

Community foundation building: Identifying key capacities for the Spanish context

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Rosa Gallego, Senior Fellow, International Fellows Program ~ 2021

Abstract

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

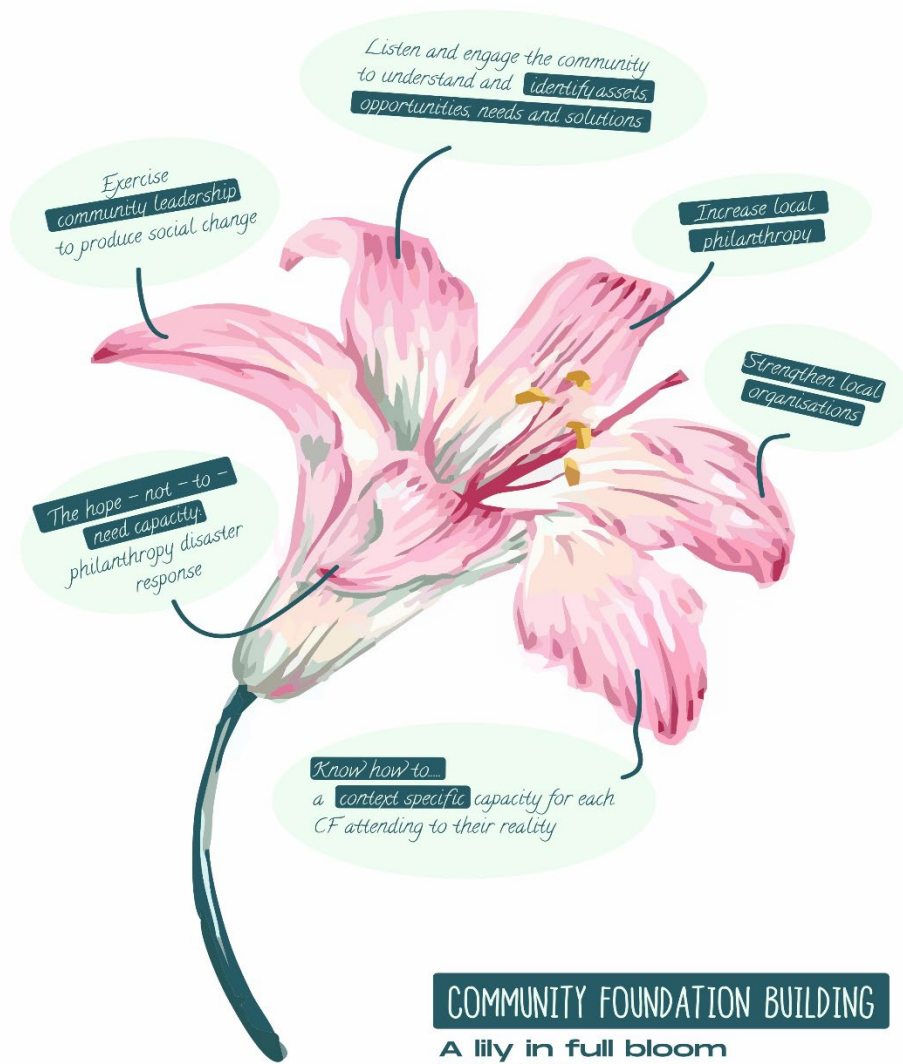
A review of existing literature and conversations with experts leads the author to identify six key capacities that community foundations should have or should aspire to have. The capacities are:

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

Gallego offers tools and activities to help exercise each capacity.

I am not a good gardener; however I find flowers are useful for building metaphors with the foundation world. If I were to portray the foundation sector as a collection of flowers, for community foundations in Spain I would choose a pink lily. In China, lilies are used in weddings because they are tied to 100 years of love. And when they are pink, they symbolize prosperity and abundance. I could not think of a better flower to symbolize institutions that are built by the love of many for a place and that are conceived to be long lasting. The six petals of a lily can represent the six key capacities required to be a “fully flowering Community Foundation”.

Rosa Gallego



0. INTRODUCTION

The Spanish Association of Foundations (known as Asociación Española de Fundaciones; heretofore referenced as AEF) took on the challenge of promoting the growth of community foundations (CFs) in Spain in 2019 at the invitation of Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. The AEF had previously engaged with Fundación Bertelsmann in Spain over a decade ago in its project to identify and strengthen existing foundations that had CF characteristics. The concept was unknown then in Spain, and although some ten foundations were identified as CFs, and some continue working nowadays, the concept did not catch on. As a result, the numbers have not increased, the organizations have not grown local philanthropy significantly, nor has knowledge about this kind of foundation spread.

Once the decision was made by AEF to accept the invitation, we were confronted with several challenges. Among the first was to explain what a CF is and the second was to design a support programme that will help set up new community foundations. For this programme, several strategies were designed and deployed: awareness raising through communication and webinars; a selection process to identify suitable groups of founders, etc. But from the very beginning, the team was faced with the need to identify the key capacities a community foundation should have. This was and still is important for communication purposes and for identification of suitable founders, but foremost to ensure that we equip new and existing foundations with the knowledge necessary to successfully develop their work. The identification is not just a matter of translating existing practices from other countries. It has to do with a strategic view, as in which niche should CFs position themselves in Spain in order to make a meaningful contribution to social development, taking into account our context.

Spain has a very well-developed social sector, with a high level of professionalism and readiness to cooperate and absorb resources to scale programs; experience in piloting, testing and scaling solutions; and last, but not least, a long tradition of cooperating with local authorities. However, that sector needs to become more sustainable. Sustainability essentially means diversifying sources of funding and cooperating more with a larger and more diverse range of stakeholders and maintaining a broader view of what communities need.

1. COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS AS A SINGULAR SPECIES

Community foundations is a rather new concept and comprise a small segment within the foundation world. That they lack a single definition brings challenges to understanding what these institutions are and how they operate. This challenge affects, among others, support organisations as they begin to promote the concept of community foundations in a country with little prior history of such a concept. For that reason, support organizations need to adapt the concept to the local context and design the kind of support and programme content needed for the sector to emerge and thrive.

There are no estimates on the number of foundations worldwide, but if according to Global Philanthropy Report (Johnson, 2018, p.10) there are more than 260.000 foundations in 39 countries, we can say that foundations are counted by the hundreds of thousands. Meanwhile according to existing data, community foundations are counted by the thousands, probably somewhere around 2000 (Community Foundations Atlas, 2014). So, at the beginning of the third decade of the twenty-first century, community foundations seem to be less than one percent of existing foundations in the world.

As to their “age”—and while there is not much information on their first appearance— it seems that in some places, foundations date back over eight hundred years. In the UK there are foundations that were set up even before the promulgation of *its Magna Carta* (1215). In Spain, records mentioned the setting up of Fundación Abadía Santa Leocadia de la Vega on 11th March 1162 and the registration of Fundación Hospital de Graus on 1st July 1405. In contrast, community foundations started in 1914, just over 100 years ago.

Obviously neither their number nor their novelty are negative attributes. Community foundations were envisioned to respond to new societal factors that did not exist before. Organizing local philanthropy in a way that was more effective in a time when that philanthropy experienced a strong growth was essential. So their birth is linked to an innovation to solve a problem that did not exist before.

The fact that they’re relatively modest in number compared to the total universe of foundations corresponds, in my view, to the African proverb “If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” Community foundations are a good example of “going together” which makes them institutions that need the agreement of many to be set up. Therefore, their establishment is subject to a slower and more complex process than that of other foundations—which, generally speaking, requires the will of only one founder to be set up.

Literature about community foundations is still scarce. Furthermore, when approaching the study of CFs, an important number of readings refer to the original community foundation model and to the concept of community foundations as they developed in the United States. This is understandable when considering the relatively small number of these institutions, their short history and their uneven geographical distribution. There is more written about Cleveland’s community foundation and the model of community foundations that predominated until the 1980s/1990s in the US, than there are publications about CFs in the rest of the world combined. This affects how community foundations are portrayed and, therefore, understood. And in countries unfamiliar with CFs, the lack of literature creates an entrance barrier for understanding the concept and for the creation and development of CFs.

It is noteworthy (and to be celebrated) that in the last two decades, efforts have been made to document the growth, characteristics, and reality of community foundations around the world. Although it will take some time before a more balanced knowledge production is achieved, this trend should be encouraged and maintained. Such information will help to provide an

understanding of the diversity that community foundations encompass nowadays and may serve to lower entrance barriers to their growth.

The characteristic of diversity is a second challenge to understanding what a community foundation is. While this is at the base of the richness of the movement and the enormous possibilities for adapting CFs to all sorts of contexts and evolving them as needed, the diversity challenge is not a minor issue. It is impossible to have a single definition. Definitions are extraordinarily helpful for understanding what something is and are the basis for how something is understood and explained.

Once the community foundation concept moves out of its original setting—both in time and place—and is actualized in widely different contexts and adapted to the time, place, and culture of very distinct places, the possibilities for a one sentence definition are extinguished. Despite existing definitions, it is not possible to find one that would be time and context relevant everywhere. This poses a challenge that has frequently led researchers, practitioners, and the support ecosystem in its varying forms, to opt for the use of lists of concepts to characterize what a community foundation is.

To date, no single definition has been found that will serve all, nevertheless agreement on sets of characteristics has helped for various purposes: to map the sector, to produce standards, to establish membership criteria, among others. A final element is language and the difficulty of translating certain concepts, hence adding to the disparities this decentralized approach has created.

2. BREAKING DOWN THE DEFINITION OF COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

The concepts that I propose as critical for defining what CFs are, what they do, how they do it and what they should aim to achieve can be categorized as follows: **characteristics, principles, capacities and roles**. The definition of each category and its content may help a community foundation support organization (CFSO) to produce its own reference framework to both communicate about CFs and to support them in their set up and activities. The following table is offered as a compass to help ensure that all key aspects of a CF are taken into account.

	Oxford dictionary	
Characteristic	a typical feature or quality that something/somebody has	Distinctiveness
Role	the function or position that somebody has or is expected to have in an organization, in society or in a relationship	What it should aim to achieve
Principles	a law, a rule or a theory that something is based on	Ethical framework
Capacity	the ability to understand or to do something	Doing what

In principle, and in looking at the definitions of each term, it should not be difficult to produce sets of attributes for each of the four categories. However, the analysis of several publications discussing CFs actually shows that the attributes or components of each category are in many

cases mixed. Without entering a linguistic debate, however, there is a clear consequence of this linguistic issue. The above-mentioned concepts provide the bases on which researchers and practitioners alike build knowledge about what a CF is. They also provide a base from which to analyze its evolution in history. And even more important, to distill commonalities or differences that explain the richness of the organisations that are identified as part of the same movement.

In a rapidly changing world, the analysis of those concepts may also allow for ongoing examination of whether and how community foundations should evolve (or even radically change) in order to continue as meaningful institutions that work to improve the quality of life of people in their communities. Outside the academic world, “lists of attributes” help people around the globe learn about a type of institution that can serve in its community to propel social transformation and enable a myriad of stakeholders to also understand it and, more importantly, promote and support it. For countries unfamiliar with community foundations and where attempts are underway to promote the concept and help establish such institutions, how they are defined is critical, and it is one of the first things that support organisations face when starting the journey of promoting and supporting the CF concept.

The challenge for a CFSO in building up a nascent movement is twofold:

- A communication challenge: This challenge is twofold. Due to the lack of existing examples in the country, the CFSO will have to do not only a linguistic translation of the concepts, but a contextual one as well, thereby adapting the concept to the country’s reality. This adaptation is a strategic decision that will have an impact on the way that new organisations will be set up and perceived.
- A programmatic challenge: Depending on the CF definition and the attributed roles, values and actions, a different provision of programs will be needed to support emerging organisations.

So, this is not a minor issue for CFSOs; it is important that it is perceived as a major issue, to which time and thought are dedicated.

The starting point for many of these attempts is to translate and adapt some of the existing sets of features. There is no scarcity of them. There are even authors who have produced comparative charts with several of the most well-known features. (See Annex: Figure 7.1: Comparative matrix of the definitions of community foundations from “A promising tool for local innovative development: The case of civic or community foundations in the Iberian Peninsula” [Hernández Renner, 2018])

When reading those sets, the “context” lens needs to be applied with a view to choosing and adapting the CF concept to what makes sense in a country according to its culture, traditions, and moment in time. In addition, a strategic approach is necessary to place the foundations where they will bring more opportunities to bring about social transformation. At the same time, the adaptations should not overlook the most commonly accepted attributes; otherwise, the institutions promoted might not be community foundations after all.

3. CHARACTERISTICS, ROLES AND PRINCIPLES OF A COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

As mentioned above, the four categories of concepts can be used as a compass that will help the CFSO and the founders of CFs to avoid overlooking any features that will simplify their work. In the case of **characteristics**, one approach can be to choose those that differentiate a community foundation from other nonprofit organisations in the country. This is especially relevant in countries that have no differentiated legal or fiscal framework. From the strategic point of view, the characteristics may serve to emphasize aspects that because of a CF's novelty in the country would be the ones that will require greater effort. In the case of Spain, owing to the widespread lack of endowments and grant making among community foundations (although both aspects are common to other types of foundations), an emphasis on these CF-specific characteristics will be particularly important.

If the characteristics (features) serve to identify what makes a community foundation distinctive within the field of institutional philanthropy, the role is what informs us about its purpose in society or, to put it in simple terms, it is "what it aims to achieve". Again, the context lens needs to be applied, as the roles played by a CF should be chosen to make it a meaningful institution in its community to promote social change and at moments in time.

When starting to promote the concept, CFSOs should reflect on the ideal role that CFs can play in a particular country or geographical area that will somehow mark off a playing field in which future CFs can situate themselves in a niche not occupied by other existing institutions. For each case, it will be a decision that founders should take when setting up the CF, answering to the specificities of its territory with an entrepreneurial approach in choosing the options that will ensure a bigger impact.

Roles that are often mentioned include the following:

- Stimulate community life and create an environment suitable for the development of new ideas and initiatives
- Raise public awareness of charitable giving as a form of civic engagement
- Help donors to achieve their philanthropic goals and invest financial capital in their communities
- Stimulate and nurture relationships that link people with one another and nurture a sense of belonging to the community.
- Support civic organisations
- Serve as a platform to facilitate cooperation
- Developer of local philanthropy
- An asset builder
- Other: An interesting set of roles to also take into consideration were identified in the Community Foundations of Canada (CFC) publication, *Principles for Community Foundations* (2nd edition). They are as follows: building useful knowledge; shaping community discourse; growing and linking local leadership; brokering regional solutions; maximizing access to government resources; nurturing high-impact philanthropists; collaborating for local systems reform; advocating and partnering

for policy solutions; enhancing community capacity; and strengthening accountability of local decision making.

Moving away from our consideration of what a community foundation is and what it does, the third area to decide upon would be the principles. **Principles** inform how the community foundation will act to fulfill its role. Some of the principles in the reviewed literature are:

- Accountability
- Acknowledgement
- Beauty
- Creativity
- Cooperation
- Commitment
- Curiosity
- Courageousness
- Dignity
- Diversity
- Empowerment
- Equity
- Excellence
- Evaluation
- Flexibility
- Generosity
- Gratitude
- Innovation
- Integrity
- Leadership
- Respect
- Responsiveness
- Sustainability
- Transparency
- Trust

Founders of a CF will be critical in defining the principles from the very beginning so that they have a compass that helps inform many of the decisions that are taken even before the CF is legally established. It will be advisable that they are publicly recorded in the founding documents or bylaws. The principles will serve as a sort of compass to guide decisions, big and small.

4. CAPACITIES OF A COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Finally, we arrive at the **what**. What does a community foundation do to achieve its role? This fourth element is the one with which support organisations would probably have a more intense relationship. The community or, initially, the promoters of the CF will need to decide, based on their context, which components from the list of characteristics will they incorporate and how. They will also decide on their role as a CF, which should be the one that best promotes social change in their community. In addition, the community will need to agree on the principles in which such work/role should be done. These three components forming the ethos of the community foundation are the prerequisites that the community and/or the leading promoters setting up the CF will have to decide upon.

Capacities, defined as the ability to understand or do something, are by things that can be learned. For this reason, CFSOs can play an ongoing role for both new or already existing CFs in the provision of learning opportunities for them. It is indeed the lion's share of the menu of services that CFSOs provide around the world. When researching those "menus," big

differences from country to country are evident, underscoring that what CFs do in different geographies and at different stages of sectoral development determines the offer the CFSO makes. So where to start when having to decide on the “menu”? In my view, the information gathered can be classified in three main areas:

- A. Capacities that are common with other foundations: this mainly refers to governance and compliance issues;
- B. Capacities linked to standards and/or certification; and
- C. Specific capacities that respond to the niche position the CF should fill in an existing, and often undifferentiated and crowded, foundation sector.

When applying the above classification to the Spanish Association of Foundations (AEF), the results are the following:

- As per A: The association already provides a range of services related to those topics as they affect foundations regardless of type. Governance and compliance will not be part of the specific menu offered to CFs, which will be able to access AEF’s general services.
- As per B: We have never applied a system of certification. Although there may come a time when that is needed, it is not the approach to capacity building that AEF has chosen.
- As per C: We need to develop a capacity-building programme that will work on the specific characteristics of the CFs.

In order to choose which capacities AEF should focus when helping CFs achieve the capacities under category C, a combination of two sources have been used:

- Current support programmes offered by a number of CFSOs around the world. Their websites, together with information provided by their staff when it is not available publicly, provides an interesting pool of knowledge from which to draw inspiration.
- Analysis of existing CFs carried out in Spain several years ago and updated by a review of the situation today.

As for the latter, I have used the work commissioned to Shannon St. John more than a decade ago by Bertelsmann Foundation (BF) in Spain (Fundación Bertelsmann), that conducted a very thorough study to identify existing foundations that fulfilled the CF criteria. BF commissioned individual analyses¹ of twelve foundations that either fulfilled the CF criteria, as defined at the time by the Global Fund for Community Foundations, or that were thought to have the capacity to evolve into community foundations.

¹ Individual analyses are publicly available at <https://www.fundacionbertelsmann.org/es/home/publicaciones/fundaciones-civicas> (June 2016).

The following table is a score card based on the above-mentioned analyses of six foundations.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. They aim to improve the quality of life of all people in a defined geographical area	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
2. They are not under the control or influence of other organizations, governments or donors	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow
3. They are governed by a representative body of the communities they serve	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow
4. They make grants to other nonprofit groups to address a range of (changing) community needs and opportunities	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow
5. They collect contributions on an ongoing basis from a wide spectrum of donors, mostly local (individuals, businesses, city council, neighbors who have emigrated, etc.).	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red
6. They try to create or ensure a permanent flow of resources from the community to the community, such as funds from a wide variety of donors or other services and activities.	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Yellow
7. They help local donors to achieve their philanthropic goals.	Green	Yellow	Green	Red	Red	Red
8. They participate in a series of community leadership and associative activities and drive processes, organize meetings, collaborate, and contribute to finding solutions to community issues.	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
9. They develop open and transparent policies and practices in relation to all aspects of their activity.	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
10. They are accountable to the community and regularly inform the general public about their goals, activities and financial situation.	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green

The table illustrates how characteristics 4 to 7 are the ones in which more CFs were deficient or did not even meet the criteria. The following extracts illustrate the deficiencies for each foundation:

Nº 1: No weaknesses.

Nº 2: “Lack of a sustainability model that allows [the foundation] to continue [its] long-term business services, and to ensure that the majority of [its] income is invested in grants, loans and projects with a profit direct to the community....”

“[the foundation] must begin to mobilize [its] social capital and its energy to create a solid and pervasive ethic and culture of philanthropy within the community”.

(Weaknesses: Business model and philanthropy growth to be channelled by the CF; lack of donor services.)

Nº 3: “the foundation is probably reaching the maximum reasonable contribution level that are able to take on their dedicated volunteers, that they should possibly see their time and energy complemented with those of a paid manager part-time capable of guaranteeing continued growth, visibility and leadership.”

(Weaknesses: Lack of resources to staff the foundation; as mentioned in the analysis, the foundation does not receive funds, but relies on the returns from an investment of a static endowment of 500.000 €.)

Nº 4: “[the foundation] would need to start firmly looking at how to attract funds from a wide variety of members of the community. Even those foundations that may be sustainable also seek funding from the community members to generate (literally and figuratively) investment in the community. The ongoing efforts to attract citizen support allows a foundation to assume a well-grounded position in the community. It should also strengthen its donor role by expanding calls for aid to other social entities.”

(Weaknesses: Increase donors to become an institution that channels local philanthropy, as opposed to limiting activities by relying only on funding from the returns on in an investment of the endowment or public private partnerships; lack of donor services.)

Nº 5: “[the foundation] awards grants to nonprofit organisations that carried out work related to its own aims..... [the foundation] could strengthen its compliance with CFs characteristics if it would broaden its grant making activities to entities that work to cover social and economic development of the area”

“[the foundation] has so far carried out important actions thanks to the personal commitment of the six founding members, but it is worth noting that it has possibilities to fully develop its potential. We believe that it could cope better if the foundation had permanent or salaried staff”

As the [the foundation] gets more donations from people or institutions or corporations [it] may offer more specialized services for its donors and, thus, expand not only the income and benefits of the foundation, but also the involvement of citizens in civic foundation and, therefore, in the development of community.

(Weaknesses: Scope of work not diverse enough and lack of professional staff.)

Nº 6: “Our suggestion is that, in [its] role as civic foundation, [the foundation] continue with the three lines of community activity, incorporating as an extension the first direct grants for civic organizations in projects where it does not perform a direct function. Although this type grant making 'without intervention' entail some risks (usually minor) that could prevent that the recipient organization will carry out the project, it is an important sign of trust in the recipient organization”

“The foundation is currently not engaged in donor services, since it has not yet expanded its donor base. They want to do it, but are not yet doing it.”

(Weaknesses: Lack of a pure grant-making system and donor services.)

The author’s analysis of the current public information online, mainly the foundations’ corporate websites and the foundations’ annual reports, *indicates* that the *weaknesses* identified a decade ago continue and *are* areas where improvement proves difficult. *This view* is consistent with opinions voiced in conversations with select practitioners, as well as in unpublished reports that consider the feasibility for community foundations to thrive in Spain. Therefore, emphasis on the capacities that should help overcome those difficulties should be key components of the training programme and support that AEF offers to both founder groups and already established CFs.

As mentioned before, the selection of capacities to enhance should also strive to position the CF in a niche where it can make a distinctive contribution as compared to other organisations. In that regard, it seems the existing Spanish community foundations excel especially in one area, that of local leadership. As the reports reflect, with quite strong enthusiasm in some cases, all the analyzed CFs have community leadership as their main capacity. This is interesting as the leadership role is the one that has come to the forefront of discussions of academics and practitioners alike for almost two decades regarding the role CFs should play, i.e., moving away from attracting funds, as is traditionally the main function of CFs in the US. The above-described selection methods and consultations with international experts in the field led me to propose the following as the key capacities for community foundations in Spain in which the support programme of the Spanish Association of Foundations should put more emphasis. It must be noted that the order does not reflect a ranking based on importance.

5. SIX KEY CAPACITIES FOR COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS IN THE SPANISH CONTEXT:

- Know how to exercise community leadership to produce social change
- Know how to listen and engage the community to understand and identify assets, opportunities, needs and solutions
- Know how to increase local philanthropy
- Know how to strengthen local organisations
- The hope-not-to-need capacity: philanthropy disaster response
- Know how to...: A context specific capacity for each CF attending to their reality

These capacities cannot be seen in isolation, and several of them will overlap at times. Most importantly, the improvements and achievements in one will enhance others and poor achievements in one will have an impact on others. For this reason, it is important to note that capacity building is an ongoing process that will not be fixed once and for all by having access to knowledge, training or consultancy. Realities evolve, and so, too, do methodologies. So a “lifelong learning approach” should be taken both by AEF (or the CFSO that finds this framework appropriate) and by individual CFs.

For newborn CFs, these capacities should work as an aspirational framework. Not all of them will be deployed or achieved in the same way and with similar intensity, but it must be noted that all of them have to be achieved to some extent in order for a CF to be considered a “fully flowered community foundation.”

5.1. KEY CAPACITY I: Know how to exercise community leadership to produce social change

Consideration for the Spanish context:

As stated in several of the analyses of Spanish community foundations carried out by Shannon St. John for Bertelsmann Foundation of Spain, community leadership is one of the prominent capacities of the CFs analyzed. A good track record with a variety of approaches is therefore available in the country. The Spanish Association of Foundations should leverage that experience and knowledge to build the support it will give to newly established foundations regarding this capacity.

Advice from consulted experts:

- The CF should exercise this role in an inclusive way, and make use of soft skills such as convener, broker, connector, etc.— the “one that joins the dots” (Samuels, 29th April 2021).
- Get beyond CFs as being only about funding and being transactional to focus on their added value through connecting, convening, building knowledge, etc. in order to bring about longer-term social change (Magowan, 4th May 2021).

Methodologies that will serve for this capacity are:

Community leadership seems not to answer to specific methodologies, but rather to different practices and approaches to the work. It will be worth exploring more deeply local leadership among existing Spanish community foundations to extract inspiration for new ones. However, there are already some good tools to assess community leadership:

- Community Leadership Assessment Tool developed by CF Insights (Candid): Focuses on foundations’ engagement in community leadership activities, including their commitment to community leadership work and a self-assessment of the foundation’s performance of these activities. (<https://www.issuelab.org/resources/36380/36380.pdf>)
- The United Kingdom Community Foundations (UKCF) quality accreditation programme includes resources to assess community leadership.
- Framework for Community Leadership by a Community Foundation by Council on Foundations: Can be used to bring clarity to the definition and practice of community leadership by individual community foundations. (<https://www.cof.org/sites/default/files/documents/files/Framework%20for%20Community%20Leadership%20by%20a%20Community%20Foundation%202013.pdf>)

- Community leadership as multi-dimensional capacities: A conceptual framework and preliminary findings for community foundations: (a) strategizing, (b) convening, (c) knowledge building, (d) capacity building, (e) partnering, and (f) policy engagement. (Viviana Chiu Sik Wu, 2021)

5.2. KEY CAPACITY II: Know how to engage the community to understand and identify assets, opportunities, needs and solutions.

Consideration for the Spanish context:

In a social sector dominated by a project approach, in a big part due to restricted and fragmented funding, the CF can't place itself in the position of the organisation that is there to solve all community problems. It should aim, rather, to provide the space, methodology and resources for the community to identify its own resources (assets, opportunities and solutions) and how to better use them in addressing needs.

Advice from external experts:

“Do not place the CF outside the community.” (Dakova, 28th April 2021).

“CFs should listen to the whole community, be inclusive, integrate also opposite voices.” (Chertok, 23rd April 2021)

Methodologies that will serve for this capacity are:

- Vital Signs: Uses local knowledge to measure the vitality of a community and support action towards improving the collective quality of life. Local data gathered through the program is used to support evidence-based, *locally-relevant* solutions to improve the quality of life at the community level. Vital Signs aims to inspire civic engagement, to provide focus for public debate, and to help a range of actors take action and direct resources where they will have the greatest impact. (Community Foundations of Canada).
- Social Passport of the Territory: This is a research method designed to understand the nature and dynamics of local areas. Particular attention is given to assessing the quality of life in a municipality. The methodology has been established as an accessible, understandable and effective tool empowering the local community to solve the problems of the territory by the local community. It allows for the assessment of living standards and the influence residents have on the development of the territory. (Sodeistvie Social Initiative Support Fund)

- 8 Hours Overtime: A program which brings together volunteers with expertise and NGO projects that have no budget but are in need of creative solutions. Developed by several community foundations in Romania.
- Participatory Needs Assessment: Participatory needs assessment (PNA) is a research method, based on the principle of participative democracy. PNA offers the people living within local communities the right to speak, and it attempts to place the problems and the solutions submitted by citizens on the decision-makers' working agendas. Being often a first stage in the process of research-action, PNA is the most certain modality to identify the community members' perception of their collective needs, as well as their attitudes towards these needs. (Codrina Csesznek²).
- Appreciative Inquiry: Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a strengths-based, positive approach to leadership development and organizational change. AI can be used by individuals, teams, organizations, or at the societal level; in each case, it helps people move toward a shared vision for the future by engaging others in strategic innovation. It is based in a cycle composed of the following steps: Define – What is the topic of inquiry? Discover – Appreciating the best of 'what is'. Dream – Imagining 'what could be'. Design – Determining 'what should be'. Deliver/Destiny – Creating 'what will be'. (Benedict University³).
- Asset Based Community Development (ABCD): Asset Based Community Development is a strategy for sustainable community-driven development. Beyond the mobilization of a particular community, ABCD is concerned with how to link micro-assets to the macro-environment. The appeal of ABCD lies in its premise that communities can drive the development process themselves by identifying and mobilizing existing-but often unrecognized-assets, thereby responding to and creating local economic opportunity. ABCD builds on the assets that are already found in the community and mobilizes individuals, associations, and institutions to come together to build on their assets-- not concentrate on their needs. (Nurture Development⁴).

Outcome Mapping: Outcome mapping is a methodology for planning, monitoring and evaluating development initiatives that aim to bring about social change. The process of outcome mapping helps a project team or program to be specific about the actors it targets, the changes it expects to see and the strategies it employs. Results are measured in terms of the changes in behavior, actions or relationships that can be influenced by the team or program. (Outcome Mapping Learning Community⁵).

²https://www.researchgate.net/publication/289961812_Participatory_needs_assessment_in_local_communities_methodological_aspects

³ <https://cvdl.ben.edu/blog/what-is-appreciative-inquiry/> (16.05.2021)

⁴ <https://www.nurturedevelopment.org/> (16.05.2021)

⁵ <https://www.outcomemapping.ca/> (16.05.2021)

5.3. KEY CAPACITY III: Know how to increase local philanthropy

Consideration for the Spanish context:

Community foundations can make true the maxim “everyone can be a donor”. This will require them to use different approaches for small-, medium- and large-scale donors. Particularly important about this capacity, and taking into account the lack of tradition, CFs in Spain should build philanthropic advice capacities and specific services for donors that are in line with the community strategy for social change.

CFs can play a particularly interesting role in helping small- and medium-sized local businesses and companies to strategize their philanthropy by offering a professional service for a fee that will be a source of income for the community foundation. It can also help companies help companies develop ties to the community encouraging or developing corporate voluntarism programs and automatic employee payroll donation programs. Local philanthropy should not focus solely on money, but rather encompass other important contributions such as products, services, knowledge and time.

Advice from external experts:

“cultivate continuing learning by donors in service of continuous strengthening of the community” (Clotilde Decdeker).

Activities that will serve for this capacity are:

- Specific techniques to work with high-net-worth individuals.
- Giving circles: Giving circles and other collaborative giving groups are made up of individuals who collectively donate money, undertake pro bono work or volunteering to support organizations or projects of mutual interest. Members have a say in how funding is given and which organizations or projects are supported. (Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy)
- Live crowdfunding events: Live crowdfunding involves a group of individuals raising money together at a single time-specific event for causes the participants believe in. (The Funding Network⁶)
- Loyalty cards: Cards that encourage consumers to buy in local stores, while the owners of the store commit to donate a percentage of their sales to the local community foundation.
- Workplace giving programmes: An example is automatic employee payroll donations. Payroll donations vary from country to country, but generally speaking they are donations from an employee’s gross salary and collected by the employer.

⁶ <https://www.thefundingnetwork.org.uk/> (16.05.2021).

- Art auctions: Fundraising events based on donations of art works to the community foundation for an auction among residents of the community (Berlin Community Foundation).
- Donor advised funds: Accounts established at public charities – often community foundations – that allow individuals to make a significant charitable gift to the public charity, claim an immediate charitable tax deduction, and then, over time, recommend how, when and to which charities income and principle from the account should be distributed. (Johnson and Johnson, 2004).
- Sport events: Marathons, swimathons, etc.
- Raffles

5.4. KEY CAPACITY IV: Know how to strengthen local organisations

Consideration for the Spanish context:

The strengthening of local organisations can benefit from the application of the so-called **4Cs framework**.⁷ Community foundations can provide more than money to the existing social sector; they can help in building *capacity, capability, connections* and *credentials*. Still, providing financial resources needs to be at the core of their activity, as it is what will ensure that the CF is in a position to have an impact in the ever-underfunded nonprofit sector. A significant component of this role will be done through grant making.

Advice from external experts:

CFs should “know how to design effective and innovative grant-making programs that inspire and cultivate community leadership and structural community capacities.” (Alina Porumb)

Tools that will serve for this capacity:

- Named funds are based on the contributions from one donor who could be an individual, a family, a company or a foundation. They are aligned with the donor’s philanthropic goals.⁸
- Thematic funds are built to support a certain development need in a community or a specific group of beneficiaries. Some examples include funds for youth, for revitalized neighborhoods, and for science education⁹.

⁷ The 4Cs is a planning and evaluation framework designed specifically for organisations that offer professional support to the philanthropy field. It was developed by DAFNE and WINGS members and is intended to be adapted and used in different contexts. Toolkit for the use of the framework: [Using the 4Cs: Evaluating Professional Support to Philanthropy](#).

^{8,9}From “A journey into the values of community foundations in a changing context” by [Inspire Community Foundations](#).

- Geographic funds are built to support a certain neighborhood, town or village in the area covered by the foundation.¹⁰
- Special funds can be created to support a certain philanthropic mechanism of the foundation, for instance, funds for swimathons, donor circles or endowments. They can also be combinations of the funds above.¹¹
- Grants to informal groups: Small grants aimed at promoting civic engagement can make money available to informal groups of citizens (not established charities) to pursue activities that benefit the community.
- Participatory grant making is an approach that gives local organisations, including those that may benefit from receiving the funds, a voice in deciding the allocation among the applicant's projects and transferring decision-making power from the grant maker to local organisations.

5.5. KEY CAPACITY V: The hope-not-to-need capacity: Philanthropy disaster response

Consideration for the Spanish context:

Unfortunately, disasters will hit communities at some point in time. Disasters can be caused by natural forces, such as floods or earthquakes; by accidents, such as fires; or by crises of different origins, the latest one being health related (i.e. COVID-19).

A disaster creates a situation in which two differentiated responses are needed. One response is an immediate one—short-term but very rapid and flexible— that is normally about easing the immediate effects of the crises (providing shelter, access to food, etc.). It is also a moment in which a quick gathering of resources is necessary, but more important is a quick deployment.

A community foundation can play a key role in disaster situations, if it has built the appropriate connections; is perceived as a trusted partner; and has the resources and flexibility to deploy with extraordinary speed to realize the mentioned actions. Therefore, some thought and preparation should already be in place when such a situation arises.

Community foundations should have mechanisms in place that allow them to collect and channel significant amounts of money quickly in response to disasters. They should know the local organisations and have robust and flexible mechanisms for collecting and for granting monies. Besides collecting and granting money, an ability to act as a community leader, especially making sure to connect the available resources and facilitate needed collaborations, is a key aspect of disaster response in emergency situations.

The second aspect of disaster response is medium and long term, focusing on rebuilding what has been destroyed or, perhaps, considering how re-building differently should be done. This

^{10,11} From “A journey into the values of community foundations in a changing context” by [Inspire Community Foundations](#).

second aspect links with its community leadership capacity. Although the most serious and immediate aspects of the health emergency for COVID-19 seems to be over, the social and economic crises it caused will continue to be felt strongly in communities across the country. Community foundations can build on the work begun by informal emergency response groups created during 2020.

Tools that will serve for this capacity:

Examples of activities to strengthen local organisations are:

- Emergency funds established to quickly channel donations from individuals, corporations, public administrations, etc. to local charities when needed. (Emergencies in communities may come in the form of a natural disaster, a pandemic or an event inflicting severe damage to a section of the community.)
- Online fundraising platforms and SMS donation schemes: These allow for quick collection of donations from a wide range of people.

5.6. KEY CAPACITY VI: Know how to a context-specific capacity for each CF reflecting their present reality

Community foundations should always keep in mind the importance of context and time for two reasons: to ensure that they are capable of dealing with the specificity of the community and are able to deal with a sudden opportunity or threat. This capacity remains open as to signal that each CF is different and will need to act differently to contribute to social progress in its community.

6. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

As previously stated, a selection of capacities that can inform communications about what community foundations do, are especially important in places where CFs are unknown. A CFSO working to seed and develop new CFs in its country/region/locality can also use these capacities to build a support programme.

Two key issues that should underline all capacities, as well as the support programme, will be:

- The use of technology to maximize the work of the community foundation and its impact, and
- The SDGs to help guide CFs as they identify their aspirations and develop their agendas for social change.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are drawn from readings that build on and venture beyond readings done during the Senior International Fellows Program.

- A hub and connector role: AEF should become a hub where different actors convene in order to develop the CF movement in Spain.
- Bring in expertise: Invite experts to join the support programme. The knowledge and experience that each capacity requires offer a magnificent opportunity to involve a broad spectrum of experts that will assure continuous input to the capacity building of the sector.
- Identify suitable partners: Use the capacities to find the right partners for the programme and for the sector. Building on the capacities of CFs should be the main reason for others to become partners.
- Documenting role: Make it a conscious practice to document the advancement of the programme and examples of good practices
- Listening and learning: Involve community foundations in the conception of new ideas.
- Bridging role: Connect Spanish foundations to others internationally to keep up to date on new developments and opportunities.

Annex:

→ COMPARATIVE MATRIX OF THE DEFINITIONS OF COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

From “A promising tool for local innovative development: the case of civic or community foundations in the Iberian Peninsula” (Hernández Renner, 2018).

Figure 7.1: Comparative matrix of the definitions of community foundations.

	1. COF	2. CFC	3. EFC	4. CFN	5. WIKIPEDIA	6. HOYT	7. FIORE	8. SCHMIED	9. AGART et al.	10. CEMEF I	11. BÜRGERSTIF.	12. WORLD BANK	13. CMF	14. PHILIPP	15. FERNANDEZ	16. MOTT	17. CHARRI y LOPEZ	18. NADAL	19. FEURT	20. WINGGS	21. MALLOMBE
<i>A.1: PRIMARY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DEFINITION</i>																					
1. Broad vision and mission	X	X+	X	X	X	-	X	X+	X	X	X+	X	X	X+	X	X	X	X	X+	X	X+
2. Stable public endowment	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X+	X	X	X	X	X+	X	-	X	X	X
3. Geographic definition	X	O	X	O	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O
4. Support/Subsidize to NGO	X	-	X	X	X	O	-	-	X	X	X+	X	X	X	O	X	X+	X	X	X	X+
5. Independence	X	X	X	O	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	O
6. Leadership and catalysis	X	X	X	O	O	O	O	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	O
7. Representativeness of the governing	X	O+	X	O	X	O	O	O	O	X	-	X	X+	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X

body																					
8. Service to donors	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	O	X	O	O	X	-	O	X	X	O	X	X	O
9. Tax regulations	X	X	-	X	-	X	O	O	X	X	O	O	X	X	O	O	-	X	-	X	O
10. Promote philanthropy, social capital and equity	O	X	X	-	X	O	O	X	O	X	X	X	X+	-	O	-	X	-	-	-	-
11. Render accounts publicly	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	O	O	X	O
12. Solve community problems/needs	O	O	X	O	O	O	X	O	O	X	O	O+	X	O	O	X	X	O	X	X	X
13. Transparent proceedings	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	X	O	O	X	X	O	O	O	X	X	O	O	X	O
<u>A.2: SECONDARY CHARACTERISTICS</u>																					
14. Improve quality of life	X	-	X	O	-	O	-	X	O	X	-	O	O	O	X	O	O	O+	O	X	O
15. Long term solutions	X	O	-	O	O	O	O	O	X	O	O	O	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	X
16. Created by 1 or more	O	O	O	O	O	X	O	-	O	O	X	O	O	O	X	O	X	O	O	O	X
17. Local knowledge	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	X	O	O	O	X	O	X	X	O	O	O	O
18. Local character	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	-	X	O	O	X	X

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Informational meetings

- Masha Chertok, Director, CAF Russia, 23rd April 2021.
- Daniele Giudici, Secretary General, Fondazione Lambria, 26th April 2021.
- Vera Dakova, Program Officer, C.S. Mott Foundation, 28th April 2021.
- Agustín Landa, Chair, Comunalía, 28th April 2021.
- Daniela Castagno, Head of Institutional Partnerships, Fondazione con il Sud, 28th April 2021.
- Clotilde Perez-Bode Dedecker, President and Chief Executive Officer, Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, 28th April 2021.
- Alina Porumb, Founding Member at Association for the Practice of Transformation (APT) 29th April 2021 (email conversation).
- Shaun Samuels, Executive Director, SGS Consulting cc, 29th April 2021.
- James Magowan, Coordinating Director, European Community Foundation Initiative, 4th May 2021 (email conversation).
- Beatrice Manole, Program Manager, Romanian Federation of Community Foundations, 7th May 2021.
- Axel Halling, Programme manager, Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen, 7th May 2021
- Kezia Jackson-Harman, Membership and Learning Officer, UK Community Foundations, 24th May 2021.