



Welcome to the latest Global Fund for Community Foundations e-bulletin!

In this issue we have a special focus on different ways community foundations around the world are tackling local environmental issues and climate change.

News from the Global Fund for Community Foundations

Africa Philanthropy Symposium: view video clips on YouTube

In May last year, the GFCF and TrustAfrica, co-hosted a convening on the shores of Lake Naivasha, Kenya, with the aim of stimulating discussion and debate around philanthropy and its emerging trends across the African continent. The meeting was filmed and recorded and a web discussion was launched on the TrustAfrica website. Clips of the meeting are now available to view on YouTube (click [here](#)) and, after some “teething problems” with the website, we now re-invite readers to participate in our web discussion in African philanthropy via the following [link](#).

Save the date! Special pre-conference session at the EFC AGA: “Life after the Community Philanthropy Initiative (CPI): what next for European and global philanthropy networks?”

GFCF and the CEE Trust (Trust for Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe) will be hosting a special pre-conference event at the EFC AGA in Rome on **May 13th** for a brainstorming session to explore options for reviving a community philanthropy network in Europe and what its function might be. The session will be open to representatives of community foundations, their associations and other community philanthropy organizations. For further information contact Vadim Samorodov at GFCF (Vadim@wings-globalfund.org) or Monika Pisankaneva (m.pisankaneva@ceetrust.org).

Special Feature: Community foundations and climate change - connecting global issues with local realities

The effects of global climate change are becoming increasingly apparent around the world, with changing weather patterns resulting in more frequent and severe storms as well as prolonged periods of drought. What is also becoming apparent is that the adverse impacts of climate change will not affect everyone equally and will fall hardest on those in poor communities the world over.

The GFCF supports emerging and established community foundations operating in many of those low and middle income countries which will feel the adverse effects of climate change most strongly and where populations will be least equipped to adapt. For this bulletin, we asked community foundation partners around the world how (and whether) they were responding to the challenge of the changing environment in the communities they serve.

Environmentally Active in Latin America

[Fondo de Estrategia Social AC's](#) (FASOL) is a local environmental grantmaker serving the Northwest region of Mexico (Gulf of California), a region which frequently falls victim to the devastating impact of hurricanes coming from the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean. In

the past FASOL has made grants to support local community-based organizations to become involved in the redevelopment of communities affected by hurricanes, including the introduction of eco-tourism as an alternative and environmentally sustainable source of income. Other grants have also supported the development of alternative and environmentally sustainable forms of income as well as raising awareness in communities around environmental preservation and the protecting natural resources. Carboneros de la Sierra, which received a grant from FASOL in 2006, is located in one of the poorest areas of Baja California Sur where the largest industry has traditionally been the production of charcoal from the local Mezquite tree, a practice which was threatening to wipe out the Mezquite altogether. FASOL supported an economic development project that focused on the production of arts and crafts to sell to tourists and to the public (including the knives shown in the photo, made from wood, leather and scrap metal).



A man putting finishing touches to a knife in Northwest Mexico. The development of an alternative source of income was supported by FASOL

Not only did the project lead to an end to charcoal production in that area, but the introduction of a new source of economic livelihood allowed local people to remain in their communities with a new awareness of the need to conserve the natural resources in their area.

In November 2008, the state of Santa Catarina, in Southern Brazil, witnessed the biggest environmental disaster the region had ever seen. Intensive rain and flooding caused severe landslides which resulted in 135 deaths and thousands of people losing their homes. In the days following the disaster, [Instituto Comunitario Grande Florianopolis \(ICOM\)](#), the only community foundation in Southern Brazil and established in 2005, started to receive requests for advice on

how best to help the victims of the disaster. Following a visit by ICOM staff to the region and meetings with local NGOs involved with the reconstruction effort, the decision was made to create a 'Community Fund for Reconstruction', which would enable individuals and organisations to contribute to the redevelopment efforts. So far, U.S.\$ 300,000 has been raised for the community fund, as ICOM has encouraged donors to invest together for greater impact. Another unexpected outcome from the creation of the Community Fund has been the development of a reconstruction plan for the region which has involved partnerships between the local government, businesses and NGOs.

The environment is also high on the agenda for [Instituto Rio](#), another Brazilian community foundation, which has adopted a set of principles for sustainable development. All of Instituto Rio's grantees have some kind of an environmental focus in their work, whether it is recycling as a source of income generation, increasing environmental awareness in the community or even working towards the proper maintenance of their local sewage systems. According to Candace Lessa, the President of Instituto Rio, the influx of migrants from the Northeast of Brazil to Rio de Janeiro has resulted in overpopulation, an over-burdened infrastructure and many other problems. Similarly, as deforestation increases in Brazil overpopulation in urban areas will only become more of a problem as people move from the countryside to the cities to look for work. For Instituto Rio, Candace says, 'there is no way to avoid facing and dealing with issues related to the environment'.

Investing in the future: raising youth awareness in Bosnia

The environment is an important issue for [Tuzla Community Foundation](#) in Bosnia and Herzegovina and one around which board members have been particularly active, organizing annual community action plans to raise awareness around and tackle local environmental issues. In 2008 the group introduced an annual spring fair, called 'Earth Day', which was aimed at involving the local community – and children and youth in particular - in environmental projects and clean up operations in the area.



Children in Bosnia – Herzegovina removing the remains of an old electricity station

Paying the price for the past and investing in the future: Kazakhstan

The environmental legacy that Kazakhstan inherited from the Soviet Union is a bleak one. A testing ground for nuclear weapons during the Cold War, with 30 uranium mines scattered across the country and once one of the largest producers of carbon emissions, scientists and environmentalists are predicting that some areas of Kazakhstan will not be able to support any form of wildlife by 2015.

In the face of this ecological disaster and amid growing public concern over the environment Enbekshikazakh Community Foundation (ECF), which was established as Kazakhstan's first community foundation in 2007, has begun to take a strong focus on the environment and particularly on raising awareness among children and young people. The region of Enbekshikazakh is a large tobacco growing area which employs many people and which comes with its own set of environmental issues: ECF has made a number of grants for summer "Ecological Tourism camps" for disadvantaged children whose parents work on tobacco plantations and for environmental and health education for young people.

The foundation has also supported climate change adaptation projects such as 'Sun in Service of Villagers', implemented by a women's environmental NGO where solar water heaters were introduced as an energy efficient way of producing hot water.

Food security and the issue of water: first steps in Africa

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Africa will experience some of the most severe effects of climate change. It is predicted that decreases in agricultural production and increased water stress could affect up to 250 million by 2020 because of climate change, although Africa itself is responsible for less than 4% of global carbon emissions. "Global Climate Change" may perhaps seem a distant problem on a continent already blighted by deep poverty and diseases such as malaria and the AIDS epidemic. Food security will become an increasingly important issue in Africa with changing weather patterns and increased drought: [Kenya Community Development Foundation](#) has set up a Food Security Fund which targets funding at drought-prone parts of Northern Kenya. In the Western Cape region of South Africa, water shortages present a particular problem, particularly in the northern area around Kliprand. [West Coast Community Foundation](#) plans to work with a local partner the Goegedacht Trust, to explore ways of supporting new and innovative technologies for water collection and preservation (in particular "fog catching" off the West Coast and "dry sanitation" systems) in this area.



Tuzla organized a project where children refurbished their own playground

Climate change: the importance of community leadership

On the other side of the world, community foundations are also responding to the issue of climate change. [Community Foundations of Canada](#) runs a national programme on Community Foundations and the Environment. According to Sara Lyons of CFC, Canadian community foundations are building on their grantmaking support for environmental organisations by providing environmental leadership as well. This has seen foundations act as conveners and educators, and the emergence of joint ecological projects between community foundations. The *Going Green* conferences, for example, bring together the youth councils from several different community foundations in order to deepen their knowledge and to develop environmental programmes. A particular issue around which ten community foundations have been active in highlighting and developing strategies for has been the environmental crisis facing Lake Winnipeg, the world's tenth largest freshwater lake.

With its multi-stakeholder composition, its commitment to improve the quality of life in a specific place, the experience and insights it brings as a local grantmaker, its ability to "reach deep" into communities and the many bridging and connecting roles that it can play, the local community foundation is indeed well-positioned to take on a leadership role around the environment, whether it is around preserving and appreciating it, supporting efforts to develop alternative and sustainable livelihoods, or even convening multiple voices to discuss policy change. Although several of those community foundations surveyed initially said "we don't do climate change", and some are certainly more pro-active on this topic than others, the reality is that there are few community foundations which **aren't** responding in some way to environmental issues in their community.

We would like to thank the following people for their contributions to this article:

Angelina Hodzic of Tuzla Community Foundation, Artemisa Castro of Fondo de Estrategia Social AC, Candace Lessa of Instituto Rio, Carolle Devonish of Anguilla Community Foundation, Alasdair Forbes of Phuket Community Foundation, Sara Lyons of Community Foundations of Canada, Lucia Dellagnelo of ICOM and Bakhytgul Elchibaeva of Enbekshikazakh Community Foundation.

Do you have a story to share about your foundation's methods in raising awareness about climate change or tackling existing ecological problems in your community? Send stories to: info@wings-globalfund.org

Community philanthropy news update

From Thailand to Egypt: exploring the community foundation concept in an Islamic context

Egypt and Thailand might not seem like an obvious fit for a peer exchange on community foundation development. However, for an initiative group from Satun, one of Thailand's Southern provinces where 68% of the population is Muslim, connecting with the recently established [Al Maadi Community Foundation](#) (Waqfeyat al Maadi al Ahleya) in Egypt, proved to be an interesting and productive match. In January a group of 10, which included members from the Satun Community Foundation and staff and consultants from the Centre for Philanthropy and Civil Society (CPCS) in Bangkok, spent 3 days in Egypt, meeting with Marwa el Daly, founder of Al Maadi, her colleagues, and members of Egyptian civil society organizations.



The Thai study group with members of Al Maadi Community Foundation in Egypt

Satun Community Foundation is still in the early stages of formation and was interested in learning about Al Maadi Community Foundation, which is seeking to adapt and revive the concept of endowment or *waqf* as a means of sustaining the work of development NGOs in the Maadi area. Before establishing the foundation, Marwa had conducted extensive research on giving patterns in Egypt, both religious and secular. In Satun, a similar process of mapping giving patterns within the community is currently underway with support from

the CPCS (who also sponsored the visit), aimed at determining the feasibility of establishing some kind of local philanthropic entity there. The Thai group were also interested in learning more about the role of Al Maadi's board, their organisational governance and general administration.

According to Sutthana Vichitrananda, from the CPCS, the legal framework in Egypt is more conducive to community foundation development than in Thailand (where there are no tax deductions for and little familiarity with the community foundation concept at government level). Similarly, while 90% of Egyptians are Muslim, in Thailand Muslims are very much a minority (less than 5% of the total population) and their needs may not always be catered to by government. However, what was also striking in terms of the operating environment was the high level of control that the Egyptian Government exerts over the philanthropic sector, compared with a comparative freedom in Thailand. Sutthana was also impressed by the high level of professionalism among Egyptian philanthropic organizations

In an introductory presentation, Marwa el Daly gave a brief presentation on the background of philanthropy in Egypt, describing how philanthropy is generally regarded as "charity" rather than "development." Giving is done primarily hand to hand, most usually to relatives or neighbours. The Thai group found Marwa's description of the Islamic 'Waqf' model very helpful. Waqf is similar to a trust law or endowment where property or assets can be left to or reserved for an individual or an organisation, and it is the cornerstone of Islamic philanthropy.



The medical centre located inside the mosque. This project was initiated by Al Jamia El Shariya, a grantee of Al Maadi CF

The group also had an opportunity to visit some of Al Maadi's grantees. Particularly inspiring, and closest to the work of the Satun group, was Al Jamia El Shariya. Their project was based around the function of the local mosque as more than a place to practice faith but as the centre of the community. The mosque contains a health facility, pharmacy, small gym, a home for the elderly and an orphanage and is entirely supported by local community volunteers and local businesses. The Satun group took this idea back to Thailand and are planning on implementing

something similar themselves.

We would like to thank Sutthana Vichitrananda of the Centre for Philanthropy and Civil Society and Marwa el Daly of Al Maadi Community Foundation for their contributions to this article.

“The poor philanthropist”: launch of two new publications – “new approaches” and a “practice-relevant guide for community philanthropy”

On February 16th, two follow-up pieces to *The Poor Philanthropist* by Susan Wilkinson-Maposa and Alan Fowler were launched in Cape Town. They are the products of a six-year project conducted out of the University of Cape Town, Graduate School of Business to research philanthropic traditions and practice among the poor in southern Africa. “New approaches to sustainable development” documents the lessons and insights generated by the research around the application of a community lens to deepen and improve the practice of community grantmaking in South and southern Africa and “A practice-relevant guide for community philanthropy” introduces new instruments that allow community foundations and trusts to appreciate existing assets in a community, determine the equity that a community brings to the grantmaking table, explore whether a grant supports or distorts the local norms of self-help and to assess their interventions.

The publications are also available as pdf files. For further information, contact Susan Wilkinson-Maposa (susanwil@gsb.uct.ac.za).

Council on Foundations’ Survey Reveals that Donor Advised Funds Provide the Majority of Community Foundation Grants

A recent survey conducted by the Council on Foundations in conjunction with the Community Foundations Leadership Team highlights the importance of donor advised funds as a vehicle for philanthropic giving in the US. The report draws on information from 137 community foundations that held donor advised funds in 2007 and explores the role of this method of donation in democratizing charitable giving.

To read the report in full, click [here](#).

Community Philanthropy launches latest “Future Matters” reports

Produced with the support of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the Ford Foundation, the three reports aim to help community philanthropy organizations better understand and adapt more rapidly to the changing world and shifting community needs around them.

[*“Community Foundations and Social Enterprise”*](#) looks at the many ways community foundations are supporting social enterprise development in their communities; [*“Communities on the Move: Community Philanthropy, Immigrants and Giving”*](#) explores how community foundations are working with immigrant communities; and [*“Community Philanthropy and Social Media,”*](#) offers an update on the of media, changes in user behaviors, and expectations about information that community philanthropy organizations should consider in our rapidly changing technological landscape.

To read the reports or find out more about the project, please visit the [Community Philanthropy](#) website.

Calendar

3rd Annual Third Sector Communications Conference: Cost-effective e-communications, social networking & blogging, 17 March, London UK

Explore the utilization of e-communications within non-profit organizations, from emails to virals and e-newsletters to mobiles, and social networking and blogging. Sessions aim to help participants to cost-effectively increase their competence and awareness online. Speakers will include: Magda Walker, Acting head of PR, Oxfam; Andy Hackman, Head of Brand and Events, Amnesty International UK and Tom Whitwell, Assistant Editor, The Times.

For more information about this event, please follow the [link](#).

The Center for Effective Philanthropy “Aligning for Impact: Connecting the Dots”, 31 March – 1 April 2009, Los Angeles, USA

The event will gather foundation chief executives, senior management, and trustees to explore the challenges of improving foundation performance, and will feature new insights from The Center for Effective Philanthropy's latest research as well as practical examples. The conference will combine plenaries with small, interactive breakout sessions and various networking opportunities and will address issues such as how business thinking helps or hinders philanthropy, the merits of sharing foundation information and CEO assessment.

For more information about this event, click [here](#).

International Funders for Indigenous Peoples 7th Annual Conference, 3- 5 April, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA

This year's event, entitled “Fostering Local to Global Partnerships”, will deliver sessions focused on Climate Change & Water Issues, Indigenous Rights, Sovereignty & Self Determination and Strengthening Indigenous Philanthropy.

More information about this event can be found [here](#).

Coming up in the next GFCF e-bulletin...

Special focus on start-ups. Although there are now community foundations all around the globe, in many countries and regions the numbers are still quite low. What strategies do new community foundations – which may be the first and only one in their region or country - use to build their profile in the local community and to distinguish them from other non-profits and foundations? Is it always possible to go straight into grantmaking and into talking about building endowment funds or are other strategies sometimes more effective?

If you have a story or experience you would like to share on this issue, or other news and comments, please contact us at info@wings-globalfund.org