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# AFRICA GRANTMAKERS' AFFINITY GROUP



## 2012 Annual Retreat Evaluation & Learning: Navigating the Range of Approaches

March 12 - 14, 2012  
Hamilton Park Hotel & Conference Center  
Florham Park, NJ

# SUMMARY REPORT



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**T**he Africa Grantmakers' Affinity Group (AGAG) is a project of the Tides Center. It was founded in 2000 by a group of foundation staff seeking to create a space where they could come together to learn from and share with each other and to highlight the opportunities to support development efforts in Africa. AGAG has grown into a vibrant and diverse network of grantmakers funding in Africa and continues to elevate Africa's profile within the philanthropy community.

AGAG supports the learning agenda of its members and adds value to the field of philanthropy and African development through its activities. Membership is open to grantmakers only and both individual and institution memberships are available. Institution membership extends benefits to staff and board members.

AGAG seeks to engage all grantmakers interested in and committed to Africa and to create opportunities for grantmakers to build useful and meaning professional relationships with their colleagues. Members can engage in spirited discussion and debate, develop strategies to address challenges, and take advantage of networking opportunities in a safe and professional supportive space.

Each year the Africa Grantmakers' Affinity Group organizes a retreat to bring together the members and other stakeholders. This report is a summary of the discussions held at 2012 Annual Retreat. Audio recording of the sessions are available in the Members section of the website at [www.africagrntmakers.org](http://www.africagrntmakers.org).

For more information about AGAG activities or additional copies of this report please contact AGAG at [info@africagrntmakers.org](mailto:info@africagrntmakers.org).

2011 Retreat Report by Phil Arkow

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## INTRODUCTION

Each year grantmakers funding development projects in Africa come together at the Africa Grantmakers' Affinity Group (AGAG) Annual Retreat. In 2011 the discussions focused on approaches to supporting organizational capacity. As part of those discussions, the role of assessing organizational and grantmaking effectiveness emerged. At that Retreat, participants noted that tracking the impact of their support on social movements and addressing social problems is difficult. More often than not, progress is slow and span borders. The partners involved can have widely differing priorities, levels of expertise, and capacities for gathering and interpreting data. Participants had observed that whichever evaluation tools are used may not be as important as the processes of evaluation and learning themselves.

The 2012 Retreat built on this issue and explored how to navigate the range of approaches to evaluation and learning. The discussions revealed the complexity of the discussion and the range of opinions to answers key questions. How grant partners and funders evaluate their results? What is success to a grantmaker, its partners, and the grantees' constituents? How will we measure outcomes, and how will we know success when we see it? And, more importantly, what do organizations learn from this experience?

The 2012 Retreat examined these questions using a theoretical and practical lens, looking at quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods and their roles in strategic planning, program design and implementation. Six case studies revealed the practical aspects in approaching evaluation and reflected the many evaluation and learning approaches currently being used by foundations. Participants left with a greater understanding of how grantmakers can identify their evaluation needs, the types of questions they can ask, methodologies available to them, how they will learn from evaluation results, and how this information can help set priorities.

This summary report presents some of the key topics and points of discussion. But as with all the AGAG annual retreats, it is difficult to capture all that happens when colleagues come together to share with and learn from each other.

If you would like to be a part of the Africa Grantmakers' Affinity Group network of Africa funders, find out more about our activities, or read our publications, please visit our website at [www.africagrantmakers.org](http://www.africagrantmakers.org) where you can learn more about our activities. We look forward to seeing you at the annual retreat next year.

Niamani Mutima  
Executive Director

## THE THEORY:

### “THE ART AND SCIENCE” OF EVALUATION

**Jennifer Caroline Greene**, president of the American Evaluation Association and Professor at the University of Illinois framed the context of what evaluation can and cannot do. Evaluations are often the missing piece in program creation, design and implementation, leading to an “evaluation gap.” Greene asked the audience to consider three key questions:

#### 1. What types of evaluations can be utilized?

- Context evaluation – A needs assessment to explore the environment in which the organization functions and the program operates.
- Input evaluation – Develops portraits of how a program should develop based upon the perspectives of different stakeholders. It measures the logic, feasibility and evidence underlying a program’s design.
- Process evaluation – Evaluates the fidelity of program implementation, its concordance with the underlying theory or initial planning, reach, efficiency, and quality. How is it improving the end users’ everyday lives?
- Program outcomes evaluation – Measures whether the intended outcomes were reached, all intended groups benefited equally, the interests of the most needy were advanced, any unintended effects, and whether the program was cost-effective.
- Developmental evaluation – A capacity-building strategy as the program is being developed to help the team think about program design, implementation and expected outcomes. Including evaluation in program planning can be highly beneficial.

#### 2. What is the purpose of the evaluation and who are its audiences?

Evaluation approaches depend on whose interests are being addressed. Because there are multiple stakeholders among the grant partners, different types of evaluations are needed to inform decision makers about the program, its effectiveness, social problems being addressed, and to gain accountability.

There is no uniform evaluation process. Conditions on the ground rarely stand still long enough for a tidy collection and analysis of data, so evaluators need to choose an approach most responsive, in sync with their needs and those of the field, and supportive of the aims and character of the program being evaluated. The type of evaluation is less important than whether the evaluation process respects the organization for its capabilities and aims.

#### 3. What is the value dimension of evaluations: how do we know if a program is good?

Measuring the intangible effects of long-term social advocacy can be highly subjective. Quantitative analyses may be feasible in the biological sciences, but the social sciences may require more qualitative analyses, particularly if the horizon for change is long-term or incremental and outcomes harder to quantify. Building in an evaluation process from the beginning can be a valuable opportunity to establish realistic expectations. Evaluators can help program developers to think strategically about the logic of their design and anticipated outcomes within the context in which the program will operate “on the ground.”

## THE CONTEXT:

### DEVELOPMENTS IN EVALUATION IN AFRICA

**Florence Etta**, past president of the African Evaluation Association and CEO of GRAIDE International, described how the African Evaluation Association is developing the evaluation capacity of NGOs. Numerous challenges affect evaluations in the African context. The value for money invested may be difficult to measure when trying to assess the impact of advocacy or projects with long time horizons.

The methodologies of African evaluation processes are more collaborative and collective than those with which outside funders may be familiar. Local representatives who know the people, culture, customs, and the area's needs should be involved in design, refinement and implementation. As a consequence, it is easier to create an evaluation with benign intentions that informs organizational development. The method of evaluation may not be as important as its intentionality, how the information is used, and what can be learned from the process and the information gathered.

"We need to develop evaluation on behalf of the many. We need to learn what works, and when it works, but too often we forget to ask why it works," she said. The bottom-line question is simple: "How are the lives of people affected by what I did?"

## LEARNING WITH THE COMMUNITY:

### ADAPTING EVALUATION AND LEARNING TO INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

**I**ndigenous populations represent the backbone of Africa's traditional knowledge of nature and sustainable development. These groups struggle to maintain their land, cultures and human rights in the face of widespread and extreme economic, social and political marginalization. Evaluation and learning can be particularly challenging when funding these societies. Panelists working with indigenous communities addressed several key points based upon their experiences.

**Wolde Tadesse of the Christensen Fund** noted that the definition of "indigenous" is contentious, is continually evolving, and means different things to different people. Many challenges confront grantmakers supporting indigenous groups and incorporating these issues contextually in evaluations is important. Funders who fail to understand these realities will be perceived by their communities as arrogant. "We should pay attention to their way of understanding what something given to them means to them rather than what it means to us."

**Elizabeth Chadri of the MacArthur Foundation** described the MacArthur Foundation's Human Rights and International Justice and Conservation and Sustainable Development programs. Improved transparency and meaningful participation by group members in decision-making reduce the potential for conflicts and lead to improved conservation outcomes and greater respect for human rights. Chadri recommended that funders integrate "life plans," or a holistic approach to understanding social conditions, into their monitoring and evaluation processes.

**Hussein Isack of the Kivulini Trust** described its work with pastoralist, hunter-gatherer, fishing, and minority groups in northern Kenya. To ensure effectiveness and sustainability, community-based organizations must be anchored in local cultures and values so they can count on the trusted pillars of legitimacy, accountability and self-enforcement. Holistic approaches must ensure that projects are aligned with the needs of the indigenous community rather than the donor's interests; otherwise, the community's vision will stagnate at the activities level, setting up "project orphans" for easy derailment and apparent failure when they are evaluated.

**Janet Akwimbo of Global Greengrants Fund** discussed the valuable lessons it has learned about ownership, voice and connectivity among community-led projects in 11 countries. What indigenous groups see as most valuable may not be what intermediaries or funders consider important. Once these groups feel the program is theirs, they will be more focused on it and evaluations can more accurately measure appropriate indicators. While advisors and grantmakers may approach an issue on a global level, indigenous groups are more concerned with being connected with their neighbors. Grants designed for local connectivity will be more successful.

Akwimbo identified three key concepts learned from evaluating indigenous grantmaking:

- **Judgment:** Funders must be sensitive to indigenous peoples' worldview.
- **Context:** Indigenous people are connected and have their own relationships and interdependencies that must be respected and incorporated into grant impact assessments.
- **Marginalization:** Many indigenous populations have evolved an adaptive strategy of keeping a low profile and may not want to become involved in community projects.

One size of evaluation does not fit all. Grantmakers should take extra time in their planning to learn which evaluation techniques will work with indigenous populations.

## THE FRAMEWORK:

### FRAMING THE DISCUSSION ABOUT NAVIGATING THE APPROACHES

There are many different ways that foundations approach the value and expectation of evaluation and learning. Panelists from a range of philanthropy organizations gave their perspective to help frame the discussion.

**Susan Gibbs of the Wallace Global Fund** described their programs on women's empowerment, advocacy and social change. Trying to define and measure empirical changes is difficult and "a slippery process," as long-term social change is an incremental effort and ongoing process. Gibbs identified several approaches to help measure the effectiveness of social change and advocacy programs. Grantmakers can view their transformative vision and grant activity within a longer time frame and not expect immediate results. They can measure changes in social trends broadly and incrementally, and measure changes in grantees' organizational capacity rather than just metrics of how grant dollars were spent.

**Sarah Hobson of the New Field Foundation** described evaluation in terms of the grantmaker's power, politics, public expectations, attitudes toward collaboration, internal politics, and corporate culture. Getting consensus among board members can be difficult, and board members operate at a higher level than program officers regarding the impact of grants. The evidence that the board needs may be less detailed than what the executive director requires.

Although evaluations are significant for their organizational development, requiring grantees to perform them is a challenge. "Evaluation can be as much a tool of oppression and domination as it can be a tool of liberation," Hobson noted. A suggested solution is to consider evaluation results as one – but not the only – source of information and to couple it with knowledge, experience, strategy, and context to obtain a fuller picture.

**Jackie Williams Kaye of Wellspring Advisors**, described three relationships: between evaluation and the grantmaker's approach; between evaluation and the grantmaker's strategy; and between the grantee's evaluation and the funder's evaluation. Grantmakers may have to change their funding approach to better accommodate grantees' capacity to conduct evaluations, or provide funding to help them develop it. Funders need to be clear about their overall goals and how individual grants fit within that model. Grantee and funder evaluations should be linked: both partners face the same issues of inadequate resources, coordination and expertise for conducting evaluations.

Asking grantees to identify their short-, medium- and long-term goals can better inform their progress reports and performance analyses and help all to see that some social improvements are necessarily long-term affairs with only incremental measurable outcomes. The real measurement of success is whether organizational capacity is increased.

**Mwihaki Kimura Muraguri of the Rockefeller Foundation** described a "Herculean" task of trying to catch up after long periods without evaluations. Grantees often focus on their own needs and their individual grants without knowing how their work fits into an overall strategy. Gaining an understanding of an issue or problem can be much like the "three blind men and the elephant" fable in which each had a different picture based upon their limited point of contact. To counteract this, the Rockefeller Foundation has convened its grantees to share a common vision. Such a process also leveraged opportunities among the grantees and increased their networking.

## CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS OF EVALUATION APPROACHES

Six case studies were presented describing the method, rationale, and learning from different types of evaluations undertaken by foundations and what each revealed about matching evaluation methods and learning objectives. Background information on each case study was sent to participants prior to the Retreat. Each presentation was followed by questions and discussion.

### **AN INTERNAL, PROGRAM-DRIVEN APPROACH REFLECTING WITH PARTNERS TO LEARN FROM AND IMPROVE STRATEGY**

**Sarah Gunther** described “Reflecting with Partners,” the American Jewish World Service’s process of gaining evaluative feedback from its grantees. As AJWS’s scale grew it needed more accountability from its grantees. This necessitated creating an environment encouraging mutual communications with grant partners. Grantees in Uganda were brought together to reflect on AJWS’s strategy and to identify complex environmental factors that affect social changes. An internal process of evaluation by program staff tapped their experience, gave them ownership of the process, and evaluated within the context of grantees’ realities. Evaluations were tied to strategy development and organizational learning, with program officers and end-users providing a feedback loop. Participants were taught to learn to think evaluatively.

### **AN APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY APPROACH: AN ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING AGENDA TO TEST AND REFINE A THEORY OF CHANGE**

**Aili Langseth** described the Firelight Foundation’s support of grassroots organizations to improve the well-being of children. Firelight’s organizational learning agenda applied knowledge gained to improve its programs, build an evidence base to inform and persuade other donors, test and refine its theory of change, and ground the development of evaluation metrics.

In 2010, a learning lab in Zimbabwe asked 26 grantee partners how they had survived political turmoil and what elements contributed to their resilience and adaptive capacity to respond to systemic shocks. An appreciative inquiry process started from the presumption that every organization has strengths that work for them and serve as a life force. An extensive list of challenges and adaptation strategies emerged. The evaluation deepened the foundation’s understanding and resulted in adding a new set of questions – a linkages survey – to grant proposals to identify the nature, purpose and directions of grantees’ organizational relationships. This new understanding of how CBOs operate is helping Firelight to adapt its strategies.

### **USING PROCESS AND OUTCOME EVALUATION TOOLS: EVALUATING THE GROWTH OF ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AMONG INDIGENOUS NGOS**

**Shira Gitomer** of Geneva Global described the New Partners initiative to strengthen 31 Ethiopian HIV/AIDS organizations’ technological and organizational capacity. Geneva Global utilized several types of evaluation processes. An outcomes evaluation was used with quarterly project performance reports prepared for internal use to measure the capacity of the organization, costs against budget, and outcomes against expectations. The cost-per-life-impacted identified why some organizations are more expensive to operate than others when factored against their breadth and depth of scope. An annual organizational capacity assessment tool was used with site visits, one-on-one follow-ups and individual technical assistance plans to ensure grantees use the tool correctly. A combination of process and outcome evaluation tools made the most sense for the funder to see if its approach was the most effective.

**LEARNING FROM QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE EVALUATIONS: CREATING FEEDBACK LOOPS BETWEEN EVALUATION AND IMPLEMENTATION FOR EVIDENCE-BASED GRANTMAKING**

**Alix Zwane** described a randomized controlled trial by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to determine the “attributable benefit” of a new rural water, sanitation and hygiene intervention that also became a learning issue for the foundation. The grantee conducted an impact evaluation self-assessment. But while the impact evaluation revealed quantitative data about health indicators, it did not account for qualitative contextual or motivational findings to understand why people were reluctant to use the new systems. A forensic exercise was then conducted in-country to understand what was going wrong and make better sense of the program and its shortcomings.

The foundation’s learning experience from this was to conduct more rigorous evaluation utilizing more randomized trial evidence, to work with grantees to ensure that they are more sophisticated about evaluation, and to learn from them. The foundation learned to combine both quantitative research, favored by the epidemiological and academic communities, with qualitative evaluations, favored by program implementers, to generate better information. Measurements and evaluations have to be relevant from a programming perspective, not just an academic one.

**THE POWER OF STORY-TELLING AND GROUP DATA: ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY TO ASSESS IMPACT**

**Sarah Hobson** described the New Field Foundation’s strategy of improving women’s rights, financial services, and community peace-building and the numerous challenges in measuring change. Based on these constraints, New Field took two approaches. One used the power of story-telling for qualitative evaluation. While many evaluation professionals do not consider story-telling sufficiently rigorous, this traditional means of disseminating information can provide a highly enlightening understanding of what is going on – with vivid quotes that can be repackaged for a variety of purposes.

The validity of story-telling can be enhanced by systematizing the stories. Merely collecting a few individual stories risks skewing data based upon incomplete, selective samples and may not present a comprehensive picture. But narratives can be data-driven if enough stories are collected and analyzed for overarching patterns and recurrent information, and provide culturally rich and authentic qualitative insights that cannot be obtained through more traditional means.

The second approach worked with local leaders to identify quantitative information that would be useful to all parties involved. Critical to measuring impact is the ability of grantmakers and local groups to gather information consistently that is meaningful to them. Although training the community to conduct evaluations may be a slow process, this can be a dynamic for change in its own right and identify unintended grantmaking consequences.

**ASSESSING IMPACT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PARTNERS: TESTING THE GRANTMAKER’S THEORY OF CHANGE**

**Yeshica Weerasekera** described how the International Development Exchange (IDEX) tested its grantmaking strategy, theory of change, assumptions, and impact. IDEX commissioned an external evaluation of its partnership model of grantmaking around one overarching question: How effective has this model been from the partners’ perspective? Giving voice to the partners gives qualitative depth, nuance and meaning to the quantitative data.

A theory of change-based methodology was the most suitable approach. The evaluation was viewed as a learning exercise to review past accomplishments and to think through course corrections to future grantmaking. The ensuing report revealed areas in the social change process that needed to be shifted. All funders bring their particular vision, history, approach, and experience when developing a theory of change. By getting input from

partners and sharing evaluation results with them, funders can strengthen their theory, sharpen it, and determine future directions

## NEW FUNDER INITIATIVES

**D**uring this session two presentations informed participants about new funder initiatives in the United States and in Africa to bring together grantmakers and leverage support.

### **The African Grantmakers Network (AGN)**

**Neville Gabriel** of the Southern African Trust described the African Grantmakers Network, a new organization responding to a changing Africa and its emerging new economies, philanthropies, and the influx of funding from global players. Gabriel identified a number of emerging issues: the need to establish a voice for African actors to ensure that they help define discussions and actively participate in dialogue; accountability; new sources of African wealth; transnational issues; and intergenerational differences of perspective. The group is planning its second conference in South Africa in the fall of 2012.

### **Fund to Amplify Agro-Ecological Solutions Multi-Donor Fund**

**Lauren Marra** of Arabella Advisors and **Wolde Talesse** of the Christensen Fund described how this fund leverages solutions around the principles of ecology that meet people's needs for food but which give equal attention to sustainability, resilience, indigenous peoples' ways of life, and equity rather than only food production. Loss of knowledge about each clan's traditions, crops, methods of animal husbandry, and how people relate to one another and to the land can cause humanity to lose much of our heritage. With agricultural operations growing in scale, there is a need to promote alternative methods and local practices that sustain food sovereignty and sustainability and that mitigate the impacts that are causing global warming.

## MEDIA AND AFRICA: RECENT AND RELEVANT

**Tami Hultman** of the AllAfrica Foundation reviewed the growth of AllAfrica.com, the pan-African, multimedia organization she helped found that aggregates news content from over 130 African media sources. AllAfrica.com posts over 2,000 articles daily, generates its own content, and receives more than 2,000,000 monthly visits on its website. With offices in Capetown, Dakar, Monrovia and Nairobi and a predominately African staff, AllAfrica.com has become a significant voice by, from and about Africa speaking to and for Africa. Traditional media are faring relatively well in Africa and in some cases are profitable and thriving.

The growth of social media, evidenced by what she called the "African Spring" uprisings in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt, is accelerating the trend among younger persons for a new African identity. Mobile devices are the future of communications media and "an astounding number" of Africans are using mobile technology and crowd-sourced data. Social media are invaluable issue-oriented communications that are strengthening African development and innovation through empowerment.

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**AGENDA**
**MONDAY, MARCH 12, 2012**

6:00pm - 9:00pm Reception & Dinner: Navigating the Range of Evaluation Options  
 Guest Speaker - **Jennifer Caroline Greene**, President, American Evaluation Association

**TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2012**

9:00am - 12:00pm Morning Sessions - Exploring the Landscape

9:00am - 10:15am Connect Up: Mapping the Landscape

This interactive session is designed to help participants to network and identify common interests. A mapping exercise will identify geographic and program funding interests, evaluation approaches, and related topics.

10:30am - 12:00pm The Field of Evaluation in Africa: Implications for Grantmakers

Guest Speaker: **Florence Etta**, Past President, African Evaluation Association (AfrEA)

12:00pm - 1:00pm New Funder Initiatives

African Grantmakers Network – **Neville Gabriel** of Southern Africa Trust, an AGN member will discuss its emergence and activities and how grantmakers can participate in AGN including the upcoming conference in 2012 in South Africa.

Fund to Amplify Agro-Ecological Solutions Multi-Donor Fund - **Wolde Tadesse** of the Christensen Fund and **Lauren Marra** of Arabella Advisors will discuss the formation of this new funders' collaboration and how grantmakers can become involved.

1:00pm - 2:00pm Lunch

2:00pm - 6:00pm Afternoon Sessions: Navigating the Range of Approaches

2:00pm - 3:00pm Framing the Discussion about Evaluation & Learning

**Susan Gibbs**, Consultant, Wallace Global Fund

**Sarah Hobson**, Executive Director, New Field Foundation

**Jackie Williams Kaye**, Director, Research & Evaluation, Wellspring Advisors

**Mwihaki Kimura Muraguri**, Associate Director, Rockefeller Foundation

Representing different perspectives and the diversity of funders working in Africa, these speakers will start the conversation by sharing their thoughts about issues and challenges in evaluation and learning followed by an open discussion to identify issues from the group.

3:00pm - 6:00pm Case Study Sessions

The case studies will focus on the method, rationale, and learning from different types of evaluations undertaken and what each revealed about matching evaluation methods and learning objectives. Background information on each case study was sent to participants prior to the Retreat. Each presentation will be 15 minutes and followed by questions and discussion. Case study descriptions are after the agenda.

1 - Reflecting with Partners to Learn from and Improve Uganda Country Strategy

**Sarah Gunther**, Associate Director of Grants, Africa, American Jewish World Service

2 - Community-based Organizations - Resilience in Zimbabwe

**Aili Langseth**, Program Officer, Firelight Foundation

3 - Evaluating the Growth of Organizational Capacity among Indigenous NGOs

**Shira Gitomer**, Global Health Program Director

4 - Creating Feedback Loops between Evaluation & Implementation for Evidence-based Grantmaking: A Case Study from Sanitation

**Alix Zwane**, Senior Program Officer, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

5:45pm - 6:00pm          Wrap Up

This session will provide an opportunity to reflect upon the day's discussions and identify issues that emerged to be discussed during the "parking lot" session on Wednesday morning.

### **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2012**

9:00am - 9:30am          Parking Lot Discussion

This session is an opportunity to discuss issues or questions that emerged from the previous day's discussions and were "parked" for later discussion.

9:30am - 10:45am          Indigenous Peoples in Africa and Sustainable Development: Approaches to Evaluation and Learning

Moderator: **Elizabeth Chadri**, Program Officer, MacArthur Foundation

Speakers: **Janet Awimbo**, East Africa & Southern Africa Advisory Boards Coordinator, Global Greengrants Fund

**Hussein Isack**, Executive Director, Kivulini Trust

**Wolde Tadesse**, Program Officer for the African Rift Valley, The Christensen Fund

This session will explore the diversity, aspirations, and types of organizations of indigenous peoples in Africa and discuss how to establish relevant evaluation approaches that meet the needs of both grantmakers and local grantee groups while building strong funding partnerships.

11:00am - 12:15pm          Case Study Sessions

5 - Community Grantmaking in West Africa 2006-2011: Assessing Impact

**Sarah Hobson**, Executive Director, New Field Foundation

6 - Evaluating IDEX's Organizational Approach: Our Decade-Long Global Partnership Work

**Yeshica Weerasekera**, Director, Program Partnerships, International Development Exchange

12:15pm - 1:00pm          Wrap Up and Planning for 2013 Retreat

1:00pm - 2:00pm          Closing Luncheon - Media and Africa: Recent and Relevant

Guest Speaker: **Tami Hultman**, Co-founder and Chief Content & Strategy Officer, AllAfrica Global Media; Director, AllAfrica Foundation

Tami Hultman, journalist and co-founder of the leading source of information about "all Africa all the time," shares insights on media reporting on and about Africa.

## **CASE STUDY DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Evaluating IDEX's Organizational Approach: Our Decade-Long Global Partnership Work**

#### **International Development Exchange (IDEX)**

This case study will share the process and findings from a recent evaluation study to explore and assess the impact of IDEX's grantmaking strategy and engagement over the past decade from the perspective of its partners. The purpose of the evaluation was to review, refine the decade-long partnership model, and share the results within philanthropy.

### **Evaluating the Growth of Organizational Capacity among Indigenous NGOs**

#### **Geneva Global**

This case study will focus on the evaluation strategy and method of GGI's New Partner Initiative program in Ethiopia funded in 2006-2011 by the Presidents Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through USAID that focused on Prevention, Care and Treatment of HIV/AIDS. This case study will review the evaluation tools, techniques, and approaches used in this program involving multiple grant recipients and a technical donor that can be adapted by other donors working in a similar context.

**Reflecting with Partners to Learn from and Improve Uganda Country Strategy****American Jewish World Service (AJWS)**

This case study focuses on AJWS's sexual health and rights country strategy in Uganda and highlights the value of adopting an internal, program-driven approach to evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation was to strengthen AJWS's grantmaking strategy and to engage grantees in collective learning and reflection.

**Community-based Organizations - Resilience in Zimbabwe****Firelight Foundation**

This case study will focus on the Firelight Foundation's use of the appreciative inquiry method to learn how grantee partners in Zimbabwe managed to weather the socioeconomic crisis, the factors of resiliency that helped them to survive, how they will use what they have learned, and the framework they developed for capturing and linking data, lessons, and insights that emerge from across partner networks.

**Creating Feedback Loops between Evaluation and Implementation for Evidence-based Grantmaking: A Case Study from Sanitation****Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**

This case study describes a combination of impact evaluations and process evaluations used to inform rural sanitation investment decisions. It describes how the Foundation learned to use evaluations to answer questions about the mechanisms underlying successful programming, and the uses, and limitations, of evaluations that only provide information on final impacts, no matter how rigorously this metric is assessed. The presentation will discuss how the Foundation changed its strategies as a result of this experience and the challenges of using the data going forward.

**Community Grantmaking in West Africa 2006-2011: Assessing Impact****New Field Foundation**

This case study presents findings from a current process to understand better the impact of the Foundation's community grantmaking over six years in Sierra Leone and Senegal and highlights the challenges and choices for monitoring and evaluation when working with grassroots grantees.

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## ABOUT THE AFRICA GRANTMAKERS' AFFINITY GROUP

### Our Mission

The Africa Grantmakers' Affinity Group (AGAG) is network of funders whose mission is to promote increased and more effective funding in Africa through building and sharing knowledge. AGAG is a project of the Tides Center.

### What We Do

We support knowledge building within the field of philanthropy to Africa on a range of topics that affects grantmaking in Africa and facilitate networking among funders interested in or currently funding in Africa by:

- Organizing the Annual Retreat, the only yearly gathering of grantmakers funding in Africa
- Organizing "Conversations With and Dialogues On" calls or webinars and informal and formal gatherings where colleagues can share with and learn from their collective professional experience
- Conducting research on topics important to grantmakers funding in Africa
- Providing online resources including a searchable directory of member funding interests that provides useful information to grantmakers and grantseekers
- Providing consultations with staff knowledgeable about trends in Africa grantmaking.

### Our value added for Africa grantmakers

Our members tell us they join and stay in our network because through us they are able to:

- Stay current with the field of philanthropy in Africa by participating in AGAG activities, use our online resources, consult with staff, and read our research publications.
- Identify and meet colleagues that lead to partnerships and collaborations.
- Learn about the work of other funders.
- Support the field of philanthropy to Africa

Visit our website at [www.africagrantmakers.org](http://www.africagrantmakers.org) to access resources and learn how to join the network.

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