



More than the  
Poor Cousin?  
The emergence  
of community  
foundations as a  
new development  
paradigm  
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& Barry Knight



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## **Introduction**

This paper sets out findings from a baseline study of 50 applications for grants from the Global Fund for Community Foundations. The paper uses information gained from the processes of assessing the grants to learn lessons about the state of the field, what it can contribute in terms of outcomes and impact, and hypotheses in taking forward work of this nature.

The paper suggests that community philanthropy may have an important role to play in creating a new paradigm for development. This paper is based on a cohort of grantees that will be followed up as part of evaluation work by the Global Fund for Community Foundations.

## Summary

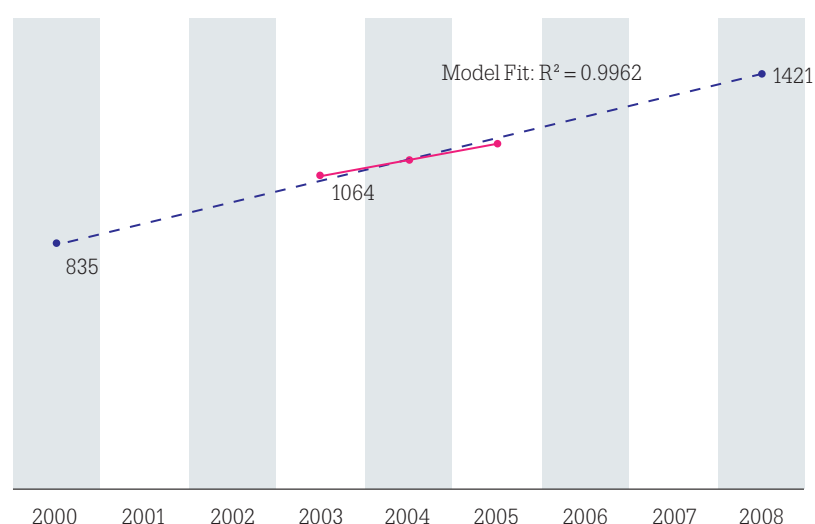
Community philanthropy has long been regarded as the 'poor cousin' within the wider world of philanthropy. But this needs to change. Our report argues that community philanthropy and community foundations, far from being marginal, are now emerging as key building blocks in the broader field of international development.

It has long been suggested that communities should be centrally involved in their own development. This view emerged in the 1940s as colonial powers began to plan to transfer power to emerging states, and found full expression in the 1960s during the 'War on Poverty' in America when the leitmotif was 'maximum feasible participation'. The theory was that local people needed to own development programmes and have trust in the institutions that delivered aid; otherwise 'cold bureaucracies' would govern development.

Unfortunately, the idea of 'community' has been subject to changing fashions in development practice and has never taken firm root. This is in part because it is a hard idea to implement, with a lack of clarity about the terms used, difficulty in finding robust community organisations to deliver programmes, and poor understanding about how to measure impact. For these reasons, everyone pays lip service to the idea of 'community' but almost no one acts on it. However, without the engagement of the community, the evidence is that top-down programmes fail to deliver lasting benefits.

This paper seeks to document a significant development – the emergence over 15 years of community foundations in a range of diverse low and middle-income contexts from the Global South – from Brazil to Thailand and from South Africa to Azerbaijan. The evidence gathered from these foundations – admittedly a small group – points to the growing relevance of locally formulated community development. This marks a shift away from the top-down strategies of many government and international aid programmes towards 'people-led development'.

### Growth in Community Foundations



The growth of community foundations across the world is shown in the chart 'Growth in Community Foundations'. The trend analysis shows that growth is stable and that, on average, 70 new community foundations are formed each year.<sup>1</sup> The total number has more than doubled globally in a decade.

The community foundation field in the Global South and in the emerging economies of Eastern Europe is still relatively young and small in financial terms. However, this research suggests that this emerging sector offers some powerful insights into increasing community trust, encouraging citizen participation, tackling issues of social justice, and augmenting the role of community assets. If these processes were applied systematically, this could result in a new paradigm for international development.

## Sources of data

This report draws on three main sources of evidence:

- 1** The Global Fund for Community Foundations' experience of four years of making small grants (U.S. \$5,000 to \$50,000) to 121 community foundations, other local grantmakers, philanthropy support organizations and associations in 41 countries across Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Eastern Europe;
- 2** Outcomes of past formative and summative evaluations conducted on the Global Fund for Community Foundation's grantmaking from 2006–2008;
- 3** Provisional and empirical data drawn from a new strategy for data collection that the Global Fund for Community Foundations piloted during its 2009 grant round. Basic 'demographic' data was collected from application forms on the 49 community foundations and support organizations that were invited to submit full applications.<sup>2</sup> Applicants were also invited to consider the outcomes of their work by ranking priorities across a range of indicators developed by the Global Fund for Community Foundations. This was followed with in-depth interviews with 37 organizations (including both successful grantees as well as organizations whose applications were declined).

We are aware that, in relation to the wider field of community philanthropy, the data is biased towards smaller and southern-based organizations. However, this paper is a first step in a wider effort already being planned by us to gain more systematic information about the field. Although the data is provisional, it is also illuminating of trends taking place within the field, most notably in the Global South.

## Defining the territory

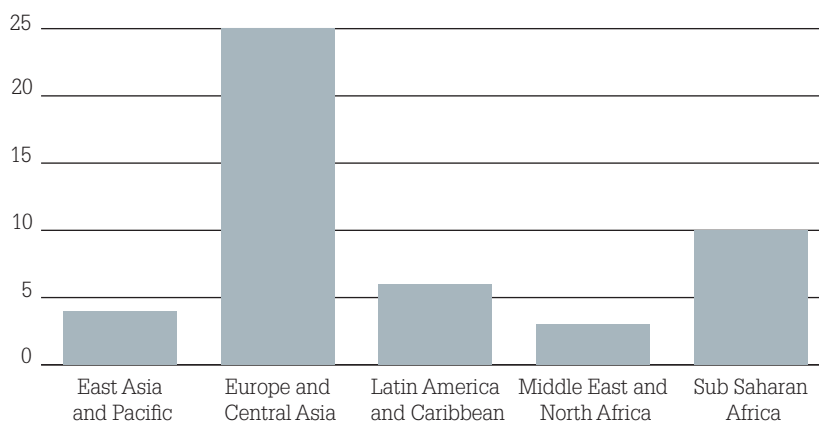
Broadly speaking, the organizations surveyed in this paper fall into four main clusters:

- 1** Community foundations: established (sometimes with international support and sometimes not) with deliberate reference to some particular universal community foundation 'principles' and normally adapted to the local context;
- 2** Indigenous, often national, grantmaking foundations: established largely with international funding and which are exploring the promotion of local philanthropy as a strategy both for long-term sustainability and also to enhance their local legitimacy and ownership;
- 3** Initiatives that can be described as 'community foundation-like' in nature: they possess similar characteristics and values to community foundations, which seek either to build on pre-existing cultures of leadership and philanthropy or existing activities through a community foundation 'lens';
- 4** A small number (7) of philanthropy support organizations (mostly membership associations), active in community foundation development in a specific country or region.

The cohort is very diverse in terms of age, size and local context. Despite this diversity, all of the organizations shared the same combination of a core set of functions, which include grantmaking, local philanthropy development, and a complex set of community 'bridge-building' roles under a single institutional roof.

## Location

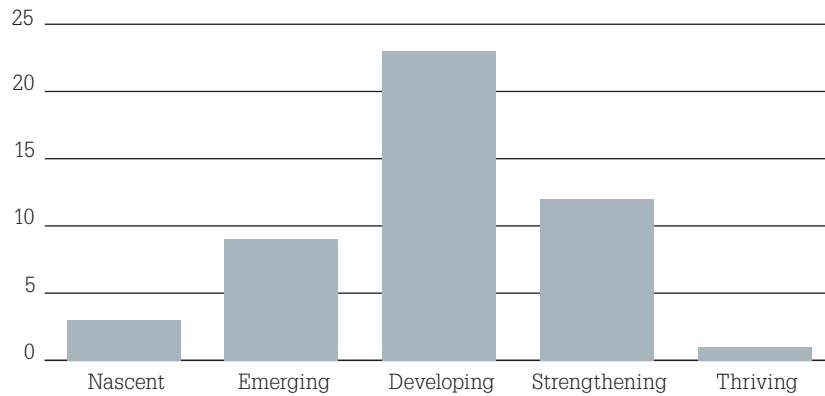
The geographic distribution of grantees is shown in the following chart.



## Young and small

The community foundations surveyed in this research were all established after 1992, the median age was four years, and three-fifths of them were five years old or less.<sup>3</sup>

Foundations were asked to say how they saw their stage of development. Results are displayed in the chart.

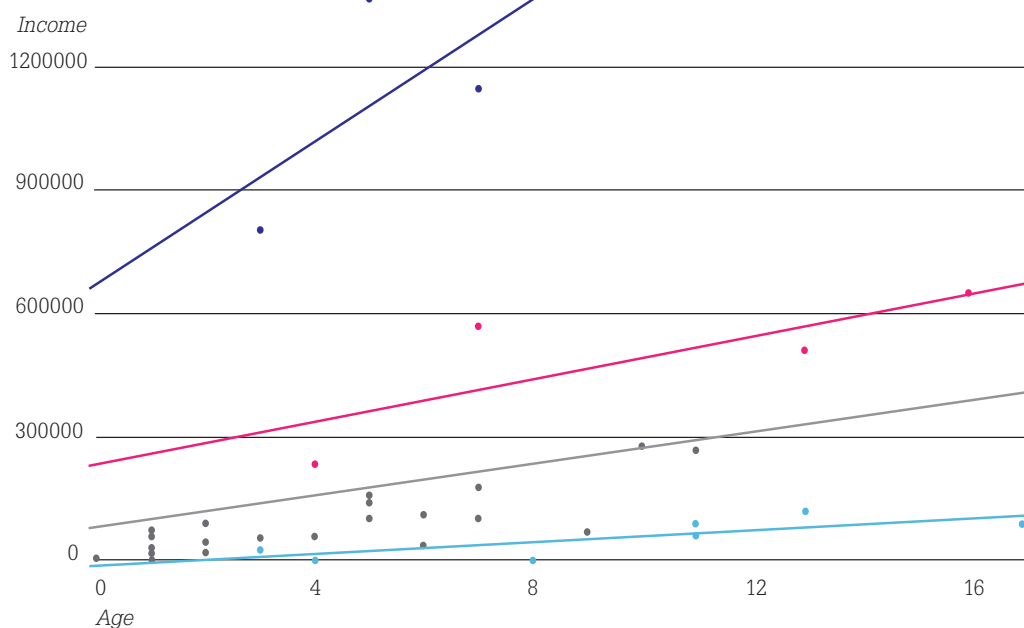


It is clear from the chart that foundations saw themselves in the early stages of development.

In addition to being young, these community foundations were also relatively modest in financial terms. With the exception of a handful of organizations with an annual income that exceeded U.S. \$750,000–\$1 million, three-quarters received less than \$155,000 in income, and half less than \$65,000. One quarter had incomes of less than \$23,000.

There was a statistically significant relationship between the length of time an organisation had been in existence and its level of income but the effect of age on income was not a big factor.

## Age and Income



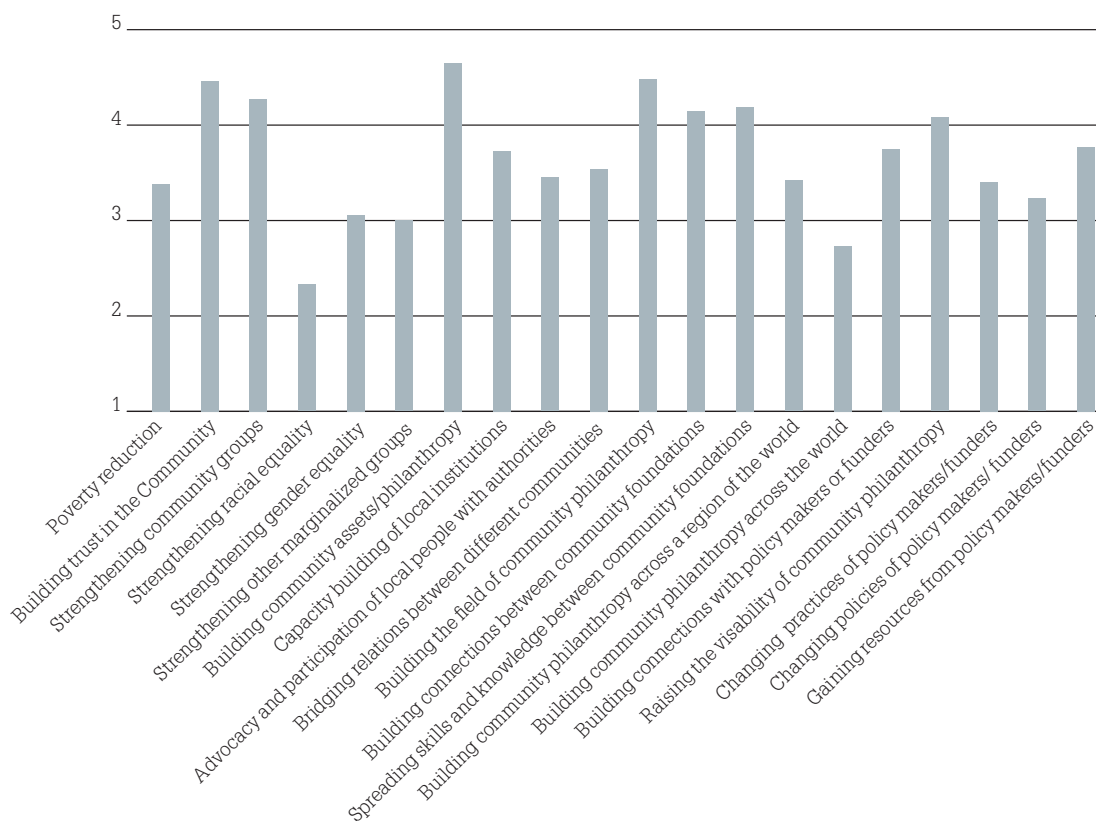


This can be seen in the following scatter plot. Each dot represents a foundation, plotted by age on one axis and income in 2009 on the other. The overall trend is shown in the black line, which shows a slow and gradual increase. However, this gradual increase masks dramatic variations – with the dark blue line showing a high trajectory, the red line an above average trajectory and the light blue line showing a group of organizations that make little gain in income over time.

## Size isn't everything; it's the functions that matter

We found that the size of a community foundation was less important than the roles it plays in the community. We asked people to assess the roles that they played, giving a score to how important it was<sup>4</sup>. Results are shown in the following chart. Scores are mean ratings on a five-point scale where 1 is 'very low' and 5 is 'very high'.

### Importance of different functions



It is noteworthy that all the items in the highest quintile of scores (all those rated 4 or above) include the word 'community', while none of those in the lowest quintile (scores of 3.25 or less) do. It is clear that the key functions for foundations in this community focus on issues like building trust, solidarity, assets and capacity within communities.

These findings were confirmed in interviews with the organizations. Although grantmaking was a key activity for almost all of the organizations interviewed – and one that tended to distinguish them from other civil society organizations in their community – most saw their key role as maximising the assets of their community.

## Building active communities

A core and defining role for the community foundations was to build links between different parts of the community, to foster public trust and to stimulate a culture of local philanthropy. In performing these roles, interviewees working in community foundations saw their work as being about encouraging people to become more active in their own development, driven by a sense that 'people can do things for themselves'. They also spoke of how they sought to overcome high levels of apathy and civic disengagement in their communities by 'getting people to take charge of their lives', as one put it.

By emphasising the role of local giving as a resource for local community initiatives, community foundations often found themselves challenging local mindsets in quite radical ways, particularly in overcoming the perception of the community always as the receiver. This was especially the case in contexts where international aid had created a culture of dependency, as well as in the former countries of the Eastern Bloc where the state had traditionally played a presiding or top-down role. Some encouraged grantees to raise matching funding as a way of increasing local ownership and a sense of self-reliance – or, in the words of one respondent, 'changing the way they see themselves and each other'.

Many foundations also saw an important role in demonstrating that effective institutions could strengthen community relations and local development initiatives. In contexts where public trust was absent or had been eroded by corruption, this was as much about restoring faith in institutions. In other cases, organizations were exploring ways in which new institutional forms might be introduced and shaped to complement traditional culture. One organization working with indigenous communities in Latin America was seeking to introduce a community foundation as a way of increasing awareness of the value of institutional structures with its community. In another instance in Central Asia, the institutional form of a community foundation had been established as an effective management tool *within* traditional structures of governance and cultures of giving.

Most community foundations stressed the importance of their role as independent local funders, free from the influence of any particular donor or interest group. That perception of independence was also mentioned by many who saw themselves as playing a unique role in connecting and convening different parts of the community. Many described how this role as 'community facilitator' was not necessarily one that they had initially actively sought, but had rather come to them as they had begun to build their own local constituencies as grantmakers and local fundraisers. Small grants to different parts of the community had enabled community foundations to develop trusting relationships with local organizations and groups and build up a knowledge base of local needs as well as the capacities of local groups. This – along with the effective and transparent handling of funds – also increased their credibility among other parts of the community (including government, local donors and the public as a whole) and strengthened their position as natural 'bridge-builders'. One described their community foundation as 'the organization that people come to'. A young community foundation in South East Asia said 'we are known as convenors for difficult problems'.

## Involving the community

Community buy-in was regarded as central to the work of all of those surveyed. In the words of one organization, 'You can't be a community foundation if the community is not engaged with you'. However, the combination of an emerging field and the low prevalence of community foundations meant that public awareness was low, and many organizations described how hard it was to explain themselves to the community. Concepts such as 'philanthropy' could be difficult to convey, particularly when there was a historical distrust of the term (such as in former Socialist countries where it was associated with compulsory charitable contributions or 'mandatory volunteering') or in contexts where traditions of giving and mutual aid (such as burial societies and savings 'merry-go-rounds') formed a crucial social safety net in poor communities and yet were not generally considered as 'development' funding. The practice of grantmaking was also often regarded as something new and more commonly associated with the programmes of large international NGOs.

Despite these obstacles, almost all (96 per cent) community foundations had deployed a range of strategies aimed at promoting different forms of participation, including proactive grantmaking strategies to reach informal or marginalized groups, public fundraising or volunteering events and participation in community foundation's decision-making mechanisms (including grants committees etc.). Other strategies used by community foundations to listen to, learn from and build confidence in their community included NGO forums, youth banks, community consultations, village level meetings and community monitoring systems. In a number of cases, the notion of 'community' was itself a contested concept: this was particularly the case for those community foundations whose main constituency were populations that were marginalized by the broader 'community'. It also arose as an issue in other contexts where economic or social pressures sometimes led to a narrowing of the definition of community.

All those surveyed stressed the importance of community involvement in the different aspects of their work. However, this did not always translate into their governance structures. Only 57 per cent had an open selection process for board members and 50 per cent had fixed terms for board members. One explanation for the apparent weakness in this area is that most of the organizations in the cohort were still only getting established. During the crucial and vulnerable start-up phase, during which the community foundation established its credentials, the support of a small, hand-picked board comprised of respected individuals – often from within the founder's extended networks – who broadly understood the concept and lent legitimacy to the foundation, was essential. As long as the community foundation was engaging with the community in the other aspects of its operations, a strategically selected board could support and protect the space which the organization was seeking to carve out for itself while it built awareness and acceptance within the broader community. Several organizations with a hand-picked board during the start-up phase were preparing for a transition towards a board which was more balanced and reflective of the broader community.

On the subject of boards, it is noteworthy that there were several instances where community foundations had been established through some form of externally facilitated process – often with international funding support – and where governance structures tended to be more formally organized but where the community foundation was still struggling to find its direction because of the diversity of experiences and understanding within its theoretically representative board.

## Community foundations and social justice

Our data shows that community foundations are building social capital in the communities they serve – the common threads of promoting citizen engagement and increasing community trust appear consistently.

Our survey also investigated the extent to which community foundations took on structural or deep-rooted issues of social justice. We asked questions about how grantees understood the meaning of ‘social justice’, whether it was a term in common use, whether it had unfortunate connotations, and if so what alternatives they used. We also used a methodology being developed by the Working Group on Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace.<sup>5</sup> The Working Group suggests that ‘social justice’ is too general an idea to be meaningful unless it is analysed in terms of specific traditions of thought such as ‘human rights’ or ‘structural transformation’.<sup>6</sup> From this, analysis we derived six specific statements for social justice (without using that label) and asked how well they fitted the outcome of the work of the foundation on a five-point scale.

It was clear that for 17.6 per cent of those interviewed, the term ‘social justice’ carried certain unfortunate connotations and interpretations that made its use problematic. This was particularly so in post-Socialist contexts where it was associated with Communist ideology which posited the social (state collective) versus the individual. At the same time, even where ‘social justice’ did not carry negative overtones, a majority of people (58.8 per cent) preferred to use another term. While many respondents felt comfortable understanding and applying the term within certain circles (community foundation peers and networks, international funders etc), most felt that it might be too abstract to be usefully applied in regard to immediate needs or that there was a danger of its use being potentially divisive or overtly political among different elements of the community. One interviewee summed this up:

‘We don’t use the term ‘social justice’ directly, but it’s an important principle behind our work. People would link the term with politics which is not very productive in our country and we must be careful to be non partisan.’

Notwithstanding doubts about language, when it came to the substance of the work on social justice, people typically scored highly on six statements derived from the work of the Working Group on Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace. These are displayed in the following table. Scores are on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 is low and 5 is high).

<i>Criterion of social justice</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>StDev</i>
Structures that ensure equal distribution of outcomes of public and private goods	3.58	1.23
All people have security within a framework of rights	3.71	1.35
Marginal groups are protected through the rule of law	3.74	1.21
Individuals and groups have the power to have a say on issues that affect them	4.39	0.88
All cultures recognise that their norms do not dominate others	3.58	1.2
The market operates in ways that benefit all	3.48	0.89

It is striking that the highest score is 'Individuals and groups have the power to have a say on issues that affect them'. This connects with our earlier findings about increasing the power of community.

It is noteworthy that a high score on one of the six criteria predicts a high score on all of the rest.<sup>7</sup> This means that there is a coherent underlying concept behind these six items – which people might call social justice or something else, but does seem to be consistent with the ideas of social justice. Further analysis suggests that there are two underlying concepts among the community foundations in this cohort. There is one group that stresses security, rights, law, participation, and tolerance, and a second group of foundations that stresses structures that ensure equal outcomes and that the market should work for all. The first of these groups appears to be most interested in social factors and the second economic factors.<sup>8</sup>

## Small grants as a development tool

Small grants were one way in which community foundations could provide visibility to NGOs and other community-based groups among business and corporate sectors in an open and transparent way. Grants frequently went hand in hand with a range of other activities, including capacity building, strengthening community leadership etc. – and were merely a means to an end rather than an end in themselves.

Most of the organizations had only small amounts of funding available for grantmaking and so their grants were correspondingly small. Taking the range of grants from smallest to largest, the median was from \$350 to \$2,500. The 25th percentile was from \$110 to \$1,000 and the 75th percentile from \$700 to \$12,850.

However, this was not necessarily a disadvantage. Many of the small groups that community foundations were supporting had never received grant funds before and would have struggled to absorb large amounts. The process of applying for and administering a small grant was in itself a developmental one for many community organizations. Even if transaction costs were higher than with small grants they could be seen as longer-term investments. One respondent described how their small grants had provided a number of informal groups with the opportunity to formalize their activities to the point where they were then able to source their own funds directly without the community foundation. Others emphasised the empowering effects that small grants could have in building local ownership for projects, as well as the importance of unrestricted funding: in the words of one respondent 'It's only after getting funding that they figure out what they want to do'.

Similarly, the use of small grants with simple and accessible reporting requirements, alongside a range of other capacity building supports, also meant it was possible to develop more horizontal, less hierarchical, relationships with grantee partners that were based on more than just money. One respondent saw their organization's accessibility and proximity to the groups they served as a key part of their identity: they were not funders to 'be afraid of'. Small grants also served as effective strategy for bridging what was often a disconnect between people and more mainstream types of development. Several respondents described how large projects of the kind normally implemented by the next level up of professional NGOs often seemed abstract and remote to local communities.

## Funding and fundraising

Although the overall funding sources of this cohort of organizations varied significantly, all were engaged in developing a local donor base at some level. At one end of the spectrum were a cluster of professionally run organizations, established and still funded by international donors, who were seeking to develop a local donor constituency as a strategy both to ensure their long-term financial sustainability (particularly when international donors were already discussing exit strategies) and to increase local ownership. At the other end, were those more grassroots initiatives, established entirely on local contributions (and for whom the Global Fund for Community Foundations was the first and only international funder), which tended to be less formally run and which struggled with the challenge of balancing significant needs with limited resources. Most community foundations fell into a 'middle' group, having had success in attracting a mixture of both local and international support.

The following table shows the importance of different kinds of funding support. It identifies international, national or local government, corporate, individual and other sources and relates these to the proportion of the budget met by each kind of funding in 39 of the organisations in this study.

### Proportion of budget met by from different types of funding

<i>Funding source</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>1–24%</i>	<i>25–49%</i>	<i>50–74%</i>	<i>75% or more</i>	<i>Total</i>
International	8	6	11	6	8	39
National or local government	18	15	0	4	2	39
Corporate	10	18	7	2	2	39
Individuals	5	28	3	2	1	39
Other	21	14	1	3	0	39

Note: numbers in the table are numbers of organisations falling into the category. N = 39

Regardless of size or context, organizations faced many of the same challenges when it came to raising money locally. One reason for this was the novelty of the community foundation concept, both in terms of its aspirations and functions. In the same way that grantmaking was often not established as common practice, community foundations that were seeking to build endowment funds also had difficulty explaining the concept. An endowment can ensure a community foundation's long-term sustainability and independence, a resource that can be drawn upon to responding to the changing needs of a community. However, convincing local donors to contribute to endowment funds, where donations would be invested and only a tiny percentage earned in interest would be spent, was a difficult task for many. As one respondent from Southern Africa put it, people's reaction was often one of: 'Why grow endowment funds, when there is poverty today?'

Slightly fewer than half of the organizations had established an endowment (22 of 49). The size of the endowments tended to be small. The median was \$32,500, the inter-quartile range was \$13,750 to \$107,000, and the largest was \$927,000.

A country's past also helped to shape current attitudes and assumptions towards local philanthropy and fund raising. For example, the notion of organized philanthropy as a space for personal action was particularly difficult to inculcate in contexts with a historic dependency on the state or on international development aid as a key source of basic provisions. The director of a young community foundation in East Africa described how, although members of the community were used to contributing for specific events such as weddings and funerals, when asked to contribute for an issue such as vulnerable children, people saw this as the responsibility of the state. Another mentioned the challenge of shifting mindsets in their local context where there was a heavy reliance on foreign aid, where the community had become 'accustomed to think of itself as a receiver, undervaluing its own resources'. However, history, culture and religion also offered more positive philanthropic experiences, which many community foundations sought to draw upon or revive in their efforts to foster local giving. In South-East Asia, for example, one emerging community foundation described how 'people will volunteer partly out of altruism but also because they receive 'goodness' in Buddhist philosophy'.

The issue of trust – or mistrust – was another major obstacle to building a local donor constituency. In their attempts to raise local money, many community foundations initially struggled to overcome doubts as to their motives. Again, past experiences of organized philanthropy in post-Communist states often led to a profound public scepticism as to the motives behind new attempts to re-activate it. Similarly, in contexts where corruption was high, there was often an overriding distrust of institutions of all kinds as non-transparent, self-serving and open to abuse.

Unsurprisingly perhaps, given the lack of familiarity with the notion of institutionalised philanthropy, many potential local donors – if they were inclined to give at all – preferred to give to causes directly rather than through what they regarded as a costly intermediary. As one Eastern European community foundation explained 'people don't understand the need for a professional organization and hate giving for administrative costs.' In many cases, community foundations found themselves in a Catch 22 situation. It was hard to raise money for grantmaking because potential donors wanted to know exactly where their money was going and yet without these funds community foundations were hard-pressed to make the kinds of grants to very concrete, visible community projects that could demonstrate the effectiveness of the approach. As 'second level' organizations (i.e. one step removed from direct project beneficiaries) it was also sometimes hard to be directly associated with any project success. However, many understood that it would take time to build up the kind of trusting relationships that might lead to the development of a diverse donor base and had developed interim strategies aimed at bridging the distance between goals – such as first getting people involved in the activities of the community foundation, by contributing their time as volunteers, or else presenting pre-selected projects to potential funders. Others saw it simply as a question of slowly building up awareness and trust in the community and of leading by example. One foundation director described how he himself had worked as a volunteer for the first two years and this had helped convince people that his motives were not suspect. In the words of another: 'people need a push to start changing attitudes . . . Trust is very important: it can only come if you do what you promise to do.'

For those community foundations working with minority groups, there was often a particular challenge associated with raising local money from the broader community.

In Eastern and Central Europe, for example, the issue of the Roma was one for which it was very difficult to attract local money; another 'difficult' issue was that of illegal immigrants; in other regions, community foundations working with 'invisible' communities (particularly indigenous communities) faced similar challenges when it came to approaching local donors. In such cases, community foundations often relied on the availability of international– and sometimes diaspora – funds in order to be able to address the issue at all.

For many community foundations, the most likely form of early support was from local business, if they could be convinced of the value of working with a community foundation as a way of relieving them of the administrative burden and of their funds being deployed more effectively. Although attracting donations from individuals was a challenge in most contexts, many of those interviewed stressed the importance this kind of support in guaranteeing true community ownership of the foundation. One respondent described how public philanthropy should not be regarded as 'a boutique' of 'elitist jewellery' but rather a 'consumer good . . . accessible at a supermarket'.

## Conclusions

Our study suggests several promising lines for further enquiry and development. We state these here as propositions for further testing.

- 1** Community foundations may be a missing piece in the jigsaw of international development. There is a growing debate about aid reaching the parts of society for which it is intended. Money from international agencies is subject to capture by elites, so that money fails to reach the grassroots. Community foundations offer a mechanism for reaching those most in need, while offering local leadership, ownership and accountability.
- 2** Community foundations develop 'trust' as one of their leading concerns. This is a vital component in addressing poverty. People who feel disengaged from each other and distrustful of their institutions are unlikely to be able to combat poverty in their communities. There is increasing understanding of the role of attitudes and behaviour in communities, seeing the idea of 'community outlook' as a key feature in successful development.
- 3** There is a particular value in local money. Even if amounts are small, it is important that local people contribute their own resources to the solution of their problems. Community development is about much more than money and yet small amounts of money are immensely valuable.
- 4** Finally, by making small grants and building relationships with grassroots organisations, community foundations can play a role in enabling the voices of local people, including the poor, to be heard. Although the majority of community foundations in this cohort disliked the language of 'social justice', their strongest of their ambitions was to enable 'individuals and groups have the power to have a say on issues that affect them'.



## What next?

We are conscious that this is a small and limited piece of work. We plan to continue this research by deepening our understanding of the current cohort of grantees as they move forward, and also by adding in new cohorts as they come on stream.

We also wish to engage people in discussions and invite you to send comments on this paper to Jenny Hodgson at [jenny@globalfundcf.org](mailto:jenny@globalfundcf.org).

## Footnotes

**1** The trend analysis, based on five data points reported in five *Community Foundation Global Status Reports* from 2000 to 2008 ([www.wingsweb.org](http://www.wingsweb.org)).

**2** One organisation was invited to submit two proposals for different projects, so the total number of applications was for 50 projects from 49 organisations.

**3** The first community foundations outside North America and Western Europe were established in the mid-1990s, in Eastern Europe, Mexico and South Africa.

**4** The choice of indicators was derived from the summative evaluation of the work of the Global Fund for Community Foundations (2006–8). The indicators were chosen from a variety of sources, including the literature on social capital and World Bank evaluations of development projects. There were three main type of indicator chosen, each relating to one of the goals of the Global Fund for Community Foundations. The first type of indicator measured the impact on particular localities. The second measured the building of the field of community philanthropy on a regional or global basis. The third measure the impact on policies and practices of policy makers and resource holders.

**5** In 2007, the Working Group on Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace was convened by Christopher Harris, who was then Senior Programme Officer for Philanthropy at the Ford Foundation, to promote thinking and build consensus about the meaning of philanthropy for social justice and peace, to identify (new or existing) tools to assess with greater effectiveness the impact of our work, and to deepen and expand the network of individuals interested in seeing philanthropic foundations increase and improve their support for work that promotes structural transformation for justice. See <http://p-sj.org/node/68>.

**6** Ruesga, G.A. and Puntteney, D. (March 2010). *Social Justice Philanthropy: An Initial Framework for Positioning this Work*. Working Group for Philanthropy for Social Justice & Peace

**7** Chronbach's Alpha = 0.73

**8** These findings were based on principal components analysis using varimax factor rotation. Despite the small numbers, the results were clear and the two factors explained two-thirds of the variance.



The Global Fund for Community Foundations (GFCF) is a grassroots grantmaker working to promote and support institutions of community philanthropy around the world. It works with individual community foundations and other local grantmakers and their networks with a focus on low- and middle-income countries. Through small grants, technical support and convenings the GFCF helps these local institutions to strengthen and grow so that they can fulfil their potential as vehicles for local development which is community-driven.

In developing its grantmaking model, the Global Fund for Community Foundations has integrated evaluation with its administrative systems, so that all procedures involved in making the grants yield evaluation data. The GFCF would like to acknowledge the support of the following donors in 2009–2010 without whom this report – and the work behind it – would not have been possible:

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