

Community Foundations & Social Change: Understanding Philanthropy Through Community Foundations in South Africa

Annsilla Nyar, Fellow, International Fellows Program ~ 2002

Abstract

The paper examines the advent of a new kind of philanthropy in South Africa influenced by the community foundation model. The context is the rapidly changing cultural, political and socio-economic landscape of the post-apartheid order in South Africa. Key issues include: what community foundations in South Africa can learn from the experience of others; whether the community foundation model is replicable or easily transferable to fundamentally different philanthropic environments; and how a culture of voluntarism and social responsibility can be nurtured and promoted in South Africa. The research draws on semi-structured interviews with a range of North American philanthropic agencies, community foundations and grantmaking institutions, as well as an exploration of several Southern models including the Foundation for Community Development in Mozambique and the Western Region Foundation in Zimbabwe. Ms. Nyar addresses issues of partnerships, tax and legal considerations, and organizational structures. She argues that community foundations have the potential to change traditional conceptions of philanthropy in South Africa to a more progressive and people-oriented understanding of philanthropic giving. Finally, she indicates that the research feeds into a broader three-year research project into the state of "giving" in South Africa currently in progress at the Centre for Civil Society at the University of Natal, Durban.

To request the full version of the paper, please click [here](#)

