



Local giving/philanthropy in the Matabeleland Regions of Zimbabwe: what role for Uluntu Community Foundation?



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CONTENTS



CONTENTS

3	Acknowledgements
4	Executive summary
5	Solidarity and self-help: local cultures of giving
6	About the study
14	The global context
17	Uluntu Community Foundation
20	The opportunity for Uluntu

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Executive summary

The practice of philanthropy is deeply rooted in the cultures of the Matabeleland region of Zimbabwe. The strong historical tradition of giving is demonstrated by the many proverbs in the local language, IsiNdebele, emphasising giving.

In 2017, Uluntu Community Foundation decided to carry out a study on local giving. The aim was to gather baseline information on the culture, trends and current practices of giving in the Matabeleland regions of Zimbabwe, especially in the communities where Uluntu operates.

It was hoped that a greater knowledge of the available local resources in these communities and an understanding of current trends and practices of giving would help Uluntu to plan its interventions and serve as a baseline for future programming. It would also help to ensure sustainability in community initiatives in Uluntu's areas of operation.

Despite limited resources, harsh economic conditions and recurrent droughts, it seems that most people in the two districts where Uluntu operates practise some form of local giving to support each other and those in need in the community.

Key findings of the study are as follows:

- Local giving is widely practised among the communities in the Matabeleland region: 75% of household respondents had practised some form of local giving in the last 12 months. Communities see this as a way of contributing to development processes and supporting the needy.
- A wide range of different types of resources are available locally, including labour, natural resources and indigenous knowledge.
- Communities lack both know-how and the processing equipment to add value to the resources they have.
- People give to support those in need in the community such as orphans, child-headed households, and elderly and disabled people. They also give in response to bereavement,

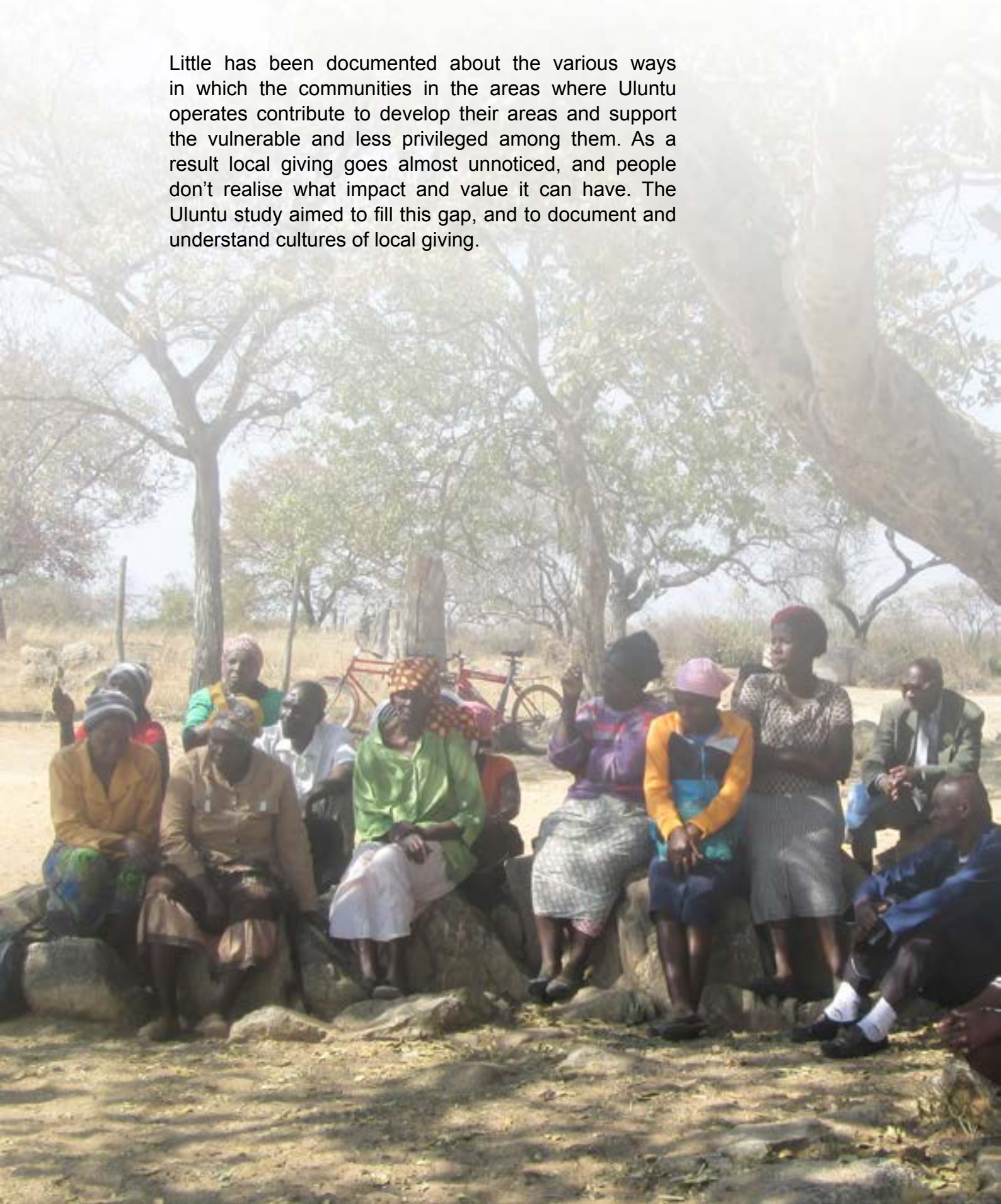
natural disasters such as droughts, and other events.

- Local giving takes a wide variety of forms. The support given can be financial or in kind, in the form of clothing, food and labour. Funeral assistance accounts for 39% of local giving, while community service work such as building and repairing schools, roads and bridges accounts for 26%.
- Community leaders are at the forefront of giving, followed by NGOs, individuals, government departments and churches. Women give more than men.
- Community leaders act as facilitators and coordinators, mobilising community members to give.
- Businesses do not practise much philanthropy in the communities they operate in.
- Economically active age groups heavily sustain local giving, but there is no relationship between source of income and giving. Generally people have a giving culture.
- The most important factors that drive people to give are perceived need and the economic status of the receiver. Accountability of the recipient is also important. If someone misuses the gift then there will be no motivation to give again. The culture of giving is another motivator.
- People prefer to give as individuals rather than as groups.
- Local projects supported by local giving exist in both districts, both small scale and large scale.
- Uluntu is well known in the communities that it serves, though there is still room to improve on visibility.

If local people have a culture of giving, Uluntu has the opportunity to build on what the community is already doing and to join it up more strategically. Uluntu could do this by mobilising and stewarding resources transparently and effectively and by channelling other (external) resources to the foundation. This in turn would increase community ownership of their development and shift power closer to the ground.

Solidarity and self-help: local cultures of giving

Little has been documented about the various ways in which the communities in the areas where Uluntu operates contribute to develop their areas and support the vulnerable and less privileged among them. As a result local giving goes almost unnoticed, and people don't realise what impact and value it can have. The Uluntu study aimed to fill this gap, and to document and understand cultures of local giving.



About the study

The overall goal of the study was to look at the nature and extent of local giving in the Matabeleland regions of Zimbabwe and to understand how it can contribute to the sustainability of community initiatives. The research findings will feed into the strategic plan that Uluntu is working on, informing its programming and helping it to craft a strategy for mobilising local resources that will empower communities to champion their own development through local giving. Uluntu will also use the information to establish an endowment fund that will strengthen its capacity to give grants to the communities in a sustainable and consistent manner.

Specific objectives were:

- Establish current giving trends of communities in Matabeleland region
- Establish what resources are available in each community, be it infrastructure, skills, finance or other, that can be tapped to support community initiatives
- Understand how communities interpret and use the concept of local giving for their own development initiatives
- Establish who the main local givers are
- Find out what motivates them to give and what discourages others from giving
- Outline legislation that promotes or discourage local giving
- Establish the level of understanding of and trust in Uluntu activities by the communities it works with and how it can improve its services.



Survey areas

The study was carried out in Gwanda and Umzingwane Districts. Gwanda has a total population of 142,652 people (68,541 males and 74,111 females), of whom 21,216 live in urban areas and the rest in rural areas. It has 26,773 rural and 5,656 urban households. According to the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC-2017), 40% of the households in Gwanda were food insecure during the months of January to March 2017.

Umzingwane has an estimated population of 66,068 (32,718 males and 33,350 females). Farming and artisanal mining are the principal income-generating activities. According to ZimVAC-2017, 54% of households were food insecure during January to March 2017.

Three wards were sampled per district, two wards in which Uluntu is currently running programmes and one ward where they are not running any programme as a control.

Methodology

A wide range of approaches to data collection were adopted for the study, allowing for extensive participation of key target groups such as beneficiary households, community leaders, private sector and relevant government departments. Quantitative data was collected through a household survey. Qualitative data was collected through focus group discussions and key informant interviews. A desk review considered existing literature on philanthropy and the legal and policy framework for local giving in Zimbabwe.

Structured interviews were used to gather data from 336 households, which constituted an 11.2% sample of the estimated direct beneficiaries (3,000 to be reached by local giving). A systematic random sampling was done from men, women and young people who were directly involved in various community

development processes. The gender composition was 70% females and 30% males. The focus group discussions had the same gender ratio; each involved 10-15 participants.

Key informants were selected from among community leaders, the private sector, Uluntu board and staff members, relevant government ministries and local authorities. A total of 36 key informants (16 females and 20 males) were interviewed. They were selected based on their expertise and involvement in community development processes.

Quantitative data was collected and analysed using SPSS. Data collected through focus group discussions and key informant interviews was summarised and coded based on the key variables defined as baseline indicators to supplement results from the individual household survey.

What follows are the key findings from the study.

Overall giving trends

The current local giving trends in Gwanda and Umzingwane districts resonate with traditional practices expressed in local idioms and proverbs. Local giving draws from traditional practices of reciprocating acts of kindness, sharing, joining hands with others to help someone in need or coming together to perform work in someone's field.

Practising philanthropy as groups or individuals is a way of life within these communities and part of the culture of the people in the region. Giving is informal at times, especially when done individually, and more formal when the giving is done by groups, as it is discussed and agreed by the givers or by community leaders in response to a particular identified need. People commonly give cash, food, clothing, livestock and labour.

The study established that 75% of household respondents had practised some form of local giving in the last 12 months; 20% acknowledged they knew about the concept of local giving, while 5% said they were not aware of it.

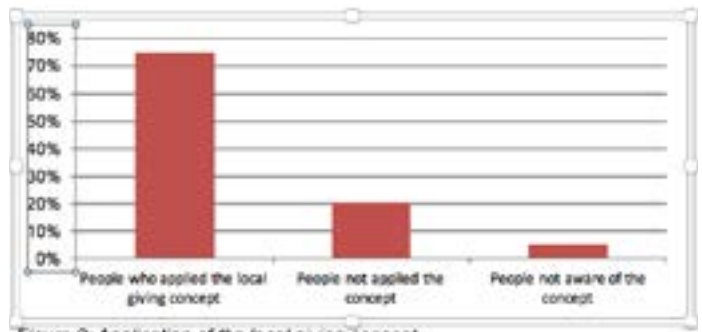


Figure 3: Application of the local giving concept

In both Gwanda and Umzingwane districts, communities see local giving as a way of contributing to development processes and supporting the needy. People believe that giving is a way of storing for the future so that when they also have a need the person they gave to will give back to them. This particularly applies to educating their children, who will in turn plough back into the community in the form of cash, skills and labour. Key informants highlighted that local giving cultivates good relationships and builds a feeling of oneness. They also believe it is God given that people should give so that God blesses them with more. Most respondents feel giving is embedded in their culture.

The way communities understand the concept of local giving for supporting their own development initiatives is a key insight provided by the study because it could provide a clue as to whether future projects might be sustainable or not. The study captures the fact that communities see giving as a way of moving out of the perennial development challenges they experience with very little external support.

Resources available to communities

Communities highlighted various forms of locally available resources, some of which can be sold and converted into money which can be used in local philanthropy. When it comes to natural resources, the lack of capacity and difficulties of exploitation often means communities are unable to tap into the locally available resources to enable philanthropy.

Labour/manpower

This is seen as the most widely available resource, for example labour to construct dams, schools, bridges and roads on a voluntary basis

to complement donor and government initiatives. Technical experts like builders, welders and plumbers often offer their services for development initiatives that involve construction.

Indigenous knowledge

This is another resource available in communities – knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. It is the basis for local-level decision making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural resource management and a host of other activities in rural communities. People gave various examples of indigenous knowledge that can be used in development and philanthropy, for example about the use of leaves from different trees for stock feed for cattle, and about leaves and roots that can be used for medicine. Incorporating indigenous knowledge into projects contributes to local empowerment and development as it increases self-sufficiency and strengthens resilience.

Livestock

Given an erratic and irregular rainfall pattern and persistent droughts, the region mainly relies on rearing livestock – cattle, goats, sheep and chickens – supported by the production of drought-tolerant crops, with an emphasis on small grains. Communities are involved both in commercial livestock production and in smaller-scale production. This is an abundant resource which communities can invest in.

Tourism

The Matabeleland region is endowed with mountains and rivers that can bring income to communities as tourist sites. Umzingwane district has many such places, for example the Lumene Falls and caves and dams for fishing.

River sand, pit sand and minerals

In almost every community that was interviewed, natural resources like river sand and pit sand were mentioned as locally available resources that could be tapped into to enable philanthropy. People gave examples of building school blocks and community halls using bricks moulded in the community, but communities are not currently benefiting from these resources to the full as they do not have the transport to ferry the sand

to urban areas. People also mentioned gold reserves in rivers and in mountain ranges. Again, local communities are not benefiting much from gold owing to lack of the knowledge and financial resources needed to acquire legal status to extract it. Instead, mine claims are being issued at national and district level to people from outside. People also talked about the potential for constructing dams and sand traps in rivers to provide clean drinking water. This in turn would result in irrigation projects, which can be a major source of income and food for communities.

Trees

Trees are another abundant natural resource. Deciduous fruits such as umnyi, uxakuxaku, umqokolo and umkhomo are sold to people from towns such as Bulawayo who buy for resale. Other useful fruit trees are marula and baobab, both a source of valuable nutrients. The marula fruit is mainly brewed into beer, which is either sold or used to pay people who have helped to plough, cultivate or harvest in the fields. Baobab fruits are sold both as fruit and as powder to make porridge. The seeds of marula and baobab contain nuts that can be sold, but they are difficult to extract. Other trees produce fruits that make good, high-protein livestock feed. In communities with mopani trees, one bucket of mopani worms fetches as much as USD7.

Forms of local giving

The study revealed a variety of forms and practices of giving in communities.

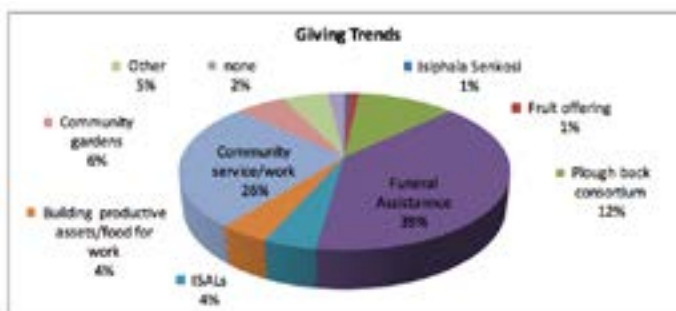


Figure 2: Forms of local giving in Umzingwane and Gwanda districts

Funeral assistance

Giving to help with funerals is the most common giving practice. Here communities come together to support the family of the bereaved through giving in cash or kind. Door-to-door collection of cash (USD0.2 per household) is undertaken when a bereavement occurs. People also help gather firewood, lend cooking pots and utensils, and help with cooking.

Community service/work

Community work or service is the second most common form of local giving. Here community members aged 18-60 provide labour for activities like moulding bricks and collecting river sand, pit sand and water for community construction projects. Community leaders work with established structures such as burial societies, livestock committees, garden committees, women's clubs and churches to address identified needs and development projects.

Plough back concept

Groups that have benefited from Uluntu programmes have also given back to the organisation and or passed on the support to other groups. This has been done by groups that have benefited from the livestock, horticulture and savings groups. This has resulted in small grants given by Uluntu covering more people in the community.

Community gardens support

Community members, especially women, form groups and establish community gardens to grow vegetables for local consumption. Members carry out tasks such as watering plants and weeding; local authority and traditional leaders provide the land; NGOs or other development agencies donate seeds and other inputs.

Group members harvest and share the vegetables; sometimes they sell them to members of the community or to local shops which resell them for profit. Some vegetables are given to vulnerable members of the community. The success of these gardens tends to be widely affected by climate change effects and competition with bigger farmers for the markets needed to grow these into businesses supplying beyond their membership.

Internal savings and lending schemes

Internal savings and lending schemes are community saving groups. Group members contribute a set amount of money regularly, and the money raised is used to help members pay for funerals, health care and groceries. It is also used to support micro lending to members. The money incurs a small amount of interest to help the fund slowly grow and accommodate more people and bigger businesses.

Building of productive assets/ food for work programmes

These programmes are designed for community members to give their labour during certain seasons to help build or rehabilitate infrastructure such as roads, bridges, school classroom blocks and clinics or to perform tasks such as cutting grass and clearing fireguards around schools. Through these projects government utilises the local labour force, creating the opportunity for local people to develop their communities instead of hiring labour from outside.

Isiphala seNkosi/chief's granary

This refers to the granary where proceeds from the chief's field are stored. These are community fields which are collectively worked by the community under the leadership of the chief and the village head for the benefit of vulnerable people in the community. In some communities it could be funds and resources mobilized through local giving and banked by the chief/village for purposes of community welfare. The National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (2004) recognises traditional leaders' role in the care of orphans and the support of programmes such as the Insimu yeNkosi and Isiphala seNkosi.

The Matabeleland provinces are food insecure, and the study also shows that communities in the study districts frequently share what the little food is available.

Who are the local givers?

The study indicates that community leaders are at the forefront of giving, followed by NGOs, individuals, government departments and churches, with women giving more than their male counterparts both in churches and leadership

structures and as individuals. Community leaders are opinion leaders and custodians of local traditions in their communities so their prominence in local giving is a good yardstick of community practices and suggests local giving is well rooted in the communities surveyed. The information collected regarding the distribution of these resources indicates that there is very little coordination and documentation of local giving.

Although the government of Zimbabwe has put in place legislation and policies to support local giving, respondents believe that the current economic situation in the country makes it very challenging for government to give much. They called for economic revival, good governance and an end to corruption in order for government to generate enough resources to support communities.

Respondents also reported that businesses are not giving much since they are struggling to survive in the challenging economic times. The exception is businesses in the mining sector, which are compelled, through the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act (General) Regulation, 2010 section 3(1), to set aside 10% of their shares to support development.



Figure 4 Local Givers

Age profile of local givers

The study shows that economically active age groups heavily sustain local giving. The 18-29 and 30-39 age groups seem to be the leading local givers, followed by the 40-49 and the 60-69 age groups, with the 50-59 age group giving less.

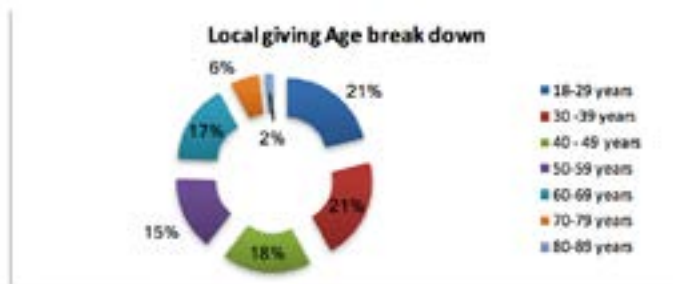


Figure 5: Local giving age breakdown

Socioeconomic characteristics of local givers

The majority of respondents are rural based. Sixty-three per cent of those who are practising local giving state that their income comes from self-employed earnings, mainly from activities such as farming (sale of livestock, small grain crops, mopane worms, etc), trading, sewing, brick moulding, building and carpentry. Those whose incomes derive from remittances from family members in the diaspora account for 19% of local givers, while those who earn salaries account for only 8%, with 10% coming from other sources including pensions. Some said their income comes from group savings and income-generating projects supported by NGOs and government departments. Of the 155 people who claimed to be self-employed, 89.6% said they had practised philanthropy. The figures for the 22 salaried respondents and the 49 who relied on remittances are 81.4% and 83.7%, respectively.

Eighty-eight percent of respondents whose average monthly income was less than USD10 indicated that they practise philanthropy – which shows that members of the community are prepared to share their financial resources. Despite the high poverty levels in the region, communities are able to give out of the little cash they have.

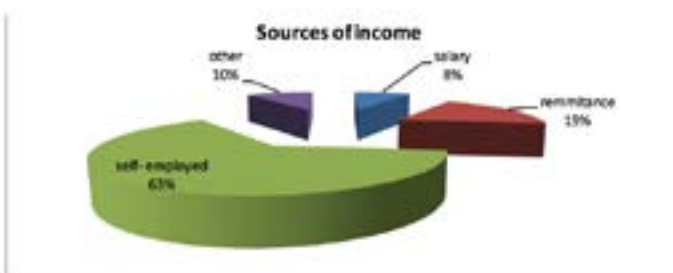


Figure 6: Sources of income

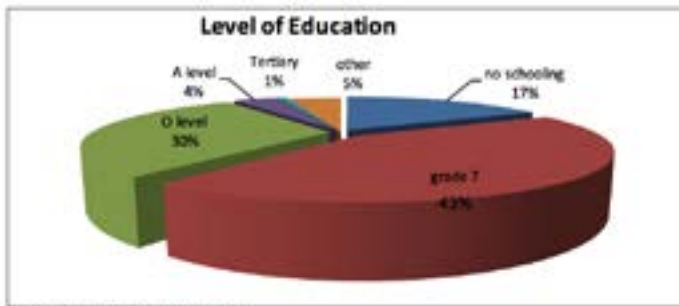


Figure 7: Level of Education

The evaluation team sought to assess whether level of education was associated with level of giving. They found that 86% of respondents who had attained grade 7 (43% of the total) had practised philanthropy, and 92% of those who had done O-Levels (30% of the total). Surprisingly, the least generous were those who had reached tertiary level of education (just 1% of the total). A possible explanation is that they spend most of their time at work or that the communities have not made an effort to involve them in resource mobilisation for local development initiatives.

Eighty per cent of local givers have 5 to 9 children of school-going age. It is impressive that even with this number of children people have been able to engage in various forms of giving, both formal and informal. But educational requirements do have an impact on family expenditures, so are likely to affect individual and family giving trends as well as the educational careers of the children, who may fail to make it at school due to lack of school fees and other related school requirements.

What motivates local giving?

Individual local givers seem to be motivated by a number of factors. Foremost among these is the economic status of the recipient (35%) – most respondents said that they are motivated to give when they see other people in need. In most communities people will give alms to a beggar or disabled person on the streets. The giver’s religious beliefs (18%) and relationship with the person they are giving to (17%) are also relevant, as is the giver’s own economic status. Individuals with surplus resources will give to those who are in need. In some cases people become motivated to give because they see others doing so (12.3%). The recipient’s health, their response to help, seeing what use is made of the help given, and trust in the mobilising group or organisation are other factors.

Another factor influencing local giving raised in the focus group discussions is cultural practice. There is a culture of families and communities supporting the less privileged, and of individuals supporting others within their extended family.



Figure 8: Motivation factors

Reasons for not giving/demotivators

People are put off giving for a number of reasons. Some people are naturally selfish and inherently stingy and will not give under any circumstance. Limited resources and high levels of poverty and unemployment also impede giving.

Failure to be acknowledged was given as another thing that discourages people from practising philanthropy. Fear of witchcraft was also mentioned during focus group discussions. Local people believe that when you give to someone you avail an opportunity for him/her to bewitch you using the dress/food/cash that you have given. Because of this belief some prefer not to give to keep themselves away from such dangers.

Preferred giving platforms

When it comes to preferred platforms for local giving, it seems that people mostly prefer to give as individuals. Giving as a church ranked second followed by giving as a family, club or village/ community, with giving as a business or school at the bottom of the list. Individuals give to the other social structures, which in turn give as part of the collective. For example, individuals will give to the church or club, which in turn gives to the needy.



Figure 9: Commonly preferred giving practices

Local giving projects

The study identified a number of local projects in Umzingwane and Gwanda districts that are supported by local giving, both small scale and large scale. These include construction of school toilets and of early childhood development (ECD) play centres and classrooms; rehabilitation of roads, boreholes, dams and dip tanks; training of ECD teachers and facilitators; and school feeding schemes. Three quarters of respondents mentioned such projects. People also highlighted community projects supported by people in the diaspora, including payment of school fees for the less privileged, purchase of stationery, and food for starving families.

However, local giving is limited by harsh economic conditions and erratic rainfall patterns which make a good harvest uncertain (particularly in Gwanda). Development initiatives such as construction of ECD blocks can only be sustained when income-generating projects enable communities to create revolving funds to meet the infrastructure maintenance costs. Household-level income-generating activities that will cater for families' immediate needs will also need to be established.

External support to complement local giving efforts

Local and international NGOs contribute significantly to the development of communities in Umzingwane and Gwanda districts, mainly through food assistance and development projects. They also provide building materials, clothing, technical support, irrigation equipment, livestock, farming inputs, educational material, play equipment, tools and cash. Communities felt that while these NGOs do improve their lives, they need to strengthen capacity-building strategies so that communities are not disempowered by the handouts they are given in times of need.

Assistance in the form of training and teaching was appreciated.

Other sources of local funding

The desk review noted other sources of local funding to support community development.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Zimbabwe's dire economic situation over the years has brought company closures, which has translated into limited CSR undertakings. In Matabeleland a few companies have survived the economic difficulties and they try to fulfil their corporate social responsibility by giving back to the communities that they serve. One company with a programme in Gwanda is CBZ Holdings. In its statement on CSR, it says that the company sees CSR as an integral part of its business activities. CBZ Holdings has a strong culture of staff volunteering, with staff members contributing many hours in their respective communities as well as providing resources to help the needy.

National AIDS Trust Fund

In 1999, the Zimbabwean government established a National AIDS Trust Fund or 'AIDS Levy' to fund HIV and AIDS prevention, care and treatment in response to a growing rate of HIV infection and AIDS and limited government funding to combat the problem. It is managed by the parastatal NAC through a decentralised structure of AIDS Action Committees which support community initiatives to support people living with HIV, orphans and other vulnerable groups.

Rotary clubs

Rotary International has chapters in different parts of the world, which are a source and driver for local giving. Its stated purpose is to bring together business and professional leaders in order to provide humanitarian services, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and advance goodwill and peace around the world. In Matabeleland Rotary International has chapters in Bulawayo and Gwanda. In 1983 the Rotary Club of Gwanda was the smallest in the world with 14 members. Its local giving activities include its support to Mzimuni Clinic in Gwanda. It has also, with support from Rotary Club Bulawayo, supported the Gwanda hospital.

Rotary clubs also use matching funding as a tool to stimulate local giving.

Edward Ndlovu Memorial Library Trust

One successful in-kind local giving initiative in Gwanda is the Edward Ndlovu Memorial Library Trust. The trust collects books and donates/distributes them to libraries. It has so far established a network of 27 schools in the local area that have received library books

Legislation and local giving

Legislation can play a crucial role in determining how philanthropy operates. In Zimbabwe there are a few pieces of legislation that promote or enable local giving.

Private Voluntary Organisations Act

NGOs in Zimbabwe are mainly registered under the Private Voluntary Organisation Act (PVO Act). Registration is done through the Department of Social Welfare under the Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare. Chapter 17:05 of the Act gives registered organisations authority to collect contributions, thus accepting philanthropy as a source of income to run organisations. Section 6 (b) of Part III of the Act (b) states that 'No private voluntary organisation shall seek financial assistance from any source unless it has been registered in respect of the particular object or objects in furtherance of which it is being conducted'.

Non-Governmental Organisations Act

The proposed Non-Governmental Organisations Act also has various clauses that promote local giving. Part X of the Act on Fundraising and Financial Sustainability of Non Governmental Organisations allows NGOs 'to lawfully and appropriately collect funds and other resources both inside and outside Zimbabwe'. It gives tax deductions for donations by 'Zimbabwean juristic and natural persons to one or more non-governmental organisations for the furtherance of their activities' and tax exemptions for grants received from external or domestic sources.

Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act

The General Notice 114/2011 requires that all mining businesses achieve indigenisation by

disposing of 10% of their shares to a Community Share Ownership Trust (CSOT). CSOTs are a countrywide government initiative to spearhead development and empower rural communities by giving them a 10% stake in all businesses that exploit natural resources in their areas. Since Gwanda launched the Gwanda CSOT, mining company Blanket Mine, acquired by Caledonia in 2006, has donated 10% to the Trust. Blanket also made a non-refundable donation of USD1 million to the Trust as soon as it was established and paid advance dividends of USD4 million before the end of April 2013.

The global context

After the global financial crisis of 2007–08, international aid and development spending fell drastically. In 2011, global donor aid to developing countries dropped by nearly 3 per cent. In 2016 bilateral aid to sub-Saharan Africa was USD28 billion, representing a fall of 0.9 per cent in real terms compared to 2010. The group of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) also saw a fall in net bilateral aid flows of 8.9% in real terms to USD27.7 billion.

This happened despite OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría's efforts to encourage donors to meet their commitments. 'The fall of ODA is a source of great concern,' he said, 'coming at a time when developing countries have been hit by the knock-on effect of the crisis and need it most.' While aid is only a fraction of total flows to low-income countries, these hard economic times also mean lower investment and lower exports. These drops in traditional sources of funding are forcing development entities in Africa and other regions of the Global South to look for new funding sources. This is reflected in this study where Uluntu wants to explore the capacity and willingness of communities to mobilise resources from within and among themselves.

The role of local philanthropists

Recent years have witnessed a growth in philanthropy around the world, corresponding with a rise of private wealth in Brazil, India, Russia, China and other countries, so it is natural that African development organisations should turn to philanthropy.

It is estimated that Africa's known philanthropists give away over USD7 billion every year. This includes Zimbabwean businessman Strive Masiyiwa, who established a USD6.4 million trust to sponsor at least 40 African undergraduates at Morehouse College over a four-year period. Masiyiwa also funds the Capernaum Trust, a Zimbabwe-registered Christian charity that sponsors scholarships

and medical assistance for more than 28,000 Zimbabwean orphans. Another notable Zimbabwean philanthropist is Vuli Mkandla, founder and director of the Zimbabwean Educational Trust, which has helped over 1,000 young Zimbabweans to travel to the UK and access higher education over the last 17 years.

Zimbabwe's rich legacy of philanthropy is best highlighted by the works of one of the country's greatest philanthropists, Jairos Jiri (1921–82), who founded the Jairos Jiri Association in 1940 to provide hope and assistance for the disabled of Zimbabwe.

The role of companies

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) can be broadly defined as the responsibility of businesses for their impact on society at large. Recently most companies have been urged to integrate social, environmental and human rights into their core operations and strategies. Perhaps the most prominent CSR activities in Zimbabwe are those of Econet Wireless through its 'Econet in the Community' initiative. Companies interviewed for the study stated that they were not aware of any legal instruments in Zimbabwe to influence the practice of CSR, but they give out of goodwill and as a way of ploughing back into the communities that they work with. Companies are mostly involved in ad-hoc paying of school fees and building of community infrastructure such as boreholes to improve access to clean water.

The rise of community philanthropy and local giving

Community foundations first appeared in the US. The Council on Foundations defines them as grantmaking public charities dedicated to improving the lives of people in a defined local geographic area. They bring together the financial resources of individuals, families and businesses to support effective non-profits in their communities.

In the Global South, community foundations – or, more broadly, community philanthropy organisations – have developed as a tool for community development rather than just a strategy for fundraising. They are emerging as a movement with an agenda to #ShiftThePower. According to a 2018 Grantcraft report, ‘community philanthropy is based on the premise that all communities have their own assets (money, skills, knowledge, networks, etc.). When these are pooled together, they build community power and voice.’ When local contributions are brought to the table, certain things happen:

- People start to feel like co-investors with a stake in their own development.
- This creates a different, flatter kind of power dynamic when dealing with external donors, which challenges traditional donor-beneficiary dynamics.
- New, more horizontal forms of accountability emerge, based on trust and transparency.

Like other regions of the Global South, Africa has witnessed the rise of community philanthropy. This is documented in a 2012 report called *A Different Kind of Wealth*:

“Across the continent, a new generation of local philanthropic institutions is emerging, some seeded with money from outside the continent, others entirely home-grown – and all seeking to draw on local resources and tap into different forms of wealth, which include cash but also include other, less tangible, forms of social capital such as trust and credibility. These organisations seek to occupy the spaces between large, formal philanthropy and more local level mobilization of communities and their assets, and to build bridges between the two. At the same time they also promote a form of development which is community-led and community-owned.”

Of the 21 organisations included, the majority were concentrated in Southern and East Africa, with a scattering in West Africa (two in Ghana and one in Nigeria) and North Africa (two in Egypt). Although international money was the largest source of funds (45%), the amount raised from individuals was an impressive 33%. Two years later, the Community Foundation Atlas identified

33 community philanthropy organisations in Africa. While many of these depend largely on donations and support from outside, some are managing to raise resources locally to fund some of their activities. Failure to do so can be attributed partly to a lack of understanding of local giving trends. Community philanthropy organisations need to appreciate local giving patterns, who the givers are and what resources they have, and be able to support the existing giving culture, before they can present themselves as attractive channels for local giving.

Probably the best known African community foundation is the Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF). KCDF perfectly exemplifies the community philanthropy philosophy outlined above.

“We seek to shift the power and change the narrative that poor people in Africa have nothing, to one that seeks to put them in the driver’s seat of their own destiny. Our experience has confirmed that communities understand their problems. They have visions of their desired future. They have indigenous knowledge. They are open to learn new things, especially if one takes time to help them understand the rationale and relevance to their lives.”

So wrote long-time executive director Janet Mawiyoo in a 2017 blog called ‘Durable development: time to do things differently’.

And it’s not just about resources, says Mawiyoo. Often poor and remote communities may lack ‘the soft skills that can help them unlock already available resources from state or donor funds or enable them to be more effective with what they already had’ – something that has been addressed by KCDF grants over two decades to groups with all sorts of agendas. ‘The commonality is we are investing in partnership with communities themselves, and putting in place a foundation to drive these platforms for years to come.’

A more recent convert to the idea of community philanthropy is the Zambia Governance Foundation (ZGF), which found that:

“the emerging debate on community philanthropy in the African region resonated with ZGF’s ambition to become more self-sufficient and sustainable not just because of dissatisfaction with traditional development financing, but also because of the underlying principle of acknowledging community assets as an indispensable part of successful local development processes.”

Inspired by KCDF’s community endowment fund experience, ZGF has embarked on a process of transforming its grantmaking function and infusing the notion of community endowment building. Like Uluntu, ZGF commissioned a study of local philanthropy in Zambia. What was apparent from the study was that organised and networked philanthropy has the potential for growth if families and individuals channel their resources through formal philanthropy.

In Zimbabwe, community philanthropy started with the establishment of the Community Foundation for the Western Region of Zimbabwe (CFWRZ) in 1998. Its first donors were 50,000 villagers, who had few funds but big ideas. CFWRZ was based on the concept of Qogelega, a traditional approach of the people in the western parts of Zimbabwe whereby community members pool resources with the ultimate goal of creating a permanent community endowment. Ten years later Inviolatta Moyo, first executive director of CFWRZ, founded Uluntu Community Foundation.

Uluntu Community Foundation

The vision

Founded by the late Inviolatta Moyo, together with some other development practitioners, Uluntu Community Foundation was registered in Zimbabwe in 2008. It is Zimbabwe's second community foundation, and Inviolatta was its first executive director. Uluntu's aim is to facilitate community-led, people-centred development to alleviate poverty and hunger and to provide technical and financial support to empower communities to respond to the various development challenges facing them. Its vision is of independent and self-reliant communities free from poverty and hunger in a sustainable environment. The underlying assumption is that people give, and that giving both reflects and helps to contribute to social capital. This spirit of a people-centred organisation is captured in the organisation's name: 'Uluntu' means 'people' in isiNdebele, the main local language of Western Zimbabwe.

Inviolatta Moyo took two things away from her earlier experience with CFWRZ, according to an article on the first five years of Uluntu called 'What will make us different?' namely 'her conviction that rapid growth was unlikely to lead to sustainability and her belief that success would depend on her building up a close network of relationships with others who shared her vision'. Patience and a refusal to lose sight of its founding principles – an absolute rootedness in the community and a belief in communities' power to solve their own problems – lie behind everything Uluntu does and are the basis of its relationships with the communities in which it works.

So what Uluntu does first is to establish a relationship with the community, 'listening to its representatives and members, waiting to hear from them what their most pressing concerns and needs are'. 'When you go to the community without answers,' says Moyo, 'automatically the energy is with the community. They are driving

the vehicles they want to move forward.' She elaborates: 'Just ask them [families]: "How have you coped before? How do we add to that?" It's about addressing poverty from the micro level. This is the taking-off point.'

Uluntu believes that the key to sustainable development is empowerment of communities and households as development agents. Communities have the capacity to respond to crises and development needs, and the resources to support their development, but they need support to leverage these resources. Uluntu sees its role as providing a channel for local and international partnerships to support community initiatives, enhancing local philanthropy and building leadership, accountability, ownership and trust as well as entrepreneurship at community level.

In other words, Uluntu wants to be an institutional partner that helps communities to realize their power in championing their own development. Its aim is to use grantmaking as a way of providing development support to communities, groups and individuals. Faced by dwindling donor funding and a new shift of donors priorities, Uluntu will engage communities in mobilizing local resources (financial, technical, material and intellectual) beyond what they already have to provide a sustainable way of funding local development initiatives. To date most community initiatives have received mainly short-term, piecemeal support with little community ownership.

Over the years Uluntu has developed a relationship with the Global Fund for Community Foundations (GFCF) as an affiliate member, participating in its activities including the Global Summit on Community Philanthropy, held in South Africa in 2016. Among other things, the Summit discussed the need for community philanthropy organisations to explore local philanthropy as donor support is dwindling.

Uluntu's work to date

Uluntu's work focuses on four thematic areas – food security and livelihoods, education, research and social entrepreneurship – with gender, environmental stewardship and HIV/AIDS as crosscutting issues.

One example of Uluntu's education work is an education programme in primary schools to improve infrastructure for early childhood learners, which Uluntu has been working on for the past five years. When the Zimbabwe government formalised early childhood education, there was no matching infrastructure and services in the schools. Uluntu took it upon itself to build awareness of the communities' duty to provide suitable physical infrastructure and services for early learners. Stakeholder meetings were organised which included local authorities, traditional leaders and government service departments. Community awareness meetings resulted in communities pledging their resources to construct new classrooms and renovate dilapidated ones. Local traditional and local government leaders were the entry point into communities and they have continued to be the local coordinating bodies/structures. Uluntu managed to get matching funds from international donors which were used to purchase building materials that were not locally available. Communities pledged their skilled and unskilled labour to construct classrooms, improve play centres, grow crops to feed the children, take it in turns to cook and provide meals, start income-generating projects to support the feeding project, and attend periodic meetings and training workshops. Capacity building through training leaders and community training was done over the five-year period. Within these five years 45 schools have been provided with quality classroom space and play facilities. Communities have made this a successful programme through local philanthropy, with Uluntu playing a mobilising and linking role. Local authorities have applauded the work of Uluntu in coordinating the communities in building their assets. Many schools want the programme and applications for partnership are piling up.

In its livelihoods and entrepreneurship work, Uluntu has linked external partners with

communities to improve household incomes and food security. Women and young people have mobilised human and financial resources to start income-generating activities and Uluntu has linked them with international funders who have supported them. The income-generating activities have helped community groups to contribute to supporting the sick, the bereaved and orphans, and to give soft loans to their members to cover household expenses.

The big challenge for Uluntu now is to mobilise more resources locally and internationally. Uluntu has to reach more communities and expand local resource mobilisation and community awareness, helping communities to document successful local practices and linking them with international co-funding partners, including members of the diaspora community. Lobbying of companies and philanthropic institutions is much needed and long overdue. Finally, Uluntu will want to create a sustainable fund for grantmaking to support community development initiatives.

Communities' view of Uluntu activities

The study sought to measure the community trust in Uluntu and to find out how communities feel about the services it provides. It seems there is a high level of visibility and acceptance of Uluntu among communities in both Gwanda and Umzingwane, which indicates that its interventions are having an impact. Out of 240 respondents, 73.8% indicated that they had benefited from Uluntu projects. The control group from the wards that Uluntu is not operating in accounts for almost 28%. People said they had known Uluntu for five years and it had maintained consistency and reliability in its activities. Uluntu can now start mobilising resources from those communities that have benefited from Uluntu interventions and documenting the success stories.

The study also sought to find out whether Uluntu has mechanisms to make sure that its interventions are sustainable. Both in Umzingwane and in Gwanda it came out that local community structures play a vital role in ensuring the sustainability of interventions. The involvement of chiefs, village heads, schools,

councillors and village development committees is key in continuous monitoring of the projects. This participation of local leadership is an important factor in building community trust in Uluntu, and it means that communities will be willing to give their resources to it for building sustainable funding.

The opportunity for Uluntu

The overall picture provided by the study is an encouraging one for Uluntu. Local giving is taking place. It is scattered, and based on trust and solidarity, but it does suggest the potential for local philanthropic interventions to catalyse local giving and support development in the Matabeleland regions of Zimbabwe. The study also shows the pivotal role local giving can play in stopping community dependence on external charity, breaking the cycle of poverty, and empowering individuals and communities. The findings give Uluntu a benchmark in coming up with a strategy for a way forward in its activities so that it remains relevant and sustainable.

The fact that the practice of local giving is widespread among all sections of the communities gives Uluntu a good starting point. And the fact that there are projects running in both Gwanda and Umzingwane supported by local giving initiatives bodes well for the sustainability of future projects.

The community understanding that handouts disempower them but assets will provide long-lasting solutions to their challenges is also helpful to Uluntu. To enhance sustainable development the community should be part and parcel of the building of local resources so that they are empowered to use these resources for their own development.

The detailed findings of the study also suggest specific areas where Uluntu could build on what is already happening in terms of local giving and provide useful pointers for Uluntu's work.

Helping communities to make better use of resources

The study makes clear that while communities in Gwanda and Umzingwane have an abundance of resources available to them, they are not always in a position to take full advantage of them. Uluntu could help these communities to invest in ways of adding value to these resources. This will increase disposable income, improve food

security, and finally help to enable local giving for local development. In doing this, Uluntu can tap into the indigenous knowledge possessed by communities, which can provide valuable input about the local environment and how to effectively manage available natural resources.

As an example, Uluntu could help to change the mindset of communities that keep livestock for prestige where animals often die due to lack of fodder and water, mobilising communities to build infrastructure such as dams and grazing schemes that will improve their lives and those of their livestock. Uluntu could also work with communities on projects such as improvement of irrigation schemes that will step up food production. Where extraction and utilisation of resources such as gold is currently done by outsiders, Uluntu could help communities to lobby government to craft legislation that protects them so that communities can utilise these resources for their own benefit.

Working with different types of local giver

The study also provides valuable information about who is giving locally. The fact that the 18-29 and 30-39 age groups seem to be the leading local givers suggests that Uluntu would do well to focus on mobilising resources from the younger generation, who are already involved in giving. These groups see themselves both as future leaders and as beneficiaries of the intended development, so would easily understand the need for, and commit themselves to, building an endowment in partnership with Uluntu.

Despite high poverty levels in the region, it seems that even the poorest members of communities are able and willing to give out of the little cash they have. This makes it feasible for Uluntu to mobilise financial resources from its constituencies: the little they have can build a castle in the form of a collective local development fund. If Uluntu could help to boost people informal sources of revenue generation or small businesses through providing

grants, soft loans, etc, this could enable them to contribute towards the development fund.

Building an education fund in partnership with the communities to help families educate their children seems a promising opportunity as most of those already involved in local giving have large families. The educational requirements of their children will have a big impact on family expenditures, so affecting individual and family giving trends as well as the educational careers of the children, who may fail to make it at school due to lack of school fees and other related school requirements.

Another potential area for Uluntu is working to increase remittances from diaspora community members. Migration is a reality of life for most of Zimbabwe's Matabeleland region as a direct consequence of unemployment and the country's economic crisis. Many people in the districts where Uluntu works are largely dependent on remittances. Where fathers have migrated to neighbouring countries looking for work, mothers and children are often left in abject poverty. Uluntu could help to strengthen these families' income-generating activities while also exploring how they can better tap into remittances from the diaspora by creating a database of those in the diaspora and involving them in raising funds to build an endowment.

The study also shows how little businesses currently contribute to local development. Uluntu will have to work hard on educating the business community on the need to plough back into the community. Uluntu can make a start by working with companies that provide it with services, for example their bank or suppliers of materials that they use for local construction projects, tapping into their CSR programmes to enhance philanthropy among the business community.

Strengthening motivations to give

The study shows that people are often moved to give when they see other people in need. A role for Uluntu could therefore be helping communities to identify needy members within their own community. In doing this it might be worth exploring participatory approaches such as welfare ranking. Community-defined poverty

indexes/vulnerability indicators can be used, with development practitioners working as the facilitators. Uluntu can also work with local leaders and the Department of Social Welfare in identifying needy cases.

The study also shows that people mostly prefer to give as individuals rather than as part of a group. This suggests that Uluntu will be more effective in mobilising resources if it approaches and works with communities at the level of individuals.

In general, building close relationships with communities will help Uluntu to bring out into the open, and understand, the factors that influence people to give and not to give.

Recommendations

Below are some key recommendations for future Uluntu activities:

- Organise, coordinate, mobilise and assist communities to step up the giving that is already taking place in Gwanda and Umzingwane districts
- Build capacity in local communities and in community and group leadership structures on good governance, accountability and transparency
- Focus more on community awareness raising, and consider the range of donors that might support local giving
- Give grants, including start-up capital grants, to projects that will improve household incomes
- Support community advocacy so that communities are able to influence and control the utilisation of local resources
- Develop mechanisms to explore and coordinate remittances from young men and women who migrate to Botswana and South Africa in search of jobs
- Encourage more private sector giving initiatives through CSR programmes by highlighting the plight of communities
- Build an inventory or database of all local giving initiatives, both financial and in kind
- Devise ways to build trust in Uluntu to manage resources from various local giving initiatives, flagging up its grantmaking capacity and expertise in supporting communities in their development trajectory

If it is to fulfil its mission, Uluntu will need to mobilise resources both locally from beneficiary communities and from bigger funding partners. If people are giving, and if this local giving can be joined up more strategically, then Uluntu might be in a position not only to facilitate this (in terms of mobilising and stewarding resources transparently and effectively) but also to channel other (external) resources to the foundation that build on what the community is already doing. This would increase community ownership of their development and shift power closer to the ground.