

Case studies of organizations supporting
community foundations:

**Community Foundation Network ,
United Kingdom**

This case study includes a focus on the services offered to
emerging, new and established community foundations
by this national support organization.

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Community Foundation Network (United Kingdom)

1. The Whole Organization

Background

The community foundation movement in the United Kingdom began in the mid 1980s from a joint Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) and central government initiative. CAF and the government set up the Community Trust Development Unit (CTDU) to make and implement plans for the establishment of community foundations in the UK. The Unit advised the Home Office, a major central government department, on grants to emerging community foundations, and funds totalling £100,000 a year for three years were distributed to six community foundations for administration and setting up costs.

In 1989 the CTDU was replaced by the Central Resources Unit (CRU), still within CAF and with a Community Trust Steering Committee. The terms of reference adopted by the CRU centred around four points:

- to serve and support a network of effective community foundations in the UK;
- to respond at national level to the developing needs of the community foundation movement;
- to undertake national promotional activities on behalf of the movement; and
- to achieve through agreement the establishment of a viable network of community foundations.

By late 1991 the CRU achieved the fourth goal and left its parent body (CAF) to become the independent Association of Community Trusts and Foundations - now Community Foundation Network.

Mission and Objectives

Community Foundation Network's current objectives are:

- To promote the concept of community foundations throughout the UK;
- To increase coverage of the UK by community foundations;
- To support community foundations, providing a high quality service to members.

Financial resources

For the year ending March 31, 2001 Community Foundation Network had total income of £629,248 and total expenditure of £564,110. A special grant of £1 million was also received for disbursement to community foundations in a project described below. (Note: as of 13 November 2001, 1 Pound Sterling = approx. \$1.44 USD.) Community Foundation Network, as its name suggests, is wholly devoted to serving the needs of its member community foundations and does not provide support to other foundations

(which have their own association). All its resources are devoted to work on community foundation development and support.

For its first ten years Community Foundation Network has had the support of the Home Office (national government) and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation of Flint, Michigan in the US. Its total resources come from a variety of sources. The UK government has provided £20,000 per year for core costs including contributions to the salaries of the Director, the Operations Manager and other posts. This contribution has now been increased to £25,000 for 2000-03.

In 2000-01 Community Foundation Network received support from a wide range of sources, including the core cost funding from the UK government. During the year it received two grants from the Mott Foundation: £219,264 for general support and network development, and an additional £42,341 for development of London Community Foundation (the last instalment of a three-year grant). Other donors include some UK charitable foundations, a private funder and several companies. The National Lottery Charities Board (now confusingly renamed the Community Fund) gave the first instalment of a grant that will total £275,000 over three years for an information and electronic communications technology project.

Staffing

Community Foundation Network's staffing has developed considerably over the last ten years as the network has grown. In the early days, the organisation had two part-time staff that grew to a full-time staff of three in the later 1990s. Recently, there has been significant expansion with the creation of the London Unit and the Children's Fund Local Network.

The rapid recent development of community foundations in the UK has put enormous pressure on Community Foundation Network. Staffing has been one step behind demand until recently, and when new staff have been appointed this has inevitably raised management, training and accommodation issues. Furthermore, the organisation has begun restructuring its staffing in order to strengthen services to its members. The re-structured staff team will be made up of a Director, with an Executive Assistant; two Assistant Directors, one focusing on Network Services and the other on Development, especially in relation to projects such as its information and communications technology project; a Network Development Officer working in the Midlands and North of England; an Information and Publications Officer; an Operations Manager; a part-time Finance Officer and an external communications consultant.

In addition, the London Unit (dealing with London community foundation development) employs a Development Director and a Research and Information Officer, with plans for two more part-time more local development staff. This project will soon become a free-

standing charity independent of Community Foundation Network. The Children's Fund Local Network is responsible for the three-year £70 million contract Community Foundation Network has recently entered into with the UK government through which community foundations will make grants to local organisations working with poor and disadvantaged children and young people throughout England. In 2000-01 this programme is operating in 17 areas (about 40% of England). This project employs four staff members and will increase to five as the number of areas covered by the Fund doubles in the next financial year.

Governance

Community Foundation Network is a membership organisation serving the needs of its members – established community foundations and groups working to set up community foundations. The Board is composed of: six elected members from staff of community foundations; six members elected from Boards of community foundations and up to four co-opted members (who may be appointed from inside or outside the network (though all at present are from inside the network). It is considered important that some of the newer/smaller community foundations are represented on the Board; these smaller foundations are an important reference group.

The Board's core role is to develop and monitor the strategic plan. It also considers applications for membership and development grants of up to £3,000 or up to £5,000 to support new and established community foundations. The Board meets quarterly. Meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee are held between Board meetings to deal with any urgent issues, to consider policy issues before they are decided on by the full Board, to develop budgets and to scrutinise management accounts.

Membership

Community Foundation Network currently has 65 members almost equally divided between full Members - community foundations that fulfil the membership criteria of a core definition of a community foundation plus evidence that endowment building has started and is a key goal - and Associates, and Friends and Supporters. In the past there was no distinction between Associates – emerging community foundations – and supporters. This distinction has been introduced recently and the Board is considering how to ensure that the Associate category is a developmental one, where emerging community foundations can be helped to progress to become fully fledged community foundations. The category of Friends and Supporters will encompass developers of community foundations, other interested local trusts, supportive bodies such as the European Foundation Centre and external donors and other interested parties.

2. The Environment

Economic and political

The UK's is a developed economy with a number of cross-cutting divisions. Parts of the country are markedly more wealthy than others but pockets of poverty exist within otherwise richer areas. There is a growing urban-rural divide, as well as varying levels of racial tension in different parts of the country. There is a continuing economic divide between rich and poor, and concerns about investment in public services, especially health, education and transport.

Devolution of government in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and the creation of regional government within England have created further divisions and for all organisations that work UK-wide have resulted in a more complex set of relationships with government officials, Ministers and agencies. Increasing divergence between policy development, legal frameworks and funding mechanisms between the "four nations" are adding to the complexity of the working environment.

The UK's New Labour government has a strong commitment to the voluntary sector as part of its Third Way policy. Encouraging voluntary groups, especially local and smaller groups, is seen as particularly important in neighbourhood renewal and community building. Most recently the government has begun to experiment with channelling its own grant aid to local areas via voluntary organizations. In some cases community foundations have been used as government agents for grant-making and government is trying at present to develop a coherent policy on how their local grant-making should be managed.

Legal and tax frameworks

The UK has a generous system of tax breaks for charities and donors. But because the system is complex, and some benefits go directly to charities and not to donors, it has not been fully effective in encouraging giving.

Since the 2000 Budget, when various improvements to the system were introduced, the situation has improved considerably. The most generous of these new measures is the ability to give or sell shares to charity and receive full income tax relief on the value of shares. This concession is probably of most relevance to charities, including community foundations, which rely on the creation of capital for their own work since they will be most geared up to share transactions and share ownership. Significantly the Chancellor has put some weight (and £1 million) behind a national Giving Campaign which will be run by the voluntary sector and will seek to expand the numbers of people giving to charity tax effectively, create new donors, especially younger donors, and explore any barriers to giving.

Attitudes to “philanthropy” and “foundations”

The vast majority of the British population claim to give to charity, with the poor giving a proportionately larger share of their income than the rich. Surveys suggest that although the British are willing to give to charity, they also believe strongly in the value and importance of state services.

Endowment trusts had largely gone out of fashion with the growth of the welfare state. Community foundations were swimming against the tide in this respect, as well as in their emphasis on supporting small/local rather than large/national organizations. In the last few years there has been increasing interest again in the creation of capital funds. This is partly in response to the growth and success of community foundations, but more perhaps a reaction to the news of big new US foundations and interest in tapping into increasing numbers of young high earners in the City of London.

There are estimated to be 9,000 foundations of all types in the UK, giving approximately £1.58 billion in 1999-2000. One very wealthy trust (Wellcome Trust) gives £392 million of this sum. In addition, the charities arm of the National Lottery (the Community Fund) gave £527 million, and the Arts Councils around £275 million.

Assets, income and grant-making are very unevenly distributed between charitable foundations; the vast majority of them have little income and make few grants.

Tradition of voluntary organisations

The UK has a long tradition of voluntary activity that, in many cases, formed the basis for subsequent development of services funded and provided by government after 1948. In the years immediately after creation of the welfare state, voluntary giving and action were seen as providing 'extras' to state-provided 'necessities'. The last three decades have seen a revival of voluntary activity. During this period various factors, including contracting out of previously state run services, and the professionalisation of fund-raising by voluntary organizations, have led to large national voluntary organizations dominating the sector.

More recently, there has been renewed interest in smaller local organisations as a result of notions such as the Third Way, 'civil society' and 'social capital'; devolution of government has further contributed to interest in regional and local voluntary activities. Furthermore, as government has become increasingly aware that investment in physical regeneration of disadvantaged areas has not been as effective as expected, it has attached greater importance to supporting community involvement and local capacity building and increased streams of funding going into local areas.

There are estimated to be 185,000 registered charities in England and Wales receiving £5.76 billion in charitable donations. In addition, charities receive income from trading

and investment activities and from government, mainly in the form of contracts for services.

3. Developing community foundations

Background

One of the greatest obstacles to community foundation development in the UK (as in many other countries) is an almost universal lack of understanding of what they are and what they can achieve. The challenge for Community Foundation Network is to define clearly the nature and benefits of a community foundation, and to spread the message to the widest possible audience.

Community foundations in the UK had a significant boost to their growth and development early in 1991 when the CAF-Mott Endowment Challenge Grant Programme was launched. The Mott Foundation and CAF each put £1m into the Challenge. Three community foundations were chosen after a competitive process and each was offered a grant of £666,666. The condition of the grant offer was the challenge of raising money to match the grant on a 2:1 basis to create an endowment of £2m.

The three community foundations chosen were each given a deadline by which they had to raise at least £1.33m in order to qualify for the £0.66m grant. The programme was intended to help the three of them work fast in building permanent funds, and to demonstrate the feasibility of fund development in the UK. Thus all the money raised was for their endowment fund. All three successfully met the Challenge and their achievement has encouraged other community foundations to work hard on endowment building and the creation of a permanent local resource for grant-making.

By the end of 1999-2000, nine community foundations had built endowment to over £3 million each. The 29 largest gave between them grants to a value of almost £22 million in 1999-2000 and the total endowment held was almost £92 million. The Challenge Grant participants and a number of other community foundations around the UK are now showing their local communities that they have the capacity to make grants that have an impact on their areas. They are convincing donors of the value of contributing to a permanent, effective vehicle for local charitable giving. Most recently there has been dramatic growth of interest in community foundations, in part as a result of government initiatives and emphasis on local community re-generation.

The special attraction of community foundations in the UK is seen to be their local focus, at a time when most resources are available for national and international charities and the tradition among better off people is to give to those. Another attraction of community foundations is their ability to make grants to very small and

new groups, which might stand little chance of funding from other more 'formal' funders. Finally, community foundations' ability to offer a business-like service to donors is seen as a significant advantage.

Services to community foundations

As noted above, Community Foundation Network is solely devoted to working with community foundations. It covers the whole of the UK (total population around 58 million). Community foundations in the UK vary in size of area and population covered. Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales each have their own community foundation. In England the typical community foundation covers a county. These vary in population: for example, Wiltshire has a population of 800,000, while Greater Manchester has 2.5 million people). Community Foundation Network has encouraged community foundations to be coterminous with local authorities. One of the Network's strategic goals is to achieve 95% coverage of the UK by 2003.

Community Foundation Network engages in three broad categories of support for community foundations: promotion of new community foundations; start-up support; and services to established community foundations. Assisting community foundations to network and support each other direct has always been an important element of the national organisation's work.

Promotion of community foundations

This includes ad hoc efforts to engage the interest of key audiences and, increasingly, the press in order to identify potential community foundation developers in new areas, and to encourage new donors. Initially this was largely focused on key groups – councils for voluntary service, and other parts of the voluntary sector, local establishment figures and other influential groups in the public domain, Members of Parliament, and so on. There is increasing press interest in the network, and increasing opportunities with government and the business community. A key factor in generating greater interest was the appointment of an Honorary President in 1999 who has worked single-mindedly on promoting the network.

The President has been very effective in raising awareness of the network in high places. He also realised immediately that Community Foundation Network's original name (ACTAF), a meaningless logo, a confusion of names amongst members (lots of "community trusts" as well as "community foundations" and just "foundations"), and no Web site were obstacles to further development of the network. Community Foundation Network changed its name and logo and made a big splash about re-branding, backed up by community foundations around the country recognising themselves as a national network/movement. Several also changed their names to a more consistent style, and most began to use the national logo and to state clearly that they are part of a national network. The Web site was set up sooner than planned but

this has proved to be a good move; there is evidence of a legacy to a UK community foundation, for example, as a result.

In addition, the President has specifically assisted in recruiting senior business and public figures to the Board of London Community Foundation and given that development a very effective boost.

Start-up support

Services to emerging community foundations are designed to encourage sturdy and effective growth and some adherence to the core community foundation model. Services to emerging foundations take two main forms: general and specific.

In addition to managing the CAF/Mott Endowment Challenge (see above), general services include management of other small grants programmes for community foundation development and a continuous programme of conferences and training activities, newsletter and information material.

The development grants programme is designed to assist community foundations either with their own development, with specific projects (grants up to £3,000) or with work that will be of benefit and interest to the whole network (grants up to £5,000). Recent small grants have been given for help with purchase of IT equipment, assistance in applying for a National Lottery grant, and support work on establishing quarterly regional gatherings of community foundation directors/CEOs. Development grants may also be given to help more established foundations cover the costs of visits and information provided to newer community foundations. Development grants are one of Community Foundation Network's most popular services.

The Newsletter is published quarterly and distributed to around 1,800 people and organisations, including all Members and Associates and their trustees, nonprofit organisations and the media. The Newsletter aims to inspire and inform. It contains news of community foundation successes, discussions of current issues including matters relating to fundraising, investment, social needs and grant-making. It identifies new opportunities for funding and legal and tax changes, as well as updating contact details of members. Individual community foundations often reprint newsletter articles about themselves to use as local publicity.

In addition, Community Foundation Network regularly publishes reports for and about community foundations in the UK and elsewhere.

Community Foundation Network has a library of useful publications which members, and others, may use on site or on loan. Use of this service is low but, for some

Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support – Community Foundations (WINGS-CF)

organisations, can be critical. Making members more aware of this service would be helpful, when time permits.

Other services include the development of a model governing instrument, acceptable to the Charity Commission (the charity regulator for England and Wales). There is a very large collection of sample documents including ones on tax, fund development, planning, job descriptions, investment policies, employment contracts and so on. Community Foundation Network is gradually making these available electronically.

The Web site is developing though there is considerable scope for it to be exploited further.

Once or twice a month all Members and Associates are sent an information mailing containing a range of relevant material from changes of staff and addresses and diary dates to articles about community foundations, material sent on from other organisations and key government consultation and other policy documents. Increasing use is being made of electronic groups to share and exchange information. These have been set up for contacts in almost all community foundations and also for smaller specific groups.

Specific services involve support for individual emerging foundations tailored to their particular needs – telephone advice, visits, talks, away-days with steering committees, etc. Work with emerging community foundations became more focused with a staff appointment in mid-1999 to work specifically on network development. Although this work is highly time-consuming it is considered to be the best way of establishing sound development practice and assists in building relationships with new/potential members.

The national conference (held every two years) is designed to support both new and established foundations, and to provide opportunities for networking and informal learning and support. Topics covered at the conference in 2001 included: establishing credibility – local needs surveys; endowment building – the first £1million and beyond; how to reinvent yourself when you are no longer new; public relations and profile raising; managing government and European funds – the highs and lows; impact of small grants; relationships with large neighbourhood renewal programmes; partnerships with beneficiaries; children in the community – making things better; recruiting and developing good trustees; sharing resources between foundations; spreading foundations; communicating with a purpose; costing and unitising funds; running a legacy campaign; information technology issues; and how to research potential donors. In addition this conference had some significant national and international speakers and attracted national press coverage.

More generally, Community Foundation Network has tried to encourage peer learning, rather than investing scarce resources in running its own events. It is felt to be quicker, more timely and more effective if regional groups of community foundations can arrange their own information and training events. Events arranged centrally can be delayed six months by lack of space in the calendar, and member led events are felt to encourage community foundations to take more responsibility for their own learning.

Community Foundation Network sees one of its major roles as being a 'telephone operator', putting community foundations in touch with each other to discuss and resolve problems. Established community foundations are expected, and are willing, to support and advise newer members. Community Foundation Network emphasizes that its members are its greatest resource for learning.

New community foundations also benefit directly and indirectly from various activities primarily designed to serve more established foundations.

Support for established foundations

In addition to the services above, most of which are also available and relevant to more established community foundations, Community Foundation Network provides a range of services geared more directly to the needs of more established foundations.

Recently, these have included:

- Encouraging established community foundations to establish their own network and support groups. For example, directors meet quarterly in four regional groups, and there is increasing use of electronic groups to ask questions and share information.
- Annual meetings of the Chairs of community foundations to share ideas and information, and to learn.
- Occasional meetings of the Directors of the largest community foundations providing an opportunity for discussion of more complex issues related to management of, for example, staff, fund development and investments.
- An external pool of consultants and trainers, screened for their effectiveness in working with community foundations.
- An information technology (IT) and electronic communications project which includes developing software for community foundations allowing them to integrate fundraising, grant-making and, if they wish, accounting. Community Foundation Network has developed a software program for community foundations, over the last five years. Just over a year ago an IT and electronic communications project was begun which is not only continuing to develop the software but also offers

Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support – Community Foundations (WINGS-CF)

consultancy and individual support as community foundations review and improve their own IT resources, and evaluate equipment and training needed. With funding from the National Lottery, Community Foundation Network is employing a full-time worker on this for three years and also benefits from the efforts of a dedicated and skilled volunteer.

- Time for Growth is a new project using a grant of £1 million to help established community foundations get past the often difficult middle years. The project will make grants to ten community foundations at a stage where they have begun to establish themselves, but are in difficulties because their endowment is not growing rapidly enough for sustainability. This programme will run from 2001-05.
- Share Aware is a project designed to make professional financial advisors and others aware of the new highly tax efficient opportunities to give company shares to community foundations. Community Foundation Network worked with a member community foundation, several firms of financial advisors and the tax authorities to produce material including a general publicity leaflet and a specialised information pack providing technical detail for accountants. The pack is produced in such a way that community foundations may customize it for local use. For one week in early 2001 all community foundations held events to publicize the scheme, and the material is now advertised on the Community Foundation Network Web site (<http://www.communityfoundations.org.uk>)
- Contract and funding negotiations with government. Recently the organisation has been heavily involved in tendering for a central government contract for devolved grant-making. This followed an experimental programme which began in 1999 with one central government department and focussed very small grants on small, highly disadvantaged areas. A total of 22 community foundations were involved. Community Foundation Network has now successfully negotiated to run the Children's Fund Local Network, an inter-departmental initiative which will eventually roll out throughout England and offer small grants (up to £7,000) to groups tackling poverty and disadvantage among 0-19 year olds. This is a £70 million project over three years. Tendering for this contract, as well as winning it, has been highly effective in raising the profile of community foundations with government and more widely.
- Community Foundation Network recently raised funding for a three-year project, involving two staff members, after a careful research phase, to develop the community foundation model more effectively in London (the capital). This is now moving to independence.

- A project on standards is currently being planned to measure the effectiveness of community foundations, and provide more objective understanding of the ingredients of successful growth and development.
- There are many examples of policy negotiations, usually with government, which the national organisation undertakes on behalf of the whole membership (and usually drawing on experience and expertise from local foundations to do so). The most recent has concerned Value Added Tax (charged in the UK at 17.5%) and whether it should be levied on the fees and reimbursement for all “pass-through” grant-making handled by community foundations. After considerable discussion and detailed review of donor agreements and contracts an agreement has been reached with HM Customs and Excise in relatively simple terms that helps define the ownership and control of funding and which kinds of grant-making can be considered outside the scope of VAT. This will be implemented consistently throughout the country and will enable community foundations to keep a high proportion of their grant-making “non-VATable”.

4. Key Tensions and Challenges

Community Foundation Network is currently at a critical turning point in its development. The community foundation movement is expanding rapidly, as are the opportunities for community foundations to become involved in major contracts to manage government grant aid to localities. It faces a number of tensions and challenges, some of which are general in nature while others relate specifically to the effects of taking on government contracts.

One tension in the past was the amount of promotion a national body can do when there are few community foundations actually in operation on the ground. National promotion with mainly embryonic organisations on the ground and many areas with no community foundation at all to point to can be counter-productive. But a more cautious approach may lead to members feeling that the national body is not doing enough promotional work. This tension has become less significant as community foundations have established themselves in the UK.

For new community foundations there can be a tension at local level between the need to create a prestigious “club” to which donors want to belong, but at the same time ensuring accessibility as a grant-maker.

As noted above, the rapid development of community foundations in the UK has created enormous pressure on a relatively small staff. Fundraising for new staff is not only difficult but is also time-consuming, further exacerbating the pressure on existing senior staff. When funding is found, new staff members need training and managing.

The changing and increasing demands on the organisation have meant regular revising of jobs and re-structuring in an effort to respond and to make best use of existing skills and resources.

There is an important issue at present around membership fees and pricing of services. At present membership fees are £100 for Members and £75 for Associates. Fee levels have not been changed since 1991, and now constitute a lot less than 1% of the organisation's income. Some staff feel that these low fee levels have created a vicious circle in which members do not value what Community Foundation Network does because so much of its work is effectively free. Raising membership subscriptions on a sliding scale could raise issues to do with which community foundations make most use of services and get best value. Partly because of the strategy of peer learning and the emphasis on sharing in the network, and in the nature of the case, larger more established foundations could argue that they give to the network as much, if not more, than they get out of it. In practice those foundations most active in supporting their colleagues in the network are also proving supportive in arguing for higher fees, aiming at 5% of core income from this source.

Raising membership fees creates other dilemmas. Community Foundation Network could spend more time and money telling people about how much they do but this would cost money and could alienate members. If membership fees are to be raised the organisation would need to be very confident both that members make best use of its services and that the services provided are what members really need and want. When do services become outdated and how do you anticipate future needs in such a diverse network of community foundations at different stages?

Making greater use of members for peer learning creates potential servant-master dilemmas, but it also exemplifies how much Community Foundation Network really values and trusts its members. As one person put it 'we need a virtuous circle of feedback where we are all learning'. It is necessary however for the national organisation to ensure that peer learning is based on good and effective practice and a critical or evaluative role can be demanded of national staff.

For Community Foundation Network, there are obvious tensions in being both a membership organisation and the gatekeeper of various pots of money for distribution to community foundations. It has attempted to reduce this tension by, for example, appointing an independent panel to make grant decisions on the Time for Growth project, although the Board (made up of people from community foundations) is still legally responsible for those decisions.

In its work in developing the Children's Fund Local Network, Community Foundation Network has had to find an effective way of handling both the promotion of its

members' work and the building and maintenance of credibility with government by recommending only those foundations with the capacity to deliver to the required standards. Working with government on contract as a network has highlighted issues regarding standards and brought to the fore the possibility of a written agreement between the national organisation and its members on delivery of services.

There are further issues for UK community foundations arising from the variety of donors with which they work. For Community Foundation Network the most difficult issues have arisen from working with government bodies. The government programmes in which it has become involved are central to community foundations' mission, and Community Foundation Network is confident that its members offer the best possible network for delivery of good grant-making. Nevertheless this involvement has highlighted existing tensions and presented some new challenges.

A big issue in the network at present has arisen in response to a government consultation exercise on how small grants from government funds should be rolled out to local areas. Community foundations have the expertise and outreach capacity to undertake this work, and there are no obvious generalist local grant-makers with a national network as good as Community Foundation Network's. But there is divided opinion within the network as to the appropriateness of taking on multiple streams of "pass through" funding on government's behalf. In the external environment too there could be anxiety that UK community foundations could become too significant and powerful in their local areas. The danger of taking on the sort of coordinating roles the government is now proposing is that community foundations could be seen as gatekeepers rather than entrances to local funding. With greater demands for public accountability, community foundations could become as inaccessible, slow and bureaucratic as any government funder. The biggest danger could be a disincentive to donors to create endowed funds in community foundations if it appears that they are too close to government.

Gaynor Humphreys, Community Foundation Network's Director, considers the last decade for community foundations in the UK:

"The last ten years have been a continuous learning curve for everyone involved in community foundations, locally and nationally, as they have explored, examined and modified the US model of community foundations. During this time they have learned how daunting a task it is to start to change people's thinking about why and how to support community initiatives, and about building new organisations whose start-up costs are inevitably high. This learning has included the whole process of developing a user-led support organisation, especially ensuring maximum learning from one area to another without imposing one area's answers on another; and helping people climb the learning curve quickly without suggesting the centre has the answers!

**Worldwide INitiatives for Grantmaker Support
– Community Foundations (WINGS-CF)**

“We are still near the start of the story in building these organisations which focus on the future as well as on their areas’ immediate needs. Many of our UK community foundations are now growing consistently and well. They are widely recognised as knowledgeable and approachable grant-makers. It is clear that they are now seen as a natural part of the funding landscape in the UK. As we reflect on the issues and tensions highlighted in this case study we realize how much the network has been strengthened through a continuing evaluation of appropriate relationships, good practice, and best directions for development. All of this means that Community Foundation Network and UK community foundations are evolving and learning organizations which can continue to grow and thrive.”