

The Role of Community Foundations in Promoting Diaspora Philanthropy: A Case Study of Kenya Community Development Foundation

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Abstract

Catherine Kiganjo examines the role of U.S. community foundations in promoting diaspora philanthropy. She highlights the role community foundations in Kenya play in poverty reduction, sustainable development and social justice.

Focusing on members of the Kenyan diaspora living in the United States, Ms. Kiganjo suggests that these individuals represent untapped financial resources that may be channeled through community foundations to assist and improve communities back home. She presents Kenya Community Development Foundation as an example of a well-established community foundation, which seeks to promote a philanthropic framework in Kenya and provide a working model to test the effectiveness of giving by members of the African diaspora. The foundation has recently established a "Friends of KCDF" entity in the United States to support community development in Kenya.

Ms. Kiganjo's research reveals that there is inadequate information on diaspora philanthropy in the African continent. She argues that there is need to establish a demographic profile and evaluate the Kenyan diaspora's philanthropic potential. Among the recommendations she offers are:

- develop the culture of organized giving among the Kenyan diaspora by promoting models that exist in the United States;
- educate the diaspora about how endowments at Kenya Community Development Foundation promote sustainable development;
- collaborate with existing organizations such as diplomatic missions and the Kenyan community abroad;
- maximize the use of information technology to inform the diaspora about on-the-ground efforts by KCDF and others;
- promote cause-related marketing (for donor-advised funds and endowments);
- identify and review the regulatory requirements to ensure that communities in the diaspora are aware of new legal or political developments that could have an impact on fundraising efforts; and
- ensure that recipient organizations are transparent and accountable in the utilization of public funds.

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