



The Philanthropic Landscape in the United States: A Topology of Trends

By Sandra Bass

A publication of the Africa Grantmakers 's Affinity Group

About AGAG

The Africa Grantmakers' Affinity Group (AGAG) is a network of funders whose mission is to promote increased and more effective funding in Africa through learning and sharing. AGAG organizes a range of opportunities for grantmakers to share strategies, learn about new trends in Africa and in development, and deepen professional networks that help to make collaboration and partnerships easier to establish. Funders cannot hope to make the impact they want without learning from one another. Creating partnerships and collaborations is a key part of a grantmakers' work and learning from experienced colleagues is an advantage.

Every year AGAG organizes an annual retreat and a series of learning calls and webinars, makes presentations about grantmaking in Africa and provides assistance and information to grantmakers interested in adding Africa to their grantmaking portfolio. Publications and resources posted on the website provide information about the organizations working together to support justice and vibrant communities in Africa.

A volunteer steering committee of members representing the diversity of the membership works with the staff to develop relevant programs geared to help grantmakers funding in Africa make strategic and effective decisions.

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Introduction

Over the last decade, the field of philanthropy has been in a constant state of evolution. New wealth has brought new philanthropists into the field, many seeking to apply their business acumen to their philanthropic work. There also has been a corresponding growth in consultants and advisors providing guidance and assistance on all aspects of giving. The growth of new technologies has revolutionized communications, social organizing, data collection, and program delivery. Additionally, the line between sectors is blurring and many funders and donors are exploring partnerships across sectors, if not focusing their philanthropic efforts solely on private sector driven initiatives.

This paper was commissioned as part of the process undertaken by the Africa Grantmakers' Affinity Group (AGAG) to develop a new strategic plan that responds to changes in the landscapes in Africa and in philanthropy. The changes in philanthropy are vast and a full cataloging of them is outside of the scope of this brief paper. What this paper strives to provide is a brief overview of the major trends that have been driving philanthropy over the last three to five years and where possible, provide specific examples of these various types of philanthropy at work in Africa with the hope of fostering reflection and conversation as AGAG moves into its strategic planning process.

This paper does not discuss the activities of multilateral and bilateral donor agencies and uses the term "funder" to describe organizations and "donor" to describe individuals involved in philanthropic giving and investment to achieve social impact.

First, to better understand the broader context in which funders and donors work, the 2008 economic downturn and its impact on philanthropic giving is discussed and recent developments in the U.S. legal framework regarding international giving are discussed. Next a brief review of major trends shaping the field are discussed including a topology of philanthropic actors and vehicles that are being used for social good. Finally, the paper concludes with reflections on how this information might be pertinent to AGAG in its strategic planning process.

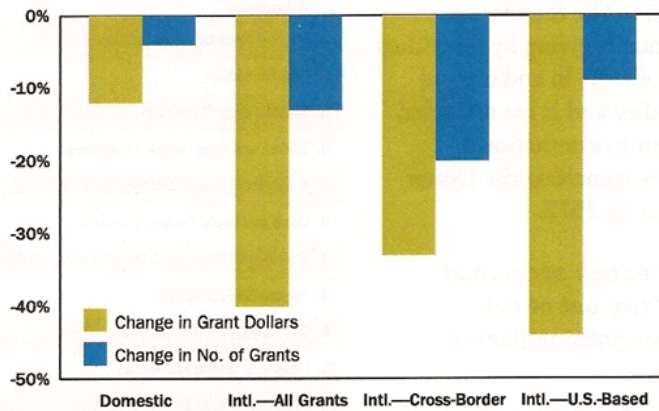
Context:

2008 Economic downturn

The collapse of financial markets in 2008 and the subsequent economic downturn was the most severe economic event since the depression. The available data for both individual and foundation giving indicates there has been a significant drop since the downturn. According to IRS data, giving by individuals with incomes of \$200,000 or more fell by over \$30 billion between 2007 and 2009. [COP 8/12] Foundation Center data on foundation giving indicates that foundation giving was relatively stable

in 2009 but dropped in 2010, with an even more significant drop in international giving.

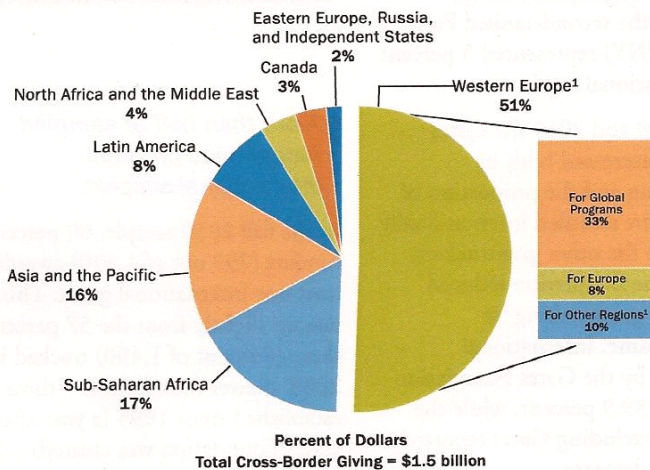
FIGURE 3. In grant dollars, both U.S.-based and cross-border international giving decreased substantially between 2008 and 2010.



SOURCE: The Foundation Center, *International Grantmaking Update, 2012*. Based on all grants of \$10,000 or more awarded by a matched set of 424 grantmakers in 2008 and 2010.

The graph above illustrates the significant drop in international giving. In 2010 international funding totaled \$4.3 billion, down from \$6.3 billion, in 2008. This represents approximately a 40% decrease in international grantmaking. The chart below illustrates that Africa captured approximately 17% of all international funding in 2010.

FIGURE 4. Global Programs, Africa, and Asia, received the largest shares of cross-border giving in 2010



SOURCE: The Foundation Center, *International Grantmaking Update, 2012*. Based on all grants of \$10,000 or more awarded by a sample of 1,330 foundations in 2010. Grants to overseas recipients may be for programs conducted in other countries or regions.
¹The majority of grants awarded to Western Europe were for activities in the regions of Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America.

Although a thorough analysis of giving trends for 2011 and 2012 is not currently available, a preliminary look at the data suggests that all charitable giving may have declined even further in 2012. What is unclear is whether this reduction holds true for giving to Africa or if giving has remained constant.

The impact of the 2008 downturn also extends beyond grantmaking and grant dollars. Faced with shrinking endowments and smaller grants budgets, it appears some funders also reduced administrative costs as well by cutting program staff and curtailing travel budgets. Additionally, the downturn may have accelerated the trend towards impact assessment as funders sought to ensure that limited grant dollars were being used effectively and efficiently. Taken as a whole, these belt tightening measures may have inadvertently encouraged funders to become more insular and inward facing than they had been in the past. This shift towards insularity and austerity may have an even greater impact on funding in Africa as it may make it more difficult for funders to travel to the continent to manage and monitor projects.

Finally on a related note, while Sub Saharan African economies were not immune to the volatility of the 2008 downturn; on the whole they are on the road to recovery. According to the World Bank, as a whole Sub-Saharan Africa economies experienced growth rates of 4.9 % and 4.8% in 2011 and 2012 respectively with some countries being among the fastest growing economies in the world. [World Bank 10/14/12]

International Giving and the Law

For the most part there have not been significant changes in the laws governing international giving in the years since 9/11. This section provides a brief review of the legal rules instituted in the post 9/11 periods and reports on new efforts to simplify the international giving process.

Two major changes in the legal rules governing international giving were instituted in the post 9/11 periods. Less than two weeks after the attack, Executive Order 13224 was enacted with the aim to block all asset transfers to terrorists and terrorist organizations. The Patriot Act that became law in October 2001 increased existing criminal penalties and grantmaker's vulnerability to civil liability for knowingly or intentionally providing material support or resources to terrorists or terrorist organizations. With regards to international grantmaking these laws have not substantively changed in the ensuing decade.

In 2012 the government instituted new rules that would make it easier for foreign NGOs to meet U.S. public charity equivalency standards. The change allows the granting of equivalency status based on the affidavit or written advice of a "qualified tax professional" defined as "an attorney, a certified public accountant, or an enrolled agent" qualified to practice before the IRS [COF 9/24/12]. It is hoped that this rule change will make it easier to give grants directly to these organizations.

There are also efforts underway to build better relationships between government, philanthropy, and civil society. Under the leadership of Secretary Clinton, the U.S. State department established the Global Philanthropy Working Group as part of its Strategic Dialogue with Civil Society initiative; this initiative seeks to better incorporate civil society into the State Department's policy-making process. Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Tara Sonenshein and Special Representative for Global Partnerships Kris Balderston were the designated co-chairs of the new Global Philanthropy Working Group. It is expected that this initiative will continue under Secretary Kerry's tenure as Secretary of State.

Trends in Philanthropy

As stated above, change is afoot in philanthropy. Indeed the changes are so vast it could be argued that what constitutes philanthropy is being redefined and reconstituted. This section provides a brief review of those trends that appear to be having the greatest impact on the field of philanthropy more broadly as well as giving to Africa specifically.

Perhaps the most pervasive trend influencing the course of philanthropy and what undergirds all of the other trends is the ongoing cultural shift towards applying business principles and practices to social good endeavors. While the universe of philanthropic giving remains diverse and varied in terms of values, principles, practices, interests, and expectations, it is also true that philanthropy as a field is increasingly adopting the language, methods, and tools of the private sector and this has significant implications for how the field is evolving.¹

The nomenclature to describe this type of philanthropic activity is long and growing, and includes terms such as catalytic philanthropy, venture philanthropy, social investment, social entrepreneurship, and impact investing. However there do seem to be a few key elements that are emerging as key aspects of this cultural shift:

- **Innovation is the new innovation** – Businesses thrive and grow because of their ability to adapt their products and services to market shifts. One underpinning value that is emerging in these new models of philanthropy, is an increased emphasis on trying new approaches to solving social problems, learning from these approaches through rigorous assessment, and then adapting the work in light of these lessons with an eye towards achieving measurable impact and scale. Supporting novel approaches and learning from their implementation is not a new development in philanthropy. However, there does appear to be an increased recognition of innovation as a good in and of itself and adopting practices in grantmaking that encourages innovation and active learning.
- **Technology** – The technology industry is a major driver behind this shift. First, many in this class of new philanthropists made their fortunes in the tech industry, Jeff Skoll, Bill Gates, Pierre Omidyar, Mark Zuckerberg, being among the most notable. Second, the implementation of business principles and practices is heavily reliant on the growth and accessibility of technology tools such as the mobile phone and the Internet. And third, mass access to technology allows for greater dissemination of information and more interaction between users and is also having an

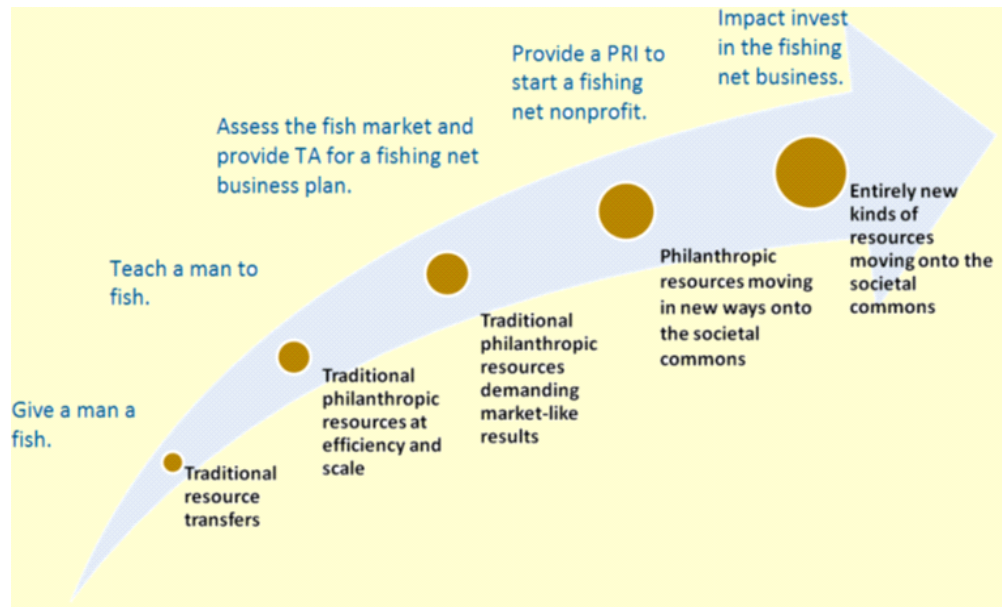
¹ There have been numerous articles and books authored by both proponents and critics about the adoption of business principles and practices in philanthropy. For example, Matthew Bishop and Michael Green, *Philanthrocapitalism: How the Rich Can Save the World*; 2008; Michael Edwards *Just Another Emperor? The Myths and Realities of Philanthrocapitalism* 2008; Michael Edwards, *Small Change: Why Business Won't Save the World* 2010; Charles Bronfman and Jeffery Soloman, "Should Philanthropies Operate Like Businesses?" *Wall Street Journal* 11/28/2011 <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204554204577024313200627678.html>; Buchanan Phil Center for Effective Philanthropy Blog series on business thinking and philanthropy. 5/17/2012 – 6/21/12 <http://www.effectivephilanthropy.org/blog>

impact on emerging models of philanthropy. For example the growth of online giving and crowd-sourced philanthropy is largely due to expanded access to the internet. Moreover, the influence of technology is deeply felt in Africa where expanded access to mobile phones has helped overcome infrastructure limitations and revolutionized such activities as communications, transfer of payments, and program delivery.

- **“Big Data”** – In her 2013 annual review of trends in philanthropy, “philanthropy wonk”, Lucy Bernholz states that the emergence of “big data” was the most significant development of 2012. [Bernholz 2013] Not only has technology made it easier to collect and share data on NGOs, there are several efforts underway that aim to encourage and improve the sharing of data across sectors. For example, Tech Soup Global recently launched NGOSource, a database of more than 500,000 organizations around the globe who have established 501c3 equivalency. This development may encourage more funders to partner directly with indigenous organizations based in countries of interest. Tech Soup Global is also working in partnership with The Foundation Center, Guidestar, MicroEdge, and the World Bank Institute to find ways of linking their various datasets so that funders and NGOs can make better use of them. And the United Nations and the World Bank, organizations that house a treasure trove of development data, are working towards making much more of this data easily and readily accessible.
- **Evaluation for Impact** - The trend towards applying tools and practices from the private sector has also led to changes in evaluation practice with a shift from measuring outcomes (what did grantees achieve with the funds) to measuring impact (how did the grantee’s achievements impact the problem they are trying to solve). In general, impact evaluation assesses the changes that can be attributed to a particular intervention, such as a project, program, or policy. However it bears noting that there is significant variation in how different funders define impact and the methodological approaches for assessing impact.
- **Network Mindset** – Also tied to the proliferation of technology is the trend towards thinking in terms of networks rather than independent entities. A network mindset emphasizes collaboration, participation, openness, decentralization, and collective action. It is evident in the field with regards to how nonprofit organizations choose to work with each other, in the growth of entities that are themselves the organizing hub of a network of organizations, and in the informal networking among individuals, which due to technological advances, can now occur in an organized, collective fashion, in real time and beyond the boundaries of geography. [Fine and Kanter 2010]
- **Market-based vehicles:** New philanthropists, many of whom are still actively engaged in the enterprises in which they created their wealth, are testing the boundaries of long standing philanthropic practice by utilizing private sector methods to catalyze change. While the practice of providing low-interest loans (program related investments) to nonprofits has been employed

in the field for quite some time, more funders and donors are intentionally applying business strategies and market based vehicles to achieve social impact.

The chart below illustrates how market based investment approach to addressing a social problem might differ from those associated with more traditional philanthropic giving utilizing the classic analogy of how to address hunger. Importantly this chart does not value one type of philanthropic giving or investment over another, but rather compares how new methods of philanthropic investing might be utilized to address an age-old problem.



On one end of the spectrum is what we typically think of as direct charitable giving; there is a need (hunger) and a funder provides funds to meet that need (give a man a fish). As we move across the spectrum, the desired outcome becomes more complex and begins focuses more on systems and/or sectorial change. So rather than alleviating hunger directly, philanthropic dollars are used to initiate changes that would address the causes of hunger (teach a man to fish). Finally at the opposite end of the spectrum, philanthropic and/or traditional investment dollars are utilized to address hunger through systems change by altering how the market works so as to achieve both a social good (reducing/eliminating hunger) as well as produce profit.

Recognizing the growth in market-based tools to promote social good, in 2007 the Rockefeller Foundation brought together a small group of funders to discuss the emerging needs of the impact investment industry. Two years later the Global Impact Investment Network (GIIN) was launched with the mission of providing opportunities for investors to collaborate, network, and share resources. Two GIIN initiatives, The Impact Reporting and Investment Standards (IRIS) and the Terragua Working Group (TWG), are particularly relevant for grantmakers working in Africa. IRIS is a set of standardized metrics that can be used to describe an organization’s social, environmental, and financial performance. IRIS metrics cover a number of performance

objectives and include sector-specific metrics for areas such as financial services, agriculture, and energy among others. TWG is a network consisting of over 50 funders interested in supporting impact investment to facilitate sustainable agriculture Sub-Saharan Africa.

- **Growth in the Philanthropic Advisor/Consultant Industry** - As interest in philanthropy has grown, so has the number of advisors and consultants that support the field. Advisors and consultants can be employed to provide guidance and support at all stages of a funder's philanthropic decision making including determining areas of focus, strategy development, due diligence, and on-going monitoring and evaluation. Additionally as funders seek to reduce overhead costs by keeping staffing numbers modest, many are turning to consultants to conduct core activities such as strategy development, grantmaking and grant monitoring activities. As such, advisors and consultants are becoming repositories for a significant amount of knowledge about the field and because of their reach across funders, can evolve into thought leaders in their own right.

Wealth advisors, financial advisors, attorneys, and others who manage different aspects of an individual's financial portfolio are also adding philanthropic advising to their range of services. According to a 2010 Study conducted by The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University approximately 39% of high-net-worth households surveyed in 2009 reported consulting with their financial advisors about charitable giving, up from approximately 16% in 2005. [Paikert 2011]

In its roundup of big stories for 2012, Non Profit Quarterly cited the growth of donor advised funds, which are often managed by financial advisors, as "nothing short of phenomenal". [McCambridge 12/21/12]. For instance, investment services firm, Charles Schwab saw contributions to donor advised funds grow by over \$92,000,000 between 2008 and 2010 to a total of over \$925,000,000 in contributions, and saw its grants increase from approximately \$250,000,000 in 2008 to over \$422,000,000 in 2010. [McCambridge 12/21/12].

- **Strategic Communications and Storytelling:** In the past, many donors and funders shied away from explicitly publicizing their work or the work of their grantees. However another significant shift in philanthropy is the recognition that communications and storytelling can be utilized to tell the story of the work being done and as a strategic tool for advocating with stakeholders and galvanizing supporters. This is another area where technology has had a transformative effect. With the advent of inexpensive, high quality, and highly portable recording devices (e.g. mobile phones), digital storytelling and short movies can be easily and inexpensively produced and distributed on a variety of platforms. For example, Witness, an NGO started by musician Peter Gabriel, has been using video as a tool for documenting human rights abuses for over 20 years. Its Women's Initiative for Gender Justice program in the Democratic Republic of Congo utilizes video advocacy to document gender violence and then uses this documentation to support prosecution of offenders.

Philanthropic Actors

A key development in philanthropy over the last decade is the expanding universe of philanthropists. Charitable giving has a long and rich tradition in the U.S. and includes giving to religious organizations, schools, the performing arts, museums, or nonprofit organizations. However, the universe of philanthropic actors is expanding. This section provides a brief overview of the universe of actors in the philanthropic sector.

- **High Net Worth Individuals** – The growing global economy has created significant wealth both in the U.S. and in Africa. Last year Forbes announced that 64 of the 400 richest people in the world have pledged to give away at least half of their wealth during their lifetime. Moreover, there are a number of high net worth Africans who are formalizing their philanthropic efforts. For example, Theophilus Danjuma, a retired General and a Nigerian oil baron, gave away \$100 million of his own funds to his personal charity, the TY Danjuma foundation. And in 2010, Nigerian banker Tony Elumelu, founded the Tony Elumelu Foundation to advance what he calls, Africapitalism™: an approach that utilizes the African private sector as the primary driver and beneficiary of development in Africa.
- **Private Foundations** - Charitable organizations that receive the majority of its funds from a private donor. A number of private foundations of varying sizes work in Africa, many of whom are members of AGAG. These include The New Field Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, The MacArthur Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, among many more.
- **Grantmaking public charities** - These organizations are charities that derive their funding primarily through the public by receiving grants from individuals, government, and private foundations. Grantmaking charities make up a sizable proportion of current AGAG members and include the Firelight Foundation, Global Greengrants, and the African Women’s Development Fund.
- **Implementing Foundations** – Funders that both fund programs and projects as well as operate them.
- **Social entrepreneurs** – Social entrepreneurs apply the passion, risk, and adaptability associated with entrepreneurship to achieving social impact. A common approach employed by social entrepreneurs is to receive funds (either through grants, individual donations, or capital investments) to seed an enterprise with the promise of achieving a specific social good, income-based sustainability, and profit. There are numerous social entrepreneurs working in Africa, so many in fact, several organizations have emerged to recognize, support and provide networking opportunities for social entrepreneurs. Perhaps the best known of these organizations is the Ashoka Foundation and several of their fellows work in Africa. Echoing Green is another organization with the mission of supporting social entrepreneurs working in the environmental field.

- **Philanthropic Advisors** – As mentioned above, these can be either individuals or organizations that specialize in providing a range of services to the philanthropic sector. Rockefeller Philanthropic Advisors, Arabella Advisors, Wellspring Advisors are well known philanthropic advising organizations. These advisors engaged in a range of activities including researching an issue area, developing strategy, arranging tours and site visits to encourage philanthropists to consider funding in a particular area, conducting due diligence, and making, monitoring, or evaluating grants.
- **Wealth/Financial Advisors** - As mentioned above, a growing number of wealth advisors, financial advisors, attorneys, CPAs, CFPs, CFAs, trust officers, etc. are entering the field of philanthropic advising.
- **Corporate Foundations and Social Responsibility programs** – A number of corporations with business interests in Africa (such as the Master Card Foundation, Western Union Foundation, Intel) have social responsibility programs in the region with activities ranging from volunteer programs that allow employees to volunteer their time and expertise, programs aimed at increasing financial literacy, and access to microfinance, and disaster relief efforts.
- **Everyone else!** - Charitable giving has been a long standing tradition in American culture however new developments have made it possible for individuals at varying income levels to engage in a range of philanthropic activities; from providing micro loans to small enterprises in other countries, to immigrants using remittance dollars to fund social good efforts in their home countries, to engaging social networks in supporting small businesses, nonprofit organizations, specific programs, or even individuals.

Vehicles

As philanthropy evolves, new methods and vehicles for distributing philanthropic good are also gaining ground in the field. In this section, common and emerging vehicles for philanthropic giving are briefly described so as to provide a topology of various vehicles.

- **Grants** – The primary mechanism funders use to support charitable causes. Can be used to support a wide range of organizations, programs, and projects provide the work as a definable charitable benefit.
- **Donor Advised Funds** – A charitable vehicle administered by an advisor or public charity or trust created for the purpose of managing charitable donations on behalf of an organization, family, or individual.
- **Donor Circles** – Individuals funders pooling grant dollars and make collaborative funding decisions around a common interest. For example, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation recently began a Donor Circle for Africa. The Donor Circle for Africa’s mission is to work with nonprofit groups and entrepreneurs in Africa who are working on affordable and sustainable power generation projects.

- **Online giving** – The world of online giving is diverse, multifaceted, and growing. The reach of the internet and mobile technology has made it possible for a number of different types of philanthropic transactions to take place. Many NGOs have the capacity to accept online donations through their websites. Additionally, there are now approximately 170 online giving portals where individuals can give direct support to nonprofit organizations. [Flandez and Gipple 2012]
 - **Microloans** One common form of online giving is providing microloans to microenterprises through online giving portals such as KIVA which allows individuals to loan as little as \$25 to social enterprises around the world.
 - **Crowd sourcing** is a way of merging online giving with social media to pool funds in new ways. Sites such as Indiegogo and Crowdrise provide a platform where individuals and organizations can provide information about projects for which they are seeking funding and draw upon their social media networks to solicit direct donations from individuals.
- **Market/Investment Vehicles** - Increasingly private sector tools and tactics are being utilized to achieve social impact and in some cases profit. Some of those vehicles includes:
 - **Impact Investing and Mission Related Investing:** When capital is invested in projects that seek to generate societal change and financial return with the goal of achieving impact at scale. MicroVest Capital fund for example invests in over 50 microfinance institutions in 25 countries.
 - **Program Related Investments (PRIs):** Capital investments closely aligned to a foundation’s charitable activities and goals. Commonly used vehicles include low interest loans, loan guarantees, lines of credit, and equity investments. The Rockefeller, MacArthur, Ford, and David and Lucile Packard Foundation have PRI programs
 - **Microfinance** – Total investments in microfinance reached an estimate \$7 billion in 2012. Growth has been greatest in Latin America, however the pace of growth is fastest in Africa. Microfinance institutions working in Africa include BRAC, Deutsche Bank Microcredit Development Fund, and Access Africa Fund, LLC. The Microfinance African Institutions Network was established in 1995 to promote microfinance in Africa.
 - **Socially Responsible Investing (SRI):** standard investments that do not invest in companies that negatively impact the environment or society as a whole.
 - **Social Investment:** any organization, either for or not for profit that applies business strategies to advance the organization’s social goals.
 - **Pooled Funds:** Giving vehicles in which multiple funders or donors, either individuals or institutional, contribute to a centralized fund that targets a specific mission.

- **Embedded Philanthropy:** Also known as cause-related marketing. Refers to the embedding of a charitable contribution into another financial transaction. For example, for every bottle of Ethos water sold at a Starbucks, 5 cents is contributed towards water, sanitation and hygiene education programs in water-stressed countries.
- **Social Stock Exchange:** A regulated investment marketplace that allows investors to buy shares in social enterprises. The South African Investment Exchange serves as a means to connect donors with nonprofits engaged in treating HIV/AIDs patients and biological conservation.

Conclusion:

This topline scan of the philanthropic world captures only the broadest contours of current trends in philanthropy. In summary, the field has undergone rapid change in the last decade, with much of that change accelerating in the wake of the 2008 economic downturn. As high net worth individuals and other private sector actors have become more engaged in pursuing social good, the cultural center point for the field continues to skew towards private sector values, principles, and practices and this has effected traditional philanthropic giving and fueled the rapid expansion of market derived vehicles. Expanding access to technology is a major driver of these changes on multiple dimensions including the availability and quality of data, the development of new tools for program delivery, networking, and storytelling, and the growth of new models of philanthropic giving.

Since its inception, AGAG has served as one of the few forums where grantmakers funding in Africa could come together to share and learn with each other so as to better serve their grantees as well as achieve the objectives of their organizations. As the field of philanthropy evolves and dynamic changes in Africa unfold, this presents an opportunity to consider how trends in Africa and in philanthropy does and should affect grantmakers funding in Africa as well as the mission, membership, activities, and future direction of the AGAG network.

Despite the widespread adoption of new approaches to philanthropy there is little evidence about their effectiveness and impact, either in the short or long term. Moreover, the developing world and Africa in particular has been and will likely continue to be a testing ground for new approaches. Given this, there could be no better time for AGAG and its members to reflect on these trends in charting the path forward in the coming years.

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