institutional donors.

Even with governance structures founded on community decision-making and meaningful participation, community-managed foundations established with a large investment from one source risk being unduly influenced by that investor. One option for the Shire River Basin Trust, which received approximately US\$5 million from the Millennium Challenge Corporation, is to designate revenue from a small ecosystems service fee from individual households and farmers as a joint community investment.

Of course, the sheer size of the budget can create competition for resources even in communities with a history of successful collaboration. Grants for cross-cutting and multi-community projects can be an effective antidote to this problem by uniting people around a common objective and strengthening trust. NADeF has experimented with two successful small grants for education in all ten communities, and many stakeholders want the grant programme to expand.

Power-sharing and trust-building practices help communities manage not only financial resources but natural resources as well. In Malawi, stakeholders are having vigorous discussions about whether sustaining the watershed means investing only in direct conservation or also supporting other community priorities. A large community-managed trust provides structure and visibility for these conversations, making them more consequential than they would be if they were only happening among elites or in isolated communities.

To gain traction in large-scale asset management, community philanthropy can benefit from strategic partnerships. Conventional environmental trusts are a logical fit: they could raise the profile and credibility of this model, and the model could increase the trusts' relevance and benefit for communities. Community philanthropy is also a philosophical cousin of environmental and human rights. Organizations working in these areas can strengthen community foundations' capacity to advocate for community self-determination and negotiate equitable agreements. These ideas are just a start. We are glimpsing the potential of community philanthropy in the management of large-scale assets, but we must invest in and support more of these efforts to understand the true power of the model. @

Data needed . . . and more besides

Susan Wilkinson Maposa

Community philanthropy organizations (CPOs) collect data for the purpose of donor compliance – numbers of grants awarded, people served, training sessions held, etc. What they don't tend to collect are data on the other form of compliance: the extent to which they are actually doing what they promise – using community dynamics, leadership, knowledge, priorities and favoured ways of working to serve and strengthen communities. Collecting data is a necessary next step toward fulfilling that promise but research suggests that data on its own will not be enough to change behaviour.



Susan Wilkinson Maposa is co-author of *The Poor Philanthropist: New approaches to sustainable development* and a freelance adviser based in Cape Town, South Africa. Email swilkinsonmaposa@gmail.com

The 2005 report, *On the Brink of New Promise: the future of US community foundations* argues that more often than not, foundations focus on their institutional sustainability rather than their core function of community strengthening, and calls for CPOs to remedy this.

There is a tension between the requirements of funders and the needs of communities. Institutional survival and growth depends, in a competitive funding environment, on meeting funders' requirements. On the other hand, CPOs must secure a licence to operate by being responsive to community needs. These upward and downward pulls contribute to misalignment and present an operational and strategic challenge. So how can we assess the horizontal or vertical direction of CPO behaviour?

Horizontal or vertical?

My research in South Africa in 2015 compared the typical characteristics of the aid industry with the community system of self-help. It produced five arcs or spectrums on which a range of behaviours could be located and from which a 'horizontality gauge' can be produced, to assess the extent to which an organization's behaviour is closer to the vertical or the horizontal.

The vertical aid system: (i) sees gaps or needs that external resources can fill; (ii) is concerned with the quantum of giving (how much, how many), favours financial resources and is concerned with the efficiency of resource use; (iii) strives to help people escape poverty; (iv) is based on written agreements; and (v) recognizes people as legal entities – citizens with rights and obligations.

The organic helping system, deeply rooted in socio-cultural norms and feelings of belonging, by contrast (i) sees resources within a community that can be deployed to address that community's needs; (ii) focuses on the social transaction of helping, 'no matter how little', with whatever is available – money, labour, support and skills; (iii) seeks to increase resilience to cope with, or escape from, current conditions such as poverty; (iv) operates according to unwritten yet widely established conventions, values and sanctions; and (v) recognizes people as human beings with an identity and dignity that need to be preserved.

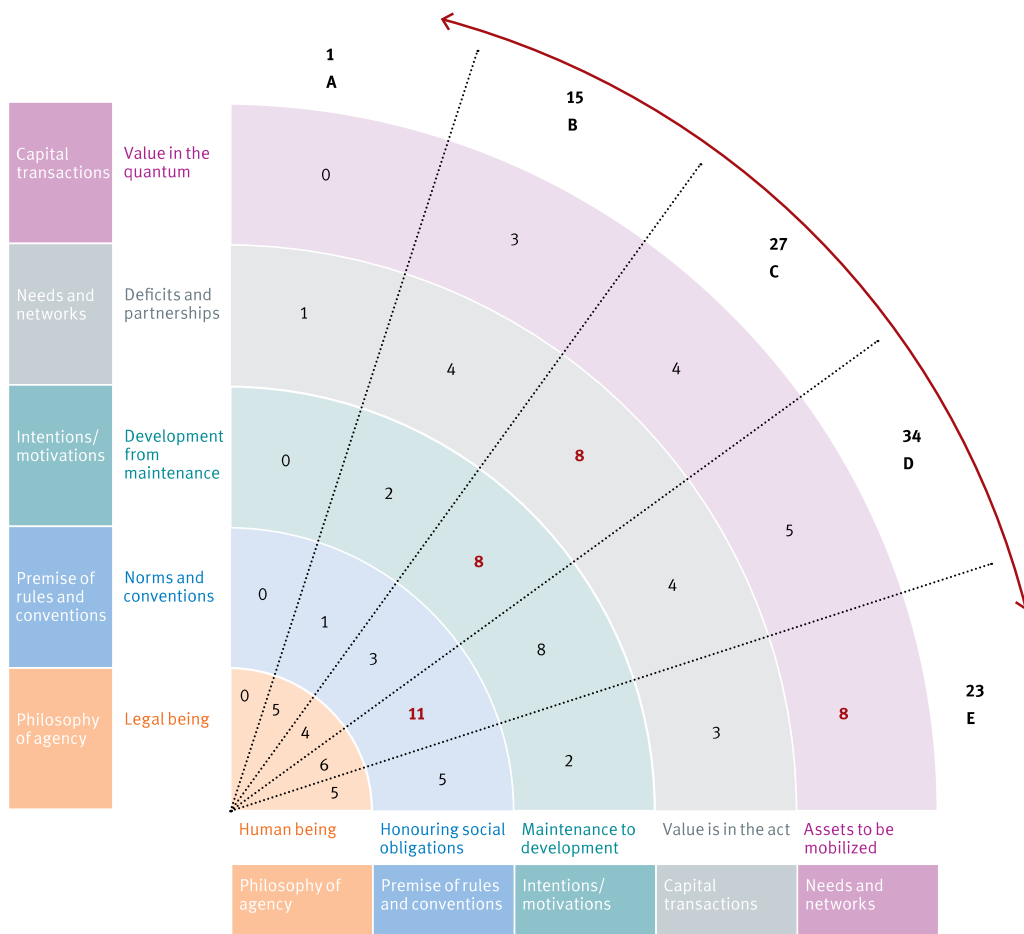
Applying the template: three critical insights

Using this gauge, responses to a 2014 survey of executive directors, grant officers and administrators, head of programmes, field workers, board members, volunteers and interns from five community grantmakers in the Western Cape were plotted on an arc structured around a vertical and horizontal philanthropy axis.

Three critical insights into CPO behaviour emerged. First, behaviour is all over the map. Two CPOs favoured the mid-point, three leaned toward the horizontal and none favoured the vertical. Individualistic rather than formulaic behaviour suggests that compromises are often made according to circumstances and the 'best possible' approach to a situation is often adopted, rather than following an ideal.

Next, CPO behaviour combines the vertical and horizontal philanthropy conventions, reinforcing the idea that there is a behaviour zone where the two approaches blend.¹ Two organizations had 'aha' moments: behaviour is not accidental, but a direct response to a donor requirement or community need. The gauge revealed what up to this point was a tacit or unspoken strategy for the management of vertical and horizontal pulls, suggesting that adherence to community philanthropy's promise could require finding optimal ways to combine the vertical and horizontal.

Finally, while organizations came up with 13 uses for the horizontality gauge, they were all related to reporting, peer sharing and evaluation. None mentioned organizational development and self-correction. The implication is that CPOs as well as donors put the emphasis on upward accountability. The question is, where will the impetus come from to put the community dynamic at the centre of community philanthropy? Should it be network and membership bodies committed to growing the field?



Changing behaviour: all stakeholders need to be involved

So we have a way of measuring compliance to the community philanthropy promise, but can this measurement be used to produce learning and improvements in organizational behaviour?

Data is a starting point but it is not enough. It cannot change behaviour. Stakeholder intent, purpose and engagement with the data and the underlying problem of competing demands is required. Aligning CPOs' work with their fundamental purpose is about promoting values and mission-based behaviour, engagement and accountability mechanisms, as well as adopting a systems perspective – an appreciation that CPO behaviour is not 'whim' but a response to forces. This suggests that the field needs a process whereby communities and donors are included in the conversation and the work needed to bring about and track behaviour change. This could include:

- A process for supporting CPO collection of compliance data.
- Examination of the value of a 360-degree assessment tool allowing communities to make their own assessment of CPOs' organizational behaviour.

- Creation of network or coordinating body platforms where stakeholders can grapple with vertical and horizontal pulls and management strategies for a frank discussion about power dynamics, optimal accountability processes and practical action.

Ultimately, if measurement data is not to be limited to CPO self-reflection and rationalization, a process of engagement with donors and community leadership is crucial. If we engage as donors we know that our own requirements can work against the values and principles of the model and that we must find ways to relinquish power for greater flexibility. If we engage as CPOs, we know we can be more conscious of vertical and horizontal pulls and their implications for our own practice, and we can get better at putting effective strategies in place to manage these tensions. If we are engaging as communities, we know that our job is to promote our own leadership and centrality within the community philanthropy model and to work with CPOs in putting our resources front and centre and to best use. [@](#)

1 Susan Wilkinson Maposa and Alan Fowler (2009) *The Poor Philanthropist II: New approaches*

to sustainable development. University of Cape Town.

Funders: use your power to shift the power

Danny Sriskandarajah

The international development landscape is shifting rapidly. In many ways, we're witnessing the end of the 'development-industrial complex' that has dominated the sector for the last two decades. The days of rich northern countries delivering large amounts of official development assistance (ODA) to poor countries in the global south, often via massive northern-based international NGOs, are numbered. A variety of complex and connected factors are driving this shift: radical global socio-economic changes and the emergence of a new, universal, sustainable development agenda, to name but two. The question now is what kind of new development model are we constructing in its place?



Danny Sriskandarajah is secretary general of CIVICUS. Email danny.sriskandarajah@civicus.org

Resources trickle down, power does not

For me, a fundamental transfer of power will be the defining feature that distinguishes our new development landscape from the old. In recent years, only about 1 per cent of all official aid, and an even smaller portion of humanitarian assistance, has gone directly to the global south. Research into private foundations suggests that they too channel a large portion of their giving through 'fundermediaries' in the global north.¹ The crux of the problem with this approach to development is that resources may trickle down, but power does not. Instead, it remains concentrated in the hands of a relatively small number of big players, predominantly based in the global north.

I often talk, and write, about the science of delivery versus the art of social transformation. But, for me, community philanthropy and local resourcing has the potential to tick both boxes. It has been argued – and demonstrated – again and again that local actors offer more efficient, sustainable development solutions. If the development agenda is guided by local priorities, if local organizations implement initiatives and programmes and if local in-country bodies are supported to finance – or at the very least co-finance – their own development needs, then sustainability becomes embedded in development. Local resourcing empowers local people; it reduces aid dependency; it breaks the cycle of endless development sector self-serving job creation projects.²

Supporting local civil society organizations based within the communities they seek to serve provides the kind of technical efficiency that is so important to the allocation of development resources. But going local is about more than technical efficiency; going local is, above all, political. The Summit on Community Philanthropy coming up in Johannesburg is being promoted using #ShiftThePower. To me, this encapsulates the real, transformative potential of community philanthropy. It is a shift that will depend upon how prepared donors and others are to disrupt the current development model and to confront the fact that going local is about more than 'development impact'.

In recent years, we have witnessed a worrying global restriction of civil society's core freedoms. In 2015, my CIVICUS colleagues recorded serious violations of civic space in 109 countries. I would argue that the power imbalances perpetuated by the dominant development modalities of the last two decades have contributed

CASE STUDY

Feminist philanthropy on the streets of Latin America

Luz Aquilante

The Women's Fund from the South (FMS) was created in 2007 to promote women's rights by investing in women-led organizations, particularly at the grassroots level. Part of the International Network of Women's Funds (INWF/Prospera), it supports women's rights organizations through direct and flexible grants based on the conviction that women have enormous potential to be agents of social change. It plays a critical role in widening the access of organizations to resources and has mobilized more than US\$3 million from overseas and supported over 100 women's groups.



Luz Aquilante is chief executive of the Women's Fund from the South, Argentina. Email luzaquilante@mujeresdelsur.org

In recent years, external donor funding for Latin American civil society organizations has declined. This has hit the women's movement particularly hard since women have also largely been excluded from the benefits of economic growth. To counter this, women's funds have focused their

to this trend. Certainly, they have made it more difficult to combat.

‘Accounts-ability’ at the expense of social change

Partly, this is because our funding models have nurtured a cadre of contracted, professionalized civil society organizations. They excel when it comes to ‘accounts-ability’, but are less good at disruptive social change. Advocating for human rights and sustainable social justice is an awkward fit with most donors’ insistence on short-term, measurable projects. For now, it also remains a no-go area for most domestic funders in the global south, leaving the very organizations that may be best positioned to fight back against closing civic space, either severely

If the development agenda is guided by local priorities, if local organizations implement initiatives and programmes and if local in-country bodies are supported to finance – or at the very least co-finance – their own development needs, then sustainability becomes embedded in development.

under-resourced and struggling for survival, or totally reliant on foreign funding.

The dominance of ODA and high-level, large-scale funding has also facilitated the ongoing trend for politicized government regulation and the imposition of barriers to what is commonly termed the ‘foreign funding of dissent’. Even as official government donors withdraw, for example, from countries recently designated as middle-income, the dependence they have created (at the expense of home-grown resource bases), leaves a gaping hole that is being quickly filled by repressive governments, intolerant of civic activism and dissent. Governments then fund only those CSOs that deliver to help achieve their own agendas, some openly using the threat of funding cuts as a way of silencing criticism, and so the independence of the civil society sector becomes dangerously compromised.

It is, of course, a classic catch-22: resourcing community philanthropy would enable civil society to flourish, but the deteriorating conditions faced by civil society

attention on mobilizing local resources and, over the last 18 months, FMS has been running short Direct Dialogue campaigns in the cities of Argentina which aim to recruit small but long-term individual donors.

FMS fundraisers go out into the streets, tell people about the organization and what it does, and then ask them to support it by making a monthly donation. FMS carried out four such campaigns of around ten days each between December 2014 and March 2016. As a result, 112 donors have joined with a monthly contribution that increases on average from US\$7 to \$10. These donors are mostly women (65 per cent), 54 of them aged between 20 and 30.

Although financial returns are modest (US\$9,100), the experience leads us to conclude that Direct Dialogue in the street could be used for other things besides fundraising:

raising awareness of women’s rights; increasing the visibility of FMS; moving donors along a continuum from one-time charitable donations to long-term investment in social change; building a lasting local constituency of support for women’s rights and feminist philanthropy; strengthening local philanthropy and shifting its primary focus from direct services to systemic change; and ultimately, increasing the sustainability of women’s rights movements in the region.

The mid-term goal is to reach 1,000 individual donors and extend the approach ourselves and to other women’s funds in Latin America. As we do so, we will begin to see even more of the changes we seek.

Fundraisers talk directly to people in Argentina’s cities. Such campaigns are also used for raising awareness.



Funders: use your power to shift the power

around the world make resourcing community philanthropy more difficult. If we believe, as Paula Johnson writes in WINGS' 2010 *Global Institutional Philanthropy Report*, that, 'for philanthropy to flourish in a society, that society must value a strong and vibrant role for civil society and believe in the role of private actors to support it', then the campaigns of vilification against civil society – and all the more subtle ways in which civic space is being restricted – are a real problem. The public in many countries now views CSOs with suspicion, seeing them as self-serving, corrupt or as agents of external forces. Back in 2004, a rapid rise in engagement in charitable activities in some transitioning and developing economies – many home to exploding middle-class populations – raised hopes of a global surge in private donations. But, the relationship between in-country wealth and the proportion of people giving money to charity is not a dependable one: deeper, underlying conditions drive or restrict a culture of giving.

The public in many countries now views CSOs with suspicion, seeing them as self-serving, corrupt or as agents of external forces.

An inherently sustainable philanthropy

But there are glimmers of hope. With growing recognition that the SDG agenda will never be anything more than aspirational unless we're prepared to radically disrupt the development sector, we're seeing a new commitment to constructing a more multi-faceted, resilient civil society. The last 25 years have seen a 75 per cent increase in the number of community foundations around the world and the diversity and relevance of the community philanthropy field has increased enormously. A well-resourced, established community philanthropy sector would entail our development efforts being grounded in strong relationships of trust, responsive to the evolving needs of communities, as well as to local political and social dynamics. Because of their independence by comparison to traditional donors and their freedom from the onerous cyclical reporting requirements, delivery criteria, or strict thematic areas of focus of large NGOs, the financial backers of this kind of philanthropy – social investors and grantmakers – can take risks, seed-fund new ideas, test innovation and tolerate a degree of failure.

CASE STUDY

Instilling a sense of (co-) responsibility in donors

Anderson Giovanni da Silva

The Community Foundation for Greater Florianopolis (ICOM) operates in Southern Brazil in a region of deep inequalities. Over the 10 years since its establishment, ICOM has gradually moved its source of funding away from international and national grants to local support. However, there is a lot to do before the organization is able to operate solely with local donors.



Anderson Giovanni da Silva is board member and former CEO of ICOM. Email: andersons@icomfloripa.org.br

During this process, the team has studied trends in giving and identified two groups of donors: a) younger donors, interested in short-term and creative initiatives, and using technology to facilitate communication and transparency; and b) an older and more financially stable generation, who prefers to be anonymous, is

less subject to peer pressure and is emotionally driven by a cause. But whatever their differences, both generations have not been easily convinced to give to non-profits, even where these are addressing a cause they are passionate about. The mind-set is that the government is ultimately responsible for tackling social and environmental issues, while non-profits have a supporting role limited to the provision of services.

The challenge for ICOM, therefore, has been to get donors to understand the complexity of the issues the community faces and show the co-responsibility of a variety of players when it comes to work for the public interest and to show that non-profits can be channels through which they can actively contribute to improving public policies and engaging in structural changes.

In order to do this, ICOM uses trustworthy data and communicates with each generation of donors through appropriate channels (social media, reports, face-to-face meetings). The data is produced in conjunction with universities, grassroots non-profits, government and specialists, and shows the complexity of the causes, the co-responsibility of all players in the community and draws attention to collaborative solutions.

The community foundation helps to identify players that could contribute to those solutions and supports non-profits to be better managed, more transparent and thus better prepared to show their value. Gradually, local donors are recognizing the importance of ICOM, are supporting its work as a bridging organization, and are seeing the impact of giving in their neighbourhood.

Perhaps most importantly, by supporting communities' efforts to gain control of their own development future, this kind of philanthropy is inherently sustainable.

For me, traditional, international donors can play a crucial role in helping to build this young movement. Indeed, if they are at all interested in the lasting impact they might have in developing contexts where they have been

By supporting communities' efforts to gain control of their own development future, this kind of philanthropy is inherently sustainable.

active for decades, investing in new forms of development like community philanthropy should be at the top of their list. This will require a nuanced approach and an honest acknowledgment of the politics embedded in their funding decisions. Above all, it will require a willingness to use their power to shift the power. @

1 <http://tinyurl.com/FCGrantmaking2016>

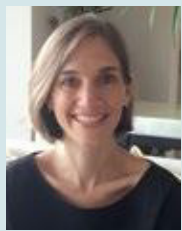
2 CIVICUS, *State of Civil Society Report 2015*, Guest Essay: The Case for Strengthening Communities, Kilmurray A. and Knight B. <http://tinyurl.com/StrenghCommunities>

CASE STUDY

Developing community philanthropy in Vietnam – part-way there

Dana Doan

LIN Center for Community Development (LIN) was set up in Ho Chi Minh City in 2009 to ensure that local people were actively involved in addressing local problems. As such, one of its objectives was to focus on building local donor support for its work. Though this aim remains central, there is a long way to go to achieve it.



Dana Doan is strategic adviser, LIN Center for Community Development. Email dana@linvn.org

When most Vietnamese think about giving, they think about short-term relief efforts that address what are referred to as 'legitimate causes' (poverty, disability, disaster). LIN was not seen in these terms. Another challenge was a lack of trust in intermediary organizations due to corruption issues in Vietnam. Moreover, LIN had no track record and introduced new terms and approaches, such as skilled volunteering and community foundations. We anticipated difficulties attracting cash contributions. Nevertheless, we were successful in securing in-kind support. Individuals and companies contributed services, products, staff time and even equipment, all of which were



Community members waiting to learn which projects will receive a grant from Narrow the Gap Community Fund during the community event held on 24 September 2016.

needed to implement LIN's annual action plan and helped to reduce our expenditure.

As LIN gained experience and built a reputation in the community, prospective donors began to respond more favourably to annual appeals. Still we only raised local funds for our small grants programme or individual workshops, not for the operation of LIN itself. Our operating costs and other programmes were still largely dependent on the support of international donors. The LIN team regularly explores strategies to increase local support and work with international donors to ensure that their grants help to attract, rather than replace, local support. Some donors offered matching grants, others contributed funds to build staff capacity or to invest in programmes to build donor

awareness and understanding. Meanwhile, LIN refused to apply for funds from foreign donors who were unwilling to contribute to this objective.

LIN recently requested feedback from past donors via an online survey and one-to-one interviews. While overall donor satisfaction with LIN and the LIN team was high, we were disappointed that donors ranked LIN's capacity building support to non-profit organizations significantly higher than our programmes to develop community philanthropy. We also noticed that our Vietnamese donors generally rate LIN lower than our foreign donors (though the difference was rarely statistically significant). Clearly, LIN still has more work ahead to increase local support for locally-led development initiatives.

Working with scarcity in rural Russia

Larisa Avrorina

Since the late 1990s, the NGO sector has developed rapidly in Russia. Community foundations have sprung up, private and corporate charitable foundations have started to grow, and state programmes of NGO support have emerged. However, these developments did not spread evenly throughout the country. They were confined to the areas where there were resources to support them and had little effect in non-industrial and rural areas. Half of Russian community foundations are rural funds in remote areas. So how can they thrive where there are few resources to sustain them?



Larisa Avrorina is programme director at CAF Russia. Email lavrorina@cafrussia.ru

CAF Russia started to work in the field of community philanthropy through a project funded by the World Bank in 2003. In our initial attempts to raise local resources to deal with social issues, we did not speak about community philanthropy development. Instead, we talked about participation and mobilizing people. A big part of the project was the establishment of community foundations. In many of the areas of operation, there is no big business or big money, and both the standard of living and the sense of agency are low. However, there is a demand for events. New formats are needed to engage people, so community foundations use celebrations of fundraising to accumulate resources to make them work for the good of community. It is like lighting a candle.

A novel event

Maima, in South Siberia, is a good example. With a population of 11,000, it is 4,000 kilometres from Moscow. The local community foundation invited residents to a musical performance featuring local personalities – teachers, doctors, administration officials and businesspeople. The experience of creating a completely new and unusual event turned out to be so successful that today charitable performances are staged in the state theatre in the

capital of the republic. However, the most important thing is that this activity, which united community members, raised awareness about philanthropy as a form of civic engagement. The money from the sale of tickets formed a grants fund to support social initiatives by the local youth, and the settlement now has a youth bank of ideas and projects. There are local donors committed to community philanthropy.

By using this creative approach, the Maima community foundation became the place for emergence and implementation of new projects developed by and within the community. It also led to the formation of new types of relationship between community members and the local authority. Other community foundations in Russia are beginning to use creative events as a means of developing community philanthropy.

Mapping

Another means of civic engagement that has proven valuable is a needs and resources mapping technique, developed by Sodeistvie Foundation in Perm. By means of a survey, it collects information from local residents on the most acute local issues and their willingness to take part in dealing with them. The map provides a rating of issues in critical areas like health-care, education and employment. The local residents and administration then meet to discuss the issues, which encourages dialogue, enables the better use of available resources and helps to develop horizontal liaisons within the community. The map provides the community with evidence and data, which are the basis for transformation.

There are usually no infrastructure NGOs that could implement this kind of monitoring in remote areas, so the initial stage involved training researchers – as a rule these were local teachers and librarians – to carry out the survey.

This technique not only identifies residents' problems and priorities and their willingness to deal with them, but also highlights potential community leaders. Thus, a community's social capital and the points of growth can be assessed. In practice, the fact that people contribute to the map alone encourages them to deal with the local problems together, and this in turn is a new resource for community philanthropy.

Both of these examples demonstrate the different and creative approaches Russian community foundations are using to pursue their key objectives of developing social capital and creating new types of community relationship – even when money is scarce. @

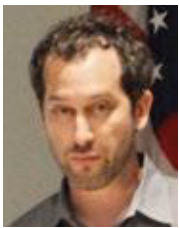
A performance in Maima, South Siberia.



USAID embraces community philanthropy

David Jacobstein

In September 2014, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the largest bilateral donor in the world, joined the Global Alliance for Community Philanthropy. The main purpose of joining was to generate greater understanding of the dynamics that sustain civil society, but USAID also recognized in community philanthropy the importance of trust, assets and capacity to foster sustainability; the emphasis on local leadership and empowerment; joint discovery of what works; and the subtle shift in power when we partner with organizations that hold their own resources.



David Jacobstein is a member of USAID's Cross-Sectoral Program Division. Email djacobstein@usaid.gov

Sustainability of development results is central to USAID's mission. It has invested significantly in pursuing local ownership and sustainability through the Local Solutions initiative,¹ which aims to support societies that plan, implement, and resource their own development which is inclusive and accountable. That effort was buttressed by the publication in 2014 of *Local Systems: A framework for supporting sustained development*,² which views sustainability as stemming from the actions of an interconnected set of actors who jointly produce a development result. Very recently, USAID revised its official guidance to staff, making sustainability through local ownership a core principle in the design and implementation of our development programmes.

The Local Systems Framework, and its incorporation into USAID principles of project design, has reinforced the need for USAID officers to devote greater attention to dynamics of local ownership of development efforts. This creates a great vantage from which to apply a community philanthropy voice, which

In many cases, community philanthropy partners are more focused on empowering the community than on addressing particular issues, while USAID funding is oriented to addressing specific challenges.

speaks powerfully about trust and relationships within a community and how those influence its ownership of development efforts to benefit that community. For example, in Kenya, the Yetu³ programme is exploring ways of leveraging local fundraising, taking the core principles of community philanthropy and applying them to a wider set of civil society partners. More broadly,

similar precepts are part of USAID's emphases on self-reliance and resilience in food security and health programming around the globe.

Moreover, community philanthropy can help to counter legislation that is inimical to civil society, refuting the pernicious narrative that civil society organizations (CSOs) do not authentically come from or represent citizens, and mitigating dependence on foreign funding. As part of democracy programming aiming to spur active citizenship, USAID has engaged with community foundations in Bosnia and in Serbia, and over the years they have thrived, and supported a more general culture of philanthropy, thanks to their deep roots.

However, despite these advantages, there are difficulties in USAID mainstreaming a community philanthropy perspective. Restrictions on our funding mean that it cannot in most cases be legally provided to form an endowment. More fundamentally, USAID funding priorities are shaped by political considerations and some of these priorities can more easily employ a community philanthropy approach than others.

The scale at which USAID operates can be an obstacle to leveraging community philanthropy simply in terms of funding levels and management requirements. Further, staff are used to working within our traditional results management incentives and approaches, which do not always fit with community philanthropy on a practical level, such as how we evaluate proposals and select partners or how we aggregate and report results. In many cases, community philanthropy partners are more focused on empowering the community than on addressing particular issues, while USAID funding is oriented to addressing specific challenges.

Despite the barriers, there are many places where staff are experimenting with these ideas and our updated guidance provides a new opportunity for principles related to community philanthropy to be mainstreamed. There is ample room for community philanthropy to grow within USAID, less as a practice area in its own right and more as an approach that can inform how USAID does its work. @

¹ www.usaid.gov/usaidforward

³ <http://yetu.org>

² www.usaid.gov/policy/local-systems-framework

Putting our money where our mouth is

Jennie Richmond

Earlier this year I met a group of collaborators who are all working on and for a community philanthropy model. When they described to me what they were doing I got really excited. Why? Well, for starters, I was schooled in the core principles of community-driven development right at the start of my career, and have held these values dear ever since. It was these values that led me to Comic Relief, as I saw in its grantmaking a deep commitment to ensuring that community and the people who live with poverty and injustice should be setting priorities.



Jennie Richmond is head of international grants at Comic Relief. Email j.richmond@comicrelief.com

A further reason for my excitement is that it is a very different resource mobilization model. The idea is that community members pool some of their own resources, however small, in a community-managed fund, then other investors also contribute to the pot. This approach has the potential to do a number of positive things.

First, to generate local domestic resources and reduce dependency on external funds, devolving power and getting resources closer to the ground – putting fuel in the tank of locally-driven development. Second, to really deepen community engagement and ownership of decisions on development interventions and investments. There is nothing like having your own cash to ensure you take an active interest in how it is used.

And the final dimension of this model I found really exciting is the way in which it can spur organizational development. Community organizations responsible for managing collective funds need to rapidly develop ways of working that instil confidence and provide the right level of accountability. They also need to keep conversations within the community strong and ensure that those involved in decision-making over funds are listening to the priorities of the quieter and more marginalized voices.

So, are donors like Comic Relief who are keen to support locally-driven development processes willing to put our own resources into pooled funds managed and governed by the communities we aim to help? I think we should be. Comic Relief has made ‘strengthening communities’ one of its four core pillars. We have tried a number of different models of grantmaking over the years in order to get our funds as close to the

ground as possible. Here in the UK, for instance, the UK Community Foundations scheme has been running since 2005, providing small grants of about £10,000 to grassroots organizations.

However, funders need to keep some important considerations in mind. First, we are usually the stewards of other people’s funds, so we need to strike the right balance between accountability to our own supporters and empowering communities to make their own decisions and manage their/our funds. What is needed in our experience is deep and context-specific scrutiny of potential grantees; appropriate due diligence for the level of funding; a strong relationship and good communication between the funder and community organization (which includes genuine respect for the investment of time and funds by community members themselves); an adaptability in terms of plans and monitoring/learning; and a commitment to invest not only in the specified outcomes of the project but in strengthening the community organization. As funders, we need to tread carefully and not rush to invest too fast or too much, as the wrong balance between external investment and community resources, and between expansion and organizational development, could upset the fragile symmetry of community philanthropy.

Despite these challenges, I am still excited to see what communities can achieve through this model. It won’t work everywhere. It requires time, capacity and crucially some financial investment (however minimal) by community members. In some contexts even these are a luxury. However, I feel it does have huge potential to challenge us all – both local and international donors, and community groups – to ‘put our money where our mouth is’ and to co-invest. Surely together we are stronger. @

In Uganda, a community celebrates the completion of a clinic that received funding from Comic Relief.



Believe in the power of communities

Nina Blackwell

Community philanthropy is one of the most potent mechanisms for sustainable change in Africa. We aim to prove it by creating a theory and practice of support for community-based organizations (CBOs), enabling African CBOs to become community grantmakers, and by shaping international thinking on community philanthropy.



Nina Blackwell is executive director of the Firelight Foundation. Email nina@firelightfoundation.org

For almost two decades, Firelight has sought to build the capacity of African CBOs giving them the power to build better, more effective solutions for children and youth, to advocate for change in child or youth-centered policy, and to change the lives of the children around them.

We have seen the incredible power of community philanthropy over and over again and in a number of ways: contributions from community members to a CBO not only reduce dependency on outside help, but are the ultimate manifestations of local buy-in and involvement. Individuals and groups who help shape, and in other ways contribute to, programmes feel a greater sense of identity and power. Their voice and agency is increased many times when they are able to fund and drive social change in their own community. A CBO that is enabled by community contributions also has greater transparency.

We have seen results. Our CBO partners have leveraged our grants in almost every community, matching Firelight's contributions by at least 20 per cent and sometimes up to 100 per cent with contributions from

the people around them. They have also used our funds to successfully support community-driven lending circles, table banking and social funds in myriad contexts.

Firelight also looks for ways to establish community philanthropy on a more formalized basis by enabling local African organizations to become community grantmakers in their own right. These community grantmakers work with Firelight to provide small grants matched with local,

intimate mentoring and leadership to smaller CBOs. This strategy was put into action with a \$25,000 grant we made in 2003 to the Jerusalem Children and

Community Development Organization (JeCCDO) in Ethiopia. Today, JeCCDO is granting over \$3 million to smaller community-based organizations in Ethiopia. It joins 12 other successful community grantmakers that Firelight has enabled across eight countries – Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Lesotho, Malawi, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

But despite this commitment, we know that challenges exist. Many external donors look for outcomes that are programmatic or thematic, rather than holistic, making the argument for indigenous capacity building and indigenous philanthropy a complex one. Many communities in Africa have been the recipients of gifts from outside donors, making it hard to convince them that local communities can contribute to their own change. For many local communities, giving to an institution – like a CBO – is less familiar than giving directly to another individual. Community grantmakers might be strong, but they – like their grantees – need the right kind of networks, advice, training and information to be successful. Finally, we know first-hand that the sector is in need of demonstrable evidence that community-based solutions and the community contributions that fund them actually work.

Firelight is moving to a new phase of working with CBOs in Africa. We are building a theory and practice of support for indigenous CBOs. This work aims to contribute significantly to the growth of our grantees and to their effectiveness as systemic indigenous changemakers. It will also contribute to the global conversation around the effectiveness of community-based organizations and community-based solutions. One critical part of this will be support for community contributions and community philanthropy as a means of initiating and sustaining the measurable change that CBOs seek to make. Another will be the building of empirical evidence that community solutions and community contributions really do work to create sustainable and measurable change in the lives of children and youth. We will do this because of our unwavering belief that community philanthropy is an indispensable catalyst to the sustainable change in Africa that the world envisages through the Sustainable Development Goals. We believe in the power of community to seed, succeed, sustain, scale, shift systems and continue to affect children's lives long after we have gone. @

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A seat at the table for everyone **Ridgway White**

In today's super-connected society, major decisions are being made based on little credible information and even less meaningful relationships. Communication seems to be restricted to 140 characters or less. In turn, conflict and disagreements appear even more prevalent as private opinions are broadcast across social media. In these conditions, community philanthropy organizations are increasingly significant.



Ridgway White is president of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. Email info@mott.org

The wide array of organizations that make up this sector can serve as a meaningful connector for people to engage in their communities and make a difference – either by giving or by allowing a potential funder to see problems and solutions through the eyes of those they are trying to help.

While the Mott Foundation has steadfastly supported community philanthropy for more than 30 years, we're getting a first-hand look at its importance in our own backyard as we grapple with the water crisis in Flint, Michigan. When high levels of lead were discovered in the city's improperly treated drinking water and, as a result, turned up in the blood of many Flint children, it created the type of public health emergency that many of us had never encountered before. The Community Foundation of Greater Flint (CFGF) was among the first to rise to the challenge of leading the non-profit community's on-the-ground response. Along with stewarding several funds for individual donors, CFGF established the Flint Child Health and Development Fund to help ensure the charitable funds that have poured into the city are responsibly directed to addressing both the immediate and longer-term needs of the city's most vulnerable residents.

The fund, for which the Mott Foundation will match donations up to \$5 million through to the end of 2016, will support health, education and other social services for affected residents. What's more, grant decisions are made by an advisory committee of Flint residents.

While the issues vary and institutional models may look different in different places, the idea of people-led giving and development is universal.

This illustrates community philanthropy at its best – empowering local residents to play a role in community decision-making that creates lasting solutions to tough challenges.

The need for local people to come together to tackle big challenges

constantly arises in communities all over the world, which is why community philanthropy can be such a powerful tool in creating positive change on a global scale. While the issues vary and institutional models may look different in different places, the idea of people-led giving and development is universal. In a sense, community philanthropy is the great equalizer of the charitable sector – everyone can have a seat at the table.

Mott's support for community philanthropy has contributed to the spread of community foundations from about 800 in 1980 to more than 1,800 around the world today. Our focus going forward will not only be on growing the field, but on helping it mature in ways that will allow it to address many of today's global challenges through each community's experiences. Helping to build awareness and understanding, both inside and outside community philanthropy, will be key to garnering more support for the field and bringing it centre-stage.

While money and donors are important to solving the problems we seek to address, contributions come in many forms. Sharing our experiences and learning what works in communities around the world are also vital. From smaller, focused efforts like giving circles, to online platforms like GlobalGiving that make it possible for non-profits everywhere to access the tools and training they need to be more effective, Mott supports efforts that provide the space for meaningful exchange and connection.

A couple of years ago, we all proudly celebrated the 100th anniversary of community foundations as an idea that has stood the test of time. I'm looking forward to seeing how community philanthropy will help the world better face the challenges of the next century. @

Ridgway White and a young student celebrate the opening of an early education centre in Flint, Michigan.

