



Expanding and Strengthening Community Philanthropy in Brazil

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Introduction

This paper intends to describe the current scenario of community philanthropy in Brazil and worldwide, by defining concepts and mapping important trends and experiences in the field.

This work, which proposes a preliminary approach to the issue, was prepared on the basis of bibliographic and document research, as well as testimonies gathered during interviews held with a number of professionals engaging in philanthropy and private social investment in Brazil. This paper was conceived as an open-ended endeavor, a starting point, which does not purpose to be a complete or finished document, but a kickoff point to a reflection on the practices and experiences surrounding this topic, to contribute to the strengthening of community philanthropy in Brazil.

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Starting Points

Community philanthropy is clearly on a rise, globally. To understand this recent trend toward the expansion and development of community philanthropy, it is important to realize that this is a strategy based on the recognition of the role played by local communities, their leaderships and assets toward the development of collective efforts to foster the advancement of a given territory and its people, according to their needs, peculiarities, and potentialities.

A crucial starting point to the examination of the concept of community philanthropy is that it must be perceived as a field that is constantly under construction, as a way or a tool to mobilize social reality through the development of initiatives and efforts involving numerous players and dynamics, without imposing “top-down” solutions, but rather raising the communities’ voices and power in pursuit of their own solutions to existing issues, and toward the construction of a greater common good.

An element that stands out when we look at the global scenario is how few proposals and studies on community philanthropy have been developed in Brazil, which suggests that this form of philanthropy has not achieved substantial levels of visibility and progress in the country and, therefore, is not keeping up with the global trends of growth and expansion.

This paper can be seen as a contribution to the definition of community philanthropy based on reflections and examinations of the experiences currently under development in a number of contexts. By adopting a material-historic perspective, this paper plans to assist in the construction of the concept in Brazil, in an effort to “tropicalize” the notion accordingly to the local context. With this approach, the concept will be built upon the following reflections: a) to what extent can the experiences with community philanthropy developed on a global scale be translated into the realities of Brazil?; and b) how can the concept of community philanthropy be constructed in Brazil in a way that overcomes colonial thinking and the “top-down” models that have been passed down for generations?

Simply put, decoloniality – a key concept to address the tropicalization of the notion of community philanthropy – and the so-called “trend toward decolonization” are attempts to undo the structures and lessons inherited from the colonization process. Decoloniality acknowledges the existence of European white, male learnings imposed in detriment of the learnings bequeathed and created by



the black peoples of Africa and the diaspora, as well as women, native peoples, among other minorities. The trend toward decolonization is precisely the attempt, the endeavor, to transcend the Global North's perspective, and reclaim the learnings that were eroded and minimized by coloniality – that is to say, by the power that subsists to this day between the ancient metropolitan settlements and the colonies, or the remnants left behind. It is about empowering the knowledge and the communities victimized by colonization and its legacies, rather than imposing an oppressive epistemology upon them.

Understanding how philanthropy is done in Brazil, and in the Global South in general, is crucial to enable the development of new strategies and narratives, stemming from different viewpoints. Undoubtedly, the breadth of global philanthropy is far ranging, but conceiving new ways to engage in philanthropy is a way to empower social minorities, which is something very important especially in light of the challenges emerging within the political context of Brazil.

What are the ideas and notions associated with the concept of community philanthropy?

Many definitions exist, as well as papers developed to examine the concept of community philanthropy. Assuming this as a practical approach, construed as a way of doing things, reference is made to the definitions proposed by Jenny Hodgson and Anna Pond (2018)¹:

“Community philanthropy is defined as both a form of and a force for building local assets, capacities, and trust. It is a way to shift power closer to the ground, so that local people and agents have greater control over their own destiny.”

“It is a strategy conceived to consolidate and organize the community's multiple resources and talents so that it is no longer seen as a ‘beneficiary’ in the traditional sense, but rather as a ‘co-investor’ in its own development processes.”

Again, please note that the concept of community philanthropy is constructed on the basis of practice and concrete experiences. After all, it is not a ready-made model to be learned and copied, but rather an approach that pre-

¹ Excerpt from “How Community Philanthropy Shifts the Power”.



sumes how the communities involved act and engage considering their territorial, cultural and circumstantial peculiarities.

To progress in this study, we have identified a number of key ideas that support the concept:

- ✓ Community philanthropy is based on the premise that all communities have their own resources and talents (money, capabilities, knowledge, networks, etc.). These elements, taken as a whole, empower and give voice to the communities.
- ✓ By contributing with their own resources, people begin to feel investors, with the word and protagonism to define his own destiny.
- ✓ When people feel that they have something to say and feel empowered, they care more about the results, and evidence shows that they become more interested in acting to promote and protect their collective interests.
- ✓ When local contributions are put on the table, a different, more horizontal power dynamic ensues, in the relationship with external donors, thereby challenging the traditional "donor-beneficiary" dynamic.
- ✓ When local resources are mobilized, new, more horizontal forms of accountability arise, based on trust and transparency.

Surely, the examination of the historic background of community philanthropy provides crucial information to enable the understanding not only of the notion, but mainly the experiences and movements sustaining it.

Historic view of community philanthropy: from community foundations to #ShiftThePower

The history of community philanthropy in the global scenario is directly tied to the onset of the community foundations. The first, Cleveland Foundation,



was created in 1914, in Cleveland, Ohio, United States of America.

Over time, other community foundations much like Cleveland's were established throughout the U.S. territory. Later, the concept spread to Canada (1921) and then across the ocean, to the United Kingdom (1975) and Germany (1996).

As of the mid-1990s, after the Berlin Wall came down, community foundations were established (with the support of global donors, including private foundations) in Eastern European countries. Riding this expansive wave, the concept of community foundation only "landed" in Africa and Latin America between the 1990s and the early 2000s. Since then, the movement has grown in scale and taken new forms, according to the local and regional realities and characteristics.

Clearly, understanding what community foundations are, as well as their main characteristics, is relevant for the purposes of this paper. They are instruments of civil society designed to promote, in a number of ways, the engagement of multiple local assets to benefit the communities. They tend to rely on a broad range of donors and social investors, and many attempt to develop sustainability strategies by setting up a number of different funds — distinguished by theme, family, corporate, emergency, etc. — including endowments.

Community Foundations usually undertake three main tasks: a) development of grantmaking initiatives (supporting community-based projects or initiatives); b) to act as a vehicle to drive the philanthropy practiced by individuals and corporations having a stake in the development of the territories where they live or operate; and c) to assume a position of leadership within the communities and develop advocacy actions (protecting people's rights) (KNIGHT, 2012).

The "Community foundation Atlas" – developed in association with Candid (formerly known as Foundation Center and Guidestar), the Global Fund for Community Foundations, and CENTRIS (The Centre for Research and Innovation in Social Policy and Practice) – has mapped the community foundations operating in the five continents (table 1). Scanning through this information, we find that, in 2014, there was a huge gap between the number of community foundations in North America and Europe as compared to South America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania. The scarcity of community foundations registered in the Global South is perhaps due to the fact that the notion of "community philanthropy" only reached the Global South in the late XX century.



Table 1. Number of community foundations operating in each geographic region.

Geographic Region	N° of Community Foundations
North America	1,033
Europe	669
Asia	62
Oceania	56
Africa	32
South America	11

Source: Community Foundation Atlas, 2014.

Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that although community philanthropy did originate in the Global North after the establishment of community foundations there, which then disseminated to other continents, in South America, as we will proceed to show, the model “arrived late.” However, we will assume that community philanthropy developed in the region through other dynamics, taking less identifiable shapes, but always somehow present in its many social make-ups, assuming unique characteristics, appropriated to the region's realities and its various sociopolitical contexts.

#ShiftThePower and Community Philanthropy

An important landmark within the historic context of community philanthropy was the #ShiftThePower movement, which was the “call to action” at the Global Summit on Community Philanthropy, held on December 1 and 2, 2016, in Johannesburg, South Africa, drawing approximately 400 people from more than 60 countries. For many attendees, the Summit's energy and emotional atmosphere confirmed that community philanthropy is, in fact, a field — or possibly even a movement — that goes beyond simply belonging to a network, which grows more and more energetic, sophisticated and extensive, of agents seeking to address power issues and innovate the philanthropy system.

Generally, the #ShiftThePower movement addresses and understands the onset of community philanthropy as a new way to approach development, as being socially just and sustainable. The core of community philanthropy is that development should be driven by the local population, rather than imposed by an outside agent, and this power should — and can — come closer to the ground level, to give the people greater control over their own destiny. Commu-



nity philanthropy also focuses on local resources and local responsibility, which might be less visible in the more conventional approaches to development (top-down), as they play an important role in promoting a sense of responsibility and engagement of the community.

The #ShiftThePower movement paved the way for new communication narratives and became a “trending topic” on Twitter in Canada, Kenya, and South Africa, reaching approximately 37.5 million users. Since then, the GFCF has used the hashtag to expand the debate and the public associated with the issue. #ShiftThePower has also been used by other players, seeking to promote development on new grounds, and reinforcing the local power to accomplish that.

This movement has not only triggered a new way of perceiving and understanding community philanthropy, by acknowledging the existence of different forms of community organization to mobilize resources, but also of engaging the stakeholders to find new solutions to local problems.

The dynamics and trends of community philanthropy in the global scenario

Although it remains clear that community philanthropy is a fast-growing trend in the global scenario, raising renewed discussions and proposing new forms of connectivity and creative engagement, it is still a “young” field, which is often seen as philanthropy’s and/or private social investment’s “poor cousin”².

From this viewpoint, it is important to acknowledge that the strengthening of this field (community philanthropy) requires support and backing, mainly from the organizations comprising the local and global philanthropic ecosystems, since they have the scope and resources to connect institutions, groups, and community-based organizations to major funders and development agencies. Furthermore, this collaboration/engagement is crucial not only to establish the relevance of community philanthropy within the field of territorial and community development, but also because it could help promote and add visibility to the existing experiences, taking them from the “sidelines to center stage”.

² Reference to the article “More than a Poor Cousin?”, published by the Global Fund for Community Foundations (HODGSON e KNIGHT, 2010).



Strategic players in the global philanthropic ecosystem

According to WINGS³, the concept of philanthropic ecosystem is crucial to enable the understanding of the field and, at the same time, it is a requirement for its development on many different levels, since it provides the necessary support for the growth and expansion of organizations and initiatives. From this viewpoint, solid, well-structured philanthropic ecosystems contribute to the production of knowledge for the segment, the creation of new connections through networks, as well as legal frameworks and environments that aid in their development, establishing trust and fostering credibility among donors, investors, and social organizations.

There are a number of strategic organizations in the field of community philanthropy that make up the global and local ecosystems, which support the development of institutions, initiatives, and projects in the field. Since the global philanthropic ecosystem is complex and robust, we will focus on the organizations comprising it that are engaged in community philanthropy, which have had closer contact and exchanged more with the Brazilian institutions and are, therefore, more relevant to the discussion.

The global philanthropic ecosystem is integrated by the following organizations:

Global Alliance for Community Philanthropy (GACP)

The alliance is the product of a collaboration among multiple donors and other stakeholders to carry out joint activities in view of promoting the practice of community philanthropy, and influence the global players fostering development to support and promote the role of community philanthropy in the pursuit of more durable results. Presently, the GACP includes six funders — the Aga Khan Foundation, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Ford Foundation, Interamerican Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) — each of which contributes financial resources and is committed to actively participate in the learning environment of the GACP. More information at: www.globalfundcommunityfoundations.org.

³ Reference to the article published on the WINGS website, in 2018, "What makes a strong ecosystem of support to philanthropy?" (KNIGHT, 2018).



Candid (Former Foundation Center)

The Foundation Center was created in 1956 to shed light on the philanthropic work being done by North American foundations with the use of data, analyses, and training programs. To add more visibility to the field globally, the former Foundation Center, now named Candid, built one of the most comprehensive databases in the world, thereby making robust knowledge accessible to the field. The foundation also executes research, education and training programs to promote awareness of philanthropy at all levels. More information at: www.foundationcenter.org.

WINGS (Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support)

Global network of donor associations. It is a product of the developments to come out of the meeting with intermediary donors, held in Oaxaca, Mexico, in early 1998. Following two years of planning and deliberations, WINGS was born, which is dedicated to give voice to the many cultures of giving worldwide, reinforcing the support to philanthropy and social investment. In addition to providing online access to the newest information concerning the field and peer learning opportunities, a strong research program provides a mapping of the funders, case studies on support organizations, and a Biannual Global Report on Community Foundations. The qualification funds provided by WINGS have contributed to the dissemination and the growing effectiveness of organizations supporting community foundations throughout the world. More information at: wingsweb.site-ym.com.

Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace

Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace (PSJP) is a philanthropic network focusing on social change. Its main purpose is to support the development and adoption of new ideas for the field of philanthropic practices. It works strategically, promoting: the reformulation of social change – working from the ground up; philanthropy as a learning cycle – and in the creation of local infrastructures within the communities. PSJP also works to connect and reinforce the institutions, groups and individuals engaging in work at the community level and directed to donors (whether individuals or institutions). More information at: <http://www.psjp.org/about-us/>.



Ibero-American Network of Community Foundations

It works for the development of Ibero-American communities by strengthening the Civic or Community Foundations operating in the Iberian Peninsula, Latin America, and the Caribbean. It promotes dialog and the sharing of knowledge and experiences to consolidate this type of organization in the Ibero-American region. Its members are community foundations located in different countries within the region, such as Brazil, Mexico, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, Spain, and Portugal⁴. In Latin America and the Caribbean, 38 community foundations have registered as such - 11 in South America and 27 in Mexico, a country that has adopted a model of community foundation resembling the United States' (according to the information in the Community Foundations Atlas). The Ibero-American Network of Community Foundations comprises 24 organizations, 15 of which are in Latin America. More information at: [http:// fciberoamericanas.org/pb/](http://fciberoamericanas.org/pb/).

Funders supporting the field of community philanthropy

Global Fund for Community Foundations (GFCF)

The Global Fund for Community Foundations (GFCF) is a donor focusing on grassroots movements to promote and support community philanthropy institutions worldwide. The Fund works with individual community foundations and other local donors, and their networks, in a global capacity, focusing especially on the Global South and emergent economies in Central and Eastern Europe. With small donations, technical support and networking, the GFCF helps local institutions to grow and consolidate, so they can fulfill their potential as agents of local development and an element in the infrastructure to foster sustainable development, relieve poverty, and promote citizen participation. More information at: www.globalfundcommunityfoundations.org.

Charles Stewart Mott Foundation (Mott)

The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation has, for nearly nine decades – since its founder created it (and gave his name to the institution) – been practicing philanthropy in the field of education. Its goal is to build, through education, a

⁴ Available at: <http://fciberoamericanas.org/pb/a-rede/>. Accessed on 26/09/2018.



fairer, more equitable and sustainable society, by pursuing systemic changes that improve people's lives, strengthen communities, and promote the success of the institutions. It is one of the foremost foundations supporting initiatives in the field of community philanthropy and, specifically, in the creation and institutional development of community foundations at a global level, in various regions and continents. More information at: <https://www.mott.org/>.

Inter-American Foundation (IAF)

The Inter-American Foundation (IAF) is an independent agency of the United States government, created by the U.S. Congress in 1969 to centralize the aid for the development of low-income populations in Latin America and Caribbean. The IAF has honored its mission, responding with the support of donations to the most creative self-help ideas received from grassroots groups and non-government organizations. It also encourages partnerships between community organizations, corporations and local governments, to improve the quality of life of low-income populations and reinforce democratic practices. Since 1972, it has granted more than 5,100 donations, exceeding US\$ 720 million. The IAF's donations support, primarily, the generation of income and the betterment of the quality of life. By granting donations for development, the IAF aspires to ensure the participation of indigenous and physically challenged people, as well as persons of African descent, in addition to encouraging their inclusion in social and political processes. More information at: <https://www.iaf.gov/pt/>.

The Brazilian philanthropic ecosystem consists of the following organizations

Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice (“Rede de Filantropia para a Justiça Social”)

The Brazilian Network gathers community foundations and funds, donor organizations (grantmakers), which support various initiatives in the fields of social justice, human rights, and citizenship. The support of the member organizations is delivered through the donation of financial resources – both direct and indirect – to civil society groups and institutions, social movements, and leaderships that contribute to the process of social transformation, and/or work for the recognition of rights in several areas and regions of the country. Between the years 2000 and 2017, its member organizations directly donated a total of R\$ 146,895,761.20 (ap-



proximately US\$ 41,970,217) to 10,669 civil society organizations (CSOs) and social movements in Brazil. More information at: www.redefilantropia.org.br.

Group of Institutions, Foundations and Companies (“Grupo de Institutos, Fundações e Empresas”) (GIFE)

GIFE is the association of the social investors of Brazil, encompassing institutions, foundations and companies. Created as an informal group in 1989, GIFE was registered as a nonprofit organization in 1995. Since then, it has become a benchmark in the field of private social investment in Brazil. GIFE’s Network is recognized for the diversity of its associates, in terms of their origin – as they might a corporate, family, independent or community-based organization – and their areas of interest and modes of operation. There are presently 141 associates, which, altogether, invest annually approximately R\$ 2,9 billion a year (2016 data) in the social field, either operating their own projects or enabling third-party projects. The core role of GIFE is to generate knowledge through networking, to enhance the political-institutional quality of the social investment and bolster the quality, legitimacy and relevance of the work performed by private social investors. More information at: www.gife.org.br.

Institute for the Development of Social Investment (“Instituto para o Desenvolvimento do Investimento Social”) (IDIS)

IDIS is a public interest civil society organization, which was founded in 1999 and pioneers the technical support the social investment sector in Brazil. It is focused on creating and participating in strategic social initiatives, capable of transforming reality, to mitigate social inequality in Brazil. IDIS strives to heighten the impact of private social investments, by building projects and partnerships, producing and sharing knowledge. Today, IDIS operates in two ways: developing its own initiatives and offering operational support to the projects conceived by companies, families, individuals and communities. These two lines of work are always designed through partnerships; and they can be classified in four different areas: technical support; donation management; project implementation; and advocacy. More information at: <https://www.idis.org.br/>.



Brazilian Fundraisers' Association ("Associação Brasileira de Captadores de Recursos"- ABCR)

ABCR is a nonprofit organization made up of fundraisers and mobilizers, which has as its primary purpose to establish a broad national network, reinforcing the ties among the professionals in the area and enabling technical exchange, the sharing of experiences, and the general development of the professional. Created in 1999, the ABCR's mission is to promote, develop and better qualify the fundraising activity, which is currently seen as one of the big challenges of the Third Sector. It has among its main goals to work to ensure the credibility and representation of the profession, and to support, indirectly, social organizations in the important task of building a more just society. Today, the ABCR counts more than 400 associates, among individual associates and supporting partners (civil society organizations or companies), throughout the country. More information at: <https://captadores.org.br/>.

How relevant is community philanthropy today?

In the current scenario, it can be said that the political paradigm based on representative democracy and on the model of development economics are experiencing a deep crisis, which has impacted many social contexts (at the global and local levels), as well as the field of philanthropy. A lack of faith in the institutions, in bureaucracy, in the prevailing notions of representation, and in the truly transformative potential of big money, are just some of the issues that must be examined if we are to understand the position that community philanthropy now holds in the global and Brazilian scenarios.

However, despite the situation of crisis (or, in part, even as a result of it), the urgency of developing new social dynamics remains clear. Evidently, within this scenario, community philanthropy has contributed with new perspectives and aided in promoting new forms of collective organization, by disseminating concepts such as: networking; joint creation; collective architectures; culture makers; diversity; empowerment; local resources; sustainable development; transparency; active listening and reliance, among others.



If, on the one hand, it is true that the development aid given by donors from the Global North is declining (mainly in regards to emerging economies), on the other hand, new philanthropic practices at a local level are emerging. The dissemination of private foundations, family foundations, and corporate foundations in countries such as Russia, China, India, and Brazil offer new potential opportunities to mobilize resources for social and economic development, with local funding. However, in this context, it remains clear that the replacement of global funding models for local funding models is not immediately accomplished. It is a slow process, which requires adjustments and a massive investment in the reinforcement of the philanthropic ecosystems within their fields of operation.

The drastic retreat of philanthropy and global cooperation have left important gaps in the financing of civil society in Brazil, which has strongly impacted the local CSOs, particularly community-based organizations engaging in the preservation of rights. Naturally, in the present context, global funding continues to be strategic, especially when directed to the reinforcement of the local philanthropic ecosystems, promoting and leveraging initiatives to promote the giving and grantmaking culture.

In Brazil, this field is in the process of expanding and developing. However, we must look at it through "tropical" lens. Although community philanthropy has been leveraged and driven predominantly by global philanthropic entities, the actual realities of each context directly influence how its demands, strategies, experiences, challenges, and participants play out in the philanthropic field.

So, the idea is to make visible everything that has always been invisible to the eyes, even to the work done by "traditional philanthropy". Giving voice to low income populations, banished to the edge of the cities, might be an urgent, important contribution that community philanthropy can bring to Brazil (and perhaps to the Global South). In short: this approach is based on recognizing that people, movements and organizations are not mere recipients of donations and social initiatives, but are capable themselves of transforming their local and social realities.



After all, what is the definition of community philanthropy in Brazil?

Tropicalizing the concept: building a definition based on practical experiences

As noted throughout this paper, it is important to recognize that the definition of philanthropy in Brazil is being built on the day-to-day practices developed by different players in the field. Once we recognize this, our work becomes less about abstractly defining community philanthropy and more about trying to identify the characteristics and dynamics on the field as the elements to be used to build it, through a gradual process of observation and examination of the reality.

In a way, it is not about importing a predetermined concept, but rather building a practical, decolonial definition of community philanthropy in Brazil. It is about using the practice to construct a concept that is compatible with what is being done and/or attempted. It is about empowering the voices here instead of simply enforcing rules and concepts that might not be capable of translating the reality of the political minorities in the country.

So, the concept of community philanthropy in Brazil is associated, mainly, to the following notions:

1. Investment of local financial resources and other local assets;
2. Focus on local/community/territorial issues for development;
3. Strengthening of the power of community and local leaderships;
4. Reinforcement of actions to facilitate access to rights, as a basic (ex-ante) condition for local/territorial development;
5. Protagonism and decision-making by the communities and local leaderships;
6. Establishment of partnerships and strengthening of local networks;
7. Promoting solutions through community protagonism;



8. Trust and solidarity as the driving forces of relationships;
9. Independence and autonomy in the allocation of resources.

According to the interviews held:

“Community philanthropy is a way to give voice, power, and resources, in the attempt to tackle a number of issues, to the people and entities at the forefront of the fight”. (Fabio Deboni)

“At ICOM, we see community philanthropy as a natural self-help movement among people. It is based on the idea that the people living in a given territory develop trust in one another; they are very familiar with their own challenges and opportunities to improve; and they act proactively to effectively foster improvements in the living conditions in that area”. (Mariane Maier Nunes).

“Community philanthropy believes that, if a community actively mobilizes local resources to benefit the community, it is practicing community philanthropy”. (Maria Amalia Souza)

“I would say that the success of the social-economic, cultural, and environmental efforts is dependent, in part, on local knowledge, and, especially, on reputation. That means that a project will be successful and well accepted if those helming it understand how the community works, and if they have the reputation and the social capital to implement it. These two things are important assets of the grassroots organizations. [...] It is important to appreciate and empower this knowledge. In addition, this knowledge and social capital can be reinforced with monitoring tools and project tracking technologies, to add even more sophistication to the endeavor”. (Roberto Vilela)

From these starting points, we can take a closer look at some of the trends and experiences characterizing the field of community philanthropy in Brazil.



Community Philanthropy in Brazil: background, trends, and experiences

Even though the contemporary notion of community philanthropy was installed in Brazil in the context of the new millennium, the practices and actions in the field date back to the pre-conquest and colonial times. Surely, the experiences of the brotherhoods, indigenous and “quilombola” communities are important and relevant to allow us to understand community philanthropy for social justice in Brazil.

Philanthropy in Brazil began during the colonization period and was strictly tied to the Catholic Church and the institution of the brotherhoods. Both played an important role in the social work done and in the molding of Brazilian civil society.

The brotherhoods were independent Catholic associations⁵, structured based on a number of lingering medieval elements from the Iberian Peninsula. They were devoted to celebrating their faith; religious celebrations; charity work; providing medical assistance and tending to orphans; supporting the elderly; burials and funeral rites; special masses; offering protection against the abuse committed by slave owners, and supporting the acquisition of certificates of manumission (freedom for slaves). The brotherhoods, called *irmandades*, were supported by the contributions of their members and fundraising activities, such as food sales, celebrations and donations, gathered within the *irmandades* and from external parties. Women played a crucial part in the construction and development of Brazilian philanthropy (both traditional and for social justice), by collecting donations, raising funds, among other volunteer work.

Brazilians of African descent, through their own *irmandades*, and due to their habit of saving money, had the idea to use philanthropy as a means of attaining freedom, acquiring citizenship, making social justice. We could even say that they were the predecessors of philanthropy for social justice and community philanthropy. The black lay *irmandades* raised funds to buy the freedom of slaves. But, in addition to the concern with freedom, they also understood the importance of education in order to exercise citizenship.

The black *Irmandades* and “Quilombos”⁶ are, perhaps, the best examples

5 Schumacher Schuma, Vital Brazil Ericco, “Mulheres Negras do Brasil”. Rio de Janeiro:Redeh/ SENAC, 2006.

6 Communities of descendants of escaped slaves.



of resistance, empowering and financial support to the black population in Brazil, a relevant precedent in the field of philanthropy, as they enabled persons of African descent to secure and define, independently, forms of social engagement and organization (a ground-up dynamic).⁷

As noted before, at the beginning of the XXI century, community philanthropy in Brazil began to make headway with the creation of community foundations. In its early stages, this movement was strongly influenced and leveraged by global entities, such as Synergos and Kellogg Foundation. Years later, Brazilian family foundations — such as Tide Setubal and Arapyaú Foundations — also played a strategic role in the creation of community funds and foundations, like Fundo Zona Leste Sustentável and Tabôa, respectively.

Again, please note that although community philanthropy has been leveraged by funds secured by global philanthropy, the establishment of this movement does not dictate a “top-down” way of doing things, but rather trigger a search for unique forms of engagement in community philanthropy.

In Brazil, we can recognize the existence of community foundations and community funds: Instituto Rio, ICOM (Instituto Comunitário Grande Florianópolis), Baixada Maranhense Institute, Fundo Zona Leste Sustentável, and Tabôa.

Although community foundations are the most widely recognized institutions in the field, many other initiatives are being developed. According to Maria Amalia Souza:

“There are many community groups flying under the radar of any national, global, family foundation (...) We would have to work harder to identify them and to make the people engaged in this field understand that this universe exists, and to have them see and use one other, because there are resources available to boost this field. Our intention is to encourage the people we support to eventually access those resources and strengthen themselves through community philanthropy.”

Many community foundations believe that grantmaking is a strategic tool to reinforce and catalyze communities’ efforts, acting as a “bridge” connecting different groups by mobilizing assets and enabling the construction of trust and

⁷ Paragraph based on the chapter “Philanthropy and racial equality in Brazil”, from the book “Philanthropy for Social Justice, civil society, and social movements in Brazil” (“Filantropia de justiça social, sociedade civil e movimentos sociais no Brasil”) (pages 141-142) (Santos e Moreira, 2018).



accountability. As we will show, grantmaking is a strategy developed not only by the community foundations, but also by other philanthropy players in Brazil, who have sought to strengthen civil society organizations in a number of different fields of action and regions.

Grantmaking: a strategy to reinforce community philanthropy

Grantmaking is a strategy that consists of offering financial support — through donations — to foster the work of civil society organizations, groups, movements, and leaderships. It is an ongoing practice in view of potentializing and contributing resources and new capabilities to civil society projects and initiatives, thereby expanding and consolidating their possibilities of social engagement (in the broad sense of the word) and, therefore, the possibilities of Brazilian democracy.

This strategy entails the establishment of “bottom-up” dynamics, potentializing what already exists, appreciating the initiatives present in the various social spaces. It supports civil society agents present within the territories, which are intimately familiar with their own realities, demands, and priorities.

Although community foundations are important supporting agents of civil society organizations (many of which are community-based), grantmaking allows the presence of other agents developing this strategy to be recognized as well, such as: the funds members of the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice, the corporate institutions and foundations associated with GIFE, family foundations, and global foundations (some of which are established in Brazil).

Although information about grantmaking practices in Brazil is lacking, the GIFE Census 2016 shows that social investors interact with civil society organizations in different ways. Of the universe of 116 associates respondents, 55% said they fund programs of civil society organizations through one-time donations/sponsorship, 58% said they support them based on program lines and/or selective processes, while 24% provide institutional support to civil society organizations (separate from any specific programs or projects). On the other hand, 72% of the social investors execute their own projects or programs directly and 51% develop their own projects with third-party support.

This analysis shows that the organizations tend to combine multiple strategies in the sense of supporting third party projects and developing their



own projects. By adding to the answers to this question an indication as to how much of the entities' budgets is allocated to their own projects and how much goes to third party projects, the Census produced a ranking of the social investors, in terms of how they operate, in order to deliver an objective analysis, which is easily understood.

According to this analysis, 16% of the investors qualify predominantly as donors to other civil society organizations (CSOs), 41% as entities that donate as much as they do their own work, and 43% qualify predominantly as doers. In terms of resource volumes, further according to the information in the GIFE Census 2016, the social investors passed on a total of 595 million Reais to support third party projects, whereas civil society organizations have been the investors' primary partners and, therefore, the primary recipients of those funds – which is an important volume, albeit 33% less than was given in 2014, and, so, shows excellent growth potential.

The GIFE Census 2016 showed that a small percentage of the members (16%) donate to other civil society organizations (CSOs).

In regards to the organizations members of the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice – all of which are grantmaker organizations – we find that their work in the area is significant in terms of the resources donated and the initiatives supported. According to the following table (table 2), from the time each member was created through the year 2017, their direct donations amounted to R\$ 142,611,540.79, in support of 10,040 civil society initiatives.

Table 2. Direct donations and projects supported in Brazil by the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice..

Year	Direct Donations	Projects Supported
Until 2016	R\$ 91,713,564.00	8,581
2016	R\$ 24,559,903.71	749
2017	R\$ 26,338,073.08	710
Total =	R\$ 142,611,540.79	10,040

Source: Assessment study and internal research by the Brazilian Network, 2018..

Clearly, there is a big difference between the strategies and forms of operation adopted by the organizations in the Brazilian Network and the grant-



makers in the Global North (or traditional philanthropy), since the former are to be construed as organizations tied to the Brazilian and Latin-American socio-political context (many of which were created by activists), with a deep-rooted knowledge of the local realities, a strong ability to articulate and understand their specific demands, and immediately respond to the needs of groups, collective entities and movements. Although the vast majority of community foundations and funds mobilize resources from global foundations, taking into account their immaterial capital, ability to mobilize, articulate and transform, as well as their well-established network of connections and breadth of action, the community foundations and funds should be perceived not only as partners of the major donor foundations, capable of embracing causes and collaborating to influence their agendas and working strategies, but also as agents strategically positioned to promote community philanthropy (in fact, many of those funds support grassroots community entities).

Taking a snapshot of the grantmaking practices within the context of the community foundations of Brazil, according to the information in the following table (table 3), those institutions have donated, from the time when they were created through the year 2017, a total amount of R\$ 4,994,026, to support 516 community-based efforts, as follows:

Table 3. Financial resources donated and projects supported by the institutions within the context of community foundations.

Institution	Funds donated	Projects supported
Instituto Rio	R\$ 2,566,656	256
ICOM	R\$ 1,707,970	148
Baixada Institute	R\$ 340,000	48
Tabôa	R\$ 379,400	64
TOTAL	R\$ 4,654,366	516

Sources: Institutional reports. Assessment study and internal research by the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice, 2018.

All organizations and projects supported by the community foundations and funds of the Brazilian Network through grantmaking programs are monitored and evaluated to ensure the quality of the management of the actions developed and the resources executed, in order to determine the efficiency (bene-



fits) e effectiveness (impacts) of the initiatives, according to the results achieved.

The experiences in progress show that the grantmaking strategy has excellent potential to encourage local development, since its support of grassroots groups and organizations reinforces the social capital of local territories and communities. The concept of social capital is associated with the set of social relations and institutions that, working together towards common goals and strategies, help expand the potential for the social-economic development of a community. In this case, the social capital relates to the organization levels of a society and the value of the interactions among its individuals, which is crucial to enable development.

According to the interviewees:

“Grantmaking practices shed new light on private social investment. It works as ‘positive baiting’, as it pushes investors outside their comfort zones, showing them that it is possible to embrace new agendas, especially within the purview of civil society, directed to diversified publics”. (Fabio Deboni)

“Community organizations are a safe donation field. We, the members of the Brazilian Network, have the knowhow of thousands of direct support efforts, carried out with total security and success. Our conversation with the Gife is important because we can support them with information on how we have worked to the local organizations”. (Maria Amalia Souza)

“Grantmaking experience is relevant also in that we have found, even in the Gife Census, that the foundations have yet to address this issue more strategically, which, to us, the community philanthropy organizations, is our core. We believe this is how we should effectively reinforce organized civil society: by mobilizing and donating resources”. (Mariane Maier Nunes)

Community philanthropy experiences in Brazil. Partnerships with local donor organizations

In the Brazilian context, it is important to acknowledge the experiences conducted by corporate and family foundations and institutions, which have invested resources to support and promote community development.

Generally, the interviewees highlighted the importance of bringing the



playing fields of private social investment closer to the practices of community philanthropy:

“There is a strong movement in Brazil that does not identify with this undertaking, however, a number of experiences are underway that support the companies’ work in the territories and their relationships with the communities. The discussion on community philanthropy works as positive baiting, in the sense of taking practitioners ‘off the default settings’ and exploring working strategies in the field of private social investment that converse with grantmaking and with a rights-based agenda. (Fabio Deboni)

The partnering between community organizations and corporate institutions and foundations adds value to those foundations since we are much closer to what is going on in the community. We have established trust and leadership relations.” (Mariane Maier Nunes)

In this paper, we will reference three experiences: Arapyaú Institute and Tabôa; Tide Setúbal Foundation and Fundo Zona Leste Sustentável; and C&A Institute and ICOM.

Arapyaú Institute and Tabôa

Arapyaú develops actions and offers strategic, financial support, and assists in the engagement of organizations and groups working to promote sustainable development. Within the context of its work programs, the idea to create Tabôa came up during the discussions on the Urban and Environmental Reference Plan (“Plano de Referência Urbanístico e Ambiental”, PRUA), in Serra Grande (State of Bahia), when the need arose for an economic development agency in the region. The public authorities, community leaderships, and local organizations supported the idea. Arapyaú Institute believed in the idea and formed the Voluntary Advisory Committee, with people from multiple fields, and focused on making a plan to set up a fund. While developing the idea, the Committee found that, to leverage the local economy, in addition to boosting business, the civil society organizations acting on behalf of that territory would also have to be reinforced. Credit, qualification, and advisories became strategic tools to support this initiative.

Tabôa was created in 2014 to foster the community’s autonomy by supporting entrepreneurs, businesses, and civil society organizations, with programs to



promote the strengthening of the economy and the community. It is driven by the belief that communities can, in fact, become benchmarks, inspiring sustainability, prosperity, and quality of life.

According to the interviewees:

“Arapyauá is based on the assumption that to promote territorial development, it is crucial to reinforce the social makeup, starting with support to small projects. Tabôa was created to manage that fund locally. Arapyauá continues to make annual contributions and has even been seeking other funders to contribute to the fund”. In its view, “community foundations are important channels to promote local philanthropy and territorial businesses, through strategies such as microcredit”. (Thais Ferraz)

Tide Setubal Foundation and “Fundo Zona Leste Sustentável”

The idea to create Fundo Zona Leste Sustentável dates back to 2008, when Tide Setubal Foundation started doing research associated with community foundations and local development. The goal was to learn about the existing experiences, gather information to expand on the local development initiatives executed by the organization on the east side of São Paulo. At the time, the Foundation saw in the encouragement of the creation of a Community foundation a way to launch a truly effective process of local development in the region. This form of organization would be able to address the issues of community mobilization and local governance independently and inclusively. Back then, several organizations were identified, which operated separately in the region and barely managed to get any results from the efforts and resources invested. Additionally, a number of local entrepreneurs were found, who would likely never progress just by attending the qualification programs offered by those institutions, since they required at least some starting capital to enable their enterprises. At the same time, there were a number of social investors injecting resources into entrepreneurial projects, albeit punctually and not systemically, which generates very little impact, from the social viewpoint.

To advance the discussion on these issues, in August 2009, Tide Setubal Foundation held an event called “Community Foundations and Local Development: challenges and opportunities,” which drew representatives from private and public organizations, as well as community leaderships, to



present and discuss the results of the study conducted and gather additional information to determine the Fund's final format, which was officially launched in September 2010. The first contribution of funds came from the Tide Setubal Foundation and other organizations and individuals who were, directly or indirectly, tied to the region.

Community Fund for Reconstruction of Santa Catarina - ICOM

The Community Fund for Reconstruction is a strategy deployed by ICOM to respond to natural disasters and public calamities, governed by the principles of community protagonism and network outreach. In 2008, with the floods and landslides that affected the State of Santa Catarina, its operating area, ICOM set up the first reconstruction fund, to raise awareness and mobilize donations by companies and individuals.

In January 2018, heavy rains again caused massive damage in 21 municipalities of Santa Catarina, affecting thousands of people. Playing its role as a community philanthropy organization, having the capability to respond quickly to local challenges, ICOM again started a process of mobilizing and engaging the community through the fund, in cooperation with the State Secretariat of Civil Defense of Santa Catarina and a local CSOs. Additionally, partnerships were established with Municipal Governments, Municipal Civil Defense organizations and Social Welfare Secretariats in nine municipalities, which brought legitimacy and intense mobilization to the network outreach effort.

In less than three weeks, the ICOM mobilized R\$ 253,500.00 from five organizations and 73 individuals, who donated to support the families and CSOs affected. The initiative relied on the partnership and financial support of the C&A Institute and local companies, the Koerich Group, Involves, Asas Incorporações e Habitat, and Cacij.

The donations benefitted three Civil Society Organizations that were severely impacted by the rains, and approximately 200 people and 55 families, from nine municipalities were benefitted, according to the priorities of each partnering municipality.

Based on the experiences narrated, it is important to highlight that the issues concerning local/territorial development are relevant lines of action within the field of private social investment, with crucial connecting points to community philanthropy.



Indeed, the issues here tend to be broad and complex, since the concepts of local development, grassroots and community development show “precisely that development itself does not follow a single definitive rulebook, that it is not a preformed project to be ‘implanted’ in a given territory, but rather a collective construction process, where the community is the real agent for change (...)” (NOBRE; LIGABUE, 2010, p. 9-10).

Reality has shown that to achieve success with development processes, constant dialog must be had with and effective partnerships built among all those agents, thereby establishing new parameters for territorial governance. Determining how to do this and the role to be played by the companies and corporate foundations are some of the issues that need to be further discussed and elaborated.

Strengthening community philanthropy experiences in Brazil

Although community foundations and funds are prominent players in the field of community philanthropy, it is important to acknowledge the existence of a diversified set of strategies and actions developed in this field.

The practices of community philanthropy only exist because there is an array of experiences being developed. Based on the analysis of the existing scenario, we can say that, although there are a number of initiatives that could be identified as practices associated with community philanthropy, many of them are not so. Considering this initial idea, and in light of the need to expand and reinforce the initiatives of community philanthropy in Brazil, we will describe two important experiences developed, respectively, by the Casa Socio-Environmental Fund and the Institute for the Development of Social Investment (IDIS), which focus on these priority areas.

One initiative that has contributed with the identification of the practices of community philanthropy in Brazil was the **Casa Communities program**, developed by the Casa Socio-Environmental Fund with the support of the GFCE, in 2017. The Program's goal was to expand and strengthen community philanthropy in Brazil through the identification and acknowledgment of existing initiatives, developed by grassroots groups and organizations (supported by Casa), which mobilize local resources, to be reverted to or reinvested in the communities. This initiative managed to identify the existence of a number of practices and strategies to mobilize local resources, which are already in place, but often lack



visibility or public recognition, both in Brazil and globally. Donations from individuals, revolving funds and community funds, community banks, microcredit, social businesses, etc. — many of which are tied to solidarity economy — are diversified initiatives, in view of generating and leveraging resources to ensure the financial sustainability of community organizations and advance their actions to develop their focus communities.

As noted, these experiences (many of which are associated with solidarity economy) maintain a direct dialog and have many points in common with community philanthropy, to the extent that they represent strategies to mobilize/generate local resources — through various agents — to be reverted to the benefit of the communities, highlighting the protagonism of the local agents capable of driving social engagement.

According to Paul Singer, solidarity economy is a form of production having as its core principles the collective or associated ownership of capital and the right to individual liberty. To quote the economist:

“The application of these principles joins all the people producing within a single class of workers who possess equal capital, within each cooperative or economic society. The natural result is solidarity and equality, which, however, requires government mechanisms promoting the solidary redistribution of income in order to be reproduced” (SINGER, 2002, p. 10).

Among the initiatives of solidarity economy (ECOSOL), reference is made to: producer groups and associations; family agriculture cooperatives; gathering and recycling cooperatives; recovered companies assumed by the workers; production, marketing, and consumption networks; community banks; credit cooperatives; swap clubs; among others. Following is a brief explanation of some of these experiences:

✓ **Microcredit and entrepreneur support:**

Microcredit is characterized by the simple, expedited analysis, approval, and clearance of the funds. All funding granted by these institutions preserves certain qualities: they are meant to fund the productive activities of small businesses; the funded amount is consistent with the requirements of the business and



its payment capacity; requests for personal guarantees (equity) are rare. The most common are joint guarantees (group of people procuring credit and together offering a guarantee). The interest charged on the microcredit granted is social in nature and not tied to the rates imposed by the traditional banking system.

✓ **Community Banks:**

Joint financial services operating through an associative, community-based network, focusing on the generation of jobs and income from the perspective of reorganization of the local economies, based on the principles of Solidarity Economy. The goal is to promote the development of low-income territories, by fostering the creation of local production and consumption networks. They focus on supporting the initiatives of popular and solidarity economy in all their facets, namely: small production enterprises, provision of services, marketing support, and the broad range of action of small popular economies. Community banks can execute financial transactions (including microcredit), both in the conventional currency (Brazilian Real) and social currencies, in addition to the Real.

✓ **Revolving Funds:**

Revolving funds are described as informal credit organizations and are most common in rural areas. They are usually created at the initiative of NGOs, municipal governments, popular movements, and producer associations. These funds make credit more accessible and democratic, affording the farmers the opportunity to participate in their management. These experiences have contributed toward the construction of rural credit proposals that are compatible with the reality and diversity of family farmers. Revolving funds are an important tool used by farmer organizations, since traditional financing is usually reserved for groups and associations.

✓ **Social Impact Businesses:**

According to the publication Social Finance Task Force, "social and/or environmental impact businesses [...] are 'enterprises having a clear mission to generate socio-environmental impact while, at the same time, generating a positive financial result,



in a sustainable manner” (2015a, p. 5 apud BRETTAS, 2018). Impact investing and social businesses are instruments comprising the institutions' and the foundations' toolset. There are three reasons why impact investing is important for donors: 1) it is a powerful tool to be used to leverage capital within philanthropy. The returns on the investments can be reinvested several times, to generate impact; 2) it affords donors more freedom and flexibility. They can test innovative ways to secure financial return, as they seek impact. Not-for-profit and for-profit organizations can be supported; 3) donors use impact investment to revitalize their own philanthropy strategies. Many donors have expressed great satisfaction once they have incorporated the concept and reshaped their usual approach for social and environmental changes.

The initiative of **Mapping and strengthening community organizations and efforts within the State of São Paulo**, in turn, developed by IDIS in partnership with Mott Foundation, also focuses on the reinforcement of the field. It proposes to learn about social initiatives and organizations operating within communities, to understand how they work together, with the direct involvement of the local population, to find solutions to their challenges. With that understanding, the idea is to strengthen the movement in four ways: 1) showing the escalation in the number of community efforts and organizations; 2) examining operating profiles, different operating models and strategies, challenges, main assets, dreams and motivations; 3) encouraging the sharing of experiences and the joint construction of knowledge; and 4) increasing the visibility of and the investors' interest in community social efforts, by describing them as investment options.

The study “Community Philanthropy: Fertile Ground for Social Development” (“Filantropia Comunitária: Terreno Fértil para o Desenvolvimento Social”) (produced by the IDIS with the support of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation) is available at: https://www.idis.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Relatorio_Filantropia_3_final.pdf

Committed to expanding and potentializing this field of action in Brazil, the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice, the GFCF, and GIFE entered into a partnership to develop the initiative “**Expanding and Strengthening Community Philanthropy in Brazil**”, aiming to converge and build bridges between small funds, movements, civil society organizations, and donors in order to:



- (i) Hold discussions and promote the sharing of experiences with agents engaged in the field of philanthropy and private social investment (PSI);
- (ii) Engage agents that already work in the social field and attract others that work in the field of philanthropy and private social investment;
- (iii) Offer support/advisement to local organizations and donors interested in developing initiatives in the field of community philanthropy.

According to one of the interviewees,

"This initiative is important to revamp the work agenda of corporate institutions and foundations, since its focus is to mobilize companies and foundations to become donors to civil society. The companies are in dire need of creating innovative models for territorial and community development."
(Fabio Deboni)

Within the scope of this partnership, several face-to-face meetings were held, attended by participants of various profiles. The events outlined the general directions for the discussions and the construction of effective proposals to consolidate community philanthropy, such as a priority agenda suited to the Brazilian context.

Please note that the holding of debates and actions in various spaces – which also represent the diverse political identities and their intersections – expands the possibility of partnerships, as well as the sharing of experiences between groups, funds, movements, etc., rendering the process of construction of the field of community philanthropy in Brazil more cooperative. So, this is not just about creating ties between donors and funders and movements, groups and funds, but about establishing strong networks incorporating all the parties involved.

Meeting about Community Philanthropy

Held in São Paulo on October 31st of 2018, the meeting to discuss the matter of community philanthropy served as an extended meeting among members of the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice, GIFE associ-



ates, and Brazilian and global partners. It also relied on the presence of various collective entities engaging and/or interested in the field. A group of 38 people was present, from organizations active in the field of philanthropy and private social invest⁸.

The presentation by Jenny Hogdson, executive director of the GFCF, highlighted important elements about the concept, history, potentials and challenges facing community philanthropy, in Brazil and globally, pointing out the relevance of:

- ✓ Reflecting on the concept of community philanthropy from the perspective of values and practices such as love, empathy, trust, collective growth, and “bottom-up” dynamics;
- ✓ Leveraging institutional capacity to engage in local and community processes;
- ✓ Promoting networks that strengthen the field;
- ✓ Promoting the involvement of community philanthropy with the communities, policymakers, governments, and global development agencies;
- ✓ Promoting grantmaking as a crucial tool for community development;
- ✓ Encouraging the creation of funds to support civil society organizations, starting with small donations as a way to engender big change.

Aligned with the bullet points above, but from the perspective of the practical initiatives developed in several Brazilian regions, the discussions held that day can be summarized in the following considerations and questions:

⁸ *Representatives from the following institutions attended the event: Global Fund for Community Foundations; OAK Foundation; Global Communities; WINGS; Action Aid; CASA Socio-Environmental Fund; ELAS Fund; Brazil Human Rights Fund; Baobá Fund; Positive Fund; Tabôa; Casa Fluminense; Baixada Institute; ICOM; Tide Setúbal Foundation; Sustainable Amazon Foundation; IDIS; Ibirapitanga Institute; Prosas; Arrondar Institute; Sitawi Finance for Good; Sabin Institute; Child Is Life Institute; Mobiliza, and GIFE.*



- ✓ How can philanthropy be expanded and strengthened in Brazil?
- ✓ How can we attract new investors? Who would those investors be? It is important to reflect on the diversification of social investment.
- ✓ Importance of reinforcing civil society to defend rights, democracy, and sustainable development, especially in light of the present political scenario.
- ✓ Relevance of collective work, mobilized horizontally, from the ground up.
- ✓ Mapping and adding visibility to initiatives and communities engaging in the field of community philanthropy.
- ✓ Fostering partnerships and networks, including for the purpose of producing knowledge about the field: studies, development and management methodologies, qualification.

To learn more, access the video, at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GiQQaXRA2xE>.

Seminar: Expanding and Strengthening Community Philanthropy in Brazil

The seminar Expanding and Strengthening Community Philanthropy in Brazil was held on June 11th of 2019, in São Paulo. It was organized and held by the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice, and relied on the institutional support of GIFE, and the support of the Global Fund for Community Foundations (GFCF), Sabin Institute, and C&A Institute, and partnerships with WINGS (Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support, RedEAmérica, IDIS (Institute for the Development of Social Investment), and Philanthropy for Social Justice & Peace. The seminar, conceived and executed in partnership and based on a process of consultations with several stakeholders, gathered more than 100 people, from 60 organizations of various types – including community funds, corporate institutions and foundations, social movements, and civil society organizations. With a total of 107 participants, 73% being women and 26% men, 55% of the public in attendance were associated with organizations, while 44% were associated with donor entities. So, we find that donors and organizations have moved closer to each other, but in



no way were the organizations under-represented. To the contrary, they were the majority and had a voice to speak and communicate their ideas at the event.

In addition to holding a historic, conceptual debate on community philanthropy at the global level, with contributions again shared by Jenny Hogdson, by divulging research work and organizing stimulating panels and theme-related workshops, the seminar focused on the dialog with various agents and on the sharing of concrete experiences in the field, in different regions of Brazil.

During the panel “Studies and Trends in Community Philanthropy in Brazil”, three organizations – the Brazilian Network, GIFE, and IDIS – produced trends and mappings concerning the field of philanthropy in Brazil, based on studies and research developed with a number of different scopes and methodologies. After the results and experiences were shared, the discussion panel allowed the construction of a general overview of local philanthropy, a diagnosis capable of prompting reflection and helping to understand the obstacles and problems that might arise in the field of community philanthropy in Brazil.

During the panel “Grantmaking and private social investment: experiences supporting civil society as a development strategy,” representatives of CASA Socio-Environmental Fund, ELAS Fund, Baobá Fund, and Sabin Institute had the opportunity to speak with representatives of community organizations about the importance of partnerships between donors and grassroots organizations for the development of concrete, effective, relevant initiatives in the field of community philanthropy. To this end, experiences were shared by entities such as the Kisêdjê Indigenous Association (AIK), of Mato Grosso, which created a community fund to enable the sale of craftwork and other items produced in their village, and the Caranguejo Uçá organization, which supports collective resistance organizations in the low-income community of Recife. Some of the testimonies contributed to the understanding of the relevance of the issues addressed at the panel:

“We, the indigenous peoples, live out in the woods. How can we raise money to develop projects inside the community? It is a challenge. We managed to conquer our territory, but had to move to another land. Everything was degraded, the woods were gone. We started to plant and created the association, planting on our own, without any resources. We are the resources. The first experience with a project was with CASA Fund, which was worth 10 thousand Reais. Then came other supports. We produced pequi oil, peppers, and craftwork. After that, we started to think about creating a community fund, and created the Kisêdjê Fund.” (Winti Suyá Kisêdjê)



“For us, the sharing of information that takes place at this seminar is crucial. For 10 years we worked without a formal institution, and could only build things through partnerships. Then, we managed to execute projects ourselves. And CASA Fund was crucial for that. Then came foreign investments as well. When we talk about capacity, what kind of capacity do we mean? We need to reinforce collective resistance organizations, build together, make it possible. Trusting agents outside the city is not just about trusting them, it is about knowing them. It is extremely important to be here today, talking about this. It is crucial to dialog and actually listen, and to potentialize what we are already doing, understanding that the people in the territory represent potential. And here we are, ready to build a new form of society, together.” (Teresinha Filha)

During the afternoon, the event's attendees were given two choices of themed workshops: a) Experiences with community philanthropy: funds supporting civil society, and b) “Mapping, articulating, and partnering for community development”

The workshop “Experiences with community philanthropy: funds supporting civil society” proposed to reflect on the following questions: “how do the funds contribute toward community development?” and “how can we stimulate the culture of giving beyond the usual sources of funding?”. The debate produced the following ideas and reflections:

- ✓ There is an underlying difficulty to understanding the importance of community funds and, therefore, a difficulty to put in practice communicating actions and initiatives tied to community philanthropy.
- ✓ It must be stipulated that the search for and securing of resources that reach the grassroots organizations and affect relevant causes is part of a political struggle that requires the construction of relationships based on trust. Community philanthropy presumes the existence of relationships based on trust. How can we build them? By approaching people and emphasizing equal treatment, actions to foster abilities, improvement of mapping tools, and establishment of alliances, etc.
- ✓ We must foster the communities' independence and autonomy from the financial resources. In this sense, engaging the communities in their own development processes is crucial for community



philanthropy. The discussion about co-responsibility, protagonism, and empowerment must be reinforced within the dynamics of fund raising and fund use.

- ✓ Resources are not just financial. We must direct our gaze to the identification of the potentials in local knowledge and initiatives, in addition to proposing education activities, advisement services, technical qualification programs, etc.
- ✓ It is important to understand that the private sector cannot satisfy every demand that arises within the communities and, so, getting philanthropy agents in contact with government agents, public policy administrators, and universities should be considered a relevant strategy. Building networks is crucial.

The workshop “Mapping, articulating, and partnering for community development” proposed to reflect on and discuss the importance of mapping tools and the strengthening of networks for mobilization, production of information/knowledge and political impact on the communities supported by funds and other organizations. The enhancement of these methodologies is critical to perceive demands, potentials, opportunities and urgencies emerging from the bases. Besides, when their development is participative and inclusive, they subvert the hierarchy/subordination relationship and help produce more effective communication strategies and engagement on certain actions. So, they should be at the core of the strategies deployed by all those striving to reinforce community philanthropy initiatives. The experiences shared at the workshop, combined with those contributed by the attendees, are consistent in their discourse and in the practice of placing value on networks, dialog, on horizontal relationships, based on trust, and on local protagonism and knowledge, and the collective construction of solutions, particularly in the current political scenario.

The closing panel “The importance of networks for the strengthening philanthropic ecosystems and community development” proposed to disseminate experiences with community networks - regional and global - to reflect on their work, highlighting their achievements, challenges and contributions to the field of community development and philanthropy. We have selected some statements that convey the power and relevance of this issue for the purposes of the seminar:



*“The Baixada Institute operates in the State of Maranhão. Our state has always been challenging to us, because it is not an egalitarian state. It is strategic, subject to income concentration, and is always left out of the development process. Why is it that we cannot manage to advance ourselves or our territory? It is not funds that create communities, but communities that design funds. How should the communities be engaged to identify resources, and make them more visible so they can be changed? We have the “Embaixadeiro Voluntário” Fund and the “Embaixadeiro Doador” fund. Each “baixadeiro” is a live fund, which joins with another person to form a big fund. Our philanthropy is based on people. So what remains? We were recognized as a territory. That was crucial to the shaping of our identity.”
(Diane Souza)*

*We entered into a partnership three years ago with the CASA Fund, to reinforce the Community Banks’ Network in the State of Bahia. Community banks are no more than a link to solidarity economy. There are 137 community banks today. In the State of Bahia, there is a network connecting 10 community banks. Each one has its own Credit Assessment Board (CAC – Conselho de Avaliação de Crédito), which provides credit assessment services. We have the only “quilombola” bank in the State, servicing several communities - Banco Solidário Quilombola do Iguape. The idea is to engage the community to develop a community bank. We do not believe in a community bank that works exclusively with social currency. It must mobilize and articulate with local agents, productive initiatives. This has set a standard at the state level, started a discussion within the state.”
(Ananias Viana)*

RedEAmérica presented the experience with “Fundo Comunidade em Rede”, developed between 2012 and 2017 in 11 municipalities, with more than 200 participating social organizations, connected through a network, which reached over 20,000 people. The main challenges identified at the end of the work were: to permanently promote dialogue among the private, public and social sectors; collective construction and multiple leaderships; permanent interaction among all players (creating and managing communication channels); assessment and monitoring of the networked projects, through the networks; adjusting to the different characteristics of the grassroots organizations; creating the conditions for the networks to continue to develop.

Additionally, experiences developed within the context of the Ibero-American Network of Community Foundations, as a result of the environmental disasters that happened in Latin America in the past years, were also presented. The networking of the organizations was crucial to the mobilization of the affected communities, and, especially, to the identification of solutions that helped them in the face of calamity.



Finally, the WINGS representative stirred up a debate by raising the following questions: How valuable are these networks? How about the ecosystems to support philanthropy? What kinds of agents strengthen the field? What kind of network promotes it? He emphasized the importance of diversifying philanthropy, which is still quite corporative. He described the experience with "Lift Up Philanthropy", which aims to promote the importance of developing ecosystems to support philanthropy and its positive impact on the field.

The elements referenced in the accounts above, as well as all other contributions shared at the seminar, allow us to conclude, in brief, that the concept of community philanthropy cannot be conceived as a ready-made model, to be applied automatically: it is present in society's routine organizational practices, which mobilizes to promote common interests and collective entities. So, the challenge before us is to add visibility to the existing experiences and reinforce them, according to their own potentials, thereby ensuring fertile ground for the horizontal construction of pathways to long-lasting, independent development.

The funders must be brought into this debate, so that they can rethink their role, their work, and their relationship with the projects and communities concerned. Communication, collective methodologies, time, scale, and resource alignments. Sensitive pondering between formalities, bureaucracies, and the subtleties of human relations. Community philanthropy, as discussed at the seminar, is about creating a new social technology, to make the resources accessible to everyone and recognize the value of the diversity of knowledge. Networking and partnerships are the keys to its expansion and reinforcement.

The results of the event were, generally, quite positive. The assessment of the seminar, done with questionnaires distributed to the participants, produced an overview of the impact that the meeting had on the attendees. Approximately 58% of the people there qualified the program and the issues addressed at the event as "very satisfactory". In addition, approximately 65% of the attendees evaluated the impact that the discussions and the program will have on their organizations as "quite significant". So, it was an event that contributed with: lessons about the field of community philanthropy, networking, potential partnerships among organizations or between an organization and donors, and many other rich experiences to the public in attendance.

For more information about the seminar, access the videos produced within the context of this initiative, at: http://www.redefilantropia.org.br/videos_ler.php?id=186 and http://www.redefilantropia.org.br/videos_ler.php?id=197, as well



as the article published in the GIFE News Bulletin, at: <https://gife.org.br/seminario-aborda-diferentes-formas-de-philanthropy-comunitaria-no-brasil/>.

Why is it important to promote community philanthropy in Brazil?

Brazil is facing huge challenges: economic crises, financial sustainability problems faced by civil society organizations (CSOs), high rates of social inequality, human rights violations, problems affecting the governance of natural resources and climate changes, the shrinking space given to civil society organizations, among others.

Clearly, community philanthropy in Brazil can be an important tool to overcome these issues, since:

- ✓ It is a local/territorial development strategy;
- ✓ It is a line of action conceived to strengthen civil society and a dynamic that encourages people to participate in political decisions and promotes access to rights;
- ✓ It encourages the construction/enhancement of community qualifications, to prompt the communities to find ways to address their local issues;
- ✓ It raises people to the position of protagonists, so they can face contemporary challenges, such as the matter social inequality, access to rights, etc.;
- ✓ It has the potential to engage the agents and encourage the creation or reinforcement of networks, which is crucial to potentialize development and democratic practices;
- ✓ It promotes social changes, led by the communities;
- ✓ It changes power relations, by giving people and institutions the resources to make their own decisions and shape their futures.



How are community philanthropy strategies developed?

This paper also proposes to offer some guidelines and ideas to the social investors who are already involved in the field, as well as those who are interested in developing and/or reinforcing community philanthropy strategies.

The first step is to reflect on the social investment practices developed by your organization.

Food for thought

- ✓ Are you and your organization familiar with the concept of community philanthropy, to any extent? Even if the expression is new to you, which elements of the concept resonate with your work as a funder/investor?
- ✓ How might the introduction of a community philanthropy "lens" into your work help, generally, to strengthen your programs? For example, would it bring you closer to the communities you support, add trust to your decision-making, ensure greater local acceptance?
- ✓ Does your organization identify as a donor? How does your organization relate, or fail to relate, with the donation approach adopted by your organization? How might it contribute to the establishment of an appropriate environment to expand donations, by new agents as well?

Tips for social investors

Some investors believe that community philanthropy exerts some appeal, in terms of its fundamental values and beliefs, on local and social development processes (from the ground up, led by the people, based on resources and talents, etc.). Others, however, believe that community philanthropy is more of a tactic or strategy to achieve specific institutional purposes. And a third group believes that it is both.



We have prepared some “general tips” that might help bring your practice closer to community philanthropy:

- ✓ **Prepare** an extensive study of the location — community, territory — where you plan to operate. Identify the location's main agents, issues and assets.
- ✓ **Get to know** the people, the place where they are, and create opportunities to talk to several players. Be prepared to listen. Build “with”, rather than “for”.
- ✓ **Prioritize** local expertise: if it does not exist, where can it be found? Consider if resources and talents (assets), capabilities and trust are being promoted (or not) within the spaces and locations relying on some kind of funding/support, and to what extent.
- ✓ **Create** spaces, networks, and connections to support the work being done on the ground. Leverage trust and relationships among the various agents.
- ✓ **Recognize the value** of mobilizing local assets. Use the investment to help create spaces and platforms for collective actions, and to think about diversified strategies to mobilize resources, such as creating permanent or themed community funds, or donor circles, including circles among the company's employees and with other local enterprises. “Using funds donated by outside parties to encourage and recognize the value of local resources and contributions is a simple, yet effective way to expand community philanthropy” (HODGSON; POND, 2018, p. 17).
- ✓ **Consider** the possibility of donating to CSOs engaging in several areas (deploying grantmaking strategies), to the benefit of specific, distinguished targets, as this is a strategy to strengthen the social makeup.



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