

## SPECIAL SECTION

# Rooted Locally. Growing Globally.

**S**tarting with a single community foundation in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1914, the community foundation field has exploded during the past 100 years, reaching some 1,750 in number worldwide today.

As the U.S. field stands ready to celebrate its centennial in 2014, now seems a fitting time to reflect on the mission, the value and the expansion of this resilient philanthropic approach, and the Mott Foundation's contribution to it.

What is it about this concept that resonates with people from different countries, cultures and walks of life — both in a nation's metropolitan regions and in its rural communities?

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# Defining a Community Foundation

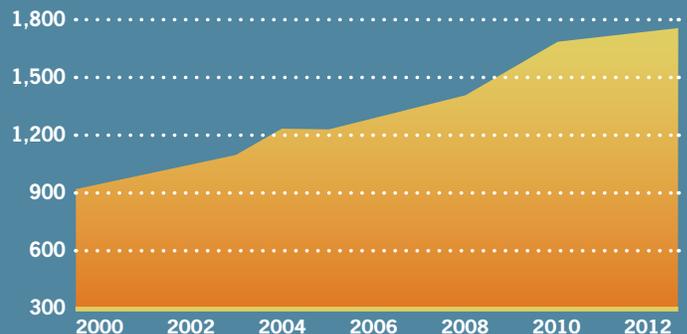


## 1,750 COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS GLOBALLY

Today, there are approximately **700** community foundations in the U.S., **259** in Germany, **187** in Canada, **54** in the United Kingdom and another **550-plus** elsewhere in the world for a combined total of about **1,750 community foundations globally**. These local philanthropic institutions can be found on every continent except Antarctica and in more than 50 countries.

## GLOBAL GROWTH OF COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

Although a community foundation was developed in Canada only seven years after the concept was birthed in 1914, signs of rapid and continuous growth outside the U.S. were not evident until the early 2000s, when the number stood at **905**. Ten years later, the number had nearly doubled to **1,680** and today is approximately **1,750**.



Source: Compiled from data obtained from WINGS' Global Status Report on Community Foundations and from the Global Fund for Community Foundations.

**S**urely part of what makes a community foundation so appealing is its simplicity. Although there are many definitions of a community foundation, at its most basic, it is an institution of the community and for the community in which a wide range of residents work together to create long-term strategies and solutions for developing vibrant, sustainable communities — and they use local resources gathered from a diverse donor base to do it.

In practical terms, that means community foundations should be quite good at: knowing their community's strengths and challenges; leading effective responses to local issues; serving as conveners; building partnerships between disparate parties; pooling resources from inside and outside their communities; engaging a diversity of residents; engendering trust; and acting as on-the-ground “eyes and ears” for regional, national and international funders.

As the concept travels around the world, it is shaped to fit specific cultures and contexts. There is no one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, the grantmaking and day-to-day operations play out differently, whether in South Africa at the West Coast Community Foundation or in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the Tuzla Community Foundation or in the U.S. at the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region — three foundations that are featured in the pages that follow and on our Web site.

Still, what links these and all community foundations is their sense of purpose, which is to improve lives and communities.

## MOTT'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FIELD

The Mott Foundation's interest in the power and possibilities of community foundations was piqued by a series of grants beginning in the 1950s in the Foundation's hometown of Flint, Michigan. Those

grants, given to the Flint Public Trust, provided the Foundation with an opportunity to observe and learn how these institutions can serve as “a different philanthropic voice,” one that provides space for a diversity of interests and ways of thinking about a community's strengths and challenges.

A community approach to grantmaking has been a signature strategy of the Mott Foundation, and the concept of a “people's philanthropy” — neighbors giving to help neighbors — aligns naturally with this mission. In 1979, seven community foundations — including the Flint Public Trust — were selected to participate in Mott's first national program of technical assistance and capacity building for small and growing community foundations.

Over time, the Foundation continued to support the national expansion of community foundations, building both the capacity and endowments of these institutions, and utilizing their knowledge of their home communities to fund national and regional programs to revitalize neighborhoods, improve race relations, prevent violence and protect the environment.

The Foundation's first major foray into supporting community foundations internationally occurred in 1988 when the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), a philanthropy support organization based in England, approached Mott about funding a technical assistance program for emerging community foundations in

# Mott's Contributions to the Community Foundation Field

1950

1950

### CONCEPT IS SEEDED AT HOME

Mott helps establish the Flint Public Trust, providing a vehicle for individuals, businesses and institutions to pool funding for programs that benefit the Foundation's home community.



1978

### HEALTH FOUNDATION CREATED IN FLINT

Funded largely by Mott and led by Dr. Arthur L. Tuuri, the Flint Area Health Foundation is launched to support health services, education and research in Genesee County.

1979

### CULTIVATING THE FIELD NATIONWIDE

Mott begins making technical assistance and endowment grants to help develop and strengthen the community foundation field in the U.S.



the United Kingdom. On the heels of that successful effort, Mott initiated an endowment-building challenge grant program through CAF in 1990 and, by 1992, was supporting the Community Foundation Network (now known as UK Community Foundations), a membership organization created in 1991 to support the growth and stability of the field in the U.K.

Fairly quickly, the Foundation recognized that support organizations and grantmaker associations could be excellent tools for spreading and strengthening the community foundation field. And, indeed, Mott's strategies in support of community foundations began to reflect that, with grants being made to various organizations at home and abroad that could help develop and unify the field.

Mott's grantmaking to support individual community foundations as well as the field and its infrastructure is detailed in the timeline that starts at the bottom of the previous page and continues on the pages that follow. Together, the entries tell a rich story about Mott's many contributions to the field through the years — a story that by 2012 involved more than 781 grants totaling \$150.4 million.

## MOTT'S CURRENT FOCUS

As the community foundation field has flourished and matured over time, Mott's focus has largely shifted away from making grants to seed and strengthen individual community foundations, with a few notable exceptions such as the community foundation in Mott's hometown. It is also worth noting that, from time to time, all four of the Foundation's grantmaking areas have worked with community foundations as grantees or collaborative partners on issues related to program strategies.

Today, the Foundation's emphasis is on building the field more broadly by funding three primary areas — leadership development, national and global support organizations, and research and lessons learned. Examples from each of these areas are highlighted below.

### Leadership development

Mott supports a variety of initiatives to develop community foundation leaders at home and abroad. One example is CFLeads, a U.S. national network that helps develop the leadership skills of individual community foundation staff while also building the organizational strength of community foundations by offering Webinars, conferences, print and online publications, peer-learning experiences and other services.

Additionally, the Emerging Leaders International Fellows Program at The Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society provides opportunities for community foundation practitioners from around the world to learn about the field from each other and specialists. Based at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, fellows participate in an intensive three-month program of research, seminars, conferences, mentoring and internships. Together, they study the trends and practices of indigenous, place-based giving within the global philanthropic sector. Fellows also design and pursue an individualized research project. Since its inception in 1989, the program has graduated about 200 alumni from more than 50 countries. Among others, fellows have come from Brazil, Czech Republic, India, Italy, Kenya, New Zealand, Romania and the U.S.

As the community foundation concept was taking root in Western, Eastern and Central Europe, Mott partnered with the Germany-based Bertelsmann

1984

#### FORTIFYING THE GRASSROOTS

Mott funds eight U.S. community foundations to make local grants aimed at improving neighborhoods; the program eventually grows to 25 community foundations.



1990

#### CANADA, U.K. WELCOME IDEA

Mott begins making grants to build the field in Canada at the local and, in later years, national levels. Endowment grants this same year for three community foundations in the U.K. spark interest and eventual expansion of the field in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

1980

1988

#### APPROACH BLOSSOMS IN FLINT; GRANTS GO GLOBAL

With Mott leadership and support, the Community Foundation of Greater Flint is created through a merger of the Flint Public Trust and Flint Area Health Foundation. This same year, Mott makes first overseas grants — providing technical assistance to community foundations in the United Kingdom (U.K.).

1992

#### FOSTERING GROWTH, SUSTAINABILITY

To help strengthen and develop the field, Mott begins making grants to community foundation support organizations. Later research points to such organizations as the single best predictor of future growth in the sector.

Foundation to create and fund the Transatlantic Community Foundation Network. The network, which existed from 1999 to 2008, included peer-exchange visits, large annual meetings and smaller regional gatherings. It ultimately involved about four dozen practitioners from 14 countries in North America and Europe who shared experiences and expertise. Working together, practitioners developed products for the field such as marketing materials and program evaluation guidelines.

Occasionally, Mott also funds major peer-learning events such as the “Community Foundations: Symposium on a Global Movement” held in Berlin, Germany, in December 2004. It was the first global meeting on the topic; plans are under way for another in the next few years.

### Support organizations — statewide, regional, national and international

Support organizations are often the institutions community foundations turn to for technical assistance and peer-learning opportunities. They also serve as the voice for the field. Whether their focus is statewide, regional, national or international, such organizations as the Council of Michigan Foundations, League of California Community Foundations, Community Foundation Partnership in Russia and the Global Fund for Community Foundations all help promote and professionalize the community foundation field. In part, they do this by developing, collecting and distributing resource materials, and also by advocating for an environment that is fiscally and legally supportive of the field.

Currently, and in the recent past, Mott has provided grants to support organizations that are helping develop and strengthen the field nationwide in the U.S. and in other countries, including Australia,

Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Germany, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Turkey, Ukraine and the U.K.

One strategic and efficient way Mott continues to support the concept’s spread internationally is through its grants to the Global Fund for Community Foundations. As its name implies, the Global Fund provides support to help start, strengthen and sustain emerging community foundations and community philanthropy organizations around the world. It is the only international organization solely dedicated to this mission, which it carries out by providing the connecting organizations; advocating for community foundations with international donor institutions; and funding emerging grassroots grantmaking institutions around the globe.

The Global Fund makes small grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$15,000. While some grants are used as incentives to secure matching donations to build endowments, others fund local projects, peer exchanges, conference attendance and additional activities that support organizational development. Its seed funding also can open doors for emerging institutions to secure funding from other sources. To date, the Global Fund has made grants totaling \$2.2 million to 121 organizations in 41 countries.

Created in 2006 as a three-year joint initiative of the World Bank, the Mott and Ford foundations and WINGS (the Worldwide Initiative for Grantmaker Support), the Global Fund was hosted by the European Foundation Centre in Brussels during its pilot phase; it became independent in 2009 and established an office in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2010, where it remains.

The Global Fund’s grant support enables community foundations in locations as diverse as Brazil, Jordan, Nepal, Philippines, Romania and

1990

1996

#### SEEDING THE FIELD IN RUSSIA

Mott support to Charities Aid Foundation helps initiate community foundations in Russia. The first such institution is launched two years later in Togliatti, Flint’s sister city.



1998

#### POLAND, SOUTH AFRICA ESTABLISH COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

Mott makes its first grants to develop the field in South Africa and Poland. Within two years, both countries develop their first Mott-funded community foundations.

1995

#### CONCEPT SPREADS TO NEW REGIONS

Mott makes a grant to the Healthy City Community Foundation, which was established in 1994 in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia. The Foundation’s support for the field in Central/Eastern Europe ultimately extends to several countries in the region. Also in 1995, Mott provides a grant to help grow the emerging fields in Australia and New Zealand.

1997

#### COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS AS VEHICLES FOR CHANGE

Mott supports the Council of Michigan Foundations, working jointly with the Great Lakes Protection Fund, to create a collaborative of 21 community foundations located along the Great Lakes shoreline that support environmental grantmaking.

Vietnam to stand on their own as vehicles of positive local change.

Most recently, the Foundation has recognized that although the community foundation concept is an excellent vehicle for community philanthropy, it is not the only one. As indigenous philanthropy develops internationally, it is taking on many forms. Consequently, Mott has partnered with the Aga Khan Foundation USA, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the Global Fund and the United States Agency for International Development to launch the Global Alliance for Community Philanthropy.

The Mott Foundation is supporting the Alliance by funding the Global Fund to manage the Alliance's activities, sharing its learning and supporting its efforts to promote community philanthropy as a valuable development practice.

### Research and lessons learned

Since its earliest days of funding community foundations, Mott has supported the sharing of research, evaluations and lessons learned about the field — a practice that continues today.

For example, Mott's longtime grantee WINGS produces a biannual Global Status Report, which tracks the growth and development of the community foundation field internationally. The report provides field statistics and status updates on specific countries,



■ The Sea Cadets program, funded by community foundations in the United Kingdom, provides team building exercises to 14,000 young people through sailing, boating and rock climbing.

and is used by support organizations, individual community foundations, donors and funders.

In addition, by supporting practitioners' efforts to share lessons learned about the field, there's less likelihood of "reinventing the wheel" and increased opportunities for cross-fertilization to occur.

Mott's support for disseminating field information is closely tied to the Foundation's awareness of the broader concept of community philanthropy. The 2013 publication, "The Case for Community Philanthropy: How the Practice Builds Local Assets, Capacity, and Trust — and Why It Matters," is a primer on the vital importance of community philanthropy as a vehicle for international development and community betterment. The publication builds on "The Value of Community Philanthropy," a Mott/Aga Khan Foundation-funded report released in 2012.

2001

#### NURTURING THE CONCEPT IN MEXICO AND GERMANY

Mott supports training, mentoring and development opportunities for the emerging field in Mexico. That same year, the Foundation makes grants to help expand community foundations in Germany — the country's first was created in 1997; in 2013 there were more than 250.

2005

#### EXPANDING WORK IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Mott begins making grants to support and expand the work of the Tuzla Community Foundation, one of the first community foundations in the Western Balkans.



2000

2003

#### GROWING A STRONG BASE IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Mott makes an endowment grant to the Community Foundation for Ireland, which was established in 2000 as a national community foundation.

2006

#### GLOBAL RESOURCE CREATED

With support from Mott and others, the Global Fund for Community Foundations is launched. Its focus is to promote and strengthen individual community foundations and other local grantmakers, and their related networks around the world.

## MOTT'S LESSONS LEARNED

Through more than six decades of grantmaking to help develop and strengthen the community foundation field locally, nationally and internationally, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation has learned some valuable lessons that may be useful to both donors and communities. Among the most critical are:

- **Importance of local roots.** To be successful and sustainable, community foundations must be initiated by local leaders and residents and focus on a community's assets rather than its deficits. People and organizations outside the community can offer assistance, but the real motivation must come from within.
- **More than money.** Although the size of a community foundation's endowment remains an important measure of its success, it is not the sole measure. Increasingly, community foundations are valued for their ability to act as conveners and leaders in their communities — attributes especially valued in financially poor communities that, nonetheless, have other important resources that can be surfaced, deployed, leveraged and grown.
- **Technical assistance is crucial.** To be effective, community foundations need technical assistance early on and along the way. They need training to develop expertise in ways to interact with the community, engage board members, cultivate donors and develop policies and procedures for investing finances, evaluating grants, optimizing technology, etc. Additionally, community foundations need to ensure that the organizations they support receive sufficient technical assistance.
- **Funder and leader.** Increasingly, community foundations may find themselves needing to strike a balance between *reacting* to community needs and becoming a *proactive* local leader capable of addressing entrenched issues head-on.
- **Inclusiveness.** The most successful community foundations try to serve and involve the entire community, broadening participation in its governance, decisionmaking and activities to all kinds of residents, not just donors and community leaders. Youth involvement is especially productive and strategic.
- **Long-term process.** Nurturing the establishment and growth of community foundations takes time. While their mission — to improve communities — is seemingly simple, these institutions are complex in structure and process, requiring patience and long-term commitment. Moreover, it takes time for a community foundation to establish a track record of success in the community and become a trusted resource for the long haul.
- **Infrastructure matters.** The importance of infrastructure (support) organizations to the growth and health of the community foundation movement cannot be emphasized enough. Recent studies have shown that in places with a healthy infrastructure — membership associations, networks, councils, forums and federations — community foundations are more likely to proliferate.
- **Adaptable to unique communities.** The capacity of the field to adapt to different tax structures, laws and cultures has been clearly demonstrated in places around the globe. While there is a need to be sensitive to the cultural context of each specific community and the resources therein, the community foundation is a concept that has proved to be both versatile and adaptable.



**2008**  
**ROMANIA EMBRACES THE CONCEPT**  
Mott makes an initial grant to develop community foundations in Romania. The field in that country has since grown from two to 12 community foundations.

**100**  
**YEARS**

**2014**  
**U.S. FIELD CELEBRATES CENTENNIAL**  
The U.S. community foundation field marks its 100th anniversary.

2000



**2011**  
**EXPANDING REACH INTO TURKEY**  
Mott provides support to the Third Sector Foundation of Turkey with the long-term goal of growing the overall field of philanthropy, including community foundations.

# A philanthropic approach with global appeal

The Mott Foundation’s support for community foundations grew naturally out of our traditional commitment to strengthening communities and reflected the view of founder Charles Stewart Mott, who believed that our basic strength as a nation is derived from strong, cohesive communities.

**W**ith that as the underpinning, the Foundation helped support the development and spread of the concept over more than three decades. In the following pages, we illustrate the breadth of Mott’s grantmaking to community foundations, as well as to several of the field’s support organizations, on a world map featuring sites where notable achievements and significant growth have taken place.

In addition, three short features — each focusing on a different aspect of the community foundation field today — portray the powerful potential these institutions hold for local communities, for convening and collaborating to create change, and for cultivating the charitable impulse. From the local to the regional to the global, the featured initiatives include:

## ■ West Coast Community Foundation

Created “to nurture the growth of philanthropy and improve its responsiveness to the needs of ‘poor and marginalized communities’” in the

Western Cape province of South Africa, the community foundation today serves as a catalyst that mobilizes and distributes resources and also provides community development training that helps local communities become self-sustaining.



## ■ Great Lakes Community Foundation Collaborative

In the late 1990s, the Great Lakes Protection Fund, jointly with the Council of Michigan Foundations, led an initiative designed to increase the number of community foundations located along the Great Lakes shoreline that would make grants to restore and protect the Great Lakes ecosystem. The result was a network of community foundations that worked on Great Lakes-wide problems and helped build endowments to ensure those problems would be addressed over the long term. Many of the 21 community foundations that participated in the collaborative remain active in environmental grantmaking.



## ■ Association for Community Relations

Established to promote and develop philanthropy in Romania, this young philanthropic support organization is driving incremental change in charitable attitudes and behavior, principally through its efforts to develop community foundations as vehicles for local giving and decisionmaking, and as funders of the work done by local non-governmental organizations.



# Mott's Grantmaking Seeds Global Growth

## CANADA GROWS THE FIELD FROM COAST TO COAST

The nation's first community foundation was created in Winnipeg in 1921. During the next 71 years, Canada added only 27 more. However, after the Community Foundations of Canada (CFC), a Mott grantee, was created in 1992, the field nearly tripled within six years. Today, the country's 187 institutions cover 89 percent of the nation.

## COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE U.K.

Although the first community foundation in the U.K. was created in Swindon in 1975, the field didn't take off until after 1991 and the creation of the Mott-funded Community Foundations Network (now called UK Community Foundations). Today, virtually every U.K. citizen has access to a local community foundation — 54 in all.

## U.S. FIELD DEVELOPS IN DEPTH AND BREADTH

After Mott provided grants to U.S. community foundations for technical assistance and endowments, it initiated a grassroots-grantmaking program in the mid-1980s that used community foundations as vehicles to improve neighborhoods. Since then, Mott has repeated this strategy of partnering with community foundations to achieve program goals in several grantmaking areas.

## GERMANY ADVANCES CONCEPT AND FIELD FLOURISHES

Mott worked in partnership with the Bertelsmann Foundation, beginning in 2001, to develop the field in Germany. With more than 250 community foundations nationwide in 2013, Germany ranks second globally in sheer numbers behind the U.S. Although its first community foundation was created only 15 years ago as a "foundation of citizens for citizens," the field has grown at a fast pace with combined assets of approximately \$300 million.

## MEXICO POSITIONED FOR GROWTH

Since the first community foundation was created in the mid-1990s, the field has grown to 22 today. These institutions exist in 19 of Mexico's 31 states, with more growth expected since the recent formation of a national support organization, Comunalia, a Mott sub-grantee through the Inter-American Foundation.

## SOUTH AFRICA COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE

From Mott's office in Johannesburg, South Africa, the Foundation has supported the growth of community foundations throughout the country. Today, Mott supports three community foundations: the Community Development Foundation Western Cape, Uthungulu Community Foundation and the West Coast Community Foundation. These Mott-funded foundations have helped grow the field to a total of five today.

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## FORMER SOVIET BLOC COUNTRIES CREATE COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

Created in 1998, the Togliatti Community Foundation was Russia's first such institution. Since then, Charities Aid Foundation and Community Foundation Partnership, both Mott grantees, have supported the field's growth and development, resulting in 45 community foundations nationwide.

The Healthy City Community Foundation in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia, was established in 1992 as an operating foundation and became Eastern Europe's first community foundation in 1994. In 2003, the Association of Slovak Community Foundations, a Mott grantee, was created and currently has eight members.

The Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Warsaw, Poland, was established in 1998. The Mott grantee serves as a national and regional support organization, and has helped create more than two dozen community foundations throughout Poland.

## AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND DEVELOP COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

Australia's first public community foundation, the Tasmanian Community Foundation, was launched in 1995. Since then, the field has grown to 36 countrywide. In nearby New Zealand, where the field is about 18 years old, there are currently 11 community foundations located throughout the nation. Each country has a support organization for the philanthropic field, Philanthropy New Zealand and Philanthropy Australia. The latter is a past Mott grantee.



West Coast Community Foundation, South Africa

# Local funder responds to needs and empowers residents

Simphiwe Somnqaba works at a farm cooperative in Klawer, a community north of Cape Town, South Africa, that receives financial support and business expertise from the West Coast Community Foundation to become self-sustaining.



With almost fatherly pride, Simphiwe Somnqaba grips a baby bottle of milk and encourages the little one on his lap to drink. When this kid’s belly is full, he will feed another. Caring for kids — young goats — is his job. In addition to providing Somnqaba with an income, it allows him to help his older brother, Collman, who is one of seven members of the Klawer Small Scale Cooperative.

The co-op is one of two farms currently receiving support from the West Coast Community Foundation (WCCF). Based in the Western Cape province of South Africa, the WCCF is a Mott grantee; its mission is to reduce poverty and build self-reliant communities.

“We are seeing some very positive outcomes because these farmers want to better themselves and provide for their families,” said Johanna Hendricks, CEO of the community foundation.

The goat farm is located less than a mile from the small town of Klawer, a rural community of about 6,250 residents that is 175 miles north of Cape Town. Its co-op members also raise pigs and grow vegetables. They — along with members of the Eden Commercial Organic Farms in Atlantis, a semi-urban area about 25 miles north of Cape Town — turned to the community foundation for practical guidance in operating their co-ops. Locally based, staffed and funded, WCCF is recognized as a trusted, non-political grassroots-grantmaking institution, Hendricks said.

After struggling with several major obstacles — lack of access to public land for grazing, stolen animals and insufficient funds to pay feed and water bills — each farm applied for a grant, but the foundation initially provided no money to either. Instead, staff shared a lot of their collective know-how. For example, before meeting with the foundation, co-op members in Klawer mainly worked as individual subsistence farmers. But, after learning that

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■ Independent farmers in Klawer, South Africa, banded together to create a nonprofit cooperative. It is one of two farm co-ops in the area that receive support from the West Coast Community Foundation.

co-ops function best when owners share tasks and work interdependently, they put those principles into practice and saw their operations improve, Hendricks said.

Additionally, foundation staff provided practical help for the Eden farmers. They aided them in drafting a constitution and creating the policies and procedures needed to become a registered non-governmental organization (NGO). These steps positioned the NGO to receive funding from several sources, including startup grants from the WCCF. While the foundation's money was minuscule by most grantmaking standards (\$500 annually), it meant a lot to the farmers. So did the professional guidance, Hendricks said.

"They applied for a grant," she said. "But we asked, 'Is that really what they need?' We did a complete assessment of their ability to manage the business and offered training in areas where their skills were lacking."

With both co-ops now operating as legally registered NGOs, they can access resources and expertise from local, provincial and national government programs. That aspect of the WCCF's work is similar to other community foundations around the globe, Hendricks said. While others might not support farm co-ops, they do provide technical assistance to strengthen NGOs and offer training to develop the skills of NGOs' staff and volunteers.

"I love this work because we witness lives changing," Hendricks said. "We see people grow. They

go from not believing they can do much of anything to discovering, 'Hey, I can do this!' Those are the little treasures I keep in my heart."

#### WEST COAST COMMUNITY FOUNDATION (WCCF) Malmesbury, South Africa

**Mott grants through 2012:** \$382,500

**Highlight:** Another WCCF-supported project, Atlantis Athletico soccer club, reaches 300 vulnerable youth. While soccer is the draw, coaches use it as a medium to address gang activities, substance abuse, teen pregnancy and failure to complete high school. Their club's slogan: "When you have a gun in your hand, people respect the gun, not you. When you play ball, people respect you, not the ball." [Read more about this project at [www.mott.org/AR2012](http://www.mott.org/AR2012)]

**In their own words:** "The Atlantis Athletico brings about real change in the lives of children and their parents. It is marked by people who make personal sacrifices of their own finances and time to give unconditionally to create an enabling environment for our children."

– CEO Johanna Hendricks  
West Coast Community Foundation

**Web site:** [www.wccf.org.za](http://www.wccf.org.za)



Maria Isaks and other subsistence farmers in Klawer, South Africa, improved their productivity after the local community foundation discussed the benefits of sharing tasks and working interdependently.

Great Lakes Community Foundation Collaborative, United States

# Community foundations **work together** to tackle regional issues





Staff members at the Great Lakes Protection Fund (GLPF) in Chicago say their ears perked up after hearing some media buzz in summer 2013 surrounding the Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area in Michigan.

Behind that buzz was the community foundation's announcement of its first Community Impact Grant, a board-directed \$250,000 investment linking it with several public, private and nonprofit partners in a five-year, \$12 million initiative called Project Clarity. The partnership aims to restore wetlands in the Lake Macatawa watershed and improve the region's water quality.

More than a decade earlier, the Holland/Zeeland institution had joined a GLPF initiative that was created in partnership with the Council of Michigan Foundations. The project was designed to increase the number of community foundations located along the Great Lakes shoreline that made grants to restore and protect the Great Lakes ecosystem. Called the Great Lakes Community Foundation Collaborative, the project's funders included the Joyce and Charles Stewart Mott foundations.

"While you can't draw a straight line between the earlier Great Lakes collaborative and this [new] project, you can infer that the momentum for this level of environmental grantmaking began when community foundations started looking through the environmental lens," said J. David Rankin, GLPF vice president of programs.

"The collaborative created a network of community foundations that could begin to tackle Great Lakes-wide problems together."

By design, program participants represented all eight states in the Great Lakes Basin — Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio,

Community foundations sharing the Lake Superior shoreline participated in an endowment-building program with other Great Lakes-based community foundations to preserve and restore the area's ecosystem.

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Small incentive grants from the Mott Foundation to a network of community foundations in the Great Lakes region leveraged millions of dollars for a coordinated effort to address environmental concerns.

Pennsylvania and Wisconsin — and the Canadian province of Ontario, which also is in the basin. While Mott made two grants totaling \$880,000 from 1997 to 2000 for this project, it was not the first time the Foundation engaged a group of community foundations to address local issues. From 1984 to 1994, Mott supported the Neighborhood Small Grants Program through which the Foundation provided grants to community foundations that then funded local projects identified by grassroots groups. Ultimately, 25 community foundations nationwide took part

in the program. For several of the participating community foundations, it was the first time they had met with neighborhood groups and made grants in response to voiced concerns.

Likewise, the Great Lakes collaborative was the first time many of the 21 participating community foundations had met with residents and discussed environmental issues related to the Great Lakes. To help ensure that these environmental challenges could be addressed for the long haul, Mott provided modest \$15,000 incentive grants for endowment building to each foundation that secured matching donations. In



all, more than \$4.6 million was raised for endowments during the grant period, and an additional \$4.2 million was secured in government grants through 2001 for collaborative initiatives, Rankin said.

By having community foundations working on the same problem at various locations around the Great Lakes, the combined return was greater — and others took notice, he said. A network of 18 community foundations located along the Mississippi River — from Minnesota to Louisiana — replicated the coordinated approach. Created in 2006, the River Partnership of Community Foundations helps

## GREAT LAKES COMMUNITY FOUNDATION COLLABORATIVE

**Mott grants for the collaborative:** \$880,000

**Highlight:** The Racine (Wisconsin) Community Foundation, an original collaborative participant, remains active in environmental grantmaking today. In fact, it helped launch the Root-Pike WIN (Watershed Initiative Network), a nonprofit organization that works to protect the watershed's drinking water quality, and also its more than 200 miles of rivers, streams and tributaries that eventually empty into Lake Michigan. [Read more about this project at [www.mott.org/AR2012](http://www.mott.org/AR2012)]

**In their own words:** "Root-Pike WIN is dedicated to pollution-free waterways that are essential to the health and vitality of our community — now and for the next generations."

– Former Executive Director Mary Beth Mikrut  
Racine Community Foundation

**Web site:** <http://www.racinecommunityfoundation.org>

preserve, protect and restore the Mississippi River and its tributaries.

Meanwhile, as a participant in the Great Lakes collaborative, the Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area has maintained its environmental interest more than a dozen years after the initiative ended, said Mike Goorhouse, vice president of donor development. Although the community foundation had created its own environment fund a few years before the collaborative started, it wasn't well known or widely supported, he said. However, after the endowment challenge was announced, new donors contributed to the environment fund, along with donors who previously had given to its other funds, Goorhouse said.

"The challenge grant gave us a voice to speak boldly about environmental issues," he said. "Someone from outside our community was interested in Great Lakes causes and had come here with matching money for us to do something. That helped bring local attention to our environmental issues. And, as you can see, we're continuing that work today"

Association for Community Relations, Romania

# Cultivating the charitable impulse countrywide



Annual swim-a-thons like this in Cluj, Romania, offer competitive fun while raising vital monetary support for community foundations across Romania.



The many years needed by Romania to transition from decades of communism to a modern-day democracy have helped influence the country's more long-term approach to philanthropy work.

“We have learned to celebrate incremental changes in attitudes and behavior about giving instead of expecting one dramatic transformation,” said Alina Porumb, the community foundation's program director at the Association for Community Relations (ACR) in Cluj-Napoca, a northern Romanian city. “In the last years, however, the rhythm of change in Romanian philanthropy has picked up, and what was only hope five years ago is now reality.”

In 2001 — a dozen years after the country started shifting to a market economy, including privatizing state-owned enterprises — ACR was established with a mission to promote and develop philanthropy in Romania. Since then, it has become a national leader in developing community foundations as vehicles for local giving and societal change.

ACR staff is enthusiastic about innovative fundraising initiatives that people are using in their communities to meet local needs, says Porumb, with community foundations serving as platforms for sharing and showcasing these initiatives to inspire others.

Philanthropic behavior becomes more rooted in everyday community life, she says, as honorees at weddings and birthday parties ask friends and families to make donations to local causes or the nearest community foundation in lieu of gifts. Similarly, people use sporting events, such as swim-a-thons and soccer matches, as fundraising opportunities to collect pledges and donations for community foundations and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

“At these events, people see they can make a big impact in their community when their small amounts are added together,” Porumb said. “It is wonderful because these ideas

were totally organic, emerging from the community itself.”

Donations have helped fund a variety of projects, including equipping a village kindergarten with educational toys, providing house repairs for people in need and supporting art programs for children with visual and hearing impairments.

ACR currently promotes both individual and corporate giving, although its earlier activities focused more on encouraging corporate giving to NGOs, Porumb says. While corporate giving continues to have a high rate of involvement from employees and clients, ACR has expanded its work to inspire and engage individual donors.

In addition to interacting with donors directly, ACR partners with other groups, such as the United Way Foundation Romania, to create stronger tax incentives for donations given by individuals and businesses in Romania.



■ Community foundations improve the lives of children by funding groups like the Club for Alternative Education in Bucharest.

Today, ACR’s philanthropy programs focus on the following:

- developing young grantmakers through YouthBank groups nationwide;
- building individual giving initiatives, including a national program allowing citizens to designate specific NGOs as recipients of a small portion of their tax money;
- encouraging people to pool funds to generate a greater local impact through Donor Circles;
- promoting a platform that connects NGOs with banks and mobile phone operators so people can easily make technology-based donations; and
- establishing community foundations throughout the country.

With Mott’s help, there are now 12 community foundations nationwide. These grantmaking institutions are spreading because they incorporate an inclusive style of decisionmaking that involves residents in all aspects of community projects — vastly different from how things were done under the former communist system, Porumb says.

However, she says, much public education is still needed because the community foundation concept was previously unknown in Romania. Whether making donations or providing input on local projects, residents appreciate the transparency associated with community foundations, Porumb says.

“Donors are involved in deciding what to fund and then invited to visit or otherwise learn about the completed projects,” she said. “This is accountability. It is closing the circle of giving.”

### ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY RELATIONS (ACR) Cluj-Napoca, Romania

**Mott grants through 2012:** \$1.55 million

**Highlight:** With strong local leadership and support from ACR and its donors and partners, 12 community foundations have been established in Romania in the past six years. Today, 35 percent of Romanians have access to a community foundation. Collectively, these institutions have pooled and invested about \$825,000, mostly from local donors, in more than 100 resident-identified causes.

**In their own words:** “The enthusiasm and creativity of community foundations is inspiring positive responses from the local people, who are ready to act to improve their own lives and communities.”

– Program Director Alina Porumb  
ACR Community Foundation

**Web site:** <http://arcromania.ro>



Community foundations engage young people with YouthBank-funded projects like this in Iasi, Romania, where students cleaned and painted murals in a derelict pedestrian tunnel.

# The final word

As the community foundation field embraces its second century of operation, there undoubtedly will be challenges to overcome. Two come readily to mind. Although it is impossible to predict how the globalization of society or our fast-changing technology will affect people's propensity for giving decades from now, we can easily imagine that individuals' loyalties to a specific place may weaken as they move from place to place, or that ever newer technologies will continue to make it even easier to give directly to any cause, any place, any time.

In response, community foundations not only will need to integrate people's new "communities of interest or identity" with the more traditional "communities of place," but also will need to demonstrate to donors their "value added" as intermediary organizations.

We suspect they are up to the challenge.

The fact that community foundations have endured for a century is a sure sign of their value and versatility. Moreover, there is every reason to believe that the community support organizations and networks now in place — or those that will succeed them — will continue to help spread the community foundation concept in the years to come into regions where seeds are only starting to sprout.

As long as the concept remains true to its core, while maintaining flexibility in light of an ever-changing world, it is quite possible the field could find itself celebrating its bicentennial 100 years from now.