PHILANTHROPY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA: ADDRESSING UNDERLYING CAUSES OR MITIGATING IMPACT?

Halima Mahomed

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ABSTRACT

In this Masters Research Report, I argue that different conceptual frameworks play a central role in influencing whether and why independent funders in South Africa choose to engage in either social justice philanthropy or traditional philanthropy. Based on documentary analysis and in-depth interviews with a sample population of independent funders and experts in the philanthropic field in South Africa, this research first puts forward a different understanding of social justice philanthropy, from a South African perspective. Based on this understanding, the research then reflects that the way in which independent funders conceptualise and operationalize the reasons why they do the work they do and their roles in relation to other development role players are the central elements that influence the nature and scope of the funding approaches, priorities and strategies that they adopt.

Keywords: social justice philanthropy; traditional philanthropy; structural change; contextual factors; grant making; charity; funders; South Africa; conceptual frameworks.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts (Development Studies) in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

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Halima Mahomed

11 February 2008

DEDICATION

For my parents, Yussuf and Jubedah Mahomed,

without whose love and support I would not have made it this far.

To all my family and friends for your endless patience and encouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SJP   Social Justice Philanthropy

IF   Independent Funder

IDP   Integrated Development Program

NGO   Non Governmental Organization

CSO   Civil Society Organization

WSF   World Social Forum

UNDP   United Nations Development Programme

1. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Despite a progressive constitution and the promulgation of a host of policies that entrench and promote basic human rights, the struggle for freedom and democracy in South Africa has not translated into the attainment of a just society. Faced with a multitude of challenges, the State has struggled to realize its progressive ideals on a number of fronts; consequently, issues of poverty, inequality, vulnerability and discrimination are a daily reality for a significant proportion of the population.

Increasingly, South African non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, social movements and trade unions are voicing concern that the policies adopted by the State have entrenched progressive rights as ideals, but have not changed the underlying dynamics and structural issues that prevent its citizens from realising these rights.[1] Consequently, these civil society bodies have been vigorously engaging the State in efforts to inform, stimulate and influence policies and programs that are directed at transforming the structural inequalities that underlie social injustice.

By and large, civil society institutions that engage the State in this way are funded primarily through philanthropic resources, especially, foreign philanthropic resources.[2] This type of funding, which supports civil society efforts to address the structural dynamics underlying social injustice, is referred to as social justice philanthropy. The practice of social justice philanthropy, however, is not as common amongst South African funders. According to Kuljian (2005), philanthropic support for efforts that seek to mitigate the impacts of poverty and inequality, referred to here as traditional[3] philanthropy, is preferred to support for efforts that seek to address its structural foundations.

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[1] For instance, there have been a number of constitutional court cases around the failure of the state to realize citizen rights that are entrenched in the constitution.
[2] South African civil society has a long history of financial support from a range of international aid agencies, governments, embassies and private foundations.
[3] The word 'traditional' as used here, should not be confused to mean indigenous systems of giving. It is used in this paper to refer to the traditional way in which institutionalised giving has been carried out.

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Exploring why this is the case is the core focus of this research paper. Through a combination of documentary analysis and in-depth interviews with key staff in a sample population of South African independent funders (IFs)[4] and other experts in the philanthropic arena in South Africa, this research outlines the conceptual ideas[5] and motivations that influence whether and why independent funders engage in philanthropy that addresses the impacts of social injustice or its underlying causes.

As such, this research details how independent funders in South Africa understand the concept of social justice philanthropy, how they engage in it and what factors determine this choice. The issue of imposed northern concepts is important to consider in any social science research and I argue that South African IFs engaged in social justice philanthropy understand the concept in slightly different ways from their northern counterparts; and that this difference in understanding has resulted in the adoption of social justice philanthropy, not as a strategy, but as a holistic approach involving different strategies.

The crux of this research explores the motivations underlying the funding approaches of IFs in South Africa. I present a typology of IFs that examines key operational differences in their approach as well as the internal and external factors that influence their approach. This paper reflects that factors internal to these funders, specifically, the way in which they conceptualize their role, the work they do and the reasons underlying why they do it, play a significant role in influencing their choices. External actors and circumstances do influence this issue, but this research posits the idea that whilst some external circumstances beyond the control of IFs certainly play a constraining role, evidence reflects that the way in which IFs conceptualise the roles of these external actors is a critical factor that results in self-imposed boundaries.

In a context where academic literature on philanthropy in South Africa is still in its infancy and where academic research on social justice philanthropy in South Africa is

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[4] The term *Independent Funders* as used in this research, refers to a specific type of philanthropic entity, whose operation is independent of external mandates (i.e. the programmatic funding decisions are the prerogative of the organization alone). This will be elaborated on under the section related to the scope of the study.
[5] Due to time limitations, the boundaries of the research do not extend to assessing the impact of IFs. Rather, the focus will be on the strategies and the conceptual frameworks underlying these strategies.

relatively unexplored, this research aims to (a) add to developing a body of knowledge on South African philanthropy, (b) stimulate local philanthropic organizations to critically engage with the ideas of social justice philanthropy and (c) encourage the practice of social justice philanthropy as a means of strengthening civil society to engage the State and hold it accountable to translating its constitutional mandates into the development of a just society.

1.2 Background and Rationale

South Africa is a country beset by contradictions. Luxury and destitution; progressive rights and age-old oppression; the rhetoric of freedom and the reality of deplorable living conditions; all these co-exist. Thirteen years into democratic rule, the country has made tremendous gains in institutionalising the principle of equality as the cornerstone of its constitution, in promulgating a host of policies that entrench and promote equal rights, justice and non-discrimination and in developing a rights-based jurisprudence. Yet today, the South African society is still one of the most unequal in the world, poverty is rife, and oppression and discrimination are still a reality for a significant proportion of the population.

Translating the country's progressive constitutional ideals into practice has been fraught with challenges; and while the South African government has made enormous strides in this regard, much remains unaddressed. Still caught in the wake of the apartheid legacy, the State is struggling on a number of fronts: to reverse the long standing impacts of that legacy; to translate the hard won political freedom into realization of social and economic gains for the masses and; to balance the range of pressures from powerful economic interest groups with its mandate of promoting freedom from poverty, discrimination, oppression and injustice. Faced with these daunting struggles the existence of a vibrant and active civil society that can engage the State, hold it accountable to its constitutional imperatives, express dissenting views and advocate for alternative policies and strategies is important to developing and maintaining healthy democratic debate, effective and accountable governance and policies and programs that are in the interests of society as a whole. Moreover, in the South African context, where the State has been weak in opening up governance processes to the masses, a healthy civil society can play an important role in reflecting the concerns of and providing space for

the voices of those who have no access to the decision making processes of the State, in particular, the poor, the marginalised, the vulnerable and the oppressed.

South Africa has a vast array of civil society organizations, ranging from a relatively small number of very well resourced entities that operate at provincial, national and international levels to a large proportion of small informal groups that operate at the community level. Given the limitations of the State, these civil society groups play a significant role in the development arena, either in relation to addressing immediate needs and crises as well as in addressing structural issues that contribute towards long term change.

So, what is the role of philanthropy[6] in this regard? Everatt et al (2005:281-282) note that the value of philanthropy to South African history and development of national character has been largely ignored by academics, policymakers, and other stakeholders. Yet, a large number of formal civil society institutions in the country derive their resources through philanthropic giving. In fact, some of South Africa's most prominent advocacy and rights based organizations[7] were established with the help of philanthropic funding and, today, the majority of civil society organizations advocating for structural changes receive significant philanthropic support.

To move to the first rationale for this research: South Africans have a long and entrenched history of mutual support and giving, yet there is not a great deal known about how, why and to what South African individuals and organizations give (Maposa:2005, Everatt et al:2005). Academic research on this circumstance is very sparse, although in the last few yeas, there has been an increased interest in trying to understand this phenomenon.[8] Moreover, whilst there has been a small amount of research and reflection by specific organizations, there is no research study that has

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[6] For the purposes of this paper, I will follow Kuljian's lead and use the term philanthropy with the specific meaning "private [non-state] resources put towards the public good" (Shearer in Kuljian, 2005:6). Kuljian acknowledges the limitations of this definition but uses it as it differentiates private philanthropy from state aid. I use the definition for this reason but also because it allows for inclusion of different sources and types of giving (vertical and horizontal giving), and particularly, because it does not differentiate between different types of giving.

[7] For example Black Sash, the Legal Resources Centre and Lawyers for Human Rights, to name but a few.

[8] See Kuljian (2005), Maposa (2005), Moyo (2004), Fig (2007) and the papers produced by the Centre for Civil Society research project on the State of Social Giving in South Africa. The research papers from this project have subsequently formed the basis of the book edited by Habib and Maharaj (2007). This book was released just as this research report was being finalised and so has not been referred to directly in this study. The individual papers, however, have been used to inform this study.

explored how South African philanthropic foundations, as a sector, conceptualize their giving or their motivations for doing so (Kuljian, 2005:29). As such, this research hopes to contribute, in small part, to this gap by looking at a sub-sector of these South African philanthropic foundations.

Secondly, despite impressive gains over the last thirteen years of democracy, a number of the social justice ideals entrenched in the constitution have not adequately materialized. Addressing the structural factors that perpetuate this situation is critical, yet with a few exceptions, South African philanthropic organizations have not channelled their resources in this direction. Instead, significant resources have been directed along traditional lines of charitable giving that seek to address service provision. Understanding why philanthropic organizations choose to engage in social justice philanthropy or traditional philanthropy, is thus important to explore. The philanthropic sector, Kuljian (2005:3) notes, "[…] has not reached its potential or promoted the social change that is needed to create a more equitable society." She acknowledges, however, that some organizations reflect this potential to promote social change and states that in this regard, it would be important to understand what factors motivate whether organizations choose to address service provision or promote social change (2005: 29-30).

What makes social justice philanthropy important, one may ask? Why is traditional philanthropy alone not enough? Traditional philanthropic giving has played (and continues to play) a significant role in addressing immediate needs and basic service provision. This must be underscored, particularly in a country with such high levels of poverty and deprivation and where the State has not been able to effectively address this circumstance. However, without addressing the issues that give rise to the existence of these needs, and the crises that they generate, these same needs will continue to arise perpetually. This is not to say that traditional philanthropic giving does not have a valuable role to play, nor that it does not have significant impacts, but rather that it needs to be complemented with giving that asks the questions about the underlying issues. Consequently, this research aims to open up further engagement with the issue of social justice philanthropy.

Lastly, in a context where the State is struggling to accommodate a range of pressures from powerful interest groups, a vibrant civil society is vital to advocating and mobilizing for, even initiating, structural changes that will result in long-term benefits for the poor, disadvantaged and marginalized. Such active and outspoken civil society organizations (CSOs) very rarely receive State support and consequently rely on their own resources or international aid, which is slowly shifting focus away from the South African CSO sector.[9] It is important that these CSOs diversify their funding to include more local income sources. Hence, encouraging IFs to engage with social justice philanthropy is an important component in helping to build a more self-reliant, robust and dynamic South African civil society sector.

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[9] For instance, (i) the Swedish International Agency has recently ended its multi-year support to the paralegal sector and is channelling a substantial proportion of its funds in South Africa via the State, (ii) there are indications that some European Union countries may considerably change funding strategies in favour of support via the State, though reports vary and (iii) Atlantic Philanthropies, a large private international donor has announced its decision to spend out its endowment within the next ten years and this has resulted in a narrowing of their funding focus areas to achieve strategic impacts.

2: RESEARCH QUESTION

2.1 Key Issues

This chapter seeks to outline the research question, which focuses on three broad areas: (i) the conceptualisation of social justice philanthropy from a South African perspective, (ii) exploration of how independent funders in the sample understand the development challenges within which they operate and what role they see for themselves in this regard and (iii) the history, operation and programming priorities of the independent funders. The chapter then proceeds to outline the scope of the study, followed by a description of the methodology utilised.

As indicated earlier, academic research on South African philanthropy is still in its infancy and, as such, there is very little baseline information on the South African context from which to begin this study with. Kuljian's (2005) paper on *Philanthropy and Equity,* however, provides an analysis of whether different types of South African philanthropic entities engage the issue of equity (equal access). The issue of equal access is a critical component of social justice and thus Kuljian's assertion that majority of South African philanthropic entities do not engage on issues related to equity is used as a baseline for this research.

As such, the central question this paper addresses is not 'if' but rather 'how' IFs engage with social justice philanthropy and 'why' they engage in either social justice philanthropy or traditional philanthropy. Accordingly, the research methodology and questions are not concentrated on assessing to what extent IFs engage in social justice philanthropy, but rather on the how and why of the engagement (or lack thereof).

The crux of this research is aimed at exploring the factors that impact on the different approaches that independent funders engage in. To begin this inquiry, the research embarked from a standpoint that the terminology of social justice philanthropy could not be taken for granted. Consequently, key questions first sought to explore what this South African conceptualization was, what implications this had for practice and how it related to existing northern frameworks.

The research then sought to explore IFs understandings of the development challenges in the country and/or the communities they work with; how they perceive their role in regards to these challenges; and how they perceive their role in relation to the roles of other development actors. Following this, the research sought to gain insight into the ideas, visions and frameworks that motivate these organizations and shape its programs as well as to better understand their operational functioning, strategies and systems.

Based on these three areas of focus, this research aims to outline and explain an alternative understanding of social justice philanthropy from a South African context and use this understanding to (i) develop and explore a typology of independent funders in South Africa and (ii) analyse the factors that influence these typologies.

2.2 Scope of study

2.2.1 Type of organization

Philanthropic institutions are themselves rooted in various sectors of society,[10] and consequently have a broad range of motivations and mandates. This makes it difficult to asses the motivations of the sector in general without first looking at different types of philanthropic institutions. Analysis of all these different types, however, is a project too large for this research.

The entities that this study focuses on are thus termed South African independent funders. This term is used here to refer to organizations:

(i)   That are indigenous to South Africa, with headquarters in South Africa (this excludes offices of foreign funding agencies).

(ii)   That are independent: this means organizations that have independent boards and whose grant making decisions and processes are autonomous from institutions or mandates that are external to the organisation. Thus, family foundations, corporate social investment agencies, faith-based foundations and State funding agencies are excluded from this study.[11]

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[10] Private corporations, religious bodies, wealthy families, statutory and public bodies.
[11] These types of entities have different decision making and accountability structures from those of public foundations and as such, the motivations underlying their work very often differ from public foundations.

(iii)   That are public or private: These organizations include both public entities (whose boards are publicly elected and who are accountable to the general public) and private entities (whose board appointment and accountability is restricted to a closed set of people).

(iv)   Who are fully endowed,[12] are in the process of building endowments whilst simultaneously raising funds from larger donors for grant making, or who rely completely on funds raised from other donors both for operational costs and for grant making.

The criteria of independence or the flexibility of the organization to make its own decisions without the direct influence or interference of outside parties is central to this pool of organizations. It is central because this research aims to examine the factors that impact on the funding decisions of these organizations when they are not inherently limited by external mandates. Based on the criteria above, a population of twenty five South African independent funders have been identified.

Two specific types of funders have not been included in the scope of this study, that is, educational bursary providers and funders that focus primarily or completely on supporting disaster/emergency relief responses. Educational bursary providers have been excluded not because they are unimportant but because (a) they represent a cluster of entities that provides a different type of funding to that of the independent funders in this study and require a separate study of their own, (b) there are a multitude of small and large educational bursary providers in South Africa, some well known, and others, operating very much under the radar and (c) they have roots in religious, family, corporate, State and public and foreign entities. As such, considerable investigation, beyond the scope of this research, is required to identify what entities exist and which of these would qualify for this research. Disaster/emergency relief funders have been excluded from this study because they have a very clear and specific motivation from the outset and the findings of this study cannot be applied to the type of interventions they support.

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[12] These endowments are invested and the interest and/or profit are used to run the organization and are distributed through grant making.

2.2.2 Parameters of focus

There are some important parameters which delineate the focus of the study and need to be mentioned here. First, the research does not aim to assess the impact of these organizations but rather to understand how these Foundations <u>conceptualize</u> their work and the strategies they use to operationalize this. Second, whilst a brief review of the grant portfolios of the funders in the sample population will be conducted, a detailed analysis of their actual current and historical grant portfolios is not a part of this research. Such a detailed analysis is beyond the scope or time available for this Masters Research Report. Moreover, the grant portfolio's of these funders is influenced by how they conceptualize their work. Thus, the absence of a detailed analysis of the grant portfolios will not limit the capacity to deal with the research question. Third, the research begins by referring to social justice philanthropy in relation to addressing the <u>structural</u> causes underlying social injustice. Based on the research findings, a South African conceptualization of social justice philanthropy is offered, which addresses the <u>contextual</u> causes underlying social injustice.

It is important to raise this third parameter here for two reasons. One is that the difference in emphasis is not meant to imply that the issue of structural change is not important, but rather that the evaluation of an intervention as a structural change intervention can be quite a subjective issue. For instance, if we look at the issue of the increasing incidence of violence against women, some may argue that only interventions which are aimed at changes in the policy arena, (which impacts on society as a whole), can constitute a structural change that will address the problem. Others may argue that interventions which lead to changes in the attitudes of the males in a small rural community constitutes a structural change within that community. Yet another group may argue that empowering a woman with assets and skills that enable her to become financially independent of an abusive partner is a structural change in her life. What is deemed structural can thus be viewed very differently depending on the context. This research thus prefers to focus not on structural causes, but on contextual causes, which allows for context specific interventions that address underlying contextual issues. This can be done at various layers.

The other is that the issue of what constitutes structural change, and which elements of structural change require priority over others, is still open for debate in the development field. For instance, education, health, economic growth, asset building, employment, income generation, democratic agency and so on, are all issues that can be included within the debate on remedying structural inequalities. This paper does not seek to evaluate social justice philanthropy in relation to the range of issues or ascendancy of issues that should be addressed, but rather focuses on the overarching approach within which these issues are addressed. As such, a debate on what issue is considered as structural is not included in this paper.

Fourth, the study focuses on IFs whose grant making coverage is equivalent to or greater than a district.[13] This excludes small community or workers trusts as well as stokvels (savings clubs) and burial. Finally, the study included only those IFs that have engaged in at least two grant making cycles.[14]

It must be emphasised that this study focused on a specific type of institutionalised giving and thus the findings of this study should not be generalised to institutions that fall outside of the scope or parameters outlined. Moreover, these findings should not be generalised to the motivations underlying individual giving, especially in an African context where individual philanthropic giving is rooted in various cultures and the motivations for giving are often intertwined within these cultural systems.

2.3 Methodology

This research study was informed by a qualitative methodology, within which two particular qualitative methods were used (i.e. document analysis and in-depth interviews). The aim of the research was to explore a conceptual understanding of a particular issue. As such, data that reflected people's thought processes and opinions was required and a qualitative methodology is better suited to this kind of exploration. With regards to the particular methods used, the kind of data required was not the type

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[13] In South African local government, a district is an administrative sub-division which consists of more than one municipality. It lies between provincial and municipal government levels. South Africa has 52 districts.
[14] New Foundations that are still in the process of establishment or consolidation have not been included here.

that could be provided through straightforward questions. Thus, in-depth interviews were identified as the most suitable method that would both allow interpersonal engagement and exploration of issues raised as well as provide the level of confidentiality required.

The first part of this research involved analyzing public documents produced by IFs such as annual reports, brochures, marketing information, web-based information and papers presented at public forums.[15] The purpose of the document analysis was two-fold: The first was to attain a broad perspective on the organisational histories, strategies, programs and underlying theoretical orientation of all the IFs in the pool. Particular attention was paid to whether they talk about issues that directly or indirectly related to structural changes (such as, addressing inequalities, discrimination, transformation of systems, civic participation, power relations, human rights, justice, social justice etc.) as well as reference to the support of specific strategies (such as advocacy, grassroots civic mobilization, asset building, public interest litigation, empowerment and capacity building, to name but a few). The second was to assist in delineating a sample population for the in-depth interviews.

The in-depth interviews were conducted with two different groups of informants, viz. expert interviews and the senior staff[16] of the IFs. The expert interviews were conducted with individuals who are involved in actively and strategically supporting or promoting the development of philanthropy in South Africa. These individuals represent a very small cluster (no more than twelve) of international private foundations, academic institutes, civil society organizations and independent consultants, each of which play an important direct role in facilitating philanthropic activity and in shaping theoretical thinking around philanthropy in South Africa. As such, this study deemed it important to explore how these experts understood social justice philanthropy and to gain insight into their thoughts on the practice and challenges to it in relation to IFs. This is a very small and specialized field and, through random selection, the study conducted eight interviews from this group.

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[15] Organizations varied in the extent of documentation available. Some organizations have produced significant amounts of information for public use whilst others have produced only a bare minimum. There were a small number of organizations for which no documentation was available at all. In these cases, verbal enquiries were made from people in the field.

[16] In all but three of the IFs, the Director/CEO/Head of the organization was interviewed. From the remaining three, two were headed by an active board and thus the most senior staff member was interviewed and with the third, scheduling changes resulted in an interview with a senior field/project officer instead of the head of the organization.

The second set of in-depth interviews involved the group that is the direct unit of analysis, that is, the leadership of IFs. At the onset of this study, 24 IFs that were within the parameters and scope of the criteria were identified through a combination of web-based research, conversations with people in the field and personal knowledge[17]. Based on information gained from the documentary and web-based analysis, the population of IFs was first divided into two groups (i) those that appear to engage in social justice philanthropy (Group A, which comprises 41% of the sample) and (ii) those who either appear to engage in traditional philanthropy or for whom information at hand was not adequate enough to make a determination (Group B, which comprises 59% of the sample).

Given that the core of this research question centres around how South African Independent Funders engage with social justice philanthropy and what the factors that influence the decision to do so are, a stratified purposeful sampling method[18] that sought to include both social justice philanthropy and traditional philanthropy organizations was used. This was seen as necessary to enable a comparison between the two types of entities. The issue of the extent to which IFs engage in social justice philanthropy is important but not the central issue, thus a random sampling of the total population was not utilised.

The social justice philanthropy and traditional philanthropy funders were then further categorised according to scale of operation (national vs. district/provincial) and geographic location. The reason for this was to ensure an equitable spread of organizations that worked at different scales and different geographic locations to avoid a dominance of one particular type or provincial area, which could then skew the study results.

Once the organizations were clustered around these categories, eight organizations in Group A and eight in Group B were identified. In total, sixteen organizations were selected as the sample. One organisation from Group B cancelled the interview just prior

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[17] These 24 funders were identified to the best of the researcher's knowledge with the acknowledgement that there may be a small number of additional organizations that may be identified during that actual research process. One more organization was subsequently identified, bringing the total population to twenty five.
[18] A stratified purposeful strategy is identified by Punch (2000:56) as one which illustrates subgroups and facilitates comparisons.

to the appointment. Given that this organisation was in a rural province and that the interview was scheduled on the last day of field research, time and distance constraints prevented the replacement of the organisation with another from the pool.

It must be noted that during the course of the research, one additional organization that met the criteria of the IF framework was identified, bringing the pool of IFs to 25 in total. The eventual sample group interviewed thus represented 60% of the total population of IFs in South Africa.

To sum up, 15 IFs across five provinces (there are IFs in six provinces) representing both national level and district/provincial level funders and representing both social justice philanthropy and traditional philanthropic organizations were interviewed. The core analysis of this study is based on these interviews. In addition, internal documentation such as, strategic plans, founding documents, internal reflections and evaluations were requested from organizations that participated in the interview process, and where provided, these have been reviewed to supplement the analysis.

Finally, it must be noted that this research was undertaken with full cognisance of the ethical responsibilities towards the interview participants. All interviews conducted were strictly confidential and undertaken with full informed consent.

3: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter seeks to engage with critical literature related to four core areas of focus: the theory of social justice, reflections on and practice of social justice philanthropy, philanthropy and social justice philanthropy in South Africa and factors that inhibit engagement with social justice philanthropy.

3.1 Social Justice

The issue of the variations in the use and understanding of terminology related to social justice philanthropy is central to this research. In order to move to a discussion of terminology around social justice philanthropy, it is necessary to begin with a brief discussion of the term social justice. The term social justice is used commonly in relation to development initiatives and objectives, yet, there is no common agreed upon definition. The World Bank Institute's Development Education Program (undated: 1) states that social justice is linked to "equality of opportunities for well-being, both within and among generations of people […] having at least three aspects: economic, social, and environmental." The World Social Forum (WSF) Charter of Principles includes a reference to "social justice, equality and sovereignty" but there is no agreed WSF definition (WSF: 2006). Likewise, a review of United Nations Development Program (UNDP) literature reflects the use of the term, in a variety of different documents, as an important factor in their goals and strategies, yet there appears to be no UNDP definition. Likewise, a multitude of other documents all use the terminology with an implicit meaning, without delving into what that meaning is. Moreover, there appears to be no consensus or discussion on whether the term refers to a strategy, a goal or a conceptual/ideological framework.

A review of literature relating to the theory of social justice also reflects fundamental differences. These works are highly philosophical in nature thus a substantive engagement with the distinctions between the theories and the various criticisms on their philosophical and practical implications is beyond the scope of this paper. Accordingly, this section of the literature review will focus on a brief outline of the critical issues that

contemporary[19] social justice theorists have highlighted/added to the debate and some critical areas of contestation, as they apply to the subject of this research[20]. The discussion is a philosophical one but is necessary to providing a backdrop upon which the assumptions and ideals of social justice philanthropy can be understood.

This discussion begins with John Rawls, who is hailed by many as the most influential contemporary theorist on the issue of social justice. Rawls (in Clayton & Williams, 2004:pp49-67) positions his theory as "justice as fairness", of which the key elements are (i) that the principles of social justice apply to the basic structure of society i.e. major social, political, and economic institutions; (ii) that social justice governs the assignment of rights and duties and the distribution of social and economic advantages by these institutions; and (iii) that people are born into different positions in society, resulting in them having unequal life chances. As such, it is to these inequalities that social justice must apply. Rawlsian theory rests on two core principles. The first is the basic *liberty principle*, which attaches priority to a set of civil liberties (Clayton & Williams, 2004:3). This principle is seen as more important than the second, the *principle of democratic equality*, which governs the distribution of opportunities to compete for jobs, political office and material expectations (ibid). Major criticisms of Rawls' theory include that it focuses on primary goods only, is blind to various other types of inequalities and it focuses on means rather than individual capabilities (Sen in Clayton & Williams, 2004:5); it focuses on institutions only, but not on personal behaviour of individuals (Brightouse, 2004:144) and that it focuses on the provision of primary goods only.

In contrast, Robert Nozick' poses a *historical entitlement* theory of justice, as outlined by Clayton & Williams (2004:5-6). In this theory, principles of justice apply to the distribution of entitlements, which confer enforceable claims and powers on their bearers to control, alienate and benefit from their holdings (ibid). Thus, a persons holdings are seen as just if he is entitled to them by the principles of justice in (i) acquisition, (ii) transfer or (iii) by the principles of rectification of injustice (Nozick in Clayton & Williams, 2004:87-89). For

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[19] Why contemporary? The theoretical analysis of the issue of 'social justice' by Rawls fundamentally changed the nature of the debate. Historically, the debate on justice included three broad schools of thought, which focus on (i) income-egalitarianism (equality of income and wealth), (ii) utilitarianism (equality of mental satisfaction) and (iii) libertarianism (focus on the procedures for liberty) [Sen 1999:19;55].
[20] This section of the literature review makes extensive use of a book edited by Clayton & Williams. I want to point out, however, that it does not rely on the views of the editors alone; the book comprises chapters that are extracts of the key works of contemporary theorists.

Nozick, differing outcomes or distributions are just depending on how they came about. He contrasts this perspective with "current time-slice" principles of justice -- which determine justice based on eventual outcome of a distribution (i.e. who ends up with what) (ibid).[21]

Ronald Dworkin posits a theory based on *equality of resources* and, in this theory, economic equality requires both respect for civil liberties as well as for private property and market procedure (Clayton & Williams, 2004:7-8). Dworkin (in Clayton & Williams, 2004:127-131) criticises what he refers to as "starting gate theories", which see equality of resources at an initial point of distribution as sufficient (the outcomes of the use of those resources is then justified based on an initial equality of distribution), and recognises that there is a need for periodic redistribution to take place to rectify certain inequalities of outcomes (ibid). Clayton & Williams (2004:8-10) see Dworkin as leading a school of thought that differentiates between inequalities of outcomes caused by choice and inequalities of outcomes caused by luck (natural abilities, background etc) and reflects that Dworkin only sees the latter as deserving of concern in relation to social justice.

Amartya Sen (1999:63-64) disagrees with Rawls prioritization of liberty over economic needs and sees Nozick as taking Rawls' focus on personal liberty to the extreme, such that even terribly unjust outcomes could be justified (1999:65). Another major critique that Sen raises of Rawls is that social primary goods are objective goods but the abilities of people to convert these goods into well being is not included as an issue of concern (Brighthouse 2004:70). For Sen (1999), the critical issues are that (i) the relationship between the resources people have and what they can do with them is central to social justice; (ii) freedom of individuals is paramount, but individual agency is constrained by the social, political and economic opportunities available to people ; as such, the limitations that these opportunities (or lack of) place on individual freedom must be given attention,; (iii) social justice is about substantive freedoms -- referred to as capabilities -- to choose a life one has reason to value, thus, the focus of a just society is in expanding

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[21] Nozick's complete theory has a number of implications for civil liberties, redistribution, personal property rights, taxation etc that are quite problematic and contrary to the common understanding of social justice. His theory is outlined here though in order to raise the issue of a historical understanding as an important factor of consideration.

the capabilities of people to lead the kinds of lives they have reason to value;[22] and (iv) issues of social injustice are thus linked to a deprivation of capabilities not deprivation of resources. For example, poverty must be seen as the deprivation of basic capabilities rather than lowness of income (Sen, 1999:87).

Elizabeth S. Anderson (in Clayton & Williams, 2004:155) critiques contemporary theorists like Dworkin and others who follow his *luck inequality* school of thought, as being too narrowly focused and too absorbed with distribution of divisible privately appropriated goods. For Anderson (*ibid*), recent egalitarian writing has lost sight of the distinctly political aims of egalitarianism. She asks:

> "What has happened to the concerns of the politically oppressed? What about inequalities of race, gender, class and caste? Where are the victims of the nationalist genocide, slavery and ethnic subordination?"(ibid)

For Anderson, the egalitarian aim is to eliminate oppression and create a community in which people stand in relations of equality to others (Clayton & Williams, 2004:170-171). Accordingly, she thus proposes the theory of democratic equality, which (i) emphasises a democratic community not a hierarchical one; (ii) aims to abolish socially created oppression; (iii) views equality as a relationship, rather than as a pattern of distribution; and (iv) applies to social relations as well as private relations (ibid). Democratic equality is fundamentally concerned with the relationships within which goods are distributed, not just with the distribution of goods themselves (ibid). Anderson goes further to say that there are certain fundamental goods to which all individuals must have access to throughout their lives, irrespective of whether they experience inequalities of luck or choice. Building on Sen's capabilities approach, Anderson's democratic equality proposes effective access to levels of functioning that are sufficient to stand as an equal in society -- democratic equality thus aims for equality of capabilities (Clayton & Blackwell, 2004:175).

Brian Barry (2005) contributes important insights to the debate. First, he refers to Donisson's point (in Barry, 2005:14) that there are different patterns and dimensions of

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[22] What does this mean? Sen (1999) explains that a persons functioning refers to the various things a person may value doing or being and a capability refers to the alternative combination of functioning's that are feasible for one to achieve.

injustice, each of which has many causes, and that none of these patterns can be erased if it is tackled in isolation from the others. Secondly, the existence of rights and the opportunities to access those rights must be accompanied by the absence of prohibition in attaining these rights (Barry, 2005:19).

The key issues that each has focused on or added to the debate and which have had an impact on social justice philanthropy can be summarised as:

Rawls	⇒ Rights, means/opportunities
Nozick	⇒ Justice of entitlements
Dworkin	⇒ Equality of resources
Sen	⇒ Capabilities
Anderson	⇒ Elimination of oppression and equal social relations
Barry	⇒ Interlinked patterns of injustice

Table 1: Key Social Justice Theorists

Each of these theorists makes philosophical arguments that have different implications for what constitutes a just society, different implications for the mechanisms that are required to attain a just society and different areas of focus. Elements of these philosophical arguments, particularly those raised by Rawls, Sen, Anderson and Barry can be seen as influencing the assumptions and ideals behind social justice philanthropy. In reviewing the literature on social justice philanthropy however, only a few texts refer to these theorists, and the literature does not engage with the implications of the various theories for social justice philanthropy. The remainder of the literature includes the ideas raised by these theorists as implicitly accepted and, as in broader development practise, assumes a common understanding of social justice without explicitly delineate what that understanding is.

Instead, the literature reflects the general use of the term social justice in the philanthropic sector as related to notions of rights, equality, equity, freedom, fairness and levelling the playing field in relation to social, economic and political opportunities, resources and relations. The literature in the philanthropic field is vague on the issue of

the constituent elements of social justice and is unclear on whether it is seen as a strategy, a goal or a framework.

The use of the term social justice in this research draws both on the ideas raised by Rawls, Sen, Anderson and Barry as well as the way in which it is generally used in the philanthropic sector, but with some clarification. The first is that social justice is seen here as a framework, not a strategy. Secondly, drawing on Sen's argument that equal opportunities in the face of unequal capabilities is problematic, this research prefers to look at equitable opportunities (i.e. fair and just opportunities), which would take into consideration capabilities. Lastly, access to rights alone is not enough. Access to rights must lead to just outcomes. As such, this research referred to social justice as:

An overarching framework for development wherein the existence of equal rights and equitable opportunities to access those rights result in the realization of just outcomes for those who bear the brunt of poverty, inequality, marginalisation, vulnerability, oppression, and discrimination.

3.2 Social Justice Philanthropy

Social justice philanthropy, (also referred to as social change philanthropy or progressive philanthropy)[23] is not something new,[24] yet there is very little published academic work on the topic. There are smaller pieces, commissioned research and articles in publications that have been written by people with a long standing engagement with this practice and/or who hold senior academic qualifications.[25] Other work available takes the form of "how to" manuals and instructions which are often used as the primary tools for sharing practices within social justice philanthropy. In most literature on social justice philanthropy, the term is discussed in contrast to traditional philanthropy, which is seen as focusing on the symptoms of poverty, injustice and inequality (Milner, 2003:21). This, however, is where the agreement ends. Discussions on the definitions and practice of

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[23] Social justice philanthropy is also referred to by some as strategic philanthropy. This research takes the standpoint that social justice philanthropy and traditional philanthropy can both be strategic (as will be shown in the development of typologies later in this report) and does not use the term strategic philanthropy as the literature does.
[24] According to Greer & Knight, 2005:3, Joseph Rowntree drew attention to the need to remove the causes of social problems rather than treat the symptoms more than a century ago.
[25] Dr. Emmet Carson, Barry Smith, Dr. Peggy Dulaney, Collin Greer and Barry Knight to name a few.

the term social justice philanthropy are varied and highly contested. In reviewing the literature, however, it appears that three broad strands can be distinguished,

First, there is the strand that delineates social justice philanthropy by its explicit focus on addressing the structural foundations of societal problems. The National Council for Responsive Philanthropy (2003:6) and Lawrence (2005:ix) both talk about "structural change" to "increase the opportunity of those who are less well off socially, politically and economically". Carson (2003:3) emphasizes changing power relations and the Liberty Hill Foundation (2005:1-2) together with a number of US community foundations who form part of a network called the Funding Exchange have adopted the motto of "change not charity" (Collins et al: 2000). The Community Foundations of Canada (2004:1) talk about addressing root causes of those problems, not just their symptoms, and Smith (2003:4) uses a Ford Foundation definition that refers to " […] the achievement of universal rights, the absence of discrimination in access to economic, social and political opportunities and the promotion of peace and reconciliation, political voice and participation."

Within this strand of thought, there is a broad variance in practice. For instance, the choice and/or prioritization of social justice philanthropy strategies vary considerably. These strategies can range from policy change and advocacy to grassroots mobilization; from academic research and knowledge dissemination to local level networking and capacity building. Different organizations prioritize one or a combination of strategies as key entry points for directing their funding, leading to a multitude of varying approaches within the framework of social justice philanthropy. Another critical area of variation relates to the range of issues and prioritization of focus areas that are included in the term structural change. For instance, some organizations may emphasize civic participation in governance processes as the critical element, others may emphasize educational opportunities whilst yet others may focus on building assets or the promotion of human rights. There is also considerable variation on the level at which social justice philanthropy is targeted with some organizations emphasizing societal level interventions as a minimum criteria and others accommodating for individual and community level interventions as well.

Second, based on this primary focus of addressing structural issues, there is the strand of thought that equally emphasizes the process of inclusive, participatory grant making as a critical component of social justice philanthropy. This is advocated by practitioners such as the Liberty Hill Foundation (2005:2-3), Community Foundations of Canada (2004:1) and Shaw (2002: 4-6) amongst others. Within this strand, however, there appears to be differentiation as to whether social justice philanthropy and traditional philanthropy are compatible, with some like the Community Foundations of Canada acknowledging and promoting the need for both strategies, whilst others like the Liberty Hill Foundation tending to be very dismissive about the role of traditional philanthropy. Furthermore, the issue of inclusive grant making processes appears to be emphasized by community foundations, but not by international foundations.

The third strand appears to be very loose and whilst defined as social justice philanthropy, there is not necessarily a particular focus on underlying causes but rather on using **philanthropy as a tool to address social justice,** without elucidating whether this refers to structural issues or impact mitigation. This strand is reflected primarily by a group of community foundations from developing countries that participated in a Synergos study on social justice philanthropy (Synergos: 2002). The distinction between "philanthropy as a tool for social justice" and "social justice philanthropy" is an important one. The distinction raises questions around whether foundations in developing countries understand and practise social justice philanthropy differently from those in the North, or, whether the terminology itself is the root of the variation.

This requires elaboration: the term social justice philanthropy is somewhat of a misnomer and this, in my view contributes significantly to the source of contestation. It is the contention of this paper that **social justice is an overarching framework**, and that traditional philanthropy and social justice philanthropy are both **strategies** directed at addressing social injustice, albeit in different ways (see Diagram 1).
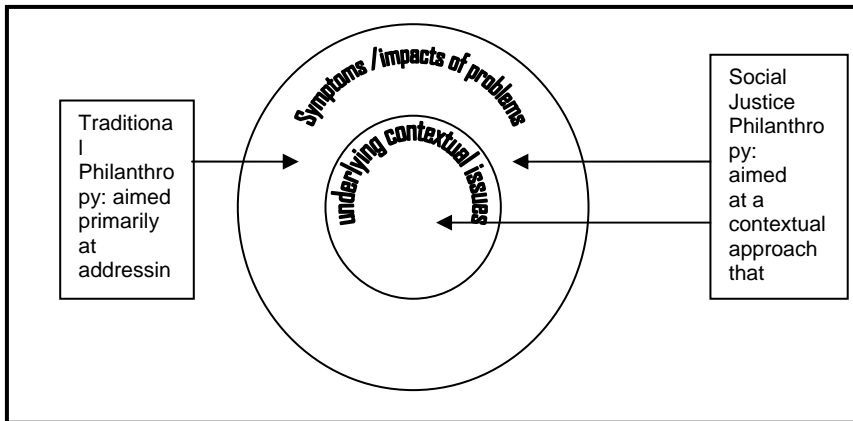
Traditional Philanthropy: aimed primarily at addressin

Symptoms /impacts of problems

underlying contextual issues

Social Justice Philanthropy: aimed at a contextual approach that

Diagram 1: Social justice philanthropy vs. traditional philanthropy

The literature reviewed does not address this differentiation, and in fact, often social justice philanthropy and philanthropy aimed at social justice are used interchangeably (for example, Smith [2003], Synergos [2002] and NCRP [2003]). The resultant impression created is that **only** social justice philanthropy is directed at social justice whilst traditional philanthropy has other lesser aims.

It is important to make the point here that this study begins from the standpoint that addressing social justice requires interventions directed at both impact mitigation and at underlying causal issues, but that impact mitigation alone is not enough to lead to long-term societal changes. Attaining social change requires that the contextual factors underlying social problems must be addressed. This, however, is not to say that efforts to mitigate the impacts of problems should not be undertaken but rather that the two strategies are not mutually exclusive and could combine within a holistic approach.

Gaberman (in Williams, 2006), has cautioned against the creeping condescension on the part of some social justice philanthropy practitioners towards practitioners involved in traditional philanthropy and, whilst this research uses the terminology of social justice philanthropy and seeks to advocate its relevance, it does not attempt to critique traditional philanthropy or make a value judgment on it. Whilst there are contentious

debates about the negative impacts of the traditional philanthropic concept,[26] its limitations in addressing long-term structural changes and its failure to challenge the power balances between rich and poor, there is still both a value and a need for philanthropy to support efforts that address immediate and urgent basic needs. As will be seen further on, the South Africa context is a clear illustration of this.

Reflecting on the definition of social justice discussed earlier and the first two strands of thought derived from the literature, this research initially proceeded with a *preliminary*[27] definition of social justice philanthropy, for the purposes of this research, to mean:

Philanthropy aimed at addressing the structural issues and barriers that prevent (i) the recognition of equal rights for all, (ii) equitable opportunities to access those rights and (iii) the realization of those rights into just outcomes for those who bear the brunt of poverty, marginalisation, vulnerability, oppression and discrimination.

3.3 Philanthropy and Social Justice Philanthropy in South Africa:

As discussed above, academic studies of South Africa philanthropy are extremely limited, though, as with the international scene, this appears to be changing. Key texts on South African philanthropy include the work by Everatt and Solanki (2005)[28] which looks at individual social giving in South Africa, Kuljian's work on the role of philanthropy and equity in South Africa (2005), "The Poor Philanthropist" by Maposa (2005) which looks at vertical giving amongst the poor, Moyo (2004) who looks at the challenges and opportunities related to philanthropy in Southern Africa, Fig (2007) who looks at the issue of corporate social environmental responsibility and Habib & Maharaj (eds) (2007) who look at different resource flows for poverty alleviation and development in South

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[26] See for example, Slim (S1) who makes an argument about the inadequacies of the charitable impulse without a rights based framework on the one hand and Maposa (2005) who challenges the connotations of "charity" as reflecting western cultural frameworks inappropriate to the South African context.

[27] The use of the word preliminary is motivated by the recognition that the South African context may result in the emergence of a different definition, as will be discussed in detail further on.

[28] This was part of a research project headed by the Centre for Civil Society. The research series produced by this project also included, amongst others, papers on corporate foundations (Friedman et al, 2005), official development assistance (Swilling et al, 2005), private foreign giving (Swilling & van Breda, 2005) and religious giving (Maharaj). As indicated earlier, these have been included in a book edited by Habib and Maharaj (2007).

Africa". There are some studies on individual organizations but to date there is no academic analysis of the conceptual framework and strategies of South African Public Foundations. Kuljian (2005:23-28) notes that there would be a value in exploring the role of this sector in relation to structural changes and this research aims to contribute, in some part, toward building that knowledge. Moreover, there is no academic study of social justice philanthropy in South Africa, and given that the northern based literature does not adequately reflect the practice in South Africa; this research intends to contribute, in some part, towards filling this gap.

In the definition of social justice philanthropy elucidated earlier, the paper referred to it as a preliminary definition, because from the onset, this study has been cognisant of not imposing Northern concepts and terminology on the South African practice. As such, part of the research study involved exploring the issue of terminology in South Africa, specifically, how IFs and resource people understood and utilised the terms social justice and social justice philanthropy and whether this would entail a revision of the definition to reflect the local context.

According to Everatt et al (2005:276) much of the literature on philanthropy originates in the North with the result that many existing definitions fail to reflect the rich traditions of giving in multicultural contexts in different parts of the world. The assertions of Everatt et al. (2005:277) on western frameworks are particularly relevant when examining the South African context. As one IF said,

> "… we always want to come and dump terminology on people that they don't understand. And suddenly, it becomes about words. And the moment that you start that word, everybody starts to use it and people use it in a way that is away from that meaning completely."[29]

Everatt et al (2005:277) and Kuljian (2005:5) also note the unease with which the terms philanthropy and charity are used, and the foreign connotations and assumptions that these bring with them and Maposa's poor philanthropist (2005) and Everatt & Solanki (2005) radically challenges some of these assumptions. This research reflects that the term philanthropy indeed elicits very strong negative reactions from majority of the

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[29] IF interview 2; 20 August 2007.

organizations in the study. Terms such as grant making, funding and giving are used much more readily by IFs in the study. It is interesting to note that the term charity, however, is still used by a small number of IFs either to articulate their work.

This study reflects that the term social justice is used by only a handful of IFs to articulate their work and these organizations tend to refer to it similarly to the literature, emphasising notions of rights, equality, equity, freedom, fairness and justice. With the larger proportion of organizations, however, they prefer instead to talk about a *just society* or about *development,* but with both these terms, many articulate them very broadly, using terms such as *"*equal rights," "benefits to all," "justice for all," "a conducive environment," "serving the public good" and "poverty alleviation". Many IFs feel that the concept social justice is an imported one that does not have much resonance for them, and cannot relate to it adequately, preferring instead to talk about their work in relation to the actual projects they support, the services they offer and the strategies they use.

The term social justice philanthropy, however, is not used at all by the organizations in the study. Lack of use of this term, however, does not imply that the practice does not exist. It is just that they use different terminology to refer to the same practice. In South Africa, there are independent funders that do indeed support initiatives addressed at structural inequalities that underlie social injustice; they simply articulate it differently. These organizations tend to use language that they feel is understandable both to them and to the communities they work with, and prefer to articulate their work as efforts aimed at "change," "rights," "justice," "a just society" or "addressing root causes."

Moreover, most of the northern-based literature tends to polarize the debate, with traditional welfare philanthropy seen as one side of a continuum, and social justice philanthropy on the other. This research study reflects that social justice philanthropy funders in South African appear to adopt a more nuanced approach.[30] Rather than seeing traditional welfare philanthropy and social justice philanthropy as two dichotomous poles, they articulate these as complementary strategies, which often run parallel to each other within a broader approach.

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[30] This does not imply that there is not a nuanced understanding amongst some Northern organizations but rather that the literature reflects this only minimally.

The idea and understanding of social justice philanthropy, if used in a South African context, thus requires adaptation. Based on the research findings, this paper thus posits the idea that a social justice philanthropy approach in South Africa has five critical components: (i) it is premised on rights-based values, (ii) it is an overall funding approach (iii) it is contextual (iv) its processes are inclusive and (v) it can be directed at both individual and community/society level interventions. Each of these will be elaborated in the key findings section of this paper.

3.4 Factors that inhibit engagement with Social Justice Philanthropy

There is a fair amount of practitioner literature on the challenges to social justice philanthropy in the United States and Canadian contexts (see for instance, Carson: 2003; NCRP: 2003; Shaw: 2005; Heller & Winder: 2003 and Lawrence et al: 2005). The literature available, however, provides lists of challenges and barriers, but in no real particular order and with very little substantive analysis. This research has used these inhibiting factors as a benchmark upon which to explore the factors that influence the choices of IFs to engage in either social justice philanthropy or traditional philanthropy.

Reflection on the literature reveals that these lists can be demarcated according to factors that are internal or external to the organisation. The external factors relate to (i) the possible inhibiting political or regulatory environment, or a state policy that focuses on basic needs; (ii) the inhibiting role that larger donors play through an emphasis on short term results, premature demands for measurement, and unwillingness to fund organizations that engage in controversial issues or that challenge the status quo and; (iii) the absence of a cohesive field of social justice philanthropy organizations and lack of fora to share ideas and learn.

The internal factors relate to (i) the quality of leadership, which is reflected by the strength of directors or boards, the extent to which boards include representatives of beneficiary groups and understand the issues that beneficiaries face; (ii) constraining attitudes that are shaped by a limited understanding of underlying contexts, that are informed by traditional notions of charity, and that prioritize attention to immediate needs; (ii) risk aversion behaviour wherein organizations' are unwilling to challenge the status quo that created them, shy away from controversial issues, prefer to remain

neutral, and are unwilling to acknowledge that they have the power for social change; (iv) sustainability concerns underscored by the perception that social justice philanthropy requires significant resources and that adopting the practice will affect their sustainability and; (v) limitations of philanthropy, that is, the perception that the scale of problems are too big for philanthropic efforts to address, that philanthropic entities are helpless in face of government policy and that philanthropic entities are unable to engage in policy change.

As mentioned, the literature reflecting on these challenges is primarily practitioner-based and there is no-in depth academic analysis of these factors. This is corroborated by Heller & Winder (2003:10) who raise the issue of the absence of research and the need for systematic inquiry to understand the challenges to social justice philanthropy in different contexts. In the South African context, no prior information on these factors has been documented, hence exploration of the factors that influence whether funders choose to engage in social justice philanthropy or not forms the crux of this research project.

The external factors, that is, issues that relate to the state, donors and the absence of a field have resonance in the South African context. What is markedly different in the South African context, however, is that it is not only the practices and influence of the state and donors that inhibit IFs engagement with social justice philanthropy. Instead, the way in which the IFs themselves perceive the roles of the state and donors that is an influential element impacting on whether they engage in social justice philanthropy.

With regards to the internal factors, the issues of leadership, attitudes, risk aversion and limitations of philanthropy also resonate in the SA context. This research reflects additional factors as well, and these will be elaborated on in detail later, through the development of typology of independent funders in South Africa.

4: ENGAGING WITH SOCIAL JUSTICE PHILANTHROPY FROM A SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

This chapter reflects on the research findings to articulate a South African understanding of social justice philanthropy and detail its implications. Thereafter, based on this understanding, the chapter provides the parameters for the development of a typology of independent funders in South Africa. This typology looks at critical conceptual and operational parameters that distinguish between funders that engage in social justice philanthropy and those that engage in traditional philanthropy.

4.1 Elements of a South African Approach

As mentioned earlier, no baseline study exists on how South African funders understand the issue of social justice philanthropy. Exploring this understanding thus formed the foundation of this research study. The study reveals that a social justice philanthropy approach, from a South African perspective, has five critical components: (i) social justice philanthropy is premised on rights-based values, (ii) social justice philanthropy is an overall funding approach (iii) social justice philanthropy is contextual (iv) social justice philanthropy processes are inclusive and (v) social justice philanthropy can be directed at both individual and community/society level interventions. Each of these will be explained briefly below but the core issues will be illustrated further in the next two chapters

What is meant by rights-based values? Social justice philanthropy in South Africa is as much about why funding is given as it is about the impact of the funding. Organizations engaging in social justice philanthropy place emphasis on the fact that the funding they engage in is not motivated by a desire to help or be charitable but that their existence is based on values that refer to every individual's right to justice, equality, equity and dignity in every sphere of life. So the first way in which they distinguish their work is based on the motivation underlying their funding.

What is meant by contextual? The common thread running through the literature is the focus on structural change. This study reflects that practitioners of social justice

philanthropy talk about change, but not necessarily 'structural' change. Instead, more often they speak about change in reference to underlying issues, root causes or contextual issues. Part of the reason appears to be that structural change can and does mean many things, and comprises many layers; and at what point an intervention constitutes a structural change intervention is a very subjective issue. The idea of contextual change appears to have much more resonance. Thus, a social justice philanthropy approach takes account of the underlying contextual dynamics surrounding an issue or problem and then looks at how to address the problem through changing the underlying contextual dynamics.

What is meant by an approach? Social justice philanthropy is not designated according to the type of activities supported or the strategies utilised, as is the case with the northern literature. Instead, it refers to an overall funding approach, which can include addressing the impacts of problems but which is ultimately aimed at addressing the contextual issues that contribute to the problem. Rather than polarising impact mitigation and underlying causes as two ends of the debate, this approach does not ignore the harsh realities of the multiple crises related to poverty, vulnerability and inequality. A social justice philanthropy approach in South Africa thus sees room for the same funder supporting initiatives that address both immediate needs as well as underlying contextual issues, within a single holistic approach. The literature does reveal a few organizations that see the two types of funding co-existing, but the difference is that with the literature these are seen exactly as two approaches co-existing, not as one strategic approach with multiple strategies.

What is meant by inclusive? Social justice philanthropy is both about strategy and process. Interacting with the beneficiaries of support as equal partners, with respect for their priorities, needs and plans, and adopting the principle that grant making decisions will be informed by issues articulated by those most affected is seen as a critical component of social justice philanthropy. In the Northern literature, the first strand of thought around social justice philanthropy does not reflect on inclusive processes at all, whilst the second strand makes inclusive processes a critical component. In this research study, inclusive processes were highlighted as a critical component, though different organizations operationalize this in different ways. Some prioritise research and/or substantive consultation aimed at soliciting the views of those most affected as

key informants of funding strategies, others prioritise participation of people who bear the brunt of the problem within their operational structures or board of trustees, and yet others emphasise both as necessary. Essentially, the idea that funding decisions cannot be taken in isolation of in depth engagement with those most affected is a central element of social justice philanthropy.

Why individual *and* societal: the literature tends to primarily refer to structural issues as relating to direct impact on the community or society level. Philanthropy that aims to benefit specific individuals directly does not receive significant attention in the literature. This is not to say that the practice in the north does not look at this, but that the literature does not engage this issue conceptually, although it does reflect some organizations implicitly addressing both levels. In South Africa, all organizations canvassed expressed the opinion that in a society with such a critical transformation imperative, individual level support is just as crucial as societal level change and the development of individual leadership, competencies, assets and skills is seen as critical to bolstering social change and a just society.

This paper thus puts forward a definition of social justice philanthropy, from a South African perspective, as:

> ***An inclusive funding approach, premised on the notion of a just society, which seeks to ultimately address the contextual issues and barriers that prevent (i) the recognition of equal rights for all, (ii) equitable opportunities to access those rights and (iii) the realization of those rights into just outcomes for those who bear the brunt of poverty, marginalisation, vulnerability, oppression and discrimination.***

4.2 Towards a typology of Independent Funders: Defining parameters

> "…the difference between social justice grant making and other types. It's certainly a… it can *at least* be philosophical. It can, at times be extremely practical and at times its also *extremely political*, the way people and institutions

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with resources to share and distribute, how they decide to do that and how they decide to label it. It can be a lot more than semantics."[31]

The central question of this research focuses on what influences the grant making choices of independent funders; in particular, what are the factors that impact on why IFs choose to engage in social justice philanthropy or traditional philanthropy. Before we can proceed to explaining these factors, however, we must shed some light on the different types of independent funders in this study and their distinguishing characteristics. In Chapter 5, the factors that influence these distinguishing characteristics are then explored in detail.[32]

This research thus presents a typology of IFs in the study. It must be stated upfront that there is no ideal type organization and typologies are bound to be problematic. I am conflicted in using this typology but I have decided to do so, not to present an ideal type, but rather to try to illustrate the differences between the various IFs.

Table 1 presents the parameters of a basic typology of independent funders in the study. Based on the research findings, this paper identifies independent funders in the sample as falling into one of two broad groups, each of which is then divided into two sub-categories. On the vertical axes, there is a division between Group 1, which refers to social justice philanthropy (SJP) funders and Group 2, which refers to traditional funders. What is used to determine whether an organization falls into Group 1 or Group 2 can be related to issues of values and context.

On the horizontal axes, a sub-division of the two groups is illustrated. This sub-division distinguishes between (i) organizations that have a cohesive funding approach and focused programmatic strategies (referred to here as strategic funders) and (ii) organizations that have a fragmented funding approach and weakly developed programmatic strategies (referred to here as the less-focused funders). The elements on each of these axes will be explained in more detail in the next section.

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[31] Expert Interview 1, 11 April 2007.
[32] There is no academic study that provides a comparative analysis of social justice philanthropy and traditional philanthropy organizations. This typology is thus an attempt to develop a framework within which the conceptual and operational differences between these two types of funders can be more easily differentiated and explained.

	Group 1 **Social Justice Philanthropy** • Values based on notion of rights • Contextual approach	Group 2 **Traditional Philanthropy** • Values based on notion of assistance • Singular approach
• Cohesive funding approach and focused programmatic strategies	***Category A: (5 IFs)*** *Strategic social justice philanthropy funders*	***Category B: (4 IFs)*** *Strategic traditional funders*
• Fragmented funding approach and weakly developed programmatic strategies	***Category C: (3 IFs)*** *Less-focused social justice philanthropy funders*	***Category D:(3 IFs)*** *Less-focused traditional funders*

Table 2: Basic typology of independent funders

The research reflects that within the SJP group, five IFs can be classified as having a cohesive approach and focused strategies, whilst three IFs can be classified as having fragmented approaches and strategies. In the traditional funders group, four IFs can be classified as having cohesive approaches and strategies and three IFs as having fragmented approaches and strategies.

4.2.1 Values, context and a holistic approach

Based on the definition of social justice philanthropy articulated earlier in this paper, the first parameter demarcating between IFs is based on whether they engage in social justice philanthropy or traditional philanthropy. If one looks at the elements of the social justice philanthropy definition -- (i) rights-based values, (ii) a holistic approach (iii) contextual understanding (iv) inclusive processes and (v) individual and/or community/society level interventions -- the key distinguishing factors between social

justice philanthropy and traditional philanthropy organizations relate to the points of values, context and a holistic approach.

In relation to the issue of values, the SJP funders see their work as being premised on rights-based values, that is, values that are premised on the notion of the necessity of equal rights for all. They identify their strategies as being based on rights, justice or development for social justice. Consequently, they see the primary motif for the work they do as the attainment of a just society.

> "…to get a society where marginalized, minorities, black people benefit from transformative processes, you have to deal with issues of justice. Issues of poverty, in a country like South Africa, fundamentally undermines issues of justice. Issues of discrimination around women and abuse of women fundamentally impacts on issues of justice. Issues of access to good quality education fundamentally …."[33]

Traditional funders see their work as being premised on values related to charitable giving and assisting those in need. A number of IFs in this group articulate their work in relation to providing help and improving peoples standard of living. Consequently, they see the primary motif for the work they do as to assist others to attain a better quality of life.

In relation to the issues of a contextual understanding and a holistic approach, the SJP funders adopt an approach that locates the problem within society and the broader contextual environment, with the result that their funding approach aims to address the underlying contextual issues that contribute towards the problem. This funding is thus ultimately aimed at correcting or changing the factors that perpetuate the status quo. To illustrate, one IF in this group supports paralegal organizations. The focus of its support, however, is not just the paralegal services the organizations' provide but rather how they reflect on the issues that arise within communities, explore why they exist and what can be done to address that underlying cause. This means that they may be addressing the reasons why domestic violence is more prevalent or the reasons why people don't have

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[33] IF interview 1; 16 August 2007.

access to housing subsidies or highlighting issues of corruption, all of which are contextual issues which directly contribute towards the problems at hand.

Traditional funders tend to locate the problem at the level of the individual. Consequently, their funding approach tends to focus primarily on mitigating the impacts or alleviating the symptoms of the problem, as they manifest at the individual level. This assists people to better cope with the immediate crises they face, but, with a focus that is primarily at the individual level, the status quo underlying these crises is not the subject of attention. Contextual factors are sometimes addressed in the course of their work, however, this is not a primary focus. Funders in this group tend to emphasise interventions that provide direct services and address critical welfare needs, as they impact on individuals. These are critical interventions, and fill a significant gap, but in many cases, the reasons why these services are required in the first place are not focused on.

Now, this should not be taken to mean that the activities that address the symptoms are any less valuable then activities that address underlying causes. In fact, these organizations play an extremely valuable role in society: they fund critical services that provide a physical, social, psychological or emotional safety net for people who are in crisis, they fund activities that assist people to cope with the crises they face and help to keep their heads above water, they may provide emergency disaster relief support and they fill a huge glaring gap where the State has not been able to adequately fulfil its responsibilities. There is clearly a need for this type of support in the short term and a need for philanthropy to look at both the symptoms and causes of social injustice.

Moreover, there are certain types of issues for which the only intervention that can be funded, given their scope, is a service that addresses the impact of a problem. For instance, supporting medical and psychosocial services aimed at disabled populations or those suffering from mental health problems, providing outreach support for aged who live alone and have no family support, supporting palliative care for people who are terminally ill. The list can continue. Whether philanthropy should in fact support interventions that are deemed as falling under the responsibility of the State is another debate altogether. For the purposes of this paper, however, the motivations for these types of interventions do not form part of this discussion.

The issue of where the problem is located has a direct bearing on how organizations choose to address that problem. In the words of one of the resource persons interviewed:

> "Social justice philanthropy, in a nutshell, is about how do you break the cycle of intergenerational poverty. Now, charitable philanthropy, doesn't ask that question. It doesn't ask how do you break the intergenerational cycle, it's about how can you help this particular person. So to be social justice philanthropy, you have to ask that question. How do we break this cycle of intergenerational poverty, so that we do not come back to the same community, the same people, generation after generation."[34]

4.2.2 Strategy

These two groups of organizations are not homogenous, which brings us to the second parameter of this typology, that is, whether the organizations have a cohesive approach and focused strategy that informs the work they do. Within the SJP group, one set of funders, the strategic funders, have given very serious consideration to underlying contextual issues and have developed a framework that consists of targeted and focused strategies for how they will address problems contextually. They tend to take a proactive approach in addressing these issues. In fact, there appears to be an increasing tendency amongst these funders towards developing their own programs and then funding organizations to undertake and manage these programs.

The second set of funders in this group, the less-focused SJP funders, are 'still working this out.' Whilst still maintaining a contextual approach, out of the three IFs in this sub-category, one is still in the process of engaging in in-depth research and analysis of the problem and the underlying contextual factors, the second is recovering from an organizational crisis and is trying to get back on track to the strategies it has formulated, and the third has developed a detailed framework that underlies its grant making, but is still refining a strategy to translate that practically. This third IF takes a strong proactive

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[34] Expert Interview 2, 21 August 2007

role in its funding, whilst the extent to which the other two IFs in this category take a proactive role depends on their strength and knowledge around particular issues.

Within the traditional funders group, two sub-sets can also be identified. The first sub-set, the strategic traditional funders, have given very serious consideration to the problems at hand and have developed focused and targeted strategies that primarily address and mitigate the impacts of the problems at hand. Contextual issues are sometimes identified, but these are marginal to the central focus of the organisation. For instance, one funder has developed an elaborate schema to reflect a strategy where the contextual factors are recognised as one part of the response but the in-depth response is reflected in addressing the symptoms. This group has given consideration to understanding what the needs of society are and how to fill the gaps; and have developed a strategy that is aimed primarily at addressing the immediate crises and needs faced by people on the ground and they proactively engage on these issues.

The second sub-set of IFs in this group, the less-focused traditional funders, appear to look directly at the problem at hand. Exploration of the underlying issues and contexts are not part of their processes and they do not articulate a detailed approach or strategy underlying their work. They have defined broad sectors of support but their grant making focuses on technical issues. For instance, one IF has defined three broad areas of support and explained that as long as an application fell within those areas, met basic technical criteria and fulfilled a need, it would be eligible for funding. No substantive discussion of the projects was included as an issue for consideration and their grant making is framed as a reactive approach to identified needs.

4.3 Some operational differences: Substantive vs. technical focus

Within the parameters of this typology, there are certain operational differences that are important to highlight. Table 3 presents a summary of the central element that defines these operational differences and the levels at which they are addressed:

	Group 1 ▪ Focus on technical and substantive issues	**Group 2:** ▪ Focus primarily on technical issues
▪ Strong organizational systems and processes	***Category A: (5 IFs)*** *Strategic social justice philanthropy funders*	***Category B: (4 IFs)*** *Strategic traditional philanthropy funders*
▪ Weaker organizational systems and processes	***Category C: (3 IFs)*** *Less-focused social justice philanthropy funders*	***Category D:(3 IFs)*** *Less-focused traditional philanthropy funders*

Table 3: Operational Differences between Independent Funders

The first operational difference between the IFs relates to the type of funding criteria they prioritise when assessing applications. Three broad criteria can be identified: technical competency,[35] relation to identified need and programmatic value and impact.

> "We have a set of criteria for basic selection. Then we look at the issues in terms of what our strategy is."[36]

The SJP funders place emphasis on the technical competencies of the organizations and the extent to which the intervention is relevant in relation to an identified need. They also scrutinize the assumptions underlying the substance of the program, the value of the programmatic response, interaction with contextual dynamics and its long and short term impact.

Within the traditional funders group, assessment criteria appear to emphasise the technical competence of the organisation and alignment to identified needs, with some funders including broad community acceptance as an additional criteria. Discussion about the programmatic value of the intervention, is dealt with in two ways. Two funders

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[35] This relates to organizational and financial management, good governance, effective and efficient operational systems, sustainability and overall processes of the organization.
[36] IF interview 14; 24 October 2007

out of seven in this group interrogate the substance of the intervention and the ideas informing it, including some attention to how it broadly interacts with contextual issues. They look at these aspects primarily within a service provision framework (i.e. they interrogate the value and impact of that service). The other five funders do not engage in discussion around substantive criteria or contextual issues. Instead, their criteria appear to focus on more technical questions such as how many people can be reached? Is there another organization offering the same service? What are the steps involved? Does it fulfil a community identified need? Engagement with substantive merits or pitfalls of the intervention is not included as a focus by these funders.

The assessment of the competency level(s) of the organization leads to the second key operational difference, i.e. what type of organizational development training these IFs provided to grantees. In general, philanthropic organizations differed in relation to the existing minimal level of competency they require of applicants prior to providing funding. Some funders stipulated that funds will only be given to a registered non-profit entity[37] whilst others were prepared to simultaneously provide support to an unregistered entity and assist them to obtain the registration. Within this sample population all the funders interviewed were of the opinion that a significant portion (or all) of their beneficiaries required organisational development assistance, that is, they either lack the knowledge or the competencies to do the work they do to the best of their potential. As such all IFs provided, either directly or via a specialised training entity, access to capacity building programs.

Capacity building can mean many things. Basic training can focus on issues such as organisational effectiveness and efficiency, sound management, good governance, leadership, fiscal accountability, marketing and leadership development. Capacity building can also involve programmatic discussions that assists grant recipients to better understand the substantive issues they are dealing with, to reflect on the impact of their interventions in relation to these substantive issues and to strengthen marginalised or unheard voices to actively engage external role players where relevant (e.g. how to lobby or advocate).

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[37] Registered as a not for profit organization with the South African Department of Social Services.

The strategic SJP funders appear to engage in both technical and substantive issues. For instance, one IF reflects that changes in policy and legislation will never reach the community if people do not know what it is meant to change, and what rights and responsibilities they have. Therefore, this funder has included a training component on rights, responsibilities and advocacy in its' capacity building program. Moreover, it has specifically targeted areas and communities who have a weaker capacity in this regard. Another funder in this group reflects:

> "…so we [are] working towards organizations that are professionally managed, so that they can stand on their own. That is one part. And the second part was the impact part, the change that we want to see…that part is where we engage organizations and say, what is it that you want to effect in the community."[38]

The less-focused SJP funders have the same outlook on organizational development. Two of the organizations in this group, however, have somewhat weaker training programs and are not able to address organizational development on substantive issues or advocacy adequately. The third organization appears to address both these issues much better. This differentiation appears to be attributed to the strength of the leader of the organization, who comes from a very strong activist background and has carried that forward into the organization.

Within the traditional funders group, the strategic IFs tend to focus primarily on capacity building around the technical organisational issues. Capacity building to interrogate issues related to assessing impact tends to focus on quantitative outputs of the project rather than its substantive impact. The difference in focus was articulated by one IF as "… the difference between institutional development and institutional transformation." [39] The first focuses on capacity building that leads to a change in processes but the second focuses on capacity building that leads to a change in attitude and orientation.

The less-focused traditional funders share a similar approach to their strategic counterparts but the issue of impact does not appear to be one that is addressed. For instance, one IF in this category articulated that their approach was focused solely on

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[38] IF interview 9; 15 October 2007
[39] IF interview 8; 6 September 2007

looking at whether the organization had the capacity to run the project, and if it did not, then the IF would provide access to a capacity building program to help them do so.

Seven funders, across both groups, have raised the point that their financial and organisational development support provides a springboard for small civil society organizations to build a track record and eventually access funds from larger donors. In the traditional funders group, the IFs tend to focus significant attention on building capacity of beneficiary organizations to report on the use of funds and to access funds from other donors. Building the capacity of organizations to change the contexts within which they work, however, is not focused on. Within the SJP group, these IFs also see a springboard role as part of their job, but the springboard role is focused on building strong institutions with strong programs that can both change the contexts they live in as well as show substantive impact that draws larger funders.

> "Capacity building is not about their ability to report back to us. It's really the capacity of that community to drive its own development and to hold us accountable."[40]

Finally, to move to the third operational difference: All funders have some sort of mechanisms in place to monitor and evaluate the use of the grant funds. These mechanisms can range from complex and detailed systems to once off questionnaires. What is just as important as the depth of the mechanisms, however, is what is being evaluated, that is, the scope of the monitoring and evaluation.

Within the SJP group, the strategic funders have very strong, focused and strategic processes for conducting monitoring and evaluation. These processes interrogate the appropriate use of the grant funds, the capacity of the organization to carry out its activities and the impact of the work on the target beneficiaries. These processes are a central part of the grant cycle and feed into developing and refining the interventions as they progress. One IF in this category uses a very comprehensive matrix that addresses all of these issues. Another prefers to use less formal systems but still look at all these issues through in-depth conversations and group discussions. The less-focused funders

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[40] IF interview 8; 6 September 2007

in this group are trying to look at monitoring and evaluation in relation to both impact and processes, but are still developing strategic mechanisms for doing this.

Within the traditional funders group, the strategic IFs also have strong, focused and strategic processes for monitoring and evaluation, but with two differences. First, the monitoring and evaluation processes appear to focus quite strongly on the appropriate use of the grant funds and the capacity of the organization to undertake its activities. All the IFs in this category prioritise these elements. Programmatic impact is also looked at, but, as with capacity building, when talking about impact, these IFs tend to refer to the outputs that have been produced through the grant rather than the impact that the grant activities have had. Second, all the IFs in this category, directly or indirectly, referred to monitoring and evaluation as a process that is conducted at the end of the grant making cycle. Consequently, the ability of the monitoring and evaluation to feed into the intervention as it progresses, to assist in adapting to challenges, and to raise substantive issues when things are not working well is limited.

The less-focused traditional funders have monitoring and evaluation systems that focus on technical issues and outputs; and they do this only at the end of a grant cycle. One organization talks about their monitoring and evaluation system comprising (i) grantees completing a basic report stating whether they have done what they applied for and (ii) the IF conducting a site visit at the end of the grant. This IF also states that on many occasions, when they go to visit a project at the end of a cycle, it no longer exists and all the people involved are gone and cannot be traced. These types of monitoring and evaluation systems can have negative implications for both the grant recipient and the grant making organization. On the one hand, the potential for grant beneficiaries to learn from the monitoring and evaluation, and so strengthen their impact, is constrained. On the other hand, the potential for the grant making organization to assess the impact of its grant making strategies, to learn and reflect on the weaknesses and strengths thereof, and so adapt and evolve accordingly, is also limited.

5: CONCEPTUAL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE FUNDING CHOICES OF INDEPENDENT FUNDERS

Based on the typology outlined in the previous chapter, this chapter now looks at the research findings to identify critical elements that influence the typology. These factors, in turn, impact on the type of philanthropy these funders engage in. This chapter details both internal and external elements, with a specific focus on the conceptual understanding of these elements as a critical differentiating factor influencing their choices.

The existing literature (see for instance, Carson: 2003; NCRP: 2003; Shaw: 2005; Heller & Winder: 2003 and Lawrence et al: 2005) reflects on challenges or factors that inhibit organizations from engaging in social justice philanthropy. Analyses reflect that these can be identified as internal and external challenges. The internal factors relate to (i) leadership, (ii) attitudes, (iii) risk aversion, (iv) sustainability and (iv) the perceived limitations of philanthropy. The external factors relate to (i) the state, (ii) donors and (iii) the absence of a field.

This paper seeks to build on these factors but instead of looking at it from the perspective of challenges to social justice philanthropy, it aims to explore the elements that influence why an IF chooses to engage in social justice philanthropy or traditional philanthropy. Analyses of the interview data reveals that the way in which funders conceptualize why, how and to what end they do the work they do reflects critical differences that influence their strategic programming. Moreover, the way in which they conceptualise their role as a funder, in relation to the roles of external actors, has critical implications for the nature and scope of their funding priorities and programs.

Table 4 provides a summary of what this research has identified as critical conceptual differences that influence the programming priorities of the IFs in the study. The key difference between the way each group understands and conceptualizes the various factors is listed and each of these factors is then subsequently analysed.

	Group 1 Social Justice Philanthropy Funders		Group 2 Traditional Funders
▪ **Conceptual starting point**	➢ What is unjust?		➢ What is the need?
▪ **Raison de etre**	➢ Agent of change		➢ Intermediary/ conduit
▪ **Neutrality**	➢ Partisan stance		➢ Neutral role-player
▪ **Reflection and learning**	➢ Technical & substantive		➢ Technical only
▪ **Leadership**	➢ Technical & programme expertise		➢ Technical expertise & networked boards
▪ **Role of State**	➢ State can be challenged on its development objectives		➢ State has sole mandate on broad development objectives
▪ **Role of larger donors**	➢ Donor involvement limits grant making		➢ Donor involvement does not limit grant making
▪ **The role of beneficiaries**	➢ Beneficiaries should actively engage development programs		➢ Beneficiaries should fit into development programs

Table 4: Conceptual Differences between Independent Funders

5.1 Conceptual Starting Points

"…you can have people who are very interested in helping the poor, and willing to give clothing, food, resources to poor people, but who are not at all interested in getting at the, or even taking on, talking about those very systemic …. Ways in which societies, some societies, promote, instigate, and continue those inequalities…they don't want to deal with, well why don't these folks have jobs? What is it about the way in which our society is structured that leaves so many people out of the social net? And what could our monies do to challenge some of those systems, beliefs and cultures?"[41]

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[41] IF interview 1; 11 April 2007.

The conceptual framework underlying philanthropic giving is *the* critical factor influencing what type of philanthropy a funder engages in. Each group of organizations operates from a different conceptual starting point for addressing problems. The SJP funders begin with the questions, what is it about the situation that is unjust?   Why is it unjust? and what needs to be changed to make it just? Consequently, they address the dynamics that make the situation unjust. The traditional funders begin with the question, what is the need? and how do we fill the gap? Consequently, they address the gaps that result from the injustice. One expert respondent is of the view that there are some traditional funders who see an implicit justice agenda in providing basic services to those who do not have, and so they may lean towards supporting organizations that engage in service delivery. This supports the argument that social justice provides an overarching framework, as detailed in the literature review. The conceptual starting point that questions why the situation is this way, however, is still a differentiating factor.

Secondly, the SJP funders tend to adopt a long-term view of the problem. They recognise the crises that people face on a day to day basis, but are of the view that these crises will continue to manifest unless the underlying causes are addressed. The traditional funders tend to adopt a shorter-term approach to dealing with the situation. This group tends to focus on the immediate crises and are of the view that that these must first be eradicated before a long-term approach can be taken. One funder described it as the necessity of a situation where society is still running behind the problem, rather than being ahead of it, thus necessitating interventions that address the impacts.

A third related conceptual starting point that distinguishes the two groups of IFs relates to what they see as the causal factors of a problem and what they see as the consequences of a problem. I use the problem of poverty to illustrate this. The SJP funders tend to see poverty as a consequence of underlying dynamics and consequently, focus primarily on the factors that contribute toward people's poverty and seek to change those factors. The traditional funders see poverty as the reason why people are deprived of their basic needs (i.e. poverty is the cause), and consequently, focus on the consequences and manifestations of poverty, and seek to mitigate those symptoms. This distinction was reflected on by one expert respondent:

> "…poverty is just not a product of the poor but people are poor because their circumstances have made them so, and the systems and strategies developed have made them poor…"[42]

Fourth, how organizations conceptualize their end goal is an important differentiating factor. For example, five traditional funders talk about development as the end goal of their interventions. What is meant by development, however, is not clear; though it appears to be centred around the notion of assisting people to move out of poverty. Moreover, some organizations in this group of traditional funders tend to talk about development and charity interchangeably. For one IF, the line is very blurred and they state that often what they do is give charity, though they simply frame it under a development rubric.

Seven of the eight organizations in the SJP group directly emphasise development as a process for reaching an end goal. These organizations assert that development in and of itself is not adequate, which begs the question, "development for what?" These organizations thus talk about development for social justice, development for equality, development for equal rights.

> "The grants we make are not social welfare, it's about making the society a just society. And it's important that people understand that what they do is not development; its development for social justice work. To make a society that is better, that is equal, free from prejudice."[43]

Finally, related to this is how IFs articulate the issues they address. The SJP funders tend to articulate the issues they address in relation to a rights-based discourse. This has two underlying implications. The first is that this discourse looks at civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and sees them as inter-related. Consequently, their funding approach takes cognisance of the barriers to these rights as contextual issues that need to be addressed. Secondly, this rights-based discourse sees the various rights as indivisible. This means that all rights have equal importance and are not seen on a

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[42] Expert interview 2; 11 April 2007.
[43] IF interview 1; 16 August 2007.

hierarchical level, but interlinked. As such, their funding approach does not necessarily prioritise immediate basic needs over longer term-contextual changes

The traditional funders tend to articulate the issues they address in relation to tangible and measurable needs. All the funders in this group emphasise the issue of responding to needs; many to immediate and tangible needs. What appears to result from this is that an approach that addresses needs on a hierarchical basis is favoured. There are some who may make the argument that communities are in crises; so how can you talk to them about rights, long-term change or root causes when they have nothing to eat. As such, their funding prioritises immediate and urgent basic needs over addressing underlying contextual causes.

5.2 Raison de etre

A second broad classificatory factor according to which these IFs can be stratified relates to what they perceive their role to be. Some may argue that there is a basic, very simplistic role that cuts across most of the organizations in the sample (i.e. to distribute philanthropic resources). However, beyond that lies a more complex issue. Two broad strands of thought can be identified (i) those funders who identify their primary role as the mobilization and/or the distribution of resources and (ii) those which identify their primary role as being agents or facilitators of change. This is by no means a simple issue and a number of organizations appear to be grappling with this. Moreover, the two motivations are not mutually exclusive, but it is where the primary emphasis lies that is a critical factor. This in turn influences their funding approaches and strategies.

Analysis reflects that in the SJP group, all but one of the organizations were established with both reasons in mind, although the primary reason was to advance a cause or to correct inequalities in the status quo. The means of achieving this would then be through the distribution of philanthropic resources. As one funder in this group reflected:

> "We are not a grant maker, we're a development organisation that makes grants."[44]

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[44] IF interview 8; 6 September 2007.

A number of funders have difficulty or are not comfortable with using terms that they feel do not reflect what they do or who they are. For some, the term grant maker reflects an emphasis on the process of funding, for others, it is preferred to the term philanthropic organization, which they see as having colonial overtones. The issue here, however, is not about semantics. Rather, it is about the role being emphasised. Within this group, regardless of what terminology is preferred, there appears to be a shared emphasis that the distribution of resources is not the defining characteristic of the organization but rather a means that is used to facilitate an end. Achieving that end is the defining role of that funder. This was underscored by more than one expert respondent. For instance, one refers to a study undertaken by Dr. Joyce Malombe,[45] which says that the need in South Africa is not to have community foundations, but to have community development foundations. The first limits the role to resource distribution whilst the second indicates an active change-oriented role.

The traditional funders appear to emphasise their role around the issue of resource mobilization and/or distribution. With the exception of the endowed organizations in this group (who are not dependent on external funding), the other five funders all place significant emphasis on their primary role of grant making, that is, to effectively, efficiently and responsibly mobilise and/or distribute philanthropic resources. The role of being a grant maker appears to be emphasised over the role of facilitating change, such that the two roles become separate issues. Consequently, a significant internal focus of many of these IFs becomes about the process of grant making, not the impact of the grants.

5.3 Neutrality

As important as the role these IFs see themselves playing is, this role cannot be viewed in isolation. How IFs see their role in relation to other relevant role-players (beneficiary groups/communities, larger funders, government, etc) appears to be a critical distinguishing factor in influencing the type of framework they adopt and the type of grant making they engage in. This relative role can be related to whether IFs see themselves as neutral entities or not.

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[45] Prepared for the World Bank.

The SJP funders tend to take a deliberate stance that says they exist to support and promote the issues they believe in and will do so on behalf of or together with those affected, and those whose voices are not normally heard. These funders take a strong partisan stance, be it in playing an intermediary role between the different role-players, whilst brokering funding with corporates or negotiating with local government. Moreover, they themselves play a proactive role in advocating for critical issues that affect their beneficiary groups. For instance, one funder in this group mobilised a group of organizations to advocate on issues related to the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS and now plays a critical role in holding the provincial government to account where it has not fulfilled its responsibilities on this issue[46]. Another funder actively engages with local government organizations to try to influence their systems and programs[47]. For these funders, there is no separation between being a grant maker and being an activist, rather, they see themselves as activist grant makers who are there to facilitate change.

> "There is such injustice. So let's use our ability to both have the resource of finance but don't lose where we [are] coming from…There is some activist agenda, because I don't think you can be a community grant maker without doing that."[48]

Traditional funders adopt a less activist approach, preferring to focus on their relative role of co-ordinating dialogue or brokering partnerships, such that they appear to be objective actors. None of the IFs in this group refer to themselves as activists, although two IFs do talk about wanting to see change taking place. The change they talk about, however, is primarily focused on how corporates give their funding, how communities can take initiative, how more resources can be mobilised and how beneficiary needs can be met.

These traditional IFs are committed to addressing the concerns of their beneficiaries and create opportunities to raise these issues on behalf of their beneficiary groups. However, they experience a tension between doing this and simultaneously projecting themselves as a practical and objective broker that provides a safe space for the broader

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[46] IF interview 9; 15 October 2007
[47] IF interview 1; 16 August 2007
[48] IF interview 12; 16 October 2007.

community, a space where all role-players can be heard. Consequently, many of these funders end up adopting a neutral stance.

> "… donors, corporates, local government and grantees have come to value the foundation, and people often say this is a very safe and neutral space. Now, safe and neutral can be debated, but how neutral can you be? At certain times you have to have a voice, and that might be in conflict with what, for instance, local government or corporates may be doing, but neutral in the sense that, what is in the best interests of the broader community."[49]

The issue of neutrality has two facets. On the one hand, by conceptualizing their primary role as intermediaries, IFs position themselves as an objective conduit that can act as a bridge between external stakeholders and their beneficiary groups. This plays a valuable role providing a seemingly open, accessible and uncritical space where a range of voices, opinions and plans from different sectors and role-players can be articulated and shared. Moreover, by positioning itself as an objective conduit, the IF may feel that it is more easily able to act as a coordinating or facilitating agent between different role-players. The position of neutrality, however, can make it difficult to raise issues that challenge the functioning and power dynamics of the contexts that these IFs work in, as the IF is then no longer seen as an objective or impartial entity. For instance, one traditional funder emphasises that the role it plays is that of a messenger. As a messenger, IFs may find it difficult to raise contentious issues or challenge those whose messages you are carrying. Consequently, the nature of issues these IFs raise with external stakeholders tends to revolve around how to build on the potential of having all role-players involved, how to initiate or enhance collaboration, how to mobilise additional resources and find ways to merge differing viewpoints. Some of these IFs recognise that there are intrinsic inequalities between these role-players and within the context that they operate, but the position of neutrality appears to place a limitation on them addressing these inequalities. For instance, a number of these IFs work in rural areas where women's rights and gender-based inequalities are issues of considerable contestation, but with one exception, this was not raised by IFs.

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[49] IF interview 2; 20 August 2007.

On the other hand, particularly in relation to funding at community level, these funders place very strong emphasis on inclusive processes and on making decisions that are informed by community identified needs. This is important because it shows recognition that the voices of those most affected are critical to informing the interventions supported. Additionally, these funders are cognisant of not imposing a donor driven agenda or project, which is a very pressing concern in the philanthropic field. Taking this stance can have the effect of placing control in the hands of the beneficiaries. This stance, however, can also have the effect of limiting IFs from taking a more activist role and raising issues or strategies that go beyond what is directly identified by communities. For six of the seven IFs in this group, priority is placed on non-interference with the needs and initiatives identified by the community. There does however, appear to be a tension here in that this priority can place a restraint on the scope of activities supported or issues raised. As one IF reflected:

> "One of the limits to an organization like ours is that you can only work with a service provider in an area. And if you got a community with no interest in a certain thing you never going to be able to help people with that."[50]

By taking this kind of a position, that they will not intervene at all or navigate beyond what communities identify, these funders adopt a neutral stance. For one expert, this is related to IFs not being able to navigate between playing a leadership role without being leaders.[51] Getting this balance right appears to be an issue that these organizations struggle with.

The issue of donors intervening or influencing programs and projects of their grantees is a very contentious one and can easily be misinterpreted as those with the resources assuming that they automatically have the right to direct interventions and that they are not leaving the solutions to the problem to be defined by those who experience it first hand. This is not the point I am making. What this research puts forward is that whilst beneficiaries may understand what the underlying issues, they may not always be empowered with the knowledge of how best to address certain types of obstacles, which

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[50] IF interview 10; 15 October 2007
[51] Expert interview 7; 17 October 2007.

networks, mechanisms and role-players need to be targeted to address these or, may feel that the barriers to addressing them are too great. As one IF reflected:

> "Our experience is that these people [communities] are very capable of seeing where the root causes are, but sometimes the blockages are just so much bigger than they are."[52]

With SJP funders, they emphasise the importance of inclusive processes, but pair this with the activist agenda that they bring to the table. Thus a central role that SJP funders play in this regard is to open up debate on critical underlying issues that affect communities, raise discussion on inequalities within the communities they serve, stimulate exploration of alternative avenues to address issues, provide access to links and resources that can address the blockages they face and build capacity of people and communities to hold organizations, corporations, the State and their own community leaders accountable.

With traditional funders, the emphasis of the role of a messenger, combined with the stance of not interfering in community defined needs, creates a framework that places a constraint on being activist and interventionist. Within this group, there is further variation. The strategic traditional funders appear to deliberately position themselves as neutral entities. Philosophically, they recognise the existence of unequal power relations and underlying dynamics, but practically, the neutral position they adopt places a constraint on their ability to challenge power relations between beneficiary communities and other groups as well as within beneficiary groups. As one funder in this category stated:

> "There must be broad community understanding. We don't want to fund a project or initiative where there is controversy over that organization." [53]

In relation to the less-focused traditional funders, two of these IFs appear to be neutral by default. They are fully endowed entities and so do not see their role as a messenger between stakeholders or as requiring an interventionist position. They focus on their

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[52] IF interview 14; 24 October 2007.
[53] IF interview 2; 20 August 2007.

primary activity of distributing the funds that they have. Underlying contextual dynamics or unequal power relations are not raised as issues of concern. For the third organization, which has no endowment and is completely dependent on external funds, the conduit role was raised as an essential element of its inception and goal, and this still stands.

It must be recognized that many of these organizations find themselves in a difficult situation and are struggling to maintain both credibility and sustainability. Challenging the status quo can have negative repercussions for them. Thus, a neutral position, whilst imposing limitations may still be seen as positive in that funds are being transferred to critical services or initiatives that assist communities in one way or another. This neutrality, however, directly influences the strategic funding framework of the organisation, whether consciously or unconsciously.

5.4 Reflection and learning

Reflecting on practice and learning from the findings of that reflection is an important factor in allowing organizations to stay relevant, adapt and enhance impact, thereby influencing funding strategies. There are two levels at which this reflection and learning is important. First, there is reflection and learning on the technical processes of the organizations, that is, related to technical aspects such as efficiency of the grant making process, effective fundraising and distribution of funds, accountability in reporting on funds and overall board and staff good governance. The strategic SJP and traditional funders appear to engage in very detailed reflection and learning around the technical issues and utilise this learning to improve and adapt where required. Two of the three less focused SJP funders are still developing these technical systems and are engaged in reflection and learning at a much more informal and less structured way. The less focused traditional funders appear not to engage in any deliberate reflection and learning around processes or technical functioning of the organisation.

Second, reflection and learning can be directed beyond organisational processes and functioning to look at issues such as the relevance of a programmatic framework, impact on the contextual dynamics and the ability to build civil society institutions with strong programs. Within the SJP group, the strategic funders engage in reflection and learning

that looks at these factors as an integral component of their functioning. All of these organizations have either commissioned external evaluators to look at this or have done this themselves. They do so in a very substantive manner, devoting a fair amount of resources to this. For instance, one strategic SJP funder has established a separate fund to support external research that will be used to inform its strategy, another is engaged in a comprehensive reflection process that will result in the compilation of lessons for the field. For the less focused SJP funders, however, this is a challenge and they are still grappling with learning and reflection on substantive issues.

Within the traditional funders group, the strategic funders reflect on issues such as the effectiveness of their funding programs, with an emphasis on the technical impact of programs, that is, how many grants they are able to make, how much money they have been able to disburse, how many capacity building programs they have provided, how to broaden the scope and reach of their programs and how to ensure accountability to their mandate. Reflection on the relevance of the programmatic framework or the impact of their funding on building strong programs on the ground appears to be looked at on a different level, or not at all. Two IFs in this category look at the issue of impact in relation to the quality, relevance and type of services they support, but not in relation to the broader context. The other two IFs in this category feel that retrospective evaluation on the impact of their work is constrained, and that this places limitations on them being able to change their practices or priorities. Thus, whilst these IFs recognise and are keen to engage in this type of learning, they experience constraints in doing so. As a result, these IFs may experience difficulties in reflecting on the appropriateness of their organizational strategies and priorities in the absence of solid data that reflects the impact of their work. The following two quotations illustrate this:

> "I think grant making has become a kind of science and I don't think there's enough learning taking place… I don't think we have been able to move away from what we have been taught by experience." [54]

> "I don't think what we doing now is meaningful change. … we've never even gone back to see, we've never tried to find ways to see are we going in the right direction… why, I don't know, that is related to the board decision. What it needs

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[54] IF interview 2; 20 August 2007.

to do is to re-evaluate itself to see where it's going, where it's from and where it's going, whether it's in the right direction. …. We don't know whether it's working or not. Nobody has ever laid that on the table." [55]

The less-focused traditional funders do not appear to engage in reflection and learning on programmatic impact, with the result that it could become difficult for them to judge the relevance of their program interventions and make changes if required. One organization in this group is trying to re-strategise its programs as a result of an organizational crisis and change in leadership. The other two organizations in this category both state that the programs they support now are the same types of programs that they supported at inception, more than fifteen years ago. For one of these IFs, this is seen as keeping programming in line with their constitution. This IF has a constitution that is quite broad in mandate, thus despite the constitution allowing for flexibility in this regard, the IF has retained its focus on its initial strategies and priorities. One way of looking at this may be to say that these IFs are happy with their impact and do not see a need to make any changes. Another is to say that the contexts within which they work have not changed, thus there need not be a change in their approach. The other side of the coin that can be looked at, however, is that limited or no reflection on impact could limit the recognition that there may need to be changes or there may be new contexts and underlying issues that need to be taken into account.

The extent to which organizations engage in learning and reflection can be further related to two underlying aspects (i) the framework underlying the perceived role of the funder and (ii) the demands placed on leaders of such organizations. The first relates to whether the funder sees itself as an intermediary for getting resources to the ground or whether it sees itself as a catalyst for change. If the first, then the reflection and learning tends to revolve around technical aspects of being effective, efficient and responsive grant makers. If the second, however, then reflection and learning also involves funders asking themselves hard questions about the impact of the strategies they use, exploring alternative avenues and models, reflecting on the implications and underlying dynamics of issues that arise from the grassroots, looking at gaps and asking why these exist.

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[55] IF interview, 27 August 2007.

With regards to the issue of demands, there are some strategic traditional funders and less-focused SJP funders that are keen to either begin or enhance the level of internal reflection on programmatic issues. What appears to be a critical inhibiting factor is that often the case is that they feel there is very little space or time to do so. With younger organizations, the directors are still trying to consolidate the organisation and are often simply overburdened. They are simultaneously engaged in mobilizing resources, exploring ways to become more sustainable, setting up and institutionalizing effective and efficient grant making systems, building up internal governance and accountability mechanisms, marketing themselves to various role-players, engaging in consultations with communities, conducting capacity building and training; in addition to the grant making and monitoring. They do all this within a framework of minimal operational costs, which often translates into minimal staff.

> "…so there they are talking about access and fundraising and the structure of the organizations and you know, with implications, because they aren't very focused on what are they actually doing and what are their program objectives?"[56]

Thus, involved in the technical aspects of running the organisation and keeping it afloat, and with limited or no support of a board that does not recognise those demands or adequate mid-level staff that they can delegate to, these IFs feel hard pressed to devote adequate time to learning and reflection on vision, strategy and impact. As such, this acts as an indirect constraint that limits the scope of funding strategies.

A further element that can influence this issue relates to the existence of peer support and networks. A number of these organizations belong to a range of membership or umbrella initiatives (in South Africa and abroad) that look at learning and sharing within the sector. The networks in South Africa, however, are still young and the focus of these initiatives is primarily on issues related to organisational processes, sustainability, endowment building, fundraising, marketing, and general running of a grant making organisation. Reflection on substantive issues and the roles of IFs, their programmatic objectives, alternative ways of addressing societal problems and the impact of the organisation are issues that have not been addressed significantly. Seven of the eight expert respondents are of the opinion that, in general, there is a need for funders to

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[56] Expert interview 8; 6 September 2007.

engage more on substantive issues; and five of the IFs have indicated that in-depth peer support and mentoring on substantive issues requires attention.

There are a further three IFs in the study (within the traditional funders group) that do not belong to any network or umbrella body, nor do they have any links with other funding organizations at all. They operate in isolation of the broader philanthropic community and whilst one expressed keen interest in joining an existing membership network and learning from other organizations, the other two were ambivalent. On one hand, they both affirm that they know of other organizations but have no reason to meet with them. In the words of one funder:

> "No we don't work with them, they are there. We do our own thing and they do their own. We don't meet somewhere. There's nothing to make us meet."[57]

On the other hand, they both indicate that it may be useful to know what activities others are funding and what challenges others face; but neither seemed keen to discuss this further. Both these organizations were established many years ago by the same funding source, but they do not interact with each other at all.

With regards to international membership networks, two of the expert respondents interviewed are of the opinion that these networks also appear to have not stimulated adequate discussion on reflection of impact. According to them, the idea of community grant making has been championed by proponents in the north without adequate understanding to how the concept applies outside of the North and, as such, many IFs are seeking to learn from and apply northern models and concepts without recognising how far removed these are from the southern context. One expert respondent is also of the opinion that international networks are also focusing on process, on endowments and on sustainability, to the detriment of a focus on programmatic or substantive issues. Consequently, many of these IFs are focusing on the technical issues raised at these meetings at the expense of focus on substantive issues.

> "…they keep going to international meetings where everyone is talking about endowment building, so if that's the issue, then that's what they will prioritize."[58]

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[57] IF interview 13; 16 October 2007.

5.5 Leadership

What all the cases in the study reflect is that an organization is defined by its leadership. Strong leaders, who understand the issues at hand, are able to explore creative solutions, are able to advocate their organizations mission and values and are able to manage the complex sets of demand that accompany their positions, are vital. The strength, capacity and values of the head of an organization thus plays an instrumental role in taking it forward. With the exception of two organizations in the less-focused traditional funders category -- who are managed by field/program staff -- the other thirteen organizations in this study are headed by very strong dynamic leaders. What distinguishes the organizations in this arena, however, relates to the (i) the conceptual framework of the leadership (ii) the nature of the demands placed on the leaders of these organizations and (iii) the extent that they are given the time and space to learn, reflect and strategize. Each of these issues is dealt with elsewhere in the paper and so will not be duplicated here.

Just as important as the leadership provided by the head of the organisation, however, is the leadership provided by the Board of Directors. As one expert respondent stated:

> "The power and potential of this sector, loosely defined, is partly in the quality of its leadership. *At every level.*"[59]

The Board of an organization plays a significant role in shaping it and taking it forward. It defines the vision and mission of the organization, makes decisions on broad programming priorities and objectives, provides guidance on the development of organizational policies, plays a monitoring role on the governance and financial management of the organization and holds it accountable to its mandate.

With the strategic SJP and traditional funders, they are both led by strong and involved boards. What distinguishes them, however, is the kind of board expertise that IFs see as required. The SJP funders appear to focus on recruiting board members that have expertise in relation to programmatic issues. They want boards that can go beyond

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[58] IF interview 8; 6 September 2007.
[59] IF interview 3; 16 August 2007.

technical and financial oversight, to board members who are able to provide feedback on substantive programmatic decisions, conduct due diligence on programmatic issues, hold the organisation to account on the nature of its impact and stimulate the organisation to think about the relevance of their programmatic interventions. For instance, one organization is of the opinion that having someone on the board that lives and works in a disadvantaged community, and who understands first hand the issues, is critical to keeping the organization's programs relevant and accountable. In addition, this organization also has on its board, people who have a history of involvement in human rights work and can both direct it as well as hold it accountable on the way it addresses these issues.

The strategic traditional funders, (with the exception of one, which is a fully endowed organization) emphasize the need for boards that have technical expertise (e.g. financial or legal) required to conduct its organizational management, governance and financial due diligence responsibilities to the best standards. These organizations also place emphasis on getting board members that can facilitate access to resources and networks. Thus, considerable effort is put on finding board members who are *linked* – to corporates, to local government, to traditional authorities, to wealthy individuals – and who are able to consequently provide access to these sectors.

This in itself can be seen as part of a proactive strategy of fundraising and marketing, but the inadvertent result is that at times these types of board members are often sought at the expense of people who have knowledge on the development issues at hand or who are able to understand community dynamics and articulate those within the broader societal issues. This is aptly illustrated by one funder, which has a number of influential people on its board, but states that some of its board members have never entered a disadvantaged community before. This funder was then educating its board about the issues and contexts on the ground. Given that context, it may be difficult for such board members to provide substantive input on programmatic decisions or to question the assumptions and limitations of those decisions or ask tough questions about the impact of the work supported.

Another related factor is that these funders place strong emphasis on trying to build the organisational reputation through association. They thus aim to get boards that include

high profile members of society. Whilst this certainly assists in building their credibility and legitimacy, at times these high profiled board members are unable to give adequate time and energy to guiding, nurturing and developing young funding institutions. As one IF reflects:

> "Too much time is spent looking for these profiled people who are on ten boards, and don't give you what you need."[60]

Perhaps the types of boards these IFs are looking for, whilst influential, are not what they may require in terms of programmatic guidance and direction, and this in turn influences the strategy and framework of the organisation.

The less-focused SJP funders are young organizations (less than six years old) with young boards (one has made significant changes to its board). Their boards are able to perform basic due diligence requirements but do not appear to be engaged in the functioning of the organisation.

> "The board that we got, they didn't realize what we actually needed from them, and we were just so grateful to have them. One man only came to one meeting. So we need to work a lot more on finding the right type of people."[61]

One explanation that has been raised is that young organizations that are still trying to establish a strong foothold and build a reputation have very high expectations of their boards and make too many demands on them. Consequently, board members thus feel overburdened and reduce their participation. Another explanation could be that there may be contentious power dynamics between boards and the Directors of the organizations, with the result that what is deemed as the appropriate set of responsibilities for boards and directors respectively can become an issue of contention. As a result, board involvement can become constrained.

Finally, one of the three less-focused SJP funders also shares the challenge of seeking to enhance its reputation through association and emphasising the necessity of board

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[60] IF interview 14; 24 October 2007.
[61] IF interview 6; 27 August 2007.

members that are linked to resources. Consequently, the types of boards that they have may not necessarily be the types of boards that they require.

The less-focused traditional funders appear to be characterised by over-involved boards. With one exception, these funders have board members whose terms of appointment have long expired, but who are loathe to hand over control.

> "The constitution says that members must change every two years, no longer than four years on the board, but it doesn't happen…Ohhh, they don't want to change. People apply, but nothing comes out….Only four members have changed since the trust started because they got jobs. The rest, they don't want to give up."[62]

These board members are able to conduct their technical due diligence requirements, and in two organizations, the board takes responsibility for the approval of all grants. This approval appears to centre on the technical issues discussed earlier and the interviews did not reflect substantive programmatic discussions. The third organization is in the process of appointing a new board and the discussion about the types of board members that would be approached reflects a focus on people who have influence and access to networks. No mention was made of experience and knowledge of the issues. The focus on technical issues, without a focus on substantive programmatic issues can play a defining role in how a board develops the organization's approaches and strategies and what it holds the organization accountable to.

5.6 Independent Funders vis-à-vis the new democratic dispensation

The way in which IFs view their mandate in relation to the mandates and development prerogatives of the new democratic dispensation, and the resultant interaction with the State, is an important factor influencing their funding choices. Exploration of the issue of engagement with the State, in the context of a relatively new democracy, reflects that in the SJP group, the strategic IFs see the achievement of democracy as but one part of the struggle for a just society.

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[62] IF interview 13; 16 October 2007.

'It would be fundamentally wrong to think that because we are in a democracy, the issues of liberty, justice and freedom from poverty are not a struggle that will continue.'[63]

All of the funders in this category appear to have engaged in serious reflection about the limitations of the existing democratic dispensation in addressing the structural issues and contextual dynamics that underlie societal problems. Consequently they have taken a deliberate decision to address these dynamics and to play a role that engages the State -- through partnership, advocacy and particularly through their grant making -- on its limitations in addressing these issues. Each of these funders has made engaging with the State and holding it accountable to its constitutional mandates an active component of their funding strategies. For example, at least two IFs have developed strong partnerships with the State to pilot innovative interventions; another IF participates in a formal network that lobbies the State on its responsibilities (all these IFs also do this individually) and a third has developed a partnership with the State to provide training to its some of its staff. With regard to the less-focused SJP funders, they share the same acknowledgement of the limitations of the State in addressing structural issues but they have not yet formulated strategies for how to engage the State on this. What engagement does take place is more ad hoc and fragmented, and prone to less contentious issues.

Within the traditional funders group, the majority of the IFs see the State as the entity that is responsible for the broader development programs and infrastructural issues, with their own role seen as aligning with or fitting into these development plans. There is no discussion about the limits of the State in addressing its development imperatives or what implications these limitations may have for the work that these funders support.

"Now there are certain issues that is the job of civil society, period. You can't blame anyone else if nothing is happening. In certain instances, I think development is a community issue, it's not a government issue you know. Infrastructure, housing roads, forestry, water, all that's the responsibility of government."[64]

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[63] IF interview 1; 16 August 2007.
[64] IF interview 2; 20 August 2007.

These IFs appear to have demarcated their role as a grant maker such that (i) they themselves do not appear to actively engage the State on contentious issues that are important to their beneficiaries, (which links to the neutral role alluded to earlier in this paper) and (ii) the scope of activities they support rarely include active engagement with the State, especially not on issues where the State is failing its mandate. Both in their own engagement with the State and in their funding strategies, there is an acceptance of the development priorities and programs of the State.

Within this group, the strategic traditional funders do engage the State on factors such as how they can find synergies with local government development plans or collaborate on initiatives. This engagement appears to be within a given State framework, where State plans and priorities have already been defined. Two IFs in this group emphasise that their role in relation to the plans of the State revolve around trying to align their objectives with that of the local government and exploring ways in which civil society could assist the local government to roll out its integrated development plans (IDPs). This in itself could play an important developmental role within the communities these IFs serve. The point I seek to raise here is not about the value of the IDPs,[65] but rather, that it appears that State prerogatives and mandates are adopted but not necessarily interrogated by these IFs. A counter to this argument may be that these IFs see the implementation process as one that affords them an opportunity for substantive engagement on the content of the IDPs. The discussion around the IDPs however, did not reflect on whether this was the case or not. Other funders have talked about aligning their programs and priorities with those of local government so that the projects they support could eventually either be incorporated into local government plans or attract funding from local government.

The less-focused traditional funders, with the exception of one (which the organization feels has had too much State influence), do not engage with the State at all. They do their work in isolation of the State's development mandates and do not see a role for them to collaborate, engage or challenge State decisions and programs. When asked about the nature of their interaction with local government, one IF in this group responded that there was nothing the organization did that would merit the attention of

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[65] Throughout South Africa, the processes used to develop the IDPs have been varied in their levels of community participation, and many have been contested. Moreover, there have been varied reactions by communities to the content of these IDPs.

local government, nor was there any reason for the organization to approach local government. Another responded that he has no problem approaching local government but that he has no mandate from his organization to do so and they will not allow him to.

What explains the nature[66] of the State engagement in the traditional funders group? One argument that can be looked at is that this does not appear to be an issue that is limited to philanthropic organizations only. There is a broad consensus that post 1994 (or post apartheid), civil society as a whole has become less challenging in its engagement with the State. Accordingly, philanthropic entities too may have moved in this direction. However, the research reflects that where philanthropic entities have moved, it has been in the opposite direction from broader civil society. In fact, four of the five organizations in the dynamic SJP group initially began funding on a very general, reactive basis, with no clear strategy or focus, except to act as conduits for funds to address rights, services and needs; and did not overtly engage with the State (which was at the time an apartheid State). Over the years, these organizations have evolved and today all of them engage with and challenge the post-apartheid State directly (through advocacy, research, initiating or participating in various fora) and indirectly through funding advocacy, research, community mobilization and civic engagement efforts. They do this based on the premise that it is their democratic right and obligation to do so.

Some in the strategic traditional funders category have also evolved from their initial establishment as welfare funders to encompassing a broader developmental role, but they have not changed the nature of their engagement with the State (both the pre- and post- apartheid State). One way of analysing this could be that where the motivation of deploying resources to communities is conceptualized within a rights based framework, engaging with the State on such issues, where relevant, is seen as necessary to their role. Where the rationale has been primarily about acting as intermediaries to devolve resources to communities, then engagement with the State on its responsibilities may not necessarily be seen as essential to that role. Another is that some IFs may feel constrained by the authority of the State, illustrated by one IF who remarked that they have always worked within the framework of whichever regime was in power at the time.

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[66] The focus here is not whether they engage the state, but what they engage the state on, and the nature of that engagement.

Yet another argument is that on a number of fronts, the democratic dispensation itself has struggled to engage with structural changes. Within this context, these funders are unable to separate advocacy from opposition and so are grappling with how to engage, challenge and dialogue in ways that reflects active citizenship but not opposition to the State.

Some experts argue that with organizations that neither challenge the State nor hold it accountable, there is also some element of belief that, by virtue of being democratically elected, the State will automatically be mindful of the interests of the poor and marginalized. Accordingly, the development priorities of the State do not need to be questioned. The research reflects that some IFs indeed adopt a position that communities need to play their own part and take some initiative at the local level because the government is busy getting the broader fundamental issues right. As reflected earlier, these IFs see their role as not to look at the broader fundamental issues but to support initiatives and efforts that allow people to also play their part within the development prerogatives of the State. What appears to happen is that, inadvertently, these funders divorce the initiatives of community projects from the development mandate of the State. Consequently, local level change becomes very much the responsibility of the community and not only does this limit the nature, type and scope of the funding programs of these IFs, it also shifts responsibility away from the State and back to communities.

Another opinion raised by a number of experts and IFs is that some of these IFs equate the achievement of the democratic struggle with the achievement of a just society, i.e. the fundamental issues have all been addressed, and all that is left is to now implement and provide services. As one expert respondent articulated:

> "In SA there is the odd contradiction that some of the social justice, human rights and democracy stuff has almost become sort of background noise, taken for granted. And we may have to some extent, lost the urgency of that rhetoric."[67]

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[67] Expert interview 3; 16 August 2007.

5.7 The role of larger donors

The pool of independent funders included in this sample represent institutions that: (i) are fully endowed, (ii) are still building endowments and simultaneously fundraising from larger donors (either corporate, international funders or even the State) for one or a combination of reasons related to endowment building, re-granting, running expenses or to extend the scope of their existing programs and (iii) have no endowments reserves at all and raise all their funds from external sources. Thus, apart from fully endowed foundations, the remainder of the organizations rely in some part on external funding sources, and as such, the issue of donor influence on the program priorities and strategies of these funders must be examined.

Within the philanthropic arena, the issue of donor-driven programming and its impacts is raised as a significant cause of concern. This concern need not just be limited to funders who give money to projects and programs on the ground, but can be extended to larger donors who provide small funders with money for re-granting. None of the IFs that receive funding from larger donors feel that they have a problem in relation to donors imposing a rigid agenda. Whilst some reflect that some donors want to prioritise certain issues or geographic locations, in general they state that there is room enough to accommodate for this within the existing scope of their work without it fundamentally altering the work they do.

> "We don't have funders that have restricted us to the extent that we can't move. We have donors that have said, lets look at children, or definitely health or environmental issues, but we don't have conditions that will absolutely tie us down."[68]

The issue of the power that larger donors bring to the table alongside their resources is one that can be problematic and in general, smaller donors have to constantly navigate this. What appears to be as important an issue, however, is not just whether existing donors directly influence the priorities and agendas of these organizations, but whether these donors or the potential pool of donors have an indirect influence on the type of grant making in which these IFs engage. For example, do funders shy away from issues

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[68] IF interview 2; 20 August 2007.

that are more controversial because these issues may challenge or hold accountable wealthy corporate donors that contribute to the organisation? Alternatively, do they deliberately stay away from challenging the State because they feel that this may affect the possibility of State funding or deter corporates who do not want to be seen as supporting activities that challenge the State? Or, do they keep a distance from specific types of interventions because they think that it may not be an appealing activity that people would make charitable contributions towards?

The strategic SJP funders appear to have confronted and reflected on this issue internally, have made decisions on it accordingly and developed clear strategies for how they respond to this. So, for instance, one organization in this group talks about how they receive funds from local government for one type of activity but with funds from other donors, they support initiatives that challenge that very same local government. The less-focused SJP funders recognise this issue but are still grappling with how to strategically deal with it.

With traditional funders the issue is not raised at all, and either it has not been reflected on or it reflects a deliberate decision not to take a partisan line. In striving to be neutral entities and focusing on their role as conduits for donor resources, the potential backlash from donors could very well be a contributory factor that informs the decisions of these IFs to deal with the less controversial issues. More than one organization talked about the types of things that are attractive to those that want to donate money. Again, there appears to be a tension in that whilst some IFs may recognise the need for alternative strategies, the necessity of raising resources leads these IFs to emphasise the types of projects and programs that they think will be appealing to their donor base.

> Advocacy and things like that are very difficult because they are not generally popular as funding targets. They come out last but those probably are your ultimate long term change innovator. It's a difficult one, and not easy to fund, and in that regard your Fords and Motts are very forward thinking"[69]

On a related but different note, three remaining issues that relate to larger donors deserve some attention here. First, a number of expert respondents reflect that there is

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[69] IF interview 10; 15 October 2007.

an increasing demand from large donors that their grant recipients show the impact[70] of their work and do so within short time frames. There is some evidence that whilst donors may not necessarily directly dictate a specific agenda, some organizations do experience a pressure to align the types of activities they support to donor demands for tangible outputs.

> "There is an understanding that there needs to be political change, but where we [the sector] tend to focus our funding is projects. That give us quick results, that give us something we can sell, in order to bring in [more] money to distribute."[71]

The emphasis on impact can play an important role in the decision to support the types of activities that show a tangible outcome, and if such activities are prioritised, then the more complex and less tangible interventions that address contextual issues are not so readily looked at.

Second, a discussion about larger donors cannot ignore the issue of financial sustainability. Financial sustainability is a topic that is increasingly being raised both in relation to the non-profit sector in general and philanthropic entities in particular. Philanthropic entities that are not fully endowed feel the pressure to become less reliant on external funding sources and this has seen an increase in the development of services that can generate income for the funder. By services, I mean the provision of re-granting, application assessment or evaluation services for large corporates or wealthy donors who do not want to manage their corporate social responsibility obligations or philanthropic donations directly. This in itself can provide a fair income that assists organizations in defraying some of their operational expenses.

There is, however, an almost unintended consequence of IFs emphasizing their intermediary or conduit role. Some organizations have placed a substantial focus on honing the grant making process and proving how effective, efficient and responsible they are. As a result, a significant amount of energy is spent on showing accountability to their donors, and less energy on being accountable to the communities they serve or

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[70] Impact in the general philanthropic sense, refers to the effect of the intervention. Increasingly, with a number of donors, especially corporate donors, an emphasis on impact is used to mean an emphasis on tangible outputs. It is to these outputs that the expert respondents are referring.
[71] IF interview 14; 24 October 2007.

to ensuring that they are fulfilling their mandate. With a number of strategic traditional funders, a consequence of this circumstance is that there appears to be a strong notion that they have to market a product; the product being, the skill to invest the donor rand appropriately and accountably. This product, rather than the development issues that require attention, then becomes the leverage point for resource mobilization. In emphasising their grant making skill and accountability as the focus, they concentrate less on why the issues are important and more on how they can provide a good service.

> "I'm just wondering. Because we [are] funding, [are] we losing the cause? Why [are] we here in the first place? So, we've become these conduits, and we [are] responsible for giving money, without worrying about, well, what is it that they [grantees] actually do?"[72]

Finally, the issue of sustainability (or lack of) has been raised in the literature as a factor that influences the type of funding decisions that IFs make. In fact, the literature cites the lack of resources as a key factor that limits IFs from engaging in social justice philanthropy. This research reflects, however, that the availability of resources does not appear to be a critical issue in influencing the type of philanthropy they engage in. This can be illustrated by looking at endowed organizations. Surprisingly, contrary to general opinion that endowed organizations are able to make more risky and challenging funding decisions, and hence easily engage in social justice philanthropy, the study reflects that this need not be the case. This study sample included four fully endowed organizations (i.e. not dependent on any external funding) and these cut across the groups: one each in the strategic SJP and traditional funder categories, and two in the less-focused traditional funder category. Accordingly, this research puts forward that it is not the extent of resources that influences the type of grant making an IF engages in, but rather that the conceptual framework of the organization plays a more important role in directing how those resources are spent.

5.8 Role of beneficiaries

As reflected above, an analysis of IFs perceptions of their own role and the role of the State is important in influencing their funding strategies. An analysis of how IFs perceive

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[72] IF interview 12; 16 October 2007.

the role that the beneficiaries of their funding play, however, is just as important a factor influencing the type of funding strategies they adopt. Almost all the IFs in the study place significant emphasis on role of beneficiaries driving their own development. The differences between IFs, however, lie in their perception of the scope of agency that beneficiaries have and their perception of the role of beneficiaries in relation to the development mandates of the State.

With regard to the first factor, the scope of agency can relate to (i) the power to make decisions on the nature of development initiatives they undertake, (ii) the power to influence the nature of development initiatives undertaken by others on their behalf (State, corporates, large NGOs etc), (iii) the power to hold these institutions accountable when initiatives are not in the interests of the beneficiaries and (iv) the power to challenge existing inequalities and power dynamics in the status quo.

The strategic SJP funders see the agency of the beneficiaries as being related to all four elements and consequently fund initiatives that support the agency of beneficiaries in all four respects. These IFs thus support the involvement of communities in engaging local governance processes, in demanding transparency and accountability of governance systems and officials, and of advocating, at local level to claim their rights. There is considerable emphasis on assisting beneficiaries to raise their concerns, needs and priorities with local councillors, to claim their rights and to advocate around violation of rights. These types of activities, beyond being a value in and of itself as a form of exercising participatory democracy, allow for the broader issues around the problem to be looked at. Two quotations aptly illustrate this:

> "We mention the components of advocacy, working with other stakeholders. In one of our letters, we have a very good story. They didn't know that you can get department officials to work on the ground. -- She said, 'you know I'm not trained to knock at the door of an official and tell them we need this and that, and now they are starting to recognise that. It takes an organization like yours to teach people about their rights.' -- People are not going to advocate if they don't know what they are advocating for."[73]

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[73] IF interview 9; 15 October 2007.

"The work we funding is advocacy and lobbying. And the national agendas have no basis if they don't start at the community… At local level, what really makes a difference is when you holding political leaders to account."[74]

With regards to challenging inequalities in power relations, these IFs emphasise the active role of beneficiaries in initiating and spearheading such interventions. They thus support initiatives that discuss debate and challenge inequalities based on gender, culture, class, nationality or ethnicity as central components that perpetuate the status quo. The less-focused SJP funders recognise that the target groups they work with have agency in all four respects; however, they have not yet given in-depth consideration to how to address issues around unequal power relations and intra-community inequalities.

The strategic traditional funders appear to relate the issue of agency primarily to the first factor, i.e. the power of beneficiaries to make decisions on the nature of development initiatives they undertake. As such, their funding strategies focus primarily on that role. They do not see beneficiaries as having a role to play in relation to active citizenship, advocacy or challenging power relations. Beneficiaries are encouraged to raise issues and discuss and debate solutions, but these involve primarily internal "community-led" solutions and take place within a limited sphere of influence. Two funders in this category recognise agency in relation to the second and third factor, evidenced by their support of a small number of organizations that provide services relating to immediate needs as well as address underlying causes. The bulk of their funding, however, does not reflect this pattern. The less-focused traditional funders look only at agency in the first respect.

In exploring this issue during the research, an element that was alluded to by a number of funders relates to the myth surrounding what advocacy really means. There appears to be a perception by many funders that reflects that they do not support advocacy initiatives because communities cannot access structures at the national level and that contextual issues are beyond the scope of influence of their beneficiaries. These IFs appear to either not recognize advocacy as relevant and practical at the grassroots level or they do not acknowledge it as being their primary role to support.

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[74] If interview 14; 24 October 2007.

With regards to challenging inequalities, traditional funders do not perceive this as a central role that the beneficiaries themselves should undertake. They recognise that inequalities exist, but see these as beyond the sphere of influence of the beneficiary groups. Moreover, with some traditional funders that act as conduits for corporate donors or have close affiliations with traditional leaders or the government, supporting initiatives that challenge the status quo can be difficult and could jeopardise these relationships. As such, funding issues such as unequal gender or power relations or negative community dynamics are not easy to address. One expert respondent explains this difficulty:

> "Community foundations operate in an environment where community politics play a big role. As such, they can't always be objective in dealing with communities. If situated in a community, they can't always be strategic."[75]

The less-focused traditional funders look at only the first aspect of agency. They do not see any scope for the target groups they work with to influence broader issues or address broader inequalities except through the projects these groups initiate. When asked whether beneficiary organizations raised the issue of interacting with local government, a funder in this group responded:

> "No, they don't. They feel it is not their task to ask. Maybe they feel that civic groups should do that. It is not their task."[76]

With those in the traditional funders group, there appears to be a trend that the conceptual starting point they adopt, the limited agency they perceive for target groups and the neutral role they have carved for themselves, have combined to create a framework that encourages a focus on immediate needs. Through the nature of the initial questions they ask, IFs limit the types of responses they receive. To illustrate: An IF begins by asking "what is the need?" The community in turn identifies a need and requests assistance to address it. The traditional funder, because of its conceptual framework, does not ask why the need exists or how communities can address its underlying causes. Communities in turn assume that such interventions would not get

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[75]Expert interview 7; 17 October 2007.
[76]IF interview 13; 15 October 2007.

support from the IF and so do not apply to address the causes. Because the IF tries to play a neutral role, it restricts itself only to the type of activities that communities apply for, and does not initiate discussions on the underlying cause. This cycle results in a focus that prioritises immediate needs, with the result that IFs approaches and strategies are developed accordingly.

6: CONCLUSION

In a country where academic studies on philanthropy in general, and social justice philanthropy in particular, are in infancy, and where civil society and the philanthropic institutions that support it have an important role to play in addressing issues of social justice, this research aims to stimulate both theoretical and practical engagement with the concept and application of social justice philanthropy. Why is this important? Philanthropic resources can play an important role in supporting efforts aimed at the development of a just society. On the one hand, they can be used to mitigate the impacts and symptoms of an unjust society, referred to in this paper as traditional philanthropy. On the other hand, these resources can also be used to support efforts that directly address the structural inequalities that bring about an unjust society. This latter type of philanthropy is referred to here as social justice philanthropy. In the context of South Africa, where the political transition and the subsequent policies and strategies of the State have not adequately realised socio-economic benefits for the majority of the population, social justice philanthropy continues to serve an important role.

IFs in South Africa, however, for the most part, tend to adopt a traditional philanthropy approach rather than a social justice philanthropy approach. Why this is the case is the question this research sought to examine. Utilising in-depth interviews and documentary analysis with experts in the field and leaders of a particular set of these IFs, this research investigates (i) the ideas, visions and frameworks and (ii) the external factors, that motivate and/or influence the programs and strategies of South African IFs. The findings then present an analysis of how South African IFs understand the concept of social justice philanthropy; how they engage with it, both conceptually and operationally and; the elements that influence the nature of this engagement.

The research reflects that in interrogating the concept of social justice philanthropy, the way in which the terminology itself is understood and operationalized in South Africa requires critical examination. As a result, this research reflects a slightly different understanding and practice of the approach than put forward in the existing literature. This research posits the idea that a social justice philanthropy approach, in a South African context, emphasise five critical components: (i) social justice philanthropy is premised on rights-based values, (ii) social justice philanthropy is an overall funding

approach that can address both impact mitigation and underlying causes (iii) social justice philanthropy emphasises contextual issues (iv) social justice philanthropy processes are inclusive and (v) social justice philanthropy can be directed at both individual and community/society level interventions.

The research findings indicate that there are a number of differentiating factors and that these are both internal and external to the organization. What stands out from this research, however, is that the critical issue is not just the absence or presence of certain factors but the way in which these IFs conceptualise these factors.

Thus, the conceptual frameworks that underlie the rationale behind their work, their end goals and where they locate the source of the problem play a central role in defining the nature and scope of the strategies and approaches IFs adopt. Traditional funders conceptualise their rationale and goals as being premised on notions of assistance, charity and development; and tend to locate the crises people face at the level of the individual. As a result their funding is primarily directed at mitigating the impacts of crises, as they manifest at the individual level. SJP funders conceptualise their rationale and goals as being premised on notions of a just society or development for social justice and locate the crises people face within the broader contextual environment. As a result their funding is directed primarily at addressing the underlying contextual factors that contribute towards the crises, whilst still leaving room for addressing the impacts of these crises.

Moreover, the way in which independent funders conceptualize their role as a funder in relation to the role of other external development actors such as the State, larger donors and their grant beneficiaries, has wide-ranging implications for the nature and scope of their funding priorities and programs. Traditional funders (i) tend to focus on their role as grant makers and conduits of funding for larger donors; (ii) tend to see the State as the authority on the broad development imperatives and; (iii) see their grant beneficiaries as undertaking initiatives that fit within these imperatives. As they try to navigate between the different role-players and find their appropriate role within the broader environment, these traditional funders adopt a neutral role that constrains them from addressing certain types of contentious contextual issues or power dynamics. SJP funders (i) tend to focus on their role as agents of change, alongside larger donors; (ii) see the State as

responsible for undertaking and implementing structural and contextual change interventions aimed at a just society and; (iii) see the role of their grant beneficiaries as being to address and challenge the issues that prevent these contextual changes. As a result, these SJP funders take a partisan stance that focuses on stimulating and supporting interventions that ultimately seek to address underlying contextual issues.

Finally, the extent to which IFs conceptualise and engage with the substantive programmatic issues, and the assumptions underlying their subsequent interventions, are contributory factors influencing their funding approaches. Traditional funders tend to engage in learning and reflection that prioritizes a focus on technical issues and impacts and have boards that conduct due diligence requirements on primarily technical issues and impacts. SJP funders focus on reflection and learning that addresses both technical and substantive issues and impacts, and have boards that hold it to account on these. Accordingly, SJP funders are more likely to question and reflect on the substantive impact of their work, with the result that they tend towards addressing underlying issues which limit that impact.

Traditional philanthropy plays a valuable role in South Africa, but on its own, is constrained. Traditional funding approaches need to be supplemented by a social justice philanthropy approach, which can play an instrumental role in supporting and strengthening an active and dynamic civil society that can help shape South Africa's social justice agenda. External limitations to this approach exist, and these need to be addressed. However, the research in this study demonstrates that internal conceptual frameworks are the critical motivating factors influencing independent funders. It is only when these conceptual frameworks -- the frameworks of the mind -- are engaged with that the ideas of social justice philanthropy can take root and be built upon.

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