

Africa Grantmakers' Affinity Group Annual Retreat



AFRICA
Grantmakers'
Affinity
Group

Retreat Report
September 30 – October 2, 2002
Summit Executive Centre
Chicago, Illinois

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Credits

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Introduction

This is a moment ripe with possibilities of tremendous growth in Africa. There are more civilian governments today than at any time in the last century. Fragile democracies are becoming stronger and developing the systems of transparency and accountability necessary to build strong citizen participation and robust economies. Civil society organizations are beginning to work with each other to strengthen regional solidarity. Governments are pursuing joint strategies and have developed a new framework, the New Partnership for African Development, to stimulate more regional trade and to bolster the ability of African countries to compete in a global economy. These promising and exciting changes are also taking place while Africa is facing difficult and oftentimes seemingly daunting challenges; among them are the struggle to reverse the impact of HIV/AIDS on the continent's human and financial resources, new armed conflicts, and a new geopolitical reality preoccupied with fighting terrorism as a result of the events of September 11th. Grantmakers that support African efforts realize that these factors present both challenges and opportunities.

The Africa Grantmakers' Affinity Group (AGAG) seeks to encourage increased and more effective foundation funding in Africa. Annual events such as the retreat held in Chicago provide an opportunity for foundations to share ideas and lessons about what works and why, reflect upon and refine strategies for building new partnerships and strengthening existing ones, and leverage the impact of their programs, while examining both the disappointments and the achievements of their work.

As the third in a series of annual retreats, this meeting in Chicago focused on both strategic issues, such as theories of social change and partnerships, and substantive issues, such as HIV/AIDS, challenges to democratization and the use of information technology. The retreat also enabled members to discuss and formulate strategies for AGAG's organizational development and program activities to support the efforts of its members.

The Chicago meeting reaffirmed that AGAG's strength is in the diversity of its members and its uniqueness as a forum for Africa grantmakers to explore issues from a range of perspectives and experiences. This exchange is undertaken with a willingness to share, to debate, to reflect, and ultimately, to affirm the commitment of the foundation community to work to improve their craft and support the efforts of the organizations and institutions they support who are working to improve the quality of life in Africa. This emphasis on sharing and learning from each other is at the heart of AGAG's mission and is a process that we will continue to promote and foster through all our activities.

Niamani Mutima
Director
Africa Grantmakers' Affinity Group



Executive Summary

FUNDERS PROVIDING SUPPORT in Africa today face a host of opportunities and challenges. Among the positive trends characterizing the continent are increasing democratization, economic growth, capital development, and the greater availability and use of information and communications technologies (ICTs). At the same time, widespread poverty, the devastating toll of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and armed conflicts continue to pose significant threats to progress.

It was against this backdrop that members of the Africa Grantmakers' Affinity Group (AGAG) met on September 30 – October 2, 2002 in Chicago to share their experiences and ideas for leveraging existing opportunities to promote positive change. The meeting enabled 38 participants from 25 foundations to exchange perspectives on the current context in which grantmakers operate in Africa. The meeting explored issues related to democratization and governance; the impact of HIV/AIDS on health, education, and economic development; and the role of partnerships in addressing a range of needs. Discussion also focused on AGAG's role in enhancing networking and collaboration among Africa grantmakers – both now and in the future.

In his welcome remarks, Akwasi Aidoo, Chair of the Retreat Planning Committee, outlined the following four areas in which foundations can have a significant impact in Africa:

People – Building the capacity of institutions and individuals dedicated to improving the conditions and prospects of Africans.

Policies – Focusing on policies that relate to grassroots organizations and communities.

Partnerships – Working with African organizations and encouraging partnerships among them, while transitioning from a more traditional funder/grantee model to one of partnership.

Philanthropy – Promoting indigenous philanthropy.

Subsequent presentations and discussions reinforced these key themes.



**“transitions to
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TODAY'S AFRICA: ISSUES AND TRENDS

The opening dinner speaker addressed some of the current issues and trends on the continent. In his remarks, Alexandre Barro-Chambrier, Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund, applauded initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and its strategy to end the marginalization of Africa. NEPAD seeks to achieve sustainable growth through promoting expanded regional initiatives and broader participation in the global economy. Mr. Chambrier referred to current favorable economic growth trends within a number of African countries, while at the same time cautioning that greater growth is needed to reduce poverty and reach the United Nations' Millennium Development Goal of cutting poverty rates in half by the year 2015.

Other speakers and participants echoed Mr. Chambrier's praise of recent progress, combined with a stark acknowledgment of urgent needs. "More and better trade, rather than aid, is needed to transform Africa into a global force," commented Akwasi Aidoo, adding that a major constraint is Africa's current share of world trade, estimated at less than two percent. At the same time, Mr. Aidoo underscored recent growth in the number of civil society organizations in Africa, stating that such "transitions to democracy provide an opportunity to inform programming, energize, and inspire."

Given their rich knowledge base and diverse perspectives, it was generally agreed that AGAG members are uniquely positioned to learn from one another about strategies that have proven successful in addressing current needs in Africa.





Executive Summary (cont'd)

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACING GRANTMAKERS IN AFRICA

In light of the scale and severity of challenges facing the continent, it was recognized that funders face difficult choices. Many find themselves torn between supporting immediate charitable activities (e.g., those associated with poverty, malnutrition, and the HIV/AIDS epidemic) and pursuing more strategic, long-term philanthropic efforts. Similarly, funders grapple with focusing on broader geographic areas versus targeting their funding toward more substantive efforts on a limited scale. In light of these challenges, Dr. Kenneth Prewitt, Carnegie Professor of Public Affairs at Columbia University, advised participants to be disciplined in what they choose to address and to “commit to something that you can believe in as an institution.”

Despite pressing needs, emerging trends within Africa are creating new opportunities for grantmaking on the continent. For example, new openings exist for nurturing indigenous philanthropy as a result of recent private sector growth. Discussion also focused on how grantmakers can help foster a more conducive environment for local philanthropy, for example, through promoting greater tax and fiscal incentives for companies supporting development initiatives.

Growth in the accessibility and use of ICTs was viewed as having great potential for furthering knowledge-sharing, education, and training, particularly at the university level. Through expanding employment options for talented students, ICT-related higher education initiatives hold great promise for reducing brain drain from the continent.

Participants also noted great promise in the growth of civil society and democracy in Africa. Suggestions for how to strengthen such efforts included the provision of technical assistance to governments and the sharing of success stories within the continent.

In the area of HIV/AIDS programming, grantmakers acknowledged the need to address the myriad impacts of the disease, including an emphasis on palliative care. At the same time, the importance of multi-sector approaches was stressed in taking into consideration the economic, social, and educational issues surrounding the disease.

The role of innovative funding partnerships was also explored as a means of addressing the complex and interrelated nature of problems on the continent. Examples were given of successful partnerships among foundations, NGOs, universities, and advocacy groups aimed at promoting public policy reform, strengthening higher education, increasing the availability of reproductive health supplies, and facilitating small grant giving among foundations. Such partnerships take a variety of forms and can effectively leverage vital resources and expertise in pursuing common goals.

Given the increasing role of the private sector in Africa, two corporate foundation representatives shared insights into their funding priorities, relationships with local communities and NGOs, and how their grantmaking fits into their companies' overall business strategies.



AGAG: NEXT STEPS

Significant discussion focused on AGAG's role both now and in the future. AGAG members are a diverse group of funders, including large, well-established foundations with a long history of involvement in Africa to small foundations, and relatively new funders. There was broad recognition that AGAG's diversity is its strength, and while members seek to work together, they need not all be the same.

AGAG's mission is to promote networking and information sharing among Africa grantmakers. For AGAG to be successful, there was broad recognition that it must leverage the expertise and support of its members to get things done. Participation among members is essential.

As a young organization, AGAG has focused on enabling its members to network and get to know one another. It is now poised to develop a strategic plan to chart an effective means to balance the needs and interest of a diverse membership with limited resources and a relatively small community of Africa grantmakers.

And lastly, it was recommended that AGAG look at ways of relating to African institutions and explore relationships with key development organizations in Africa. 📌





Philanthropy in Africa: Theories of Social Change

IN EXPLORING THEORIES of social change used by foundations, Dr. Kenneth Prewitt, Carnegie Professor of Public Affairs at Columbia University, presented an historic overview of philanthropy in Africa as it relates to new ways of approaching issues on the continent.

Historically funders focused on urgent needs such as government corruption, population growth, armed conflicts, “brain drain,” and the need for large scale reform. The current donor community is more sophisticated, has a larger knowledge-base to draw from, and is grappling with how to be more strategic in its approach.


At the same time, urgent needs in Africa underscore an inherent dilemma among those foundations operating on the continent: addressing immediate needs through charitable contributions versus pursuing more long-term, strategic approaches. Recognizing the urgency and scale of current needs, Dr. Prewitt emphasized that “there is no harder philanthropy right now than in Africa” and encouraged participants to stay focused on what is manageable in terms of their resource base and program strategies. “Foundations can lose their way by not facing the concentration question and sticking with it,” he cautioned.

Dr. Prewitt cited several theories of foundation work. Among them,

- Investing in developing new knowledge
- Investing in new ways to apply that knowledge
- Investing in policy analysis
- Promoting policy advocacy and social movements
- Promoting social empowerment
- Delivering social services

Of these, Dr. Prewitt emphasized social empowerment as a safe agenda in that it is individual, not political, at its core. “Giving individuals the resources to empower themselves is a good investment strategy,” he said, while acknowledging the importance of delivering social programs to address critical needs on the continent.

According to Dr. Prewitt, a theory of change involves understanding why there is a problem and how it can be prevented. While funders may address different problems in different ways, it is important to remain focused on – not only just those areas a funder is interested in – but also on those areas in which a funder can produce results.

“If operating on the assumption that ideas drive history, then invest in those who produce ideas,” advised Dr. Prewitt. “If the assumption is that public policy drives history, then focus on policy analysis and policy advocacy. If what drives history is social movements, then fund movements and social empowerment.” 

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Perspectives on Our Working Context

IN THIS PANEL DISCUSSION, foundation staff shared their views on the current context in which foundations operate, as well as their insights into the impact of changing socio-economic factors on foundation work in Africa.

In her introduction to the panel presentations (see below), Nancy Muirhead of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund asked participants to reflect on the following questions: “How are the global economic downturn, shrinking assets at foundations, unilateral U.S. foreign policy, the focus on terrorism, and the impending war on Iraq impacting the way Africa grantmakers are working? And how are these conditions affecting participants’ work on-the-ground in Africa and how people relate to them as Americans?”

Responses included the possibility for incorporating pluralistic messages into educational curricula to promote greater respect for religious and ethnic differences. Emphasis was also placed on increasing efforts related to positive youth development, given the difference young people can make in their societies if reached early enough. In light of diminishing resources, the importance of forging strategic partnerships was also underscored.

“How are the global economic downturn, shrinking assets at foundations, unilateral U.S. foreign policy, the focus on terrorism, and the impending war on Iraq impacting the way Africa grantmakers are working?”



Perspectives on Our Working Context (cont'd)



INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES: THE CASE OF THE PARTNERSHIP FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

In describing the current state of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in Africa, Lisbeth Levey, Coordinator of the Partnership for Higher Education cautioned participants against the use of the term “digital divide” to describe Africa’s ICT capacity. Instead she encouraged members to look at current accomplishments and ways of building on these.

While a decade ago, only a small number of African countries had access to email, today, nearly every country has full internet capacity, she explained. And while that capacity is largely concentrated in capital cities, service is beginning to appear in secondary cities.

Given the role of universities as hubs for internet accessibility and training, the Partnership focuses on promoting more effective use of ICTs for teaching, learning, and research. In 2002, the Partnership sponsored a conference in Ethiopia that enabled representatives from African universities to network with one another, with those from West African countries exchanging information and knowledge with those from East African countries. Currently, the Partnership is focused on increasing bandwidth to allow more access to journals and better dissemination of information – both within and outside the university setting.



PROMOTING LEARNING AND NETWORKING: THE CASE OF THE BERNARD VAN LEER FOUNDATION

Foundations often find themselves working in the multiple risk contexts of poverty, policy, and HIV/AIDS. To better understand how these risk factors impact its grantmaking, the Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF) created a learning agenda that identified three avenues of learning available to it. Astrid Honeyman described these learning “circuits” as: the Foundation’s partners on the ground, its fifty-year history of working in Africa, and the expertise of peer organizations such as AGAG and various UN agencies.

BvLF places a premium on sharing information and facilitating learning, particularly among its partners. “It is not enough to be learning,” stressed Ms. Honeyman. “The information has to be disseminated.”



FOCUS ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN: THE CASE OF THE AFRICAN WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT FUND

Recognizing that Africa has been in crisis for a long time, the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) realizes that it cannot fix everything. Rather, it focuses its support on women and ensuring that resources are directed to women for advocacy, networking, and social service delivery.

Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi of AWDF, summarized some of the Fund's core learnings as:

- Funders' responses must be multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and multifaceted.
- Partnerships are essential to being innovative and strategic, especially in those areas that philanthropic dollars can't reach.
- Many possibilities exist for new engagements with the African state. Funders should take advantage of these critical new engagements, and get involved in reshaping and reforming strategies.
- It is important to pay attention to when and where elections are taking place and when critical discussions are happening around constitutional reform.
- Attention needs to be focused on reconstructing and rebuilding societies that are coming out of violent conflict, such as Rwanda given that citizens are affected for many years by the trauma.

Ms. Adeleye-Fayemi urged funders to ask themselves how issues such as HIV/AIDS and human rights fit within a broader development context for the continent, and how to recognize and respect African beliefs and self-determination. 📖



A vertical image on the left side of the page, split into two sections. The top section shows a woman with dark hair, wearing a dark top, holding a mobile phone to her ear. The bottom section shows a young child with a shaved head, looking intently at a mobile phone held in their hands. The entire image has a warm, golden-brown tint.

Democratization and Governance: How Can Foundations Support this Trend in Africa?

“In addition to supporting civil society organizations, it is critical to find ways of helping newly-formed governmental structures and institutions.”

PARTICIPANTS IN THIS SMALL GROUP discussion distinguished between the demands that civil society makes on their government (e.g., accountability, representation, free and fair elections, and government policies that address specific needs) and the structures and processes needed to respond to such demands (e.g., elections, independent media, governance structures, and multiple levels of engagement (e.g., local, municipal, national, regional, international)

At the heart of initiatives promoting democracy and governance are certain core values. First, is the value of inclusiveness, given that democracy hinges on the extent to which everyone – women, youth, ethnic minorities, marginalized peoples, etc. – can be engaged in institutions. Second, is the value of “rootedness” and the importance of ensuring that moves toward democratic structures are firmly rooted within African realities, cultures, and practices if they are to be sustainable.

Participants looked closely at actions funders can take to support democracy in Africa, including:

- **Developing strategies to sustain democratic institutions**
- **Providing support to cross-border solidarities** – Recognizing that what happens in Ghana, Cote d’Ivoire, or Zimbabwe affects neighboring countries.
- **Providing technical assistance and capacity building to governments** – In addition to supporting civil society organizations, it is critical to find ways of helping newly-formed governmental structures and institutions.
- **Researching success in Africa** – Looking at lesson learned within the continent is critical in demonstrating that democracy is not merely a western-imposed paradigm.
- **Supporting organizations in countries that are not on track for democracy** – Recognizing that such efforts are vital to strengthen organizations so that they can support positive change.
- **Measuring results** – Invest in activities, research, and the evaluation of projects to determine impact. 📊

New Grantmaking Opportunities in Africa

WHILE THERE IS A TENDENCY to focus on the overwhelming challenges in today's Africa, tremendous opportunities also exist. What positive trends are impacting the priorities of funders and how they work? What grantmaking opportunities exist as a result of these trends? This session sought to answer both these questions in looking to the future and focusing on the continent's many assets and potential.

NEW TRENDS IMPACTING GRANTMAKING

- **New Partnership for Africa's Future (NEPAD)** – This initiative by Africa's leaders to eradicate poverty could represent a more empowered approach within the continent to addressing critical issues.
- **Communication systems** – Information and communications technologies (ICTs) are not only becoming more widely accessible on the continent.
- **Strengthening of civil society groupings** – A more assertive younger generation is helping to strengthen the growth of civil society, pushing for greater government accountability.
- **New geopolitical reality** – The war on terrorism has created a new global reality with implications for grantmakers.
- **Growth of the private sector and growing corporate social responsibility** – The growth of private sector institutions has the potential for playing a vital role in addressing social issues.
- **Devolution of government authority** – Governments are increasingly moving away from service delivery to a role as facilitators.
- **Improved absorptive capacity of African organizations to accept funding**
- **Growing awareness of Africa abroad** – There is growing commitment to Africa among influential individuals and institutions.
- **Entry of post-apartheid South Africa** – South Africa is now poised to play a greater role within the continent as a whole.



New Grantmaking Opportunities in Africa (cont'd)

POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRANTMAKING

- **Nurture indigenous philanthropy** – There is a tremendous need to nurture local philanthropy, particularly the business community.
- **Leverage existing philanthropic mechanisms** – Examples of indigenous philanthropy do exist. For example, Senegalese immigrants living in France send money home to their families, some of which is being used to create hospitals and schools. There is a need to leverage more of this kind of funding.
- **Tax and fiscal incentives** – Funders should explore ways of supporting a legal and policy environment that is more conducive to giving. In Tanzania, for example, companies involved in philanthropy are granted a tax reduction.
- **Strengthen local governments** – Focus on moving away from central governments, while helping to build communities and empower local government.
- **Encourage business and venture capital participation in philanthropy and social change**
- **Support local consultative processes with NEPAD** – While there is a danger that foreign governments will seek to divert the agenda, there is also an opportunity to encourage local consultation. 📌



The Impact of HIV/AIDS: Finding a Grantmaking Niche

The devastating impact and magnitude of the AIDS crisis in Africa has resulted in it being a key focus of a number of Africa grantmakers. More than 70 percent of all cases worldwide are found on the continent, where nearly 30 million people are living with the virus and more than 20 million have died.

While some of those gathered in this small group discussion pursue a wide geographic scope, covering much of the continent, some work in multiple countries, others in a few countries, and many just in South Africa. In addressing the myriad impacts of the disease, most foundations are working at multiple levels – the individual (e.g., children, youth, women, and men), family, community, institutional, and policy levels.

In terms of approaches, some members employ specific strategies or policies in addressing the disease, while others are more indirectly involved in that all grantmaking is affected by the disease. Participants' efforts encompass a range of activities, including direct service delivery, provision of nutritional supplements, increasing access to drugs for opportunistic infections, voluntary counseling and testing, and advocacy efforts. It was noted that nearly all of those present are following through on recommendations made at the 2001 AGAG retreat.

IMPACT OF HIV/AIDS ON GRANTMAKING

In addressing the widespread suffering caused by the disease, funders acknowledge a need to become more open to welfare components within those programs being supported. Other impacts on grantmaking include the need for:

- **Multi-sector approaches** – Taking into consideration the economic, social, and educational issues surrounding the disease.
- **Palliative care** – Recognizing the need to expand the knowledge and skills of those working to ease the suffering of those with the disease.
- **Confidentiality** – Respecting the need to protect the identity of those with the disease when reporting on the issue in articles and case studies.

It was also recognized that the support staff of grantees and partners themselves are confronting the diseases on multiple levels, and may have HIV/AIDS themselves.

When it comes to evaluating impact, participants acknowledged that they did not feel they were evaluating impact sufficiently, noting that AGAG might help facilitate learning and information-sharing in this area. 📄





Foundation Partnerships: Variations on a Theme

AGAG MEMBERS RECOGNIZE that partnerships are essential in realizing successful outcomes in Africa due to the complex and interrelated nature of the challenges facing the continent. To explore the issue of partnerships, a panel discussion focused on specific partnership models, successes, challenges, and lessons learned.

Moderator Nancy Muirhead of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, outlined four partnership models:

- **Support of a common grantee** – Funders join together to support a grantee who then implements a project or reallocates funds.
- **Co-managed partnership** – Funders agree upon a common geographic target, objectives, strategies, and operating procedures.
- **Creation of a new organization or formal secretariat** – Partners served as advisory board members of the new organization.
- **Directing funds through one donor** – One donor serves as an intermediary or re-granting mechanism.

Of these partnership models, three were represented in the panel discussion.

PARTNERSHIP FOR STRENGTHENING HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Joyce Moock of the Rockefeller Foundation described an initiative undertaken by the Carnegie Corporation, the Ford Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, to promote public policy reform and strengthen African universities engaged in massive transformation. The partnership focused on six countries with track records in public policy reform and transformative innovation in higher education: Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda.

The initiative evolved in response to a contextual shift in which universities are looking to rediscover their missions and visions in light of a new global reality as information technologies, privatization, and commercialization dramatically influence higher education worldwide. To keep up with these new realities, African universities are pressed to generate knowledge and skills that are relevant to African realities and global imperatives. In light of the brain drain across Africa, a key goal was retaining top level talent within those countries identified.

The partnership goals were implemented through a series of joint grants aimed at building the field and creating a platform for other funders. The partnership included support for creating and applying new knowledge by: producing studies on the nature of institutional transformation carried out by African researchers, studying trends of



higher education across the continent, conducting research on information technology, creating the first journal of higher education in Africa, strengthening regional research and training networks, and creating economies of scale.

Among the key lessons learned from the partnership were the importance of flexibility. Challenges included the cross-cultural differences among participating foundations and their varying tolerance levels for risk.

GLOBAL GREENGRANTS FUND

Based on his experience with the Global Greengrants Fund, Chris Allen provided an example of funding through an intermediary. The Fund stimulates grantgiving from north to south in the form of small grants of \$5,000 or less. The partnership works to enable large funders to support grassroots work through sharing costs and building economies of scale. It is distinguished by two distinct elements: the funding partnership itself, and the partnership that evolved among regional advisory boards set up to designate grantees.

Since the partnership was established in 1990, 30 participating foundations have made 300 small grants in 59 countries. Mr. Allen noted that the Fund constitutes less of a partnership now, than a collaboration among donors funding an NGO model.

INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVE ON REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SUPPLIES

Tamara Fox of the Hewlett Foundation described a partnership between five foundations (Wallace Global Fund, and the Bill and Melinda Gates, Packard, Hewlett and UN Foundations), and eight NGOs aimed at increasing the availability of contraceptives and condoms in Africa. The objectives of the initiative were to: 1) raise awareness and build political and financial commitment at the country and global levels to ensure the availability of reproductive health supplies; 2) promote country ownership and coordination to secure reproductive health supplies; and 3) promote and strengthen global coordination through addressing information problems.

The initiative is building a reproductive health interchange – an online system to collect data from donors who procure contraceptives and reproductive health commodities for developing countries and make them available to the users of the interchange. In addition, it is advocating among donors and developing countries to increase political and financial commitments to health supplies. Success can now be measured in terms of an increase in contraceptive volume and donor coordination, and a reduction in expensive emergency orders.



Foundation Partnerships: Variations on a Theme (cont'd)

Among the lessons learned from the experience were the importance of engaging a broad spectrum of stakeholders (e.g., NGOs, research and advocacy groups, private foundations) in the planning stages; conducting extensive research to back up their case; the passion and zeal of the four founding women; the hiring of technically skilled people; and a history of working together among a number of the partners.



CONCLUSION

A discussion followed on the opportunities and challenges represented in partnership-building. Participants commented on funders' reluctance to share information, although with time, trust is built and true collaboration becomes possible. While partnerships enable funders to leverage resources and expertise, they also can inhibit grantmakers from seizing opportunities outside a given strategy. According to participants, key success factors include:

- Strong channels of communication
- A strong sense within a country of what it wants to do
- Flexibility in accommodating the styles of different funders
- Public accountability
- The Funders' ability to recognize when to "move to the back of the room."

Discussion also focused on AGAG and its potential role in promoting partnerships as opposed to primarily communicating information on partnerships. Given that AGAG's membership consists of natural groupings of people with shared interests, it was suggested that AGAG could help facilitate working groups to network around such issues. 📌



"While partnerships enable funders to leverage resources and expertise, they also can inhibit grantmakers from seizing opportunities outside a given strategy."



Perspectives from Corporate Philanthropy in Africa

GIVEN THE INCREASING ROLE of the private sector in Africa, and misperceptions concerning how corporate philanthropy and corporate grantmaking work, this session explored the experiences of two corporate grantmakers and how their grantmaking fits into broader corporate strategies. Presenters were asked to speak about how they set priorities in Africa, the criteria that affect what and where they fund, and how Africa's medium and long term future will affect their giving trends.

THE CASE OF EXXONMOBIL FOUNDATION

Ed Ahnert, President of the ExxonMobil Foundation, explained that the company has operations in 30 African countries and employs nearly 15,000 employees and contract workers on the continent. In 2001, sales in Africa were \$5.8 billion, with the company giving back \$3.6 million. ExxonMobil's support comes in three forms:

- **Direct philanthropy** – In the form of grants or payments to charitable organizations and volunteer payments to governments and NGOs. In 2001, it spent \$8.5 million in this manner.
- **Direct investment**
- **Social bonus** – Payments to governments as contractual obligations to get into exploration and development provinces. In 2001, \$1 million was devoted to projects where ExxonMobil had a direct hand in structuring and operating the project.

Within these three areas, ExxonMobil contributes in a variety of ways, including mandatory malaria testing and treatment for its employees, support of anti-malarial research, contributions to community health organizations and health initiatives, clean water programs, and higher education.

In response to questions concerning the company's role in country's like Nigeria where protests have occurred, Mr. Ahnert described the company's "operations integrity management" program that focuses on health, safety, and environmental concerns. Through the program, local management is responsible for consulting with the community and apprising them of what is being built and risks, acknowledging that oil operations can be dangerous. Mr. Ahnert underscored the company's emphasis on research, particularly in the area of global warming and climate change.





THE CASE OF PFIZER

Paula Luff, Director of International Philanthropy for Pfizer, outlined Pfizer's philanthropic focus on public health, and particularly the use of medicines. The Pfizer Foundation is the largest corporate donor in the U.S. In 2002, it paid out \$30 million of its \$300 million endowment to health initiatives around the globe, and recently awarded \$2 million in grants to address AIDS in Africa. Ms. Luff attributed Pfizer's effectiveness as a funder to a variety of factors, including: the personal involvement of its CEO; the expertise of its staff, two thirds of whom have NGO backgrounds; its broader public health approach, realizing the medicines alone are not enough; and the ability to execute programs locally.

Among Pfizer's main global programs are:

- **International Trachoma Initiative** – providing Zithromax, an antibiotic effective in treating this major cause of infectious blindness. The program now involves several foundations, the World Health Organization and private funders, and is currently operating in 10 countries.
- **Diflucan** – Used in the treatment of certain opportunistic infections related to AIDS.
- **Training** – Supports the training of doctors, nurses, and laboratory personnel in diagnosis and treatment.
- **Academic alliance** – With Makerere University Medical School, the Infectious Diseases Society of America, international and local NGOs, the San Francisco AIDS foundation and other pharmaceutical research-based companies, the alliance plans to construct a clinic in Kampala, Uganda
- **Health Literacy Grants Program**
- **Pfizer Global Health Fellows** – Working with NGOs (e.g., Doctors of the World and the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS foundation) to place professionals in Africa.

Pfizer is exploring future initiatives in the areas of malaria and TB. The Foundation is challenged with the need to ramp up its programs and the difficulty of assessing and monitoring the impact of its work in the area of HIV/AIDS, due to confidentiality and other issues.

While Ms. Luff acknowledged that there is a tendency to perceive companies like Pfizer with its 100,000 employees as a corporate engine of capitalism and “a faceless monolith,” it is staffed by academicians, scientists, physicians, and nurses who share a commitment to making a difference in human health. While policy issues exist that the company will never agree on with certain NGOs, there is enough common ground that all can move to further shared goals. 🏠

AGAG: Looking to the Future

AGAG's MISSION: To encourage increased and more effective foundation funding in Africa by improving networking opportunities, and enhancing collaboration, capacity building opportunities, and linkages among new and experienced grantmakers.

Led by William Moses, Chair of the AGAG Steering Committee, and Niamani Mutima, AGAG Director, this session focused on current AGAG activities and the development of future strategies. AGAG was described as an organization poised to enter a new stage of development, moving from a start-up organization to a more established entity with the need to clearly define itself, establish priorities, and set strategic objectives.

Several key distinctions were made concerning AGAG's role and the need to more effectively communicate that role. While AGAG is increasingly misperceived as setting the agenda for foundations in Africa, it was emphasized that AGAG does not set agendas, nor does it serve as a gatekeeper for foundations operating in Africa. AGAG must clarify its role as a membership organization primarily serving foundations and grantmakers working in Africa.

The size and diversity of AGAG's membership was also discussed in response to pressures to expand the organization's membership base. According to participants, AGAG's strength is its diversity. Currently, the organization comprises large and small foundations, both those with decades of experience and those that are relatively new. Ensuring that the needs of its diverse members are met was identified as a top priority. As important, is ensuring the active participation of all members.

AGAG will begin a strategic planning process in January 2003. Among those issues that will be addressed through this process are: 1) AGAG's image, 2) Whether and how it plans to play a role in advocating for specific issues, 3) how members can best work together to learn and strengthen their programs and funding strategies for Africa, and 4) how to best represent AGAG's diversity through its structures and processes. 📄

“AGAG's strength is its diversity. Currently, the organization comprises large and small foundations, both those with decades of experience and those that are relatively new.”



Agenda

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2002

7:30 pm **Cocktails**

8:00 **Opening Dinner**

Quincy Grill on the River

Guest Speaker: Mr. Alexandre Barro Chambrier, Executive Director
International Monetary Fund



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2002

Summit Executive Centre

8:00 am **Breakfast and Introductions**

9:00 **Welcome, Agenda Overview, and Update from Members**

Introductions and brief update on news from the foundation community.
Akwasi Aidoo, Ford Foundation and Chair, Retreat Planning Committee
Niamani Mutima, AGAG

10:00 **Philanthropy in Africa: Theories of Social Change**

This session will examine the historical context of philanthropy in Africa, insights into new ways of approaching philanthropy, and shifts in addressing capacity building and advocacy in the evolving African context.

Moderator: Niamani Mutima

Speaker: Kenneth Prewitt, Columbia University

11:00 **BREAK**

11:10 **Perspectives on our Working Context**

A panel of foundation staff share their views on the current context in which foundations operate and insights on the impact of changing socio-economic factors on foundation work in Africa.

Moderator: Abdoulaye Ndiaye, MacArthur Foundation

Panelists: Astrid Honeyman, Bernard van Leer Foundation

Lisbeth Levey, Partnership for Higher Education in Africa

Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi, African Women's Development Fund

12:30 pm **LUNCH**

1:30 pm **Concurrent Sessions**

I. Democratization and Governance—How can foundations support this trend in Africa?

Facilitator: Julie Hayes, Open Society Institute

II. New Grantmaking Opportunities in Africa

Facilitator: William Moses, Kresge Foundation

III. The Impact of HIV/AIDS: Finding a Grantmaking Niche

Facilitator: Patricia Langan, International Youth Foundation



3:00 **BREAK**

3:15 **Foundation Partnerships: Variations on a Theme**

This session will examine the challenges and achievements of different foundation partnerships in Africa.

Moderator: Nancy Muirhead, Rockefeller Brothers Fund

Panelists: Joyce Moock, Rockefeller Foundation
Tamara Fox, Hewlett Foundation
Chris Allen, Global Greengrants Fund

5:00 **Closing Remarks**

Akwasi Aidoo, Ford Foundation

5:30 **Reception** – Hosted by the MacArthur Foundation

Nick and Tony's

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2002

8:00 am **Breakfast**

8:45 **Reports from the concurrent sessions**

Moderator: Jennifer Astone, Firelight Foundation

10:00 **AGAG: Looking to the Future**

This session will give an update on AGAG activities and discuss future strategies.

Niamani Mutima, AGAG

William Moses, Kresge Foundation and Chair,
AGAG Steering Committee

11:00 **Philanthropy in Africa: Perspectives from Corporate Philanthropy**

A discussion of the ways socio-political changes in Africa have shaped current funding priorities in Africa and the impact of current trends on future foundation goals.

Moderator: William Moses, Kresge Foundation

Panelists: Ed Ahnert, ExxonMobil Foundation
Paula Luff, Pfizer Inc

12:30pm **Closing Session**

Akwasi Aidoo, Ford Foundation

1:00 **LUNCH**



Participants List



Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi
Executive Director
African Women's Development Fund

Edward F. Ahnert
President
ExxonMobil Foundation

Iqbal Noor Ali
Chief Executive Director
Aga Khan Foundation USA

Akwasi Aidoo
Director, Special Initiative for Africa
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Chris Allen
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