



What the Future Holds

Janet Mawiyoo, Kenya Community Development Foundation

Janet Mawiyoo is the chief executive officer of the Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF). Previously, she worked with the Kenyan government in both the Ministry of Culture and Social Services and the Ministry of Technical Training and Applied Technology. She has also worked with Action Aid International, where she rose from a program officer in Kenya to become the country director of Action Aid International Tanzania. Ms. Mawiyoo is also a senior fellow of the Synergos Institute.

In 2007, KCDF will celebrate the tenth anniversary of opening its doors as a community foundation. From the beginning, it established a good base with excellent continuity and managed to retain most of its original staff for the greater part of that period at both the executive and governance levels. Consequently, KCDF successfully put in place the major elements of its operations such as an active and engaged board, a strong grantmaking and capacity building program, and a number of community endowments. KCDF illustrated that community development foundations, including the challenge of endowment building, can succeed in Africa.

During the same period, the Foundation established good systems and procedures for managing grants and donor funds. This has enabled KCDF to diversify its donor base and be recognized as a very promising institution that is committed to filling a unique gap unoccupied by any other organization in Kenya. The Foundation continues to foster a learning environment, taking stock of its achievements and challenges, consulting various stakeholders and working toward improving its operations rather than resorting to a 'business as usual' attitude. In late 2004, the Foundation reviewed its major operations as part of a strategic planning process, which ultimately produced a three-year strategic plan (2005-2007). This plan describes in detail where the Foundation seeks to be by the end of 2007. Following are some key elements the Foundation hopes to achieve over the coming years.

Governance

Governance is a major challenge in many developing countries, partially due to the behavior of their leaders, especially politicians. As a result, people have little faith in the ability of many institutions to live up to their name. KCDF, an institution that houses community funds,

cannot afford to allow its image and reputation to be compromised. If anything, it must seek to operate above reproach in all its operations and efforts.

Already, the Foundation has begun a process to revamp its governance policies and engage its board in a more formal structure. They are establishing methods to monitor progress and evaluate the board's effectiveness to meet the standards it set for itself. Ensuring that corrective action is put in place whenever weak points are discovered will be an ongoing process. The relationship between the KCDF Trust and the Foundation is an example.

Another major goal is to widen the Foundation's accountability mechanisms beyond its donors and its Board, to the public. This will mean deliberately enlarging the group of individuals who support the Foundation's mission. A "Sponsors" category was created, in which individuals can contribute to KCDF's unrestricted funds to promote its mission. Sponsors will have a chance to hear what the Foundation has achieved and be invited to contribute ideas about its growth and direction.

Visibility of the Foundation

Our strategic planning process made clear a strong case to raise the visibility of the Foundation among a variety of stakeholders, including communities, corporate firms, donors and NGOs, to make known its very creative and innovation interventions. KCDF cannot achieve its mission without deliberate, targeted and well-structured campaigns to raise its profile and showcase the unique role it plays to ensure that development gains are not lost when donor funding comes to an end. Increased visibility also means maintaining high governance and accountability standards.

Building New Partnerships

The Foundation will need to widen its world view beyond dealing with community development groups and focusing on anti-poverty efforts, to building new partnerships. Partnerships will generate opportunities to influence effective grantmaking on a larger scale and create even greater opportunity for local resource mobilization to expand anti-poverty efforts. More attention will be given to building relationships with corporate bodies and seeking

more effective ways to tap into their corporate social responsibility programs. KCDF will attempt to influence international NGOs to direct their resources toward local community organizations and NGOs they support. Thus, when the international NGOs leave, local NGOs will have the necessary funds to support their development priorities and strengthen their strategic relationships with management and organization development service providers. These providers help many nonprofits plan for a future without conventional donors.

Research, Documentation, and Promoting Shared Learning

It is also important to invest significant resources in the research and study of certain aspects of philanthropy within the Kenyan context. As well, an investment to promote shared learning among like-minded organizations and other entities who offer potential will mobilize new forms of support for community development work.

Stronger Focus on What We Do Best

The Foundation will also try to focus its energies on what it does best by opening new connections to similar organizations. Our intent is to limit KCDF's work to the components that add the most value, and encourage others to complement its efforts in non-core business areas. For instance, in the past five years, many specialists have emerged in areas like capacity building. We will work with others who share our philosophy, rather than divert resources away from what we do best. We will explore ways to be more effective and efficient at grantmaking, which means the Foundation will work less with very small groups still in their nascent stage. By strengthening the more mature organizations that have deep roots in their communities, we provide them with the means to address sustainability issues, and thus, greater opportunity to build endowments.

Endowment Building in Communities: With or Without Challenge Grants for Effective Poverty Alleviation

KCDF plans to increase its efforts with organizations just beginning to build endowments to help them understand and value the concept, with or without the provision of a challenge grant. We are committed to helping the communities recognize the long-term benefits of endowments and strong governance systems. For endowments to have a successful impact on poverty, the community must understand their value.

Kenyans in the Diaspora

KCDF will reach out to Kenyans in the Diaspora to provide them with an organized way to join us in anti-poverty interventions. The process of establishing a Friends of KCDF in the United States has already begun, and we hope to obtain Internal Revenue Service registration approval during 2006. This will create another opportunity for Kenyans in the Diaspora to contribute to the improvement of their communities back home.

KCDF's Sustainability

Very importantly, KCDF will work hard to increase its endowment with a view to ensuring its survival without significant institutional donor support from international foundations. KCDF's work must be guaranteed to continue, with or without additional funding from those donors. Strong efforts will be made to expand our connections to other donors within and outside our communities who want to see the foundation stand on its own.



Created In	1997
Serves	all of Kenya
Value of endowment (as of June 2006)	\$1.65 million
Cumulative Grantmaking (through June 2006)	\$2 million
Trustees	7
Directors	11
Staff Members	11