

Establishment and development of
community foundations in Spain:
Learning from other national contexts
to foster a thriving and sustainable
community foundation movement

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ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS IN SPAIN

Learning from other national contexts to foster a thriving and sustainable community foundation movement

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Channeling, connecting, activating, mobilizing, giving rise, promoting, building, linking, maintaining, transforming, changing, sustaining, fostering, negotiating, propelling. Community foundations do all of this and much more.

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH JUSTIFICATION

Community foundations [CFs] can be framed as one of the most effective legal forms of community philanthropy¹, a highly inclusive instrument of civil society to organize itself from the local to the local. They constitute a global phenomenon with multiple national and international actors on the field that started in United States more than 100 years ago². Their number has not stopped increasing, especially during the last 20 years, and currently there are more than 1,800³ around the globe. Nonetheless, they are extremely unequally spread, with three countries—with special economic and social conditions that have favored the spontaneous uncoordinated growth of the movement—accounting for around 80% of them (United States, more than 750⁴; Canada, 191⁵; Germany, more than 400⁶).

In countries where CFs have not naturally arisen due to less than favorable circumstances, the continued role of a **community foundation support organization [CFSO]**, providing financial and technical resources, is proved as an effective catalyst for their proliferation, compensating for the initial disadvantage. Spain—and other European countries—is amongst them. From 2006 to 2013 **Bertelsmann Foundation** opted for fostering the creation of CFs nationally and giving professional status to existing ones—whether they previously knew the concept or not. Capacity building, networking access and exchange of good practices and experiences were at the core of the technical support provided. The project ended with an **Ibero-American Network of Community Foundations** in place, connecting Spain, Portugal and Latin America and managed by *Instituto Comunitário Grande Florianópolis [ICOM]* in Brazil.

Seven years later and with no tangible progress since then, between eight and eleven CFs continue to operate in Spain, but with few ties amongst them. This is to change in 2020, when the wheel restarts. The **Spanish Association of Foundations [AEF]**, with the support of **Charles Stewart Mott Foundation [C.S. Mott Foundation]**, is starting to lead a project aimed at renewing the aspiration of creating a strong ecosystem in the field. The concept will be promoted amongst existing foundations, community groups and initiatives that can match with the vehicle, and existing CFs will be supported to reach a

¹ Normally institutionalized as the form of foundation in the majority of countries, as opposed to other forms of community philanthropy, which can have or not a legal form and be set as foundations or other CSOs forms

² The first one was established in Cleveland in 1914 <https://learning.candid.org/resources/knowledge-base/community-foundations/> 11/30/20

³ <https://communityfoundationatlas.org/facts/> 11/17/20

⁴ <https://www.cof.org/foundation-type/community-foundations-taxonomy#:~:text=More%20than%20750%20community%20foundations,taken%20hold%20around%20the%20world.> 11/17/20

⁵ <https://communityfoundations.ca/find-a-community-foundation/> 11/17/20

⁶ <https://www.communityfoundations.eu/community-foundations-in-europe/atlas-support-organizations/csfo-germany.html> 11/17/20

new level. The project may be viewed as constituting an informal second phase of the development of the CF movement in Spain.

To ensure that the desired outcomes of the project are achieved, we must now plant the seeds for this enormous but engaging endeavor, which is already taking off. This research paper aims to modestly contribute to preparing the ground for it. It will offer precise guidelines to substantiate its implementation by building on the past successes of the *Bertelsmann* project and four other similar national contexts. For that, a generic framework and a case study of a CF from each country will be provided.

Italy, Serbia, Romania and Mexico are chosen as benchmark countries for four main reasons:

1. The **CF movement** and a CFSO is already in place, although to different degrees.
2. **Internationally known and resourceful philanthropic institutions** have been investing technical and financial resources in their start-up and expansion.
3. They acknowledge a **common origin** with Spain—framework, culture, traditions, Christian-based faith—that similarly affects their context within Europe and Latin America.
4. They share many of the Spanish challenges, with the **consolidation of philanthropy** being topmost, but also other social, economic and legal issues.

As a secondary goal, this paper intends to inform *Open Society Foundations Initiative for Europe [OSIFE]* about the importance and proliferation of CFs as **agents for social change**. Until now, just a few CFs and CFSOs have received its support, e.g. *Val di Noto Community Foundation* (Italy), *Association of Community Relations* (Romania) and *Global Fund for Community Foundations* (Europe), mostly as isolated portfolio grants. The role of *Open Society Foundations [OSF]* cannot be to promote the proliferation of civil society organizations [CSOs], yet it does entail partnering with **grassroots initiatives** that **act locally with a global perspective and principles**. In the world generally and in Europe specifically, OSF constitutes a donor willing to support social change towards a more diverse, tolerant and democratic world.

I am convinced of the crucial potential of CFs in fostering a more **democratic open society** in Europe and it is one of our duties to effectively allocate resources for that to happen. I will advocate at *OSIFE* for the inclusion in the new strategy of **structured and comprehensive grantmaking** to CFs through CFSOs. The first step to undertake will focus on raising awareness and recognition about their existence and framework amongst colleagues. You can only consider a partner if you know it. Although it is a major complex task and it may take a long time to settle, I commit to defend it. Once people know CFs first hand (and fall in love with them), they will certainly stand up for them.

METHODOLOGY

DATA SOURCES:

- **Primary data:** conversations with my two mentors, representatives of organizations (mainly CFs CFSOs) and philanthropic sector's knowledgeable individuals, and learnings from the seminar sessions of the *Emerging Leaders International Fellows Program 2020*.
- **Secondary data:** academic articles, publications, reports, legislation, studies and journals.

TOOLS:

- Analysis of the country contexts⁷ (i.e., Spain, Italy, Romania, Serbia and Mexico): **PESL analysis** - Political, economic, social and legal analysis [**PESL analysis**] omits the categories "technological" and "environmental" from *PESTEL* analysis⁸ because they are not relevant for the research's purpose.
- CF case studies: The **Business Model Canvas**⁹ to capture how they create and capture value for the customer segments (community and donors). Selection of the CFs relied on advice from mentioned conversations and resulted in analyzing those who/which are:
 - Dynamic and relatively young
 - Nationally recognized in the field
 - Willing and have time to share information in a transparent way
- Comparison summary charts amongst countries and CFs

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

- The research universe is limited to four countries and four CFs, so it cannot be representative of the entire reality of the field either in the world or in the country.
- Some organizations may act as donors (customer segment) and as a CFSO (key partner).
- Amounts are presented in US \$ and in EUR € and have been rounded up to the nearest 100 or 1000 for a better comparison.
- For the secondary goal stated in the introduction to be fully addressed, a subsequent comprehensive mapping of CFs and CFSOs actors in the European countries where OSIFE holds a priority interest is required. In this way it will provide complete national profiles to fit into the goals and tactics of its different portfolios.

⁷ COVID-19 pandemics challenges and reactions are referenced multiple times in the research paper, but the topic has not been specifically included in the general PESL analysis because of the volatility of the situation at the moment and the similarity of its severe effects so far in the analyzed countries.

⁸ *PESTEL* analysis <https://pestleanalysis.com/what-is-pestle-analysis/> (10/30/20) is a framework to analyze the key factors influencing an organization from the outside.

⁹ *Business Model Canvas* <https://medium.com/pitchspot/the-business-model-canvas-explained-1f5b76207f7f> (10/29/20) is a visual chart tool to analyze the business model of any kind of organization regarding 9 connected building blocks.

GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

- **AEF:** Asociación Española de Fundaciones (Spanish Association of Foundations)
- **ARC:** Asociatia Pentru Relatii Comunitare (Association of Community Relations)
- **CEMEFI:** Centro Mexicano para la Filantropía (Mexican Center for Philanthropy)
- **CF(s):** Community foundation(s)
- **CSO(s):** Civil society organization(s)
- **C.S. Mott Foundation:** Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
- **CFSO(s):** Community foundation support organization(s)
- **ECFI:** European Community Foundations Initiative
- **EFC:** European Foundation Center
- **FFCR:** Federatia Fundatiile Comunitare Din Romania (Romanian Federation of Community Foundations)
- **GFCF:** Global Fund for Community Foundations
- **Ibero-American Network of CFs:** Ibero-American Network of Community Foundations
- **ICOM:** Instituto Comunitario Grande Florianópolis
- **KPI:** Key performance indicator(s)
- **PO(s):** Philanthropic organization(s)
- **OSIFE:** Open Society Initiative for Europe
- **OSF:** Open Society Foundations
- **OYF:** Fondacija za mlade Obrenovca (Obrenovac Youth Foundation)
- **WINGS:** Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support

ANALYSIS OF 4 COUNTRIES shown in comparison to Spain: CONTEXT and CF CASE STUDY¹⁰

COUNTRY	POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT (OUT OF 5)	GDP PER CAPITA (\$)	POPULATION	GLOBAL PHILANTHROPY ENVIRONMENT INDEX (OUT OF 5)	Nº PO	WORLD GIVING INDEX	SOCIO-CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT (OUT OF 5)	SUPPORT ORGANIZATION	YEAR OF FIRST CF	Nº OF CFs	RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS	SCORE ON TAX INCENTIVES (OUT OF 5)	EASE OPERATING PO	TAX-EXEMPTION STATUS	TAX DEDUCTIONS	OTHER BENEFITS
SPAIN	3.5	\$ 26,500	46M	3.97	60000	58th (32%)	3.5	Asociación Española de Fundaciones (AEF) -in the process-	1984 (Fundació Ciutat de Valls)	8 to 11	C.S. Mott Foundation Bertelsmann Foundation (2006-2013)	4	4.33	Corporate tax (+economic activities and conveyance deed and stamp duty tax)	Individuals: 75% for \$180, 30% for the rest Corporations: 35% Maximum: 10% of income	Individual can designate 0.7% of their income tax to social interests or to the Catholic Church
ITALY	4.5	\$ 30,500	61M	4.67	336275	54th (33%)	4.5	Assifero	1999 (Lecchese Onlus & Provincial Foundation of the Comasca Community Onlus)	41	Cariplo Compagnia de San Paolo Fondazione con il Sud	4.5	4.83	Corporate tax (+gift, vehicle, property)	Individuals: 30% of the first €26,000 Corporations: 30% of the first €30,000	5X1000 tax scheme for individuals and corporations: give the 0.5% of the income tax to a CSO
MEXICO	3.1	\$ 10,000	126M	3.47	9366	73rd (28%)	3.3	Comunalia	1996 (Fundación Comunitaria Oaxaca)	16	CEMEFI (previous support organization)	3.25	3.93	Corporate tax (is being currently challenged)	Individuals and corporations: max. 7% of the previous fiscal year's taxable income	
ROMANIA	-	\$ 10,800	19M	-	77000	97th (24%)	-	Asociatia Pentru Relatii Comunitare (ARC) & Federatia Fundatiile Comunitare Din Romania (FFCR)	2008 (Cluj and Odorheiu Secuiesc)	19	C.S. Mott Foundation Romanian-American Foundation PACT Foundation Trust for Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe	-	-	Corporate tax below certain thresholds	Corporations: 0.5% of its turnover or 20% of the profit tax due	Individuals choose a CSO as the recipient for 2% of the individual income taxes paid for that year
SERBIA	3.35	\$ 5,300	7M	3.6	23394	123rd (19%)	3	Trag Foundation	2011 (Step Forward "Iskorak")	3	C.S. Mott Foundation Cathalyst Balkans Foundation Zaječarska Initiative	3.5	4.67	No corporate tax-exemption status, but by type of donation	Corporations: depending of the type of public benefit donation. Gifts below \$900 are exempt	

¹⁰ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/11156668/3-30072020-AP-EN.pdf/1b69a5ae-35d2-0460-f76f-12ce7f6c34be> 11/19/20

CF	COUNTRY	YEAR OF CREATION	POPULATION	NUMBER OF STAFF	LAST YEARLY BUDGET	MAIN TOOL	RELATIONSHIP WITH LOCAL COUNCIL	MAIN COMMUNITY TOPICS	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	CHILDREN AND YOUTH ARE A PRIORITY?	DONATIONS FROM INDIVIDUALS?	IS SUSTAINABILITY AN ISSUE?
Fondazione di Comunità San Gennaro Onlus	ITALY	2014	32000	3 (part-time)	\$578,600 (not including overheads nor salaries)	Operational projects essentially	Very good	Education Youth and children Unemployment Restoration	Social capital and trust Church support Network relationships Communications and Press Office	Relative low community decision-making Too much focus on infrastructure	Growing endowment Individual donations Exposition of pieces of art Modernization	Insecurity and crimes Project-oriented approach	Yes	Only from businessmen and artists	Not for the moment
Fundación Comunitaria Malinalco	MEXICO	2007	27000	16	\$400,000	Grant-making prevails	Complicated	Education Youth and children Insecurity Environment protection	Social capital and trust Participative diagnosis Research and data compilation Volunteers Accompaniment and empowerment of CSOs	Fundraising Low salaries and professionalization	Projects with the neighbour local council Thriving CSOs sector	Corruption Bureocracy Local council instability	Yes	No	Yes
Fundația Comunitară Sibiu	ROMANIA	2012	400000	7	\$462,500	Grant-making prevails	Good	Education Youth and children Politics Employment Education	Social capital and trust Marathon event Strong positioning and leadership Accompaniment and empowerment of CSOs	Limited fundraising besides the Marathon event Too much pressure on the Executive Director	Diversify income sources Find other ways of visibility for companies Diversify leadership	Political and legal instability Bureocracy Emigration Online forced marathon event High dependency on the leader	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fondacija za mlade Obrenovca	SERBIA	2014	72000	5 (part-time)	\$ 21,500	Grant-making prevails	Ambivalent	Education Youth and children Air pollution Immigration	Social capital, trust and representativeness Communications Volunteers Accompaniment and empowerment of CSOs	Fundraising Limited staff time Limited staff compensation	Strategic planning Improve cooperation with public powers Advocacy for free spaces Individual donations	Weak CSOs sector Local council mistrust	Yes	Yes (a few)	Yes

SPAIN: PESL¹¹¹² and community philanthropy context

POLITICAL

- Score on political environment: 3.5 out of 5.
- Central and regional governments have competencies in regulating philanthropic organizations [POs] and split public funding calls for them. Regions have their own registries and some of them have specific regulations. The POs are completely free to communicate through media channels, yet the internal governance of foundations is supervised (reforms of bylaws and other management decisions require the authorities' approval).
- The government promotes access to public funds for POs, but there have been **several important cuts** during the past few years. The value of philanthropy is not promoted.

ECONOMIC

- GDP per capita: \$26,500.
- Score on cross-border flows: 4.5 out of 5.
- The 2008 financial crisis was particularly harsh and lasted longer than in other European countries. It has the second highest unemployment rate in Europe (15.6%), which is especially worrying among youth, and a considerable informal employment sector.
- Salaries in POs, as in many other countries, are considerably lower than in the rest of the economy.

SOCIAL¹³

- Population: 46M.
- Number of registered POs: 61,000.
- Global Philanthropy Environment Index Score: 3.97 out of 5.
- World Giving Index: 58th place (32%).
 - Helped a stranger, or someone you did not know who needed help? 45th place (51%).
 - Donated money to a charity? 46th place (30%).
 - Volunteered your time to an organization? 76th place (16%).
- Score on socio-cultural environment: 3.5 out of 5.

¹¹ <https://globalindices.iupui.edu/environment/regions/eastern-southern-europe/spain.html> 10/23/20

¹² <https://globalindices.iupui.edu/environment/regions/eastern-southern-europe/index.html> 10/23/20

¹³ https://www.caixabank.com/comunicacion/noticia/el-filantropo-es-un-lider-emprendedor-de-un-proyecto-de-transformacion-social-segun-el-informe-de-caixabank-e-ie-university-sobre-el-perfil-de-los-filantropos-espanoles_es.html?id=42404# 11/09/20

- Five main social issues are addressed by POs: higher education, arts and culture (traditional field of associations, with numerous neighborhood movements), basic needs, housing and economic development and international causes.
- Spain still lacks a comprehensive philanthropic tradition. It is founded on the values and action of the **Catholic Church**, which still has an active role in service provision, especially in basic needs and education. The role of the **State** (and its **Welfare State model**) is strong in providing social services and healthcare, as well as in supporting areas, such as education, social assistance, humanitarian aid, youth development, and art and culture. Due to the conception that the State must cover citizens' needs and that the population's contribution is limited to taxes, many movements have aimed primarily to complain about the State's deficiencies rather than creating initiatives to address them. In addition, there is a lower entrepreneurship rate than in other European countries.
- In the last few decades, the philanthropic sector in Spain has grown considerably into a new framework, with progressive secularization, more favorable legal and tax environment, and the **emergence of a more vibrant civil society**. There are around 47,000 associations and 14,000 foundations.¹⁴ **New approaches**¹⁵ are emerging, such as digitalization and the engagement of employees in social fundraising activities, and POs are recognized as representatives in the public policy decision-making process. However, many of them still rely on public funding and partnership with private actors is still messy, with unmatched expectations.
- Currently, the average of individual donations to POs in Spain is \$220 per year. The donor stage has been traditionally occupied mainly by **corporate and banking foundations**. Corporate philanthropy is growing, yet it is focused in implementing on its own projects, rather than relying on CSOs in the field. The role of **individual philanthropy** role has been growing in the last years, focusing especially on culture, social services provision, science and research and education. It is still very much unknown to the general public and must fight against the traditionally **negative conception of businessmen**, one that associates the actions wealthy individuals and big corporations with cleaning up reputations and avoiding taxes. This explains why most individuals opt to keep a low profile about their philanthropic activities. Still, most of the population **relies on POs**, but demands greater transparency.

¹⁴ The number of inactive ones is unknown

¹⁵ <https://blog.caixabank.es/blogcaixabank/2020/02/la-nueva-filantropia-ligada-la-eficiencia.html#> 11/09/20

LEGAL

- Ease operating POs: 4.33 out of 5.
- Score on tax incentives: 4 out of 5.
- Legal forms of POs are foundations (all of them are public benefit organizations) and associations. Foundations must have a board of trustees with a minimum of three members.
- The average time established by law to register a PO is between 61 and 90 days.
- The administrative and notarial costs for registering a PO averages between \$34-\$300, but foundations need an initial endowment of €30,000.
- When donating to public benefit associations and foundations, and with a limit of 10% of the annual income (from which corporations can deduct the excess over the next ten years):
 - Individuals receive a **75% deduction** for donations up to **\$180 per year** and a **30%** for the amount/value exceeding that (or 35% for periodic donations).¹⁶
 - Corporations receive a **35% deduction** for the amount/value of donations and 40% for periodic donations.
- Donations are tax-exempt for all POs, except if they are used to fund economic activities. Public benefit associations and foundations are **tax-exempt** in conveyance deed and stamp duty tax, economic activities tax and **corporation tax**. Economic activities not related to the purpose of the organization are taxable at a 10% rate. POs providing educational, cultural, social, sport or health services can benefit from some exemptions in value added tax, but this is not necessarily a benefit, as it limits its deduction in the acquisition of goods and services.
- Individual taxpayers can designate **0.7%** of their **personal income tax to social interests or to the Catholic Church** (or split it between both).

COMMUNITY PHILANTHROPY AND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION CONTEXT

- Number of CFs: 8-11¹⁷.
- CFSO: *Bertelsmann Foundation* (2006-2013) and *Asociación Española de Fundaciones*¹⁸ —*Spanish Association of Foundations*—[AEF] (2020 and ongoing).
- Between 2006 and 2013, **Bertelsmann Foundation** arose as the CFSO to promote the creation of CFs in Spain and give them professional status through its Center of Competencies for CFs. In 2009 it established the **Network of CFs and analogous organizations**, which provided these entities

¹⁶ Some regions offer additional deductions.

¹⁷ It is not the object of this research to assess the compliance to the international definition of CF. However, there are substantiate hesitations about at least 4 CFs (Igualdad Ciudadana, Galicia Sustentable, Ciudad Rodrigo-2006 and Cáceres Capital), mostly regarding their funding sources, representativeness and activities. They were included as “similar organizations” at the beginning of the Bertelsmann Foundation project, with the commitment of adjusting to be accredited CFs with the seal of quality. It seems that they have not done so.

¹⁸ <http://www.fundaciones.org/es/inicio> 10/01/20

with a seal of quality, tailored capacity building and knowledge guides (i.e. [Management Manual of CFs](#)¹⁹), access to international networks and exchange of experiences and good practices. Out of the Network of CFs, the **Ibero-American Network of CFs** was created with 32 members in Spain, Portugal, Mexico, Brazil and Uruguay. The management of the network was transferred to ICOM.

- As of today, eight of the supported Spanish CFs are part the network: [Fundación Ciudad de Sigüenza](#)²⁰, [Fundació Ciutat de Valls](#)²¹, [Fundació Cívica Oreneta del Vallès](#)²², [Fundació Cívica Novessendes](#)²³, [Fundación Galicia Sustentable](#)²⁴, [Fundació Horta Sud](#)²⁵, [Fundación Igualdad Ciudadana](#)²⁶ and [Fundación Maimona](#)²⁷. Three of them stayed out: [Fundación Cáceres Capital](#)²⁸, [Fundación Ciudad Rodrigo-2006](#)²⁹ and [Fundació Tot Raval](#)³⁰. The project equally supported both CFs and CF-like organizations (which complied with just some criteria of the international standard definition yet expressed their interest in adapting to meet others). Only the ones that complied with the essentials would receive the seal of quality and just **some of them, such as** *Fundació Cívica Oreneta del Vallès* (starting grantmaking activity) and *Fundació Cívica Novessendes* (adapting its board and diversifying its income sources), **successfully implemented the needed changes completely..**
- The output of the whole project can be described as **bittersweet**. Regarding the pros, the concept and culture of CFs was **widespread** and adopted by some organizations, and very useful resources and connections were created and shared. The **Ibero-American Network of CFs** was established at the request of some members from Latin America, and productive exchange of experiences was fostered. However, the project did not consistently take hold in the philanthropy ecosystem and it did **not trigger the domino effect** that was expected. It **lacked** vision regarding the **sustainability** of the support and focused too much on organizations as outcomes rather than as long-term community philanthropy initiatives in development. Moreover, the **end of the project** was quite **abrupt** due to a change in *Bertelsmann Foundation* strategy priorities, and many works-in-progress could not be consolidated. Thus, the project fell short and did not meet expectations in the long run. No new CFs have been established since then. Even *Fundació Tot Raval*, considered

¹⁹ <https://www.fundacionbertelsmann.org/es/home/publicaciones/publicacion/did/manual-de-gestion-de-fundaciones-civicas> 10/22/20

²⁰ <http://fundacionciudadsiguenza.org/> (Guadalajara) 10/30/20

²¹ <https://www.fcwalls.org/> (Tarragona) 10/30/20

²² <http://oreneta.org/es> (Barcelona) 10/30/20

²³ <http://novessendes.org/> (Castellón) 10/30/20

²⁴ <http://galiciasustentable.org/wp-signup.php?new=www.fundacion> (Galicia) 10/30/20

²⁵ <https://fundaciohortasud.org/> (Valencia) 10/30/20

²⁶ <http://eapnextremadura.org/quienes-somos/socios/fundacion-igualdad-ciudadana/> (Extremadura) 10/30/20

²⁷ <http://www.maimona.org/> (Badajoz) 10/30/20

²⁸ <https://www.fundacionbertelsmann.org/es/home/zona-de-prensa-raiz/zona-de-prensa/notas-de-prensa/2011/la-fundacion-caceres-capital-se-incorpora-a-la-red-de-fundaciones-civicas> (Cáceres) 11/02/20. Almost extinct.

²⁹ <http://www.fundacionciudadrodrigo.com/> (Salamanca) 10/30/20

³⁰ <https://totraval.org/ca> (Barcelona) 10/30/20

to be an example in terms of good practices, left the network. Although it gained visibility and took advantage of capacity building, the organization was not interested in adapting any of the developed policies from the Center of Competencies for CFs.

- [AEF](#)³¹ aims to take over the CFSO role for CFs and this year is starting a two-year project with **C.S. Mott Foundation** to foster the **creation and strengthening of** CFs in Spain, with the aim of eventually extending it for a total period of ten years. Established in 2003 and with a national scope, **AEF** brings together 820 Spanish foundations. It represents and defends their interests, strengthens and articulates the sector, improves their professionalization and management and contributes to their transparency and good governance. It is the most representative entity in the sector at the national level and the second most important in Europe. This is the **first time AEF is promoting a concrete type of foundation**. The project will comprise three complementary approaches:
 - Identify community organizing groups that constitute leadership and energy pools.
 - Identify some existing foundations that match with the goals and tactics of CFs (starting with ones with place names).
 - Create a dynamic community of CFs, and a national support alliance for CFs.

The promoters are aware that they must **build on past successes** (tailored capacity building, media exposure, trust-giving, generation of a network with multiple stakeholder alliances) **and avoid past mistakes** (being too top-down in approach and mixing in organizations that really do not want to become a CF or are unwilling to adapt, especially in the fundraising field). It should also be acknowledged that the initiative has originated at the national and international level, and that this must be reversed to become a truly bottom-up process.

³¹ <http://www.fundaciones.org/es/inicio> 01/11/20

ITALY

PESL³² and community philanthropy context

POLITICAL

- Score on political environment: 5 out of 5.
- After several **crises** (economic, sovereign debt, refugees), there is an increasing demand for social services, but the government shows limited ability or willingness to meet it.
- In an increasingly **polarized environment**, partly attributable to these crises, however **the performance of the philanthropic sector** is considerably **higher** than in other countries of the region; this observation may be explained by its long-term experience and the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration.

ECONOMIC

- GDP per capita \$30,500.
- Score on cross-border flows: 4.5 out of 5.
- As in Spain, the economy was also heavily impacted by the global financial crisis.
- It has the fourth highest unemployment rate in the European Union (8.8%).

SOCIAL

- Population: 61M.
- Number of registered POs: 336,275.
- Global Philanthropy Environment Index Score: 4.67 out of 5.
- World Giving Index³³: 54th place (33%).
 - Helped a stranger, or someone you did not know who needed help? 68th place (45%).
 - Donated money to a charity? 33rd place (38%).
 - Volunteered your time to an organization? 73rd place (16%).
- Score on socio-cultural environment: 4.5 out of 5.
- The values of charity, solidarity and compassion from the **Roman Catholic** philosophy, highlighting the importance of helping those in need, are embedded in a **long-lasting informal philanthropic tradition**. As in Spain, the **Church** has traditionally had a primary role in offering **social services** together with the **government**. The government and the Church still have an active role in service provision, especially in basic needs and education.

³² <https://globalindices.iupui.edu/environment/regions/eastern-southern-europe/italy.html> 11/09/20

³³ <https://www.cafonline.org/about-us/publications/2019-publications/caf-world-giving-index-10th-edition> 11/09/20

LEGAL

- Score on tax incentives: 4.5 out of 5.
- Ease operating POs: 4.83 out of 5.
- Italy has lately experienced **positive changes** in the philanthropic sector. The Third Sector Code of 2017 **harmonized and incentivized** it by recognizing the social value of POs and the importance of their cooperation with governmental authorities for public policies. This legislation includes financial reporting requirements for POs, which has considerably brought reputational benefits to them. However, the system still benefits far more the donors than CSOs. POs cannot compensate taxes with liabilities, deduct value added tax (VAT) or, unlike regular businesses, rarely have advantages in investment taxes.
- Philanthropy organizations may obtain **tax-exempted status** from **corporate tax**, gift tax, vehicle tax and property tax. They can also pursue self-financing through secondary and instrumental commercial activities, which are taxed using a special flat-rate scheme. Creating an endowment is not tax-exempted.
- Individuals and corporations receive a 30% **tax deduction** for donations up to **€26,000** and **€30,000**, respectively. There are also exemptions on inheritance tax, tax on donations and the land registry taxes for donations to CSOs.
- Individuals and corporations have the **5X1000-tax scheme**, by which Italian taxpayers may choose to give the 0.5% of their income tax to a voluntary organization.

COMMUNITY PHILANTHROPY AND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION CONTEXT

- Number of CFs: 41 (including seven in the process of being established).
- CFSO: *Assifero* (2003 and ongoing).
- [Assifero](https://assifero.org/)³⁴ is the national trade association of Italian foundations and philanthropic bodies, founded in 2003 to promote Italian institutional philanthropy at the national and international levels. It has supported the creation of CFs, promoting their interaction, information and knowledge exchange, trusting, partnership-based relationships and the development of individual and collective capacity. *Assifero* advocates for [Italian philanthropic foundations to fund missions, strategic objectives and organizations and not only projects](#)³⁵ in order to become a major driver of social transformation and stop trying to contain overhead costs as a priority. According to *Assifero*'s survey of CFs, conducted in 2017³⁶:

³⁴ <https://assifero.org/> 10/29/20

³⁵ <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Carola-Carazzone-ENG-Debunking-two-myths-April-2018.pdf> 11/10/20

³⁶ <https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/ECFI-guide-CF-in-Italy.pdf> 11/02/20

- **Grantmaking** is the most used tool, followed by services supplied and social investment/investment in social enterprises.
- The main fields of intervention are poverty, education and training, social services, arts, culture, protection of artistic heritage, unemployment and local development.
- The main beneficiaries are children and youth, people with disabilities, immigrants and refugees, the elderly and women.
- Community foundations differ in terms of origin, size, vision, methodology and operations, so represent different forms of community philanthropy. They look alike in two main aspects:
 - Deeply rooted in the fabric of a given community, they are philanthropic intermediary platforms that provide a bridge between local institutions and CSOs to deal with social, economic and cultural challenges at the local levels.
 - The vast majority of them have been **promoted by a large and wealthy foundation**, with initial and ongoing financial and technical support. **Sixteen** were promoted by *Fondazione Cariplo*, **eight** by *Compagnia di San Paolo* (two more are efforts in progress), **six** by *Fondazione con il Sud* and four by *Fondazione di Venezia*.
- The first CFs were born in 1999 in Lecco and Como on the will of the [Fondazione Cariplo](#)³⁷, a foundation of banking origin that introduced and adapted the United States model. Since then, this experience has spread with different approaches throughout the country; initially in the north, also with the endorsement from [Compagnia di San Paolo](#)³⁸ (with a banking origin too) and [Fondazione di Venezia](#)³⁹ (with special attention to youth and education); and since 2009 also in Southern Italy, with the sponsorship of *Fondazione con il Sud*. Apart, there is also another phenomenon to mention, nationwide CFs, as [Fondazione Italia per il Dono](#)⁴⁰.
- The economy of southern Italy is considerably different than northern Italy's economy. For example, the south has a custom of requesting money from elsewhere and confront realities like corruption and mafia. In this context community foundations represent an extraordinary cultural shift and an alternative to progress in life. [Fondazione Con il Sud](#)⁴¹, which supports endogenous regional development, has allowed each local community to choose how to organize and operate. Its role is to facilitate this process without passing judgement on operational decisions. It supports

³⁷ <https://www.fondazione-cariplo.it/it/la-fondazione/fondazioni-specializzate/fondazioni-di-comunit.html> 11/04/20

³⁸ <https://www.compagniadisanpaolo.it/it/contributi/linee-guida-2020-per-il-sostegno-alle-fondazioni-di-comunita/> 11/19/20

³⁹ <https://www.fondazione-divenezia.org/activity/fondazioni-comunitarie/> 11/07/20

⁴⁰ <https://www.perildono.it/> 10/04/20

⁴¹ <https://italianonprofit.it/filantropia-istituzionale/fondazioni-di-comunita/> 11/05/20

the development of CFs on an ongoing basis, accompanies them and monitors their achievement of planned goals. Its aim is to contribute to the creation of a significant number of CFs in the southern regions of Italy with at least €5 million to sustain their activities and reach a critical mass capable of attracting further funds and donations. Once the prerequisites for funding are met, it doubles the initial assets (between €300,000 and €500,000) raised by the CF. Further investments are added to consolidate the asset structure (to a maximum total of €2.5 million), to contribute to initial grant-making activities and cover the management costs of specific projects to support fundraising (€200,000 per year per initiative and €25,000 per fundraising project for five years). In order to continue supporting the CF after that time, *Fondazione Con il Sud* has set aside resources of up to €1 million to assign as grants to specific projects.

- The [quick, effective and creative response](#)⁴² of Italian CFs [in partnership with Assifero](#) to the COVID-19 pandemic has capitalized on their material and immaterial assets, social trust and local capacities.⁴³ They have been among the first to mobilize in support of their communities, committing financial, relational and social resources to counter the health, social and cultural emergency.

[Fondazione di Comunità San Gennaro Onlus](#)⁴⁴ (*San Gennaro Community Foundation*)

- Foundation: 2014
- Contact: Vincenzo Porzio (Communications Officer)
- Community: Rione Sanità (neighborhood of Naples, southern Italy), around 32,000 inhabitants. It is one of the *rioni* (administrative division) of Naples, part of the Stella quarter. Initially home of nobles and the bourgeois and characterized by brilliance and splendor, it became gradually isolated and cut off from the city since the construction of il Ponte della Sanità, which crossed the neighborhood. It looks like a suburb in the center of Naples, with a social and infrastructure patent deterioration, including high unemployment rates and mafia challenges. The arrival of the new parish priest of the Basilica of Santa Maria della Sanità in 2000 represented a turning point, initiating a process of rehabilitation and enhancement of its historical, artistic and human heritage.

⁴² <https://www.ariadne-network.eu/part-i-generating-hope-beyond-the-spotlight-the-impact-of-the-covid-19-lock-down-on-italian-civil-society-and-the-response-of-the-philanthropic-sector/> 13/11/20

⁴³ <https://assifero.org/le-fondazioni-di-comunita-in-prima-linea-per-lemergenza-coronavirus/> 11/13/20

⁴⁴ <http://www.fondazioneangennaro.org/> 11/08/20

Defining characteristics

- Mission: Encouraging taking care of **beauty**, the **culture of giving**, participation and responsibility, contributing to the social and economic infrastructure of the area.
- It operates through public notices (calls for tenders and expressions of interest) and shared planning with local CSOs. **Operational projects** are its main tool. (Grantmaking is residual.)
- Its creation has been supported by *Fondazione con il Sud*, which has contributed both to the endowment and to project grants. Investment in its own infrastructure is minimal.
- **Catholic Church** has a high importance, as origin, channel and key partner.
- Activities comprising the **restoration of common goods** range from street art murals, rehabilitation of sloppy buildings and regeneration of public space for community use.
- **Youth and children** constitute key beneficiaries and multiple initiatives seek to support their growth and maturation in a healthy and encouraging environment.
- An **annual week-long event/celebration** is organized to show the beauty of the community. It includes many kinds of shows, as theatre and concerts.
- Half of the donations come from mid-sized neighborhoods. Individual giving is rare.
- Current **endowment** is around \$1.7M (\$1M in accounts and \$700M in art pieces), with the goal to reach \$5M in 10 years (\$2.5M inner and \$2.5M as a matching grant from *Fondazione con il Sud*).
- Founding members are several stakeholders with interests in the community, such as Santa Maria della Sanità and San Severo parishes, corporation foundations and other associations. One of them, the Social Cooperative La Paranza, was granted by the Catholic Church in 2009 the right of use of [the Catacombs](#)⁴⁵ (hidden to the public) for 30 years. The foundation restored them with volunteers from the neighborhood and the support of experts and made the place blossom. Today the Catacombs attracts thousands of visitors per year and employs people from Rione Sanità. The income generated is, on one hand, used to pay the employees that keep the place alive and make it grow, and, on the other, it is reinvested in the neighborhood and other artistic sites.
- A collaboration with [Jago](#)⁴⁶, a world-renown sculptor and artist, is an example of investment in beauty and culture as force of development. He donated the *Figlio Velato*, a marble sculpture that is an artistic modern version of [Cristo Velato](#).⁴⁷ He is producing a new sculpture in a church (reopened for this occasion) that has become a laboratory accessible to everyone. People, especially those from Rione Sanità, are invited to leave their mark on the marble block he is going to use.

⁴⁵ <https://www.catacombedinapoli.it/en/about> 11/11/20

⁴⁶ <https://jago.art/it/biografia/> 11/11/20

⁴⁷ <https://www.museosansevero.it/la-statu/> 11/11/20

KEY PARTNERS	KEY ACTIVITIES	VALUE PROPOSITION	CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS	CUSTOMER SEGMENTS
30 CSOs of the region: Cooperatives, associations, parish groups	Fundraising for private and public grants	Promotion of the Humanism, beauty and culture with a direct impact on the community	Trust and long-term relationship	Community
Local public administration	Creating, maintaining and growing public relationships and	Restoration of Common goods	Closeness and proximity	Youth and children
Catholic Church			Networks partnerships	Corporation donors
University of Architecture	Press office and communications	Opening of the district to the outside	Innovation and belief in change	Local business owners and artists
University of Economics	Exploration of new projects	Growth of Youth Human Capital	Participative street art	Public donors
Assifero	Implementation of projects	CSR high impact long-term community projects for revitalisation	Educational, culture, music, health and sports opportunities	
Schools			Boost of local activity, commerce and tourism	One-on-one relationship
Pro-bono support from professionals		Concrete change and results' visibility		
		Card gifts to use in local businesses		
		Revaluation of the community through high impact effective public	Public policies alliance	
	KEY RESOURCES		CHANNELS	
	Network: personal relationships with stakeholders		Week event celebration	
	Staff		Press office	
	Endowment (money+pieces of art)		Church	
	Office (usufruct)		Social Networks: FB, Twitter, Youtube	
	Funding members		Website	
			Newsletter	
			Meetings	
			Project centers	
			One-on-one meetings	
COST STRUCTURE		REVENUE STREAMS		
Staff salaries		Catacombs tickets entrance		
Communications (branding, paid ads)		Endowment (Fondazione con il Sud) and project grants		
Implementation of the projects		Money and pieces of art donations		
		Public grants. E.g. Campania Region		

ROMANIA

PESL⁴⁸⁴⁹⁵⁰⁵¹ and community philanthropy context

POLITICAL

- In Romania, political context is key to understanding the proliferation of CFs. Traditionally, there has not been a tradition of community organizing. Young CFs and community organizing movements are rooted in the powerful reaction from the population to protect the civic space and be agents of change in addressing [instability and the antidemocratic tendency](#)⁵². In 2017 there were massive social movements and large street demonstrations to protest against political interference in the judicial system. The turbulent political context has propelled people to become active citizens, to start fighting for their rights and their future. The act of donating is becoming **more of a political than civic act**, to show the caring for democracy and to stand for European values and basic human rights.
- Each time better organized and coordinated, the philanthropic sector has grown and matured significantly with strong local community leaders and activists. Nevertheless, cooperation between national authorities and the civic sector is becoming more and more difficult. The dialogue is tainted by **a lack of trust** from both sides, and this minimizes the influence of POs.

ECONOMIC

- GDP per capita: \$10,800.
- Unemployment rate: 5.2%.
- For almost 50 years, Romania was under a communist regime that did not recognize private property, so philanthropy—which had previously been a strong tradition—was non-existent during that period. It restarted when few funding bodies existed at the national level and wealthy families' money was highly inaccessible. Currently, Romania is evolving and adapting to international trends and national needs. Philanthropy organizations now understand the need for modern, comprehensive fundraising, and Romanians trust more in POs as a way to change the society and the power balance, and they want to be a part of it. After joining the European Union, a lot of funding from international bodies for CSOs disappeared, but last year's donations have

⁴⁸ <https://www.stiftungen.org/en/home/worldwide/next-philanthropy/romania-fight-against-the-anti-democratic-wave.html> 11/07/20

⁴⁹ <https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/cf-and-democracy-in-europe.pdf> 11/07/20

⁵⁰ <https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/ECFI-guide-CF-in-Romania.pdf> 11/09/20

⁵¹ <https://philanthropyinfocus.org/2019/10/01/nurturing-community-philanthropy-in-romania/> 11/09/20

⁵² <https://www.stiftungen.org/en/home/worldwide/next-philanthropy/romania-fight-against-the-anti-democratic-wave.html> 11/09/20

achieved **record levels**. Still, a **comprehensive strategic funding** is necessary to consolidate and make the sector sustainable in the long run.

SOCIAL⁵³

- Population: 19.3M⁵⁴.
- Number of POs: around 77,000.
- Global Philanthropy Environment Index Score: no data available.
- World Giving Index⁵⁵: 97th place (24%).
 - Helped a stranger, or someone you did not know who needed help? 66th place (45%).
 - Donated money to a charity? 81st place (20%).
 - Volunteered your time to an organization? 118th place (7%).
- In 2017, there were 70,194 associations and 16,613 foundations, but only 5,436 of the latter were found to be active and, of these, just 50 are funding bodies. The POs were funded mainly from international sources for almost 20 years and did not develop in an organic way, building their project portfolios based just on this foreign bodies funding. In the last few years, nevertheless, a growing number of CSOs have adopted a different vision, being better integrated into their community.
- Romania is the European country that has had the biggest number of emigrants in the last years (more than 3.4 million people left the country since 2007), so philanthropy is and should continue to be highly focused on **diaspora**, connecting Romanians living abroad with the community value propositions and needs. There is also an increasing global way of thinking that makes Romanian individuals and companies more conscious and reacting to tragedies outside the borders.

LEGAL⁵⁶

- Romanian law allows for the development of CFs within the general legal framework for associations and foundations. Foundations need an initial capital of 100 times the national minimum salary to be set up legally (about \$50,000), except if they have the exclusive purpose to raise funds for supporting other associations and foundations (then it is twenty times).
- There have been numerous turbulences in the legal framework, such as changes in the sponsorship law, law of associations and foundations, public policies, as well as new ways of

⁵³ <https://www.communityfoundations.eu/community-foundations-in-europe/atlas-support-organizations/cfso-romania.html> 11/04/20

⁵⁴ https://insse.ro/cms/sites/default/files/com_presa/com_pdf/poprez_ian2020r.pdf 11/04/20

⁵⁵ <https://www.cafonline.org/about-us/publications/2019-publications/caf-world-giving-index-10th-edition> 11/04/20

⁵⁶ <https://www.cof.org/content/nonprofit-law-romania> 11/04/20

controlling fiscal facilities. This **unstable environment** has been generating confusion both at the level of CSOs and at the level of donors.

- There are very time and money consuming complex legal procedures for the acquisition of legal personality.⁵⁷ Associations and foundations are liable for profit tax on all of their business activities beyond a certain threshold. **Main income sources for POs with Public Utility Status are tax exempt:** grants, sponsorship, donations, contributions from members and supporters, membership fees, interests and dividends from nonprofit income, income from occasional nonprofit fundraising and social and professional activities. Also tax-exempt are income from occasional economic activities, such as festivals, raffles, and conferences, but only up to 10% of non-profit income, but no more than €15,000 per year. Foundations created as a result of a legacy are exempt from all profit tax.
- A corporation that grants sponsorships can deduct up to **0.5% of its turnover or 20% of the profit tax due**, whichever is less. Only companies with turnover of more than €1M are eligible to deduct sponsorships. For companies with a turnover under this threshold, providing social services can also deduct 20% of the profit tax through sponsorships of CSOs.
- Individual taxpayers do not have tax incentives for individual giving. They can only choose a **non-profit organization** as the recipient of **2% of individual income taxes** paid that year, and the state directs this money to the chosen recipient. This mechanism has proven to be a modest, yet reliable source of funds for many Romanian CSOs.

COMMUNITY PHILANTHROPY AND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION CONTEXT

- Number of CFs: 19 (3 of them established in 2019 and 2020).
- [*Asociatia Pentru Relatii Comunitare*](#)⁵⁸—*Association of Community Relations*—[ARC], founded in 2001, is the main CFSO, having supported the creation of the 19 CFs in Romania to date. The organization's goal is to bolster philanthropic awareness in Romanian society by offering tools and framework to enable citizens, informal leaders, companies and POs to meet, work and produce a positive change in their communities. It provides existing foundations with grants and technical assistance. It also offers legal, administrative and financial assistance to initiative groups before evolving into a CF, and it connects CFs and initiative groups.

⁵⁷ Romania 2017: Non-governmental sector – profile, trends, challenges”, survey conducted by the Civil Society Development Foundation 11/13/20

⁵⁸ <https://arcromania.ro/arc/> 11/13/20

- [Federatia Fundatiile Comunitare Din Romania](#)⁵⁹—*Romanian Federation of Community Foundations*—[FFCR] was founded in 2012 to represent and support its members to achieve the final goal of social change. It provides various mechanisms for attracting funds and a communication network. It fosters the generation and dissemination of community ideas, as well as monitors and evaluates activities in support of partner foundations. Currently, it concentrates on helping CFs start their first endowment and reserve funds to build on their sustainability.
- ARC has been solidly supporting the creation and development of CFs in Romania for the last twelve years through the **National Community Foundation Development Program**, in cooperation with the *Environmental Partnership Foundation* and the *PACT Foundation*, and with the financial support of **C.S. Mott Foundation**, *Trust for Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe* and the *Romanian American Foundation*. It took advantage of the increasing demand for civic space—traditionally empty— and the willingness of many to raise and fight for open spaces with high visible impact. General-purpose grants and trusts were offered to the initiatives to allow them to crystalize, experimenting with building connections, make mistakes and learn from them. The first two CFs were established in 2008 in *Odorheiu Secuiesc* and *Cluj-Napoca*, followed over the years by other seventeen through different support waves. Last 3 have been settled in 2019 and 2020 in communities traditionally considered to be depressed. As a normal procedure, ARC matches \$25K with the local initiative to make the \$50K to set up the foundation. These CFs have become quickly independent and well-established, with a strong leadership, and are thriving in their communities, connecting with the relevant stakeholders and fundraising for local resources.
- Between 2008 and 2019, regarding all Romanian CFs:
 - Total investment in the community amounted to \$8.8M. Of his amount, \$6.3M were in grants (35% in education, 16% in health, 13% in social inclusion and 10% in public and community services), \$1.1M in CF initiated and implemented projects and \$1M in scholarships.
 - Staff, services, transport and office costs amounted to \$7.6M.
 - The most used tools have been youth banks, swimathons, donor circles, running events and community cards (although the latter has dramatically decreased from 2017)⁶⁰.
 - They cover 52% of the population, mostly located in the center of the country (Transylvania region, the most economically developed one).

⁵⁹ <https://ffcr.ro/> 11/13/20

⁶⁰ <https://fundatiicomunitare.ro/?lang=en> 10/18/20

- They obtained \$17.6M in income. 74% from the community (\$13M, which was divided among companies [\$7.3M], individual donors [\$4.2M], public donors [\$1.1M] and other [\$430K]) and 26% from external sources (\$4.6M, spread among CF development national program partners [\$3.2M] and individual donors [\$1.4M])⁶¹.
- This successful process has been working in three complementary levels:
 - **International:** Drawing from the international movement of CFs, with knowledge and experiences exchange and learning from different models around the world as a starting point to adapt them to the Romanian context. For example, there is an ongoing collaboration with *Assifero* in Italy, with the support of the [European Community Foundations Initiative](#)⁶² [ECFI], to share and learn about the pandemic response.
 - **National:** Vast effort has been made in building a robust social infrastructure for CFs and promoting giving, especially with new methods, such as SMS donation and donor circles, which have been remarkably successful.
 - **Local:** Encouragement of leadership in local communities has guided trust and change building. Fifty percent of CFs are currently led by females. An important aspect is the ability to keep a fruitful relationship with local governments. This happens in most of cases and relies on the apolitical and neutral stand of CFs in the civic space (although many leaders were politically active during the protest movements).
- The followed approach has been highly context-adapted for each community, but always preserving and propelling two non-negotiable keystones:
 - **Local grantmaking:** The amount is not as important as the role of shifting power and mobilizing resources and allocating them to grassroots groups and initiatives.
 - **Trust brokering:** Building long-term relationships and looking for systemic change.
- Several successes have been following as a result of this clear unified philosophy and structure, which has been complemented by a strong communications setting. The most resounding success was experienced recently: during the first wave of COVID-19, seventeen CFs [together raised \\$1.8M in two months through local and national emergency funds](#)⁶³ for vital public health services and vulnerable groups. ARC set up its own emergency fund (which raised \$1.4M) to match the local fundraising efforts. The pandemic has tested the resilience of Romanian CFs and deepened their community roots. Other outstanding landmarks are *Brasov CF* raising \$10,000 in one night last

⁶¹ OSIFE is currently funding a grant to ARC for a capacity building program for four CFs to better equip them with tools to foster community organizing and fundraising.

⁶² <https://www.communityfoundations.eu/home.html> 11/05/20

⁶³ https://globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/blog/pulling-together-for-the-national-good-lessons-from-romania-community-foundations-covid-19-response/?fbclid=IwAR3smJ2lxKK_dzVJoEsl0wa0iZP_lYSe1tj5Eb9JUaeljXroSbphqQbm0BQ 11/06/20

year and *Bucharest CF* \$150,000 with an online swimming event (same as their former in-person event).

- Current challenges:
 - Most Romanian CFs are **executive director-led organizations** that rely on strong and bold leader figures, but boards and staff teams are usually not at the same level.
 - **Sustainability in the long term**, being able to raise money from the CF's community for operational costs and grant-making.
 - **Legal barriers** to set up an endowment. *ARC* has encouraged CFs to build it and *C.S. Mott Foundation* and *Romanian American Foundation* have offered matching funds, yet it seems to be a struggle and maybe not the priority for most of them.

*Fundația Comunitară Sibiu*⁶⁴ ⁶⁵ (*Sibiu Community Foundation*)

- Foundation: 2012
- Contact: Ciprian Ciocan (Executive director)
- Community: County of Sibiu (center of Romania, in the historical region of Transylvania, 275 kilometers North West of Bucharest). Around 400,000 inhabitants (Sibiu is the county capital, with 171,000). It is one of Romania's most dynamic economies and one of the regions with the highest level of foreign investment in that country. The capital has become a domestic and foreign tourist destination since the beginning of the century. It is known for its culture, history, gastronomy and its diverse architecture, which includes its iconic houses with eyes.

Defining characteristics

- The foundation strategically fosters spaces and opportunities that give people power and a framework to re-think and reinvent their city so that it is **centered around its citizens and on their dreams**. Well established and well rooted, its motto is “a living community, in the city you would never leave”. It is based on the spirit of not waiting for authorities to solve their problems, but mobilizing local resources and creating cultural changes around philanthropy, CSOs, innovation and collaboration⁶⁶.
- The ***Sibiu International Marathon event***, which started as a *half marathon* in 2012, is already a tradition. It happens in one single day but is organized over a whole year. It is the largest philanthropic sports event in Romania. It relies on 500 mostly young volunteers and it is adapted to many publics, including children, so everyone can participate and enjoy. Organizations and

⁶⁴ <https://fundatiacomunitarasibiu.ro/> 11/01/20

⁶⁵ <https://fundatiicomunitare.ro/fundatii/sibiu-community-foundation/?lang=en> 11/01/20

⁶⁶ https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/views_from_the_field/romania-interview-ciocan.pdf 11/15/20

initiative groups enroll the projects or causes in the competition, companies and fundraisers choose their cause and, on the day of the event, supporters donate to their favorites. Thanks to more than 5,000 participants, it constitutes the “star product” of the organization and accounts for 70% of its yearly income. Companies compete to participate and gain public visibility, because in this region the job supply is greater than demand in general. Public initiatives with great exposure like this one help them position themselves. Unfortunately, when it comes to other projects, their participation is rare or irrelevant, as their action cannot be broadcasted in the same way. In the context of the coronavirus pandemic, a special edition of the Marathon took place with almost 700 runners participating, one by one through the gate.

- It undertakes some operational projects, but only when civil society is not able to lead them.
- *Științescu Fund and Hub* is a financing program and space for informal educational projects that encourage a passion for science and technology among children and youth aged six to nineteen.
- A **youth bank** was organized for four years. It recruited teams of teenagers, taught them how to fundraise and make grants to other young people. Currently there is a plan for a new youth-based leadership program.
- **Green Sibiu** is a local community communication platform that aims to bring together all relevant information for selective recycling in Sibiu.
- *CitySense* is a financing program that supports the creation of prototypes of Smart City solutions, which, by using technology, contribute to improving the quality of life in Sibiu.
- Its **campaign for COVID-19**—still ongoing—has proved to be very successful, with more beneficiaries and impact than initially expected. So far, it has raised funds and provided logistics for Sibiu County Hospital, Sibiu Pediatric Clinical Hospital, Sibiu Military Emergency Hospital, County Ambulance Service, ISU Sibiu and family doctors in the city.
- It has supported the creation of several formal CSOs, such as a running club, an educational hub and an environmental promotion organization.

KEY PARTNERS	KEY ACTIVITIES	VALUE PROPOSITION	CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS	CUSTOMER SEGMENTS
CSOs and informal initiatives	International Marathon campaign	Promotion and empowerment of civil society initiatives, bridging the gap between all stakeholders and creating a strong ecosystem in the civic space field	Capacity building	Community
Runners	Fundraising		Community-driven participatory processes	Youth
City council	Relationships management		Combination of old and new community habits and traditions	Multinational corporations and tech startups with offices in Sibiu
FFCR	Needs research		Mobilization and networking	
Romanian-American Foundation (capacity building)	Grant-making management	Build and strenghten a living community, in the city you would never leave	Needs carer	
ARC	Technical support to set up CSOs		Promotion of Youth Initiatives, giving them the opportunity to step in, lead and contribute to improve the community	
"Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu	Operational projects	Creating and maintaining public visibility and branding for increase of reputation	Leadership and empowerment promotion	
			One-on-one relationship	
	KEY RESOURCES		CHANNELS	
	Social capital and reputation		Sibiu International Marathon event	
	7 staff		Hackatons	
	500 volunteers (mostly youth)		Social Networks	
	Platform to manage the Marathon event		Website	
			Green Sibiu	
			Youth Bank	
			Squad Race	
			One-on-one meetings	
COST STRUCTURE		REVENUE STREAMS		
Staff salaries		Sibiu International Marathon event donations		
Grants and scholarships		Recurrent donations of individuals		
Marathon event operational expenses		Sponsorship of the Marathon event from big companies		
		Other project grants		

SERBIA

PESL⁶⁷⁶⁸ and community philanthropy context

POLITICAL

- Score on political environment: 3.35.
- **A negative narrative around POs is quite widespread**, and conservative national and local governments have not contributed to overcoming this view. On the contrary, the governments have taken actions that have contributed to a negative view.
- Political stability is currently under threat; the access to media and the normal operation of POs involved in human rights and social activism is diminished.
- It is a highly **centralized country**, local governments depend a lot on the national sphere, and previously on the international one. Public funds for domestic philanthropy have been traditionally nationally distributed, thereby somewhat hindering the proliferation of local and regional CSOs.
- POs are free to form and function with little restriction from the government. The test of whether philanthropic freedom really works is in the regulation and promotion of giving and receiving.

ECONOMIC

- GDP per capita: \$5,300.
- Score on cross-border flows: 3.5 out of 5.
- Unemployment rate is 12.7%⁶⁹.
- CSOs are still mostly oriented toward **foreign donations**, but they are increasingly turning to domestic philanthropic sources. The value of corporate sector donations reached 45.5% in 2016. This rise shows that the private sector is more actively involved in philanthropy every time.
- It is the country in the Western Balkans with higher amounts of giving, on the rise for the last five years. However, they are still especially focused on vulnerable collectives and humanitarian issues.
- As the returns on investments are quite modest and do not typically exceed 4% in the market, **building an endowment does not seem to be a very effective practice** generally for Serbian CSOs as compared to other practices, such as receiving donor monthly donations.

SOCIAL

- Population: 7M.
- Number of registered POs: 23,394.

⁶⁷ <https://globalindices.iupui.edu/environment/regions/balkan/index.html> 10/25/20

⁶⁸ <https://globalindices.iupui.edu/environment/regions/balkan/serbia.html> 10/25/20

⁶⁹ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/440532/unemployment-rate-in-serbia/> 11/19/20

- Global Philanthropy Environment Index Score: 3.6 out of 5.
- World Giving Index⁷⁰: 123rd place (19%).
 - Helped a stranger, or someone you did not know who needed help? 123rd place (28%).
 - Donated money to a charity? 73rd place (22%).
 - Volunteered your time to an organization? 122nd place (6%).
- Score on socio-cultural environment: 3 out of 5.
- On average, there is one CSO for every 302 people (397 in all Western Balkans). The general public feel that the level of incentives for donating to the common good is insufficient (78%). The level of distrust in POs (45%) is the highest in the region, with a general thought that misuse happens often or always. Foundations are seen more trustworthy than CSOs in general.
- The main challenge for the field is **corporate sectors donations**. Over the past years, corporate and individual philanthropy's volume and focus on local CSOs have been increasing, but there is still a long path to be followed. The importance of POs advocating for improved frameworks and their implementation has begun to rise on the priorities of these organizations' advocacy agendas. **Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation** works with youth activists and CSOs in municipalities across the country to promote youth-led community development solutions.
- The **steady and incremental growth of domestic philanthropy** is fueled by the efforts of POs to improve outreach; to increase awareness among companies on being good corporate citizens; and to proliferate available data on giving.

LEGAL

- Ease operating POs: 4.67 out of 5.
- Score on tax incentives: 3.5 out of 5.
- Corporations receive **tax deductions** for donations to POs engaged in **certain types of public benefit activities**, deductions are determined for each project and donation. There is no permanent public benefit status and POs must apply for a tax deduction for each received donation. **Gifts below \$900** from a single donor are automatically **exempt** from income taxes.
- There are **no tax exemptions for individuals**.
- There is an **imbalanced legal and regulatory framework** on paper and an inconsistent application of the framework in practice. The law prescribes excessive administrative requirements for both the donor and the recipient; the requirements disincentive donations. In 2017, *Trag Foundation*—with partners from the *Coalition for Giving*—successfully advocated for the adoption of a unique

⁷⁰ <https://www.cafonline.org/about-us/publications/2019-publications/caf-world-giving-index-10th-edition>

manual on the implementation of tax deductions by the Tax Authority, making its navigation much easier.

- The average time to register a PO is between 5 and 30 days and the registration process costs \$50.
- It is possible to register two separate entities. For foundations, a founding stake is not required for foundations, while a founding stake, of €30,000 in an account are required for endowments.

COMMUNITY PHILANTHROPY AND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION CONTEXT

- Number of CFs: Three (*Obrenovac Youth Foundation*, *Step Forward* and *Foundation Front from Novi Pazar*). Four initiative groups are developing but they are not yet registered as CFs.
- CFSOs: *Trag Foundation*, *Cathalyst Balkans* and *Zaječar Initiative*.
- Until 2011, there were no CFs in Serbia. Three CFs in Serbia were established independently, all with different backgrounds and for different reasons.
- Regarding the Balkans context, there are currently five CFs. In the late 90s and early 2000s, after the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the flourishing of democracy, eleven CFs were established—mostly operational—in North Macedonia thanks to international support. Nonetheless, the approach was top-down; pretty much donor driven and oriented. As a result, cooperation with different stakeholders was not propelled and when an income source withdrew, eight of them dismantled. Only three survived and just one (*CF of Shtip*) currently operates as a CF (operational). The other two CFs are in Bosnia and Herzegovina: *Gradacac* (which was established by the municipality) and [Tuzla Community Foundation](https://tuzlafundacija.org/en/homepage-2/)⁷¹, which stands out. Established in 2003, it supports the participation of citizens in the democratic development of the community through empowerment, networking and partnership. It promotes a culture of giving and volunteering, pooling donations and directing them to improve living conditions. It was able to transform and adapt when traditional funding sources disappeared. Its projects include *Vital Signs* methodology and a youth bank.
- [Trag Foundation](https://www.fondacijatz.org/)⁷² role as a CFSO in the Western Balkans is dynamic and multiple. Its origin is rooted in 1999 and its recent name dates to 2013. It contributes to the development of active and open communities by providing financial, capacity building and other types of support to citizens' initiatives. It has supported more than 1,500 local initiatives with over €13M. It actively promotes and develops individual and corporate strategic giving and the adoption of the new technologies; advocates for a more favorable legislative and fiscal framework; builds the capacities of CSOs to mobilize resources at the local level and contributes to the development of the CF movement in

⁷¹ <https://www.fondacijatz.org/> 11/14/20

⁷² <https://tragfondacija.org/en/homepage-2/> 10/30/20

the Western Balkans, with a strong focus on communicating case studies as human stories. Now it is working on strategies to **overcome donor fatigue from the first COVID-19 campaign**. Its philosophy is to raise issues to solve them and not wait for the government to act, to identify the community priorities since the beginning and involving as much stakeholders as possible. It is kind of national CF, being the first one in the region to have an **endowment**—supported by *C.S. Mott Foundation*—of close to \$800K, using the returns on the investment to support small initiatives.

- Currently, *Trag Foundation* is in a 10- project (2018-2028) with **C.S. Mott Foundation** to promote the creation of CFs (between 15 and 20) in the Western Balkans. It follows the Romanian experience led by *ARC* given its economic, social and political context similarities and the quick success of the movement. In Serbia, four initiative groups have been spotted, but the COVID-19 pandemic is delaying their establishment. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the program is co-funded by *Porticus Foundation* and will take off in February 2021.
- [Foundation Catalyst Balkans](#)⁷³ supports the development and expansion of locally-sourced philanthropy and to increase knowledge exchange within the philanthropy community in the Western Balkans. It stands out for its [GivingBalkans](#)⁷⁴ Database, a first-of-its-kind resource of data pulled from public domain sources on giving in the region.
- The [Zaječar Initiative](#)⁷⁵ (*Zaječarske inicijative*) was established in 2001. With *Trag Foundation*'s accompaniment, it established in 2011 the first CF in Serbia, *Iskorak (Step Forward)*. The Initiative is said to provide strategic advice to CFs and helps them networking, but according to different actors in the field, it seems that it is currently carrying out its mission with a primarily endogenous approach.
- The biggest challenge CFs facing is **mitigating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic** in two ways: mobilizing the community with online interventions and raising financial resources for their work. (Most of corporate funding has been addressed to health institutions and citizens face a significant decrease in their purchasing power). One way to mitigate the effect is by strengthening their **leadership role** in the community, opening spaces for dialogue and identifying community-led priorities and initiatives. Their goal is to make communities more resilient to the health, socio-economic, educational and other negative effects of the pandemic. They need to be more flexible, adaptive and responsive to the changing context and effectively mobilize people and resources.

[Fondacija za mlade Obrenovca](#)⁷⁶ -*Obrenovac Youth Foundation*- [OYF]

- Foundation: 2014

⁷³ <https://catalystbalkans.org/> 10/30/20

⁷⁴ <https://givingbalkans.org/> 10/30/20

⁷⁵ <http://www.zainicijativa.org/en/> 10/30/20

⁷⁶ <https://oyf.rs/en/home-2/> 11/11/20

- Contact: Jelena Ivkovic (Executive director)
- Community: Municipality of Obrenovac (30 kilometers southwest of Belgrade, Serbia). Around 72,000 inhabitants, 25,000 of whom live in the city (40% live in rural areas). It is a commercial city surrounded by rural villages. In the outskirts, there are two coal-fired thermal power plants ([Termonektana Nikola Tesla](#)⁷⁷), which provide about 60% of the country's energy and constitute the ninth largest emitter of sulfur dioxide in the world from industrial plants that use coal as the main emergent.⁷⁸ The air in this area is one of the most polluted in Serbia. Central heating is not available in most rural areas; households use mostly coal and wood as energy sources; and the water and sewage systems are a problem in many of the villages. In 1999 bombardments by NATO forces of the municipality damaged mostly electrical plants, and in 2014 there were some major floods. Lately there have been problems with the integration of migrants and refugees, especially from the Middle East, including one direct attack (with only material losses).

Defining characteristics

- The mission of OYF is to provide opportunities for active citizens to **organize, learn and network**, so that their future initiatives make our community grow.
- Its vision is that every person in our community is an active citizen, **empowered to contribute** to making the community a **better place to live**
- It was created in response to the [2014 southeast Europe floods](#)⁷⁹ that especially affected the city.
- There is a **staff of five**, all of whom are involved **part-time**. They have other jobs and some of them are working remotely from other countries; both factors represent a big challenge. The role of executive director is unpaid and structure costs are very modest. They rely on volunteers, most of them youth, who are involved as part of the selection boards, are invited to participate in public events and trainings and have even performed as photographers who follow the activities. When possible, professional associates from the community have been hired for specific activities.
- One key aspect is **social capital** and **representativeness**: staff were involved in the local municipality, the Youth Council and several youth organizations, so knowledge of bonds with the community are high. Moreover, selection of projects is done by highly diverse and representative independent committees, assuring a 360° vision and multiple perspectives about social impact on the community.

⁷⁷ <https://www.nenergybusiness.com/projects/nikola-tesla-b-thermal-power-plant-tent-b/> 11/11/20

⁷⁸ <https://serbia-energy.eu/single-esiasee/?postid=17515> 11/11/20

⁷⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYrLgepcCe0> 11/11/20

- The foundation is in the middle of an important **transition**, and, thanks to an institutional grant, it is going through strategic planning in the coming years, with the goal of improving the organizational structure.
- Protection of the natural environment is channeled by **The Green Fund program**, which includes small grants to initiatives to foster a cleaner environment—especially from an infrastructure point of view, such as planting trees—and the organization of an Ecological Festival and workshops about sustainability, such as promoting recycling, responsible consumption and the use of clean transportation.
- Promotion of youth initiatives are channeled by the [Youth Fund program](#)⁸⁰, in cooperation with *Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation* and the municipality of Obrenovac, which aims to give youngsters the tools to organize and shape the community they live in to make a tangible change. Small grants of €1,000 are given to groups of five 15-30-year-old members⁸¹ to carry out initiatives, such as improving schools, creating sports facilities and rehabilitation of parks and buildings. There is also a specific [Green project](#)⁸² for youth. In all cases they are mentored by a youth committee.
- General initiatives are channeled by the **Neighborhood Initiatives program**, aiming at improving connections and bonds among members of the community, fostering a solidarity sentiment and supporting and empowering them to take care of the community. It consists of small grants of \$350 to \$500 given to informal groups of five members chosen by an independent committee. The projects are mostly infrastructural, such as visible murals or agreeable spaces for the citizens.
- In 2015, the Foundation established the [Community Center](#)⁸³, which included free services, primarily for children and youth, such as creative and educational workshops, language courses, concerts, movie screenings and open conversations with the community. It stopped working in 2017 due to financial constraints but this year an institutional grant was received to reopen it, using a public space, avoiding paying rent, and making it more sustainable. The intention is to establish a new management model based on the cooperation of different sectors and with greater citizen involvement to be able to improve work conditions of CSOs.
- A yearly [fundraising campaign](#)⁸⁴ is organized for a specific cause, but the pandemic prevented it this year. In 2019 an [award for local philanthropy](#)⁸⁵ was organized. It was supposed to be an annual

⁸⁰ <http://oyf.rs/en/programs/youth-fund/> 10/17/20

⁸¹ According to the Law on Youth in Serbia, young people are between 15 and 30 years old.

⁸² <http://oyf.rs/sr/konkurs-za-finansiranje-malih-inicijativa-neformalnih-grupa-iz-obrenovca/> 10/18/20

⁸³ <https://obrenovac.rs/?p=6522> 11/03/20

⁸⁴ <https://oyf.rs/sr/zavrshena-kampanja-prikupljanja-sredstava-za-renoviranje-osnovne-skole-u-velikom-polju/> 11/03/20

⁸⁵ <https://oyf.rs/sr/obrenovacka-nagrada-za-filantropiju-konkurs/> 11/03/20

event, but it is unlikely that it will be organized this year. The local media *RTV MAG* regularly reports on its activities, such as the [bike race](#)⁸⁶, [fundraising campaign](#)⁸⁷ and the [Youth Fund](#)⁸⁸.

- The foundation is planning to advocate with other stakeholders for empty public spaces to be used in accordance with the needs of the local community, especially for youth, and to find an adequate and democratic model of community involvement and governance.
- *Trag Foundation, Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation* and *Civic Initiatives* are OYF's largest donors:
 - *Trag Foundation* supported OYF at the beginning through an institutional grant of \$5,000. After that, OYF has taken part in their *Active Community program* (which includes capacity building and study visits), as well as in the *Sustainability Academy*, a program to build capacities to mobilize resources in the community. (A \$5,000 matching grant was received to renovate a rural school.) Cooperation continues and may include future fund transfers. Because of that, *Trag Foundation* is considered both customer and key partner.
 - *Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation* is a partner of the *Youth Fund* and projects that mainly concern young people, as well as the promotion of local philanthropy.
 - *Civic Initiatives* has been supporting OYF from the beginning. Thanks to Initiatives, OYF launched the *Neighborhood Initiatives Fund*. Furthermore, this year OYF received an institutional grant under Civic Initiatives' *Together for Active Civil Society program*.
- The foundation is facing two main issues: on one hand, the **local municipality is not very open to collaborating** and recognizing CSOs as credible connectors and helpers. These organizations are not part of the foundation's political agenda. They provide few resources, some spaces at most. On the other hand, the **civil society sector in Obrenovac is very weak**. It has few CSOs and they are very small, created for ad hoc activities and typically lacking expertise. They tackle social issues (integration of people with disabilities, Roma people, migrants and refugees), culture and the arts, children and youth, and humanitarian activities. OYF supports them by providing grants, venues and guidance.

⁸⁶ http://www.rtmag.co.rs/24_sata_o_obrenovcu_objava.php?o=3761 11/03/20

⁸⁷ http://www.rtmag.co.rs/24_sata_o_obrenovcu_objava.php?o=11580 11/03/20

⁸⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPgmRI8VqY&feature=youtu.be> 11/03/20

KEY PARTNERS	KEY ACTIVITIES	VALUE PROPOSITION	CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS	CUSTOMER SEGMENTS	
Trag Foundation	Building partnerships	Empowering citizens to organize, learn, network and channel initiatives to make the community a better place to live	Decision-making	Community	
Ministry of Environmental Protection	Yearly fundraising campaign		Trust and solidarity	Youth and children	
Center for Civic Action	Communications		Network engagement	Corporation donors (Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation)	
Local media RTV MAG	Needs and impact research and surveys	Independent representative committees with no political involvement	Local businesses and individual donors		
Local council		Volunteers training and coordination	Protection of the natural environment for the current and upcoming generations	Guidance and accompaniment	CSOs (Civic Initiatives, Academy for the Development of Philanthropy Global Fund for Community Foundations, Trag Foundation)
		Promotion of Youth Initiatives, giving them the opportunity to step in, lead and contribute to improve the neighbourhood	Bottom-up promotion of philanthropy		
		CSR high impact long-term community projects for revitalisation	Educational and recreational opportunities, emotional support, empowerment, soft-skills development		
		Boost of local activity and commerce	Mentoring		
		Boost of civil society space, fostering a participate and dynamic environment	Divac Youth Center		
			One-on-one relationship		
		KEY RESOURCES		Concrete change and results' visibility	
				Co-investment and promotion of local philanthropy	
				CHANNELS	
		Social capital and trust		Website and blog	
		5 part-time staff		FB and Instagram	
Volunteers		Local Media RTV MAG (Radio and Television)			
		Events: round tables, forums, public presentations			
		Research studies			
		Community Center			
		Youth Bank			
		One-on-one meetings			
COST STRUCTURE		REVENUE STREAMS			
Staff salaries		Project and institutional grants			
Office rent		Donations			
Grants/fellowships		Project and institutional grants			
Community Center rent					

MEXICO

PESL and community philanthropy context⁸⁹

POLITICAL

- Score on political environment: 3.1 out of 5.
- Traditionally, POs did not have legal impediments from the government. In the past, there have been frustrated attempts to enact laws and regulations to strengthen oversight and cut benefits to POs, but the relationship has recently dramatically changed.
- During the last two years, under the assumption of generalized corruption, **civil society is being heavily targeted by the government**. Amongst other actions, the government removed the budget from *Indesol* (National Institute of Social Development), an intermediary for giving public funding to CSOs. The policy is purposely weakening them by providing direct financial support to individuals. This situation is especially worrisome for the aid assistance CSOs, which depended on public support almost exclusively. Recently, moreover, the fiscal policy is pushing to remove the tax-exempt status and simplified audit system of CSOs. Civil society is organizing to counter these measures.
- Public powers are not involved in promoting a philanthropic tradition in the country. Incentives for donating to POs are often considered negative for tax collection overall. Public infrastructure to support the development of POs is scarce and under-resourced.

ECONOMIC

- GDP per capita: Around \$10,000⁹⁰.
- Score on cross-border flows: 3.75 out of 5.
- Unemployment rate is quite low, 3.3% in March 2020⁹¹. Salaries are relatively low, especially in POs, and the informal economy has a heavy weight at all levels. CSOs have long competed for limited resources.

SOCIAL

- Population: 126.2M.
- Number of registered charitable organizations: 9,366⁹².

⁸⁹ <https://globalindices.iupui.edu/environment/regions/latin-america/mexico.html> 11/01/20

⁹⁰ <https://www.ceicdata.com/en/indicator/mexico/gdp-per-capita> 11/01/20

⁹¹ <https://www.ceicdata.com/en/indicator/mexico/unemployment-rate#:~:text=Mexico's%20Unemployment%20Rate%20dropped%20to,an%20average%20rate%20of%203.94%20%25.11/19/20>

⁹² https://uk.practicallaw.thomsonreuters.com/9-634-0169?_lrTS=20200517044525717&transitionType=Default&contextData=%28sc.Default%29#:~:text=The%20number%20of%20charitable%20organisations%20in%20Mexico%20as%20of%202019,compared%20with%20the%20previous%20year.11/05/20

- Global Philanthropy Environment Index Score: 3.47 out of 5.
- World Giving Index⁹³: 73th place (28%).
 - Helped a stranger, or someone you did not know who needed help? 67th place (45%).
 - Donated money to a charity? 83rd place (20%).
 - Volunteered your time to an organization? 65th place (18%).
- Score on socio-cultural environment: 3.3 out of 5.
- Five main social issues are addressed by POs: primary and high school education, health and medical research, basic needs, food, housing and economic development. The CSOs, which face general corruption and social insecurity, vary from citizen oversight, human rights, freedom of the press, indigenous rights, and services to victims of organized crime. Many of them start as social movements and later become institutionalized, while others never register.
- Because of the **Catholic heritage** and the historical development of the State, the traditional view is that it is the **duty of the government and the church** to meet the needs of the most vulnerable. There is strong state control of social assistance activities and many CSOs with religious origin have been for a long time bringing people together around faith practices and tackling concrete issues, such as childhood, youth or disability. Gender discrimination is ingrained in the country's culture, but less obvious in the philanthropic sector.
- There is a strong philanthropic culture, yet much relates to **informal small-scale giving** through **unregistered organizations**. The number of organized CSOs is proportionately low compared to other countries and most are concentrated in a few urban centers. The sector is in the very early stages of consolidation. There is a growing number of CSOs devoted to the professionalization of the sector and a growing interest in the generation of knowledge among research centers and universities. Several cross-sectorial initiatives have developed. Still, gathering data and mapping CSOs is quite difficult and some structural conditions must be overcome.
- There is a **generalized mistrust of POs**, especially of the ones related to corporations. Even though tax-exempt POs are required to disclose their financial information, this data is not available to the public and is mostly unknown. Still, the population perceives the existence of CSOs as positive and important for overcoming social issues.

LEGAL⁹⁴

- Score on tax incentives: 3.25 out of 5.
- Score on ease operating POs: 3.93 out of 5.
- The average time established by law to register a PO is between 0 and 30 days.

⁹³ <https://www.cafonline.org/about-us/publications/2019-publications/caf-world-giving-index-10th-edition> 11/05/20

⁹⁴ All the content can be modified due to the recent modification of the Law about the corporate tax in CSOs.

- The average cost for registering a PO is \$500. (With associated costs the average is US\$1,500 and there is no minimum amount of capital.) The registration process can be costly and time consuming because of the lack of widely available information and the involvement of different authorities.
- Legal forms of POs are association, cooperative, society and others. Names vary according to each state, the most common name being “*institución de asistencia privada*” (private assistance institution). Regular POs have discretion to determine the structure and governance of the organization; there is not even a legal obligation to establish a board of directors/trustees.
- Registered POs are considered nonprofit organizations under the income tax code and are **not subject to taxation on their income**, although exceptions and limits apply.
- Some POs have the additional “*donataria autorizada*” tax-exempt status that allows them to provide receipts to donors to get a **deduction** on their **individual income tax**. There is a lack of clarity regarding the documentation needed, and obtaining it may prove very time-consuming.
- There are income tax incentives for donations at the federal level in the form of deductions, with a limit of **7% of the previous fiscal year’s taxable income** for both individuals and corporations.
- The congress just passed a law⁹⁵ that sets notable limitations to the regular tax-exempt and “*donataria autorizada*” statuses, which will affect all CSOs operations quite negatively.

COMMUNITY PHILANTHROPY AND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION CONTEXT

- Number of CFs: 16.
- CFSO: *Centro Mexicano para la Filantropía —Mexican Center for Philanthropy—*[**CEMEFI**] (1993-2009) and *Comunalia* (2009 to the present).
- Mapping CFs in Mexico represents a huge challenge, aggravated by the fact that many CSOs combine different approaches and themes (human rights, gender, democracy, politics, etc.).
- Mexico has followed a **hybrid model** for CFs, with a high degree of variation among regions. It is important to say that a considerable number of them have a corporate origin.
- **CEMEFI**⁹⁶ is a private, non-profit civil association founded in 1988. It promotes and articulates the philanthropic participation of citizens, CSOs and companies to achieve a more equitable, supportive and prosperous society. It accounts 1,584 members (institutions and individuals) and it is identified as an important source of reliable information on the civil society sector and social responsibility in Mexico. It was the first promoter of the CF movement in Mexico (which started

⁹⁵ <https://www.animalpolitico.com/blog-invitado/asi-quedaron-los-cambios-a-la-lisr-que-afectan-a-osc/> 11/22/20

⁹⁶ <https://www.cemefi.org/> 11/22/20

in the decade of 90s, if not before⁹⁷), was influenced by the US model and was financially supported by, amongst others, *C.S. Mott Foundation*, *Inter-American Foundation* and *W.K. Kellogg Foundation*.

- In 1993, it organized the First Seminar on CFs, looking for models triggering local development based on the mobilization of local resources that could be viable in the Mexican reality and that could contribute to the promotion of philanthropy to achieve social development objectives. In 1996 it promoted the [Oaxaca Community Foundation](#)⁹⁸, the first created Mexican CF. Its beginning was quite difficult and tense because it was being promoted by foreign capital, and other CSOs were looking at it with distrust, considering it a rival. From this experience, other groups became interested, giving birth to other CFs in the country.
- *CEMEFI* continued with the promotion and strengthening of CFs in Mexico, triggering a process that included the construction of endowment funds in each CF; the conceptual development of the model; the creation of standards of performance for CFs; accompaniment; technical assistance; international linkage; and multiple collaboration and development projects. In 2009, the initiative crystallized with the creation of the *Comunalia* project, which constituted a step forward in the development of the donor sector. Two years later the formal spin off was effective.
- [Comunalia](#)⁹⁹ is the alliance of CFs of Mexico. It is a non-profit Mexican civil association created in 2011 aimed at strengthening the Mexican model of CFs by: promoting the collective work of the partner foundations to achieve a greater social impact in the communities where they work; investigating and positioning the model to have representativeness and collective dialogue; and influencing public policies. Currently, it is promoting the concept of CFs in Latin America, with Chile and Colombia being the most advanced countries. *Comunalia* made up of 14 FCs (previously 16, but 2 left) and exists in 13 states of the country. Some of them are US influenced, with business origins, with a large grant-making budget and high focus on strengthening (e.g. *Fundación Comunitaria Puebla IBP*, *Corporativa de Fundaciones* and *Fundación Cozumel*). Others are much more modest in terms of budget and size and with a very local and rural approach that empowers and invigorates civil society in their regions (e.g., *Fundación Malinalco*).

⁹⁷ In 1985 fertile land began to be developed for the creation of CF in Mexico. Initially, 3 funds were created: the Córdoba Fund, the Chihuahuense Business Fund and the Cozumel Fund

⁹⁸ <http://fundacion-oaxaca.org/> 11/14/20

⁹⁹ <https://comunalia.org.mx/> 11/13/20

[Fundación Comunitaria Malinalco](#)¹⁰⁰ (*Malinalco Community Foundation*)

- Foundation: 2007
- Contact: Oscar Plens (General Director)
- Community: Municipality of Malinalco (95 kilometers southwest of Mexico DF, Mexico). 27,000 inhabitants. It presents a great cultural, historical, natural, architectonic and culinary heritage. It is a rural area where the population is divided into small villages and settlements. There is quite a big difference among them; depending on the location, they may be safe places or dangerous ones.

Defining characteristics

- The foundation's mission is to preserve and care for the great natural, social, historical and spiritual wealth of the area. It promotes the participation and collaboration of its members to achieve creative solutions to social or environmental challenges.
- There is a strong preference to **impulse and accompany projects** and then let them go, only leading them and being operational if there are no other actors in the field willing to do so. Consequently, it follows an **anti-assistance-based approach or policy** except in the case of major emergencies, such as the last two earthquakes. Its efforts are highly directed at mobilizing resources within the community (despite the lack of individual financial giving), and it promotes philanthropy over charity.
- **It empowers** the population and constitutes a connections builder with stakeholders, promoting participation and entrepreneurship among the community members.
- It has become a **hub of information and research center for the region**, being able to detect and connect challenges and centers of social action and provide an accompaniment in the take-off of initiatives.
- It focuses on **internal and external capacity building**, to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and soft skills required to carry on projects and not depend on external players.
- **Strong social ties and connections** in the region are one of its main assets. There were no CSOs in the region before its creation. Now, 24 groups and organizations operate (46% legally constituted) and work in the fields of education environment, water caring, reforestation, culture, recovery of historical heritage, youth, migrants, security, job creation, addiction prevention, community development and health.
- The board acts on a volunteer basis, brings connections and makes small donations. Nonetheless, the members are far from the ground, which complicates matters for the operative team to take

¹⁰⁰ <https://fundacioncomunitariamalinalco.org> 11/02/20

decisions. Moreover, staff salaries are very low and, thus, it is very difficult to achieve a high degree of professionalization.

- The campaign to face the COVID-19 pandemic has included several actions, such as food and mask distribution to more than 8,000 people, medical equipment delivery to two hospitals and a program to reactivate the agro-ecological economy.

KEY PARTNERS	KEY ACTIVITIES	VALUE PROPOSITION	CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS	CUSTOMER SEGMENTS		
CSOs and support organizations: Comunalía, CECYTEM plantel Malinalco, CBT Cuauhtinchan, Ashoka	Fundraising for private and public calls for proposals	Preservation and care of the natural, social, historical and spiritual assets	Capacity building and co-investment	Community		
	Design, monitoring and reporting of the projects	Promotion of the entrepreneurial spirit and collaboration in sustainably solving problems	Promotion of the collaboration of all stakeholders	Youth and children		
Groups and organizational operational partners (Golf Club, Centro Comunitario La Loma, Arpe Foundation, Imaginalco, Observatorio Ciudadano de Malinalco, Grupo Oriente, Productores ecológicos de Chalmita, Orquesta Esperanza Azteca, PROBOSQUE, Universidad del Medio Ambiente)	Communication and negotiation with stakeholders	Regeneration, protection and sustainability of the woods	Accompaniment of community-led initiatives	Corporation and private donors (Fomento Social Banamex, Promotora Social México, HSBC, Dibujando un mañana, S.C. y Johnson & Son, Fundación Karuna, Red Juvenil Nacional Reforestamos México)		
	Internal and external capacity building		Participative diagnosis			
	Research and data compilation	Engagement and decision-making in community challenges for a better future	Educational and recreational opportunities, emotional support, empowerment, soft-skills development			
	Management and accompaniment of CSOs	Ethical and transparent policy vehicle with high social impact change	Pedagogy of philanthropy			
	Implementation of the programs		Annual financial and legal reports			
			Continuous follow-up and invitations to engage			
					Public donors	
		KEY RESOURCES			CHANNELS	
		Social capital and trust			Group and organizations meetings, workshops and activities	
	Fluye CDI, Espacio Cultural Seis Calles, Centro Juvenil Xolotlán, Voces y Visiones	16 staff (hired + scholarship)			Monthly newsletter, Blog and FB	
	Volunteers		"Recorrido al Mictlán" community festival and annual fair			
	Website		One-on-one meetings			
			Events and networkings			
COST STRUCTURE		REVENUE STREAMS				
Staff salaries		Ad-hoc emergency funds (Unidos por Malinalco Fund, La Loma Fund)				
Project costs (e.g. equipment in wood culture program)		Infraestructure support fees for NGOs				
Venue rental of Terrocal (Casa Comunitaria)		Grants and donations				
		Public grants				

CONCLUSIONS

Context is everything and no two CFs are identical, but traversing four CFs in four countries shows that there are some universal factors present in all of them that make them shine (key factors), while others can be important but not essential (other factors).

Key factors

- **Public trust, community engagement, ability to mobilize, prestige and leadership** are the most valuable assets of a CF. Building social ties and relationships with and amongst all community stakeholders must be a priority from the beginning.
- **Social capital takes years to develop.** It can sometimes seem that not much return has been achieved in relation to fund development or activity. Nonetheless, with patience and time there will be evidence that they pay off.
- **Community philanthropy** philosophy comes (or should come) earlier than CFs. The CF is a specific form or vehicle of community philanthropy, and therefore efforts should be set first in the roots, and not on the appearance. A complete success cannot be expected from just promoting CFs as organizations. The community needs to understand first what philanthropy is and mobilize its resources before becoming institutionalized. Giving circles can be an intermediary step.
- **Promotion of solidarity, community philanthropy** and the **culture of giving** is a marathon, not a sprint. Cultivating it must aim for long-term effects, not short-run successes, and should advocate and make pedagogy regarding individuals, CSOs, public powers and other organizations, especially corporation foundations with common goals. For that purpose, tools, such as publications, events and awards can be very effective. It is useful to also understand how philanthropy around Christian communities has been working to take advantage of this heritage and apply them to community philanthropy.
- **Leaders** who boldly step up and take responsibility for making things happen make a difference in the startup phase and during a foundation's consolidation.
- In order to share knowledge and good practices, a **capacity building framework** is needed at multiple levels: from a CFSO to a CF, from a CF to the community and within the same CF. Technical skills, soft-skills and teamwork should be at the center of that.
- **Financial support** from large philanthropic institutions or CFSOs to support the establishment and consolidation of CFs is required. This requirement allows CFs to look for financial sustainability in the long run—ideally with matching funds—and to be able to at least cover the operational costs. Yet, it is not enough. Technical support is also extremely relevant. In any case, the project has to

follow a **bottom-up approach**, with the direct involvement of CSOs, private institutions and individuals; otherwise, it will very likely disappear or become just a regular CSO.

- A considerable **degree of neutrality** is required to be representative of all legitimate community interests, although complete objectivity is unattainable. Governance, no matter its form and size, must be transparent and act with trustworthiness. The fewer the ownership projects, the fewer the conflicts of interests and the more resources to spend building bridges. Having said that, political influence may be a sought or an unexpected consequence that must be leveraged. It is important to withstand the constant changes, not to get caught up and to choose not to get caught up.
- **Mobilizing local resources** is a must. Being intermediary institutions and avoiding being 100% operational distinguish CFs from the rest of the CSOs in the field. They must work as a safety net to pool all kinds of resources for community benefit, and not act as a competitor with other CSOs.
- Through their mission, CFs pursue **social transformation**, shifting decision-making power and trying to address social, economic, cultural challenges, and sometimes even political ones. Without assessing the magnitude of their aspirations, they contribute to local development and become a social change entity, shaping the landscape and being shaped by it at the same time.
- **Community individuals** and CSOs must be not only recipients of the CFs' action, but also be active actors who engage in multiple initiatives to leave a mark in their world. Community foundations must offer the resources to facilitate the achievement of their goals. The concepts of charity and beneficiary are replaced by solidarity and change maker, allowing and fostering the community to take the lead, propose solutions and implement them. For that, CFs must engage in participatory decision-making processes and bodies, like committees, round tables or assemblies.
- **Youth and children** are a non-negotiable priority collective. The same approach of both giver and taker is embedded in the movement, with special tools as youth banks. They are seen as change makers as adults and considered the future of the community. In addition, many opportunities are offered pivoting around education and recreation, to ensure a complete and healthy development progress of the personality and soft skills of children and youth.

Other factors

- **Legal constitution and taxation framework** are not key once a threshold of legal security is achieved. They influence and limit the impact of a CF, but they can be overcome by other factors.
- **A lack of a specific legal form for CFs** is not an impediment. It may entail less public visibility and definition challenges, but also more flexibility to adapt to the local context.

- **Endowments** are far from crucial for fulfilling the mission, and they do not provide a relevant yearly income source in many markets because of low market rates. However, it is advisable to have an emergency reserve that can be swiftly deployed to face any kind of crisis.
- **Funding from public institutions and other resources outside the community** are positive supplementary sources when matched with local sources and do not create excessive dependency. Matching grants are the best example.
- None of the four CFs makes use of a **quantitative and qualitative evidence-based indicators framework** to assess the needs of the community and help develop multi-year thematic programs, such as *Vital Signs*. Its development is not a key success factor in the first years, when visible challenges are tackled first. With time, when the CF is well equipped and other priorities are covered, it may—and probably should—set up a data-driven objective scheme to inform the strategy and better meet community demands.
- **Professionalization of the staff** is not key for a CF to operate, but not having paid staff will likely prevent the achievement of an organic grow and robustness. In addition, it will always remain vulnerable to external conditions.
- It is advisable that **board members** have a deep knowledge of the field and are connected both to the ground and to donors, complementing the direction. Their prerogatives and alignment with the operative team have considerable influence over strategic decisions.
- Having a fruitful **relationship with the municipality** or city council is desirable, but in case this is not feasible for any reasons, this does not impede the CF's role. It just slows or hinders its action.
- **Public support** can take many forms besides financial donations, such as in-kind donations, volunteering, prescriber/recommender role, pro-bono support, etc. In communities where financial support from individuals is not feasible, these forms are especially highly visible and valued.
- In **economically or socially depressed communities or communities with very few CSOs**, starting a CF has the advantage of not being seen as a competitor but as a creator and connector from the beginning. A CF may can leverage the fact of uniting the community around the main topics of concern and meeting its dormant demands. In communities with an existing vibrant civil society with numerous actors, it may prove more difficult for the CF to unite them all at the beginning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for AEF and C.S. Mott Foundation project

- To first foster **community philanthropy, solidarity and culture of giving** initiatives with a long-term strategy, regardless of *C.S. Mott Foundation's* continued support, and to opt only for the form of CFs where most of the key factors, especially regarding leadership, can flourish. It will be key to continuously organize emotional disseminations and presentations to engage the public.
- To follow **ARC's approach** in Romania with the triad standpoint (**international, national and local**) to build a robust framework, make use of its success as an **example**, but also from other ones that illustrate the benefits of the movement at each of its levels.
- To specifically target **informal community groups**—some of which may have been created because of the COVID-19 pandemic—that can become more powerful and engaged than already established organizations. At the beginning, grantmaking should not be a priority. Following the model of *Fundació Tot Raval*, **connecting all stakeholders**¹⁰¹ and leading **participatory and democratic processes**—which are much easier to sustain—must be prioritized.
- To illustrate the **successful and quick reactions** of CFs from countries like Romania and Italy to the **COVID-19 pandemic**, showcasing them as examples of what a community can accomplish together in emergencies and how it can swiftly react to the context and needs.
- To advocate for **English language knowledge** of CF staff, both when hiring and as capacity building programs. This factor is crucial to getting the most out of exchanges and learnings when collaborating at the international level.
- To organize a **capacity building framework** that combines technical skills with a general set of soft skills (leadership, networking, negotiation, planning, etc.), with the support of other CFSOs—especially from *ECFI*—that can provide the tools and connections for a complete set of guidelines.
- To find the **lowest common denominator** when propelling the network of current and future CFs. It should add value to all the members and maybe allow for different kind of engagements.
- To set **qualitative indicators**, besides the quantitative ones. A concrete number of CFs created should not be the only main key performance indicator [KPI] of the project. For that, it is necessary to negotiate flexibility to adapt the project tactics and outcomes on the way.
- To maintain a **balanced approach between total financial support and cofounding in every intervention**, incentivizing both the participation and responsibility of CFs and making sure that value is being added at every moment. “Tight resources make you shake the tree”.

¹⁰¹ <https://totraval.org/ca/com-ens-organitzem> 12/04/20

Recommendations for OSIFE/OSF

- To become fully aware of the **existence and role of a CF** as an **intermediary vehicle** between all stakeholders in civil society, that is able to contribute to **social transformation** in its community by building bridges and tackling issues related to OSF's mission in economic justice, climate action, migration, information democracy and defense against authoritarianism. Special importance should be paid to the roles played by CFs in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and in any future crisis. Case studies are key to promoting concepts.
- To **build on past work** regarding CFs and share experiences amongst the staff and with other OSF programs, for a comprehensive view of their scope and connection with portfolios.
- To promote, in the next strategy period the **channeling of resources** to CFs that work on **local issues with a global perspective** (democracy, pluralism, civic rights, civic participation, empowerment and representation of minorities, etc.) through some of its portfolios:
 - The most relevant issues are combating the closing space for civil society and promoting **resilience and civic engagement** (especially in Central Eastern Europe); working towards **inclusive long-term migration integration and policies**¹⁰² (especially in Italy, Germany and Spain); and fostering **economic, racial and climate justice** in all of Europe, to combat historic biases, precarious work and gender discrimination, amongst others.
 - The most natural and effective way should leverage the intermediary (and regrantee) role of **CFSOs and other support institutions and networks**, such as the *Global Fund for Community Foundations* [GFCF], ECFI, *European Foundation Center* [EFC], *Ariadne* and *Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support* [WINGS].
- To increase the percentage of grantmaking dedicated to **organizational grants**—which fund missions and strategic objectives—and the degree of **flexibility in project grants**, setting expectations over a longer period of time and sticking by a stable range of trustable stakeholders during the whole strategy period.
- When possible, and through international networks and stakeholders, make connections and referrals of non-priority issues to other well-equipped donors better suited to solve them.

This paper will be shared with OSIFE colleagues, and an initial webinar presentation will be organized to check for the appeal and fit of the recommendations within the framework of the organization's new strategy, which is yet to be approved. Changing the existing mindset will depend on two key factors: the **ability of CFs to embrace local issues from a broad human rights perspective** and the ability of OSIFE to **identify and channel support mainly through CFSOs**.

¹⁰² https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/thematic_meeting_messina_oct2017.pdf 11/20/20

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