

## ZIMBABWE

### The Community Foundation for the Western Region of Zimbabwe

#### History

The Community Foundation for the Western Region of Zimbabwe (CFWRZ) arose from a community collective savings program known as Qogelela. It was launched with a small endowment from Qogelela contributed by over 50,000 community members under the auspices of the Organization for Rural Associations for Progress. The Foundation was formed in 1998. It works to improve the quality of lives for the economically disadvantaged communities mainly in Matabeleland South, North and the Midlands province. It supports and mobilizes resources for development initiatives coming from the rural communities. However, the provinces, though in need of accelerated development programs, are rich in cultural heritage of their people, have untapped potential as investment hubs. Original funders were the communities, the Carnegie Corporation, the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa and the United Nations Development Programme. The CFWRZ is the first grantmaking community foundation in Zimbabwe.

#### Current situation: Facts and figures

<b>Geographic area served:</b>	Western region of Zimbabwe
<b>Population size</b> of service area:	3 million
<b>Total sum of grants</b> made in 2007:	US \$168,950.00
<b>Total number of grants</b> made in 2007:	9
<b>Total sum of the income/ donations</b> in 2007:	US \$424,774.90
<b>Single largest source of income</b> in 2007:	Bernard van Leer Foundation
Is there an endowment? Yes/No.	Yes
<b>If Yes, the size of the endowment:</b>	US \$140,000

#### Activities and impact

- Grantmaking
- Convening
- Working with donors and partners both at community and international levels
- Local fundraising
- Seeking international grants
- Networking by our presence in national, regional and international, e.g. conferences/meetings

**Example.** One story of positive impact is a grant given in the past year to two home-based care groups to support the establishment of nutrition and herbal gardens. The two groups that benefited from this grant now have the ability to use both conventional and traditional herbs to treat minor illnesses such as rash, wounds, and ring worm. Due to a shortage of drugs in clinics and hospitals, communities have resorted to producing Aloe Vera Vaseline that is effectively reducing the above infections among young children, in particular. Nutrition gardens also have been effective in providing the needed nutrition to children 0-8 years that are provided for under the grant. Care givers prepare vegetables for the children under their care. These gardens are established closer to Early Childhood Centers or schools.

## **Operations and staffing**

Our community foundation is run primarily by the paid professional staff. The Foundation currently employs 7 full-time staff persons. In an effort to reduce overhead costs, the Foundation is making use of university students on attachment. Presently two students are attached to programs, while the third one is attached to the Finance Department. The students are offering valuable time to the Foundation, while they are also gaining valuable experience that they require for their professional enhancement.

## **Community foundation income**

### Income categories

International Foundations:	99.9 %
Individual Contributions:	0.1 %
Corporations:	nil
Government Grants:	nil
Local Foundations:	nil

### Purposes

- Unrestricted grants
- Funds for specific programs
- Operating costs

### Permanent funds/Sustainability

Endowment building is part of our sustainability strategy. At present our endowment stands at US \$140,000. This includes immovable assets, that is, two properties with a total value of US \$140,000. It should be noted that properties appreciate in value. This is also a better investment option in a hyper-inflationary environment.

## **Environment for philanthropy**

### Local attitudes

There are positive attitudes towards community philanthropy, as this is already embedded in our culture. However, the socio-economic challenges are in a way affecting community philanthropy.

### Legal and tax environment

Legal and tax incentives for giving need to be put in place. This is a deterrent for giving as no tax incentives are in place for people who want to give e.g. businesses. However, as a community foundation, we are exempted from paying taxes, e.g. on our bank investments.

### Changing attitudes and the national or regional environment

- More technical support as far as fundraising is required and additional financial resources.
- Raising awareness within the corporate sector and individuals on the subject of increased philanthropy.

### **Current challenges and future developments**

- Raising adequate funds to meet the numerous challenges every year
- Reaching out to meet an array of community needs
- Raising endowment funds
- High inflation and economic challenges – This raises prices of goods and services, reduces the community foundation’s efficiency in addressing many needs.

### **Meeting organizational support needs**

Community Foundations of Canada, the Synergos Institute and the Bernard van Leer Foundation have offered technical support on grantmaking and exposed our Foundation with others in Canada, the US and at the regional level.

### **International links**

- I am a former Synergos Senior Fellow. Interaction with others gives more insight into areas of fundraising, grant management, etc. The peer exchanges are very important.
- I also belong to other peer learning groups such as:
  - Africa Grantmakers Affinity Group
  - Southern African Community Grantmakers Leadership Cooperative
  - Community Foundation Initiative (Advisory Committee Member) – World Bank Initiative

### **Additional resources**

The Foundation website is: [www.westfound.com](http://www.westfound.com)

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