

WINGS - COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS (WINGS-CF)

Face-to-face meeting for support organisations
2 December 2004, 0900 – 14.00



PREPARATION FOR THE MEETING

A good part of the meeting will be spent in small groups, in workshops, which will provide an opportunity for exchanging experience and also help to build an action agenda for WINGS-CF.

There will be five workshops looking at different topics and since many people may like to take part in more than one, we have made the plans very flexible to enable you to do so. But as time is limited on the day, we will encourage you to contribute thoughts to all the workshops in a brief session before the workshops start.

To help you in doing some thinking in advance about the topics and the thoughts you may have, we have come up with some KEY QUESTIONS that we hope the workshops will discuss. There may be other questions raised on the day, but we hope the questions below will set you thinking about some of the major issues. The questions are listed below, with their working group headings. *There is space at the end of this paper for you to jot your thoughts down.*

WORKSHOP TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

Role and function of support organisations I: What is the role of support organisations in relation to the development of new community foundations – at start-up and early stages?

KEY QUESTIONS

- What is the main role of support organisations in relation to the development of new foundations?
- What kinds of programme activities should support organisations develop to fulfil their role?
- What are the main kinds of funding that community foundations need in their early stages of development?
- Should support organisations develop specific links with funders to provide funds for new community foundations, or should they assist new foundations to identify sources of funds to help with early stages of development?
- Should advocacy with policy makers, either for support or for inclusion in mainstream programmes of community foundations be one of the main responsibilities of a support organisation?
- Should support organisations seek out opportunities for new community foundation development or should they react to initiatives which come from local communities? Given a clean slate, how would one begin to develop community foundations in one's communities?
- Are rural community foundations worth developing and should the strategy be different?
- What are the key resources (other than funds) that support organisations need to develop to assist with the early stages of community foundation development?
- How can resources from international sources be adapted/interpreted to ensure that they are appropriate for use?

Role and function of support organisations II: What is the role of support organisations in relation to developing resources for more established community foundations?

Support organisations can play a variety of roles once a basis for foundation development has been achieved. Their role in relation to “mature” community foundations may be very different from that needed by newer foundations.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- As community foundations develop, what is the main role of support organisations to deepen the work of foundations?
- Are there funding sources which support organisations should try to secure from funders to assist in widening and deepening foundation development?
- How can support organisations help community foundations achieve endowment growth?
- What are the key resources (non-financial) that support organisations can develop to help community foundations grow beyond their initial stages?
- What are the support needs of more mature foundations which support organisations can assist with?
- What is the role of networks of foundations in relation to support organisations?
- How do support organisations respond to requests from networks?
- Should support organisations become membership organisations? If they are membership organisations, what services should support organisations offer?

Sustainability of support organisations

Support organisations (secondary bodies) often have difficulties in persuading funders of the value they add to the work of community foundations (primary bodies).

KEY QUESTIONS:

- What do we mean by sustainability of support organisations?
- How do support organisations demonstrate that they are adding value to the work of community foundations?
- Is membership an option in developing unrestricted funding for support organisation work? Should support organisations seek project funding from funders for specific work on issues related to the development of foundations? Can support organisations (unlike community foundations) realistically expect public support (contributions from the public) for their work or will they always be grant dependent?
- How do support organisations ensure their long-term survival?
- Is there a critical mass of development of community foundations in a country which can help a support organisation to survive?
- How do support organisations change in response to the changing environment as foundations develop and move towards their own sustainability and maturity?
- How do organisations which support networks of community foundations respond to and prioritise the demands and wishes of these networks?
- What are the risks for future community foundation development within a country if the national support organisation fails to achieve sustainability?
- Is there specific work that support organisations should undertake to ensure their sustainability?

Standards and codes of ethics for community foundations, developed by support organisations

Standards and codes of ethics are increasingly important to ensure that the community foundation brand is valued and that community foundations are operating to best practice standards in relation to fund development, donor relationships, investment and grantmaking. Support organisations may have a critical role in the development of standards and codes of ethics.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- What is the key driver for the development of standards?
- How can support organisations best develop standards?
- How can community foundations themselves be involved in the standards and codes of ethics process?
- What are the main areas of standards which need to be developed?
- What are the key issues which need to be covered by codes of ethics?
- At what stage should standards and codes of ethics be developed by support organisations, in relation to foundation development within a country?
- Are there standards which should be seen as universal in relation to the community foundation brand?
Will standards need to be culture/context specific?
- Are there basic ethical codes which should be seen as universal in relation to community foundations?
- Should standards and codes of ethics be mandatory on community foundations which wish to join a network?
- How can standards and codes of ethics be used with funders and with donors?

Visibility and marketing of community foundations – the role of support organisations

Whilst individual community foundations will market themselves in their local areas, there may be a role for support organisations in marketing and improving the visibility of the brand more widely.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- What is the key driver for the marketing of community foundations by support organisations?
- Is there a link between standards and national level marketing of community foundations by support organisations?
- Should support organisations have a role in the wider marketing and visibility of the community foundation brand?
- What kind of role could support organisations play in marketing?
- Is there a tension between national and local level marketing?
- What kind of marketing at a national level is likely to be useful and successful?
- Are there some key messages that only support organisations can deliver in relation to wider marketing of the community foundation brand?
- Should support organisations develop an advocacy programme to market community foundations and their issues to policy makers? If so, how should this be done?
- Are there particular target audiences for marketing and profile raising of the community foundation brand by support organisations?
- How can resources be found to undertake marketing and profile raising of the community foundation brand by support organisations?

This is a long list of questions and we may not get round to talking about all of them on the day, but we hope that they will get you thinking in advance, and we know that your contributions to these discussions will be valuable. So, could we ask you to come prepared with your thoughts and ideas and suggestions on these topics? We don't need you to write anything down in advance but you may want to use this page to make some notes for yourself.

We look forward to seeing you at the event.

THOUGHTS ABOUT THE WORKSHOP TOPICS

Role and function of support organisations I: What is the role of support organisations in relation to the development of new community foundations?

Role and function of support organisations II: What is the role of support organisations in relation to developing resources for existing community foundations?

Sustainability of support organisations

Standards and codes of ethics for community foundations, developed by support organisations

Visibility and marketing of community foundations – the role of support organisations