

Community Foundations, Social Capital and Development in South Africa

Bhekinkosi Moyo, Emerging Leader, International Fellows Program ~ 2003

Abstract

Citing the “need for a connecting thread between development projects and the people to be developed,” Mr. Moyo highlights the South African concept of *ubuntu* as a tool for channeling local philanthropy into emerging community foundations. Rooted in notions of the value of collective mutual aid that lie at the heart of *ubuntuism*, *stokvels* (initiatives that pool communal resources for specific ends such as savings clubs, burial societies, and collective investments) are a potential vehicle for increasing local giving. The challenge is to harness this tradition of collective capital formation for non-traditional ends. There is a strong need to present the community foundation model more clearly, in terms that local populations can understand, and to democratize local giving. As he explains, many “community foundations have not managed to sustain themselves simply because they have not taken the community along with them in fundraising.”

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