Abstract

The community foundation concept is a growing global phenomenon. Community foundations (CFs) are diverse by nature, as they adapt to the characteristics of the community they are a part of and evolve with time. For this reason, there is not a single definition nor a single set of attributes that can apply and translate everywhere to define what a CF is, how it should operate, and what its capacities should be. As programmes supporting the development of community foundations spread around the world, more practitioners are dedicating time to adapt the CF concept to their realities and to develop programmes to support the setting up and growth of community foundations.

A review of existing literature and conversations with experts leads the author to identify six key capacities that community foundations should have or should aspire to have. The capacities are:

1. exercising community leadership to produce social change;
2. listening to the community and engaging it to understand and identify assets, opportunities, needs and solutions;
3. increasing local philanthropy;
4. strengthening local organisations;
5. mobilizing philanthropy disaster response, if and when necessary; and
6. adapting the work of the CF to the specific territorial context and reality in which CF operates.

Gallego offers tools and activities to help exercise each capacity.

For the full version of the paper, please click here.