Human Rights Funding in the Arab Region: Participatory models for grantmaking & local resource mobilization

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1. INTRODUCTION

Research Objective And Methods

Recognizing the increasingly urgent need to defend human rights in the Arab region, as well as the challenges of funding such work there, a working group of advocates initiated a multi-phase research process to explore possibilities for local human rights funds in the Arab region. The Working Group engaged us in the first phase to identify resource mobilization and participatory grantmaking mechanisms in other regions where communities have successfully organized to support human rights in difficult environments.

To accomplish this objective, we conducted interviews with 27 participants: fourteen represent organizations that raise local funds and/or use forms of participatory grantmaking to build constituencies or movements primarily in restricted societies, and two represent large funds in the Arab region. The remaining are human rights advocates or academics; thought leaders in community philanthropy and people-led development; or experts in alternative financing, international development, or funder networks with experience in the Arab region or similarly complicated areas. We supplemented these interviews with desk research on related topics including giving trends in Arab societies, social justice movements in philanthropy, and rights-based approaches to development.

Although no one definition encapsulates all aspects of participatory grantmaking, a **GrantCraft guide** explains that "participatory grantmaking cedes decision-making power about funding—including the strategy and criteria behind those decisions—to the very communities that funders aim to serve."

Viewing the Data through an Assets-Capacities-Trust Lens

Beyond articulating the practical and applicable functions of effective local grantmaking and fundraising, we were also interested in the ways that models could strengthen the voice of communities so that local people become constituents for human rights and see the struggle—and outcomes—as theirs. We looked for organizations that practice some form of community philanthropy, which is broadly defined as "local people mobilizing local resources for development processes."[1] Community philanthropy entails grantmaking in combination with other tools to build local capacity and address local priorities and actively cultivating local giving and assets.[2] Because community organizing and self-determination are fundamental to effective community philanthropy, organizations using this approach are well-positioned to inform this research.

Through grantmaking and resource mobilization tactics suited for their context, the organizations featured in this report harness assets, build capacities, and cultivate trust. These

[1] Hodgson, Jenny and Barry Knight. (https://www.alliancemagazine.org/feature/shiftthepower-rise-community-philanthropy/
[2] For further information, see https://globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/what-we-stand-for/community-philanthropy/

processes foster a sense of collective investment, strengthen social capital, and increase accountability, all of which ultimately support the long-term defense and expansion of human rights.[3] We analyzed different organizations' programs and structures within an assets-capacities-trust (ACT) framework to identify key elements to consider in fund design for the Arab region.

Evaluating the Relevance for Restrictive Societies

In other parts of the world, local resource mobilization and participatory grantmaking in support of human rights are relatively more common than they are in the Arab region. We wanted to understand how these models work, particularly in restricted context, to determine their application for Arab countries. We sought organizations that reflected geographic diversity, with a special emphasis on the Global South and developing nations, where economic inequality, undemocratic governments, and other pressures have led people to develop creative strategies.

We used the CIVICUS Monitor, which rates civic space in 196 countries, to gauge how different levels of government repression may affect the creation and operations of a local human rights fund. CIVICUS defines civic space as "as a set of universally-accepted rules, which allow people to organize, participate and communicate with each other freely and without hindrance, and in doing so, influence the political and social structures around them."[4]

Of course, local contexts vary greatly, and economic, cultural, or other factors may present obstacles to the full exercise of rights, but the CIVICUS ratings, summarized below, provide a basic framework for comparison:

- Closed (Egypt, Libya, Syria, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Yemen)—The state or other actors threaten or kill people for exercising basic rights to assembly and speech, fear and suspicion are pervasive, and media, including the internet, is heavily censored.
- Repressed (Algeria, Iraq, Palestine)—Active critics of the regime are harassed, surveilled, and sometimes killed, and although civil society organizations exist, their activities are severely curtailed by government intimidation. Media is restricted and usually reflects the position of the state.
- Obstructed (Lebanon, Morocco, Jordan, Tunisia)—Power holders constrain civic space through onerous regulation or defamation of civil society organizations and harassment or surveillance of leaders. Peaceful assembly is possible but authorities may use excessive force against demonstrations.
- Narrowed (none in the Arab region)—The public and organizations are relatively free to exercise their rights to assembly and association, but violations sometimes occur. Authorities may use bureaucratic or legal tactics to restrict demonstrations or put pressure on media outlets.

[3] The Case for Community Philanthropy.
[4] https://monitor.civicus.org/FAQs/

- Open (none in the Arab region)—The state ensures civic space so that the public and organizations can exercise their rights without fear. Police generally protect public demonstrations, and media is open and independent.

Most organizations we interviewed operate in repressed or obstructed societies. A few operate exclusively in closed societies, and some operate in societies across this spectrum. One operates in an open civic space but in a developing economy with limited financial resources. We refer to these ratings throughout the report. (See the CIVICUS world map for more detail about all countries' ratings.)

See Appendix A for the complete list of interviewees, locations, and affiliations.

This report presents:

- Key findings on challenges and opportunities for funding human rights locally
- Elements to consider for fund design and examples of organizations using assets, capacities, and trust to build constituencies
- Five models with a menu of options for grantmaking and resource mobilization
- Other tactics for strengthening community voice in the grantmaking cycle
- Conclusions and recommendations for the next phase of research
- Appendices and references for further information

Our goal with this report is to provide sufficient context and detail so that researchers or consultants in the next phase can engage in thoughtful, informed, open-ended discussions with leaders on the ground. However, recognizing our limitations as researchers outside the region and in the spirit of the insights from interviewees, we do not offer recommendations for design. We believe the fund design must be community-driven for maximal success. Therefore, we outline key questions and milestones to guide a stakeholder process toward that end.

2. KEY FINDINGS

In our interviews and desk review, four overarching themes arose that are important to explore as context for conversations with stakeholders about the purpose and functions of a human rights fund in the Arab region:

- Expand the concept of human rights.
- Rethink the purpose of fundraising and grantmaking.
- Center the community as your north star.
- Balance external funding with increasing local ownership and resources.

Expand the concept of "human rights."

The link between human rights and socio-economic issues. While the human rights movement of the past fifty years has made crucial advances in dismantling systemic barriers to individual and societal freedoms, many of the experts and activists we spoke to feel it has unintentionally become monolithic and out of touch with the very public it has sought to protect. "Human rights" work conjures images of technical and legal professionals holding government institutions to account. To people in neighborhoods and villages facing economic hardship, restricted access to services, and untrustworthy media, it is often difficult to see how such work makes a difference in their daily lives. As Mona Younis wrote in a recent article, "As we fought for civil and political rights, we expected people to manage without economic and social rights. Rather than exploring their complementarity, we stressed their dissimilarity. Regrettably, failing to pursue the full spectrum of rights together, we failed to achieve either set of rights fully—anywhere."[5] Asmaa Falhi, Program Officer for North Africa for Fund for Global Human Rights, elaborated on this point: "You can take a woman out of a violent situation, but without economic independence, she has few other alternatives."

Most of the activists and experts we interviewed agreed that the language of human rights work needs to be reframed for the next generation in order to reflect the relationship to social and economic rights. Nada Darwazeh, board member for the Arab Human Rights Fund, indicated that young people in general are not inspired by mainstream human rights institutions or institutional frameworks such as the U.N. charter. Atallah Kuttab, Founder and Chairman of SAANED for Philanthropy Advisory, remarked that during the Arab Spring young people taking to the streets described the struggle in terms of "social justice" rather than "human rights" and that inequality and other economic issues were key drivers in the uprising. Not only does this reframing convey the relevance of the work to the average person and foster more interest, it can help protect it from unwanted attention and overbearing scrutiny. This is especially true in more closed societies, where "human rights" is a politicized, polarizing, or even dangerous term. As Hilary Gilbert of the South Sinai Foundation noted, "by talking about human rights you are implying that they are lacking and thereby criticizing the government," which is illegal and extraordinarily risky in Egypt and other autocratic regimes.

From defenders to catalysts for human rights. Just as the mainstream human rights movement needs to reframe its language and scope to embrace basic rights as human rights, it also needs to re-envision its role—from a sector of professionals defending human rights to partners in catalyzing community-driven change that supports and protects people's rights and well-being.[6] Human rights researcher and lecturer Omar Nashabe provided the example of the Amel Association in Lebanon, which offers medical care and other services to all people, no questions asked, with an explicit mission of "dignity and justice for all." This catalyst role requires human rights activists to develop different kinds of partnerships to respond to a wider

[5] Younis, Mona. https://www.openglobalrights.org/Back-to-the-Future-returning-to-human-rights/
[6] Kennedy, Garry. "Rights Based Approach to Development." https://slideplayer.com/slide/12633652/, p. 9.

array of needs and priorities. Nada Darwazeh described such a situation involving a grantee of the U.N. Population Fund: the grantee, a women's rights organization, requested and received authorization to reallocate some of its grant to a local women's shelter that lost most of its international funding because of the COVID-19 crisis and was at risk of closing. Both organizations, one with an explicit rights focus and one that focused more on social services, recognized a strategic and mission-related benefit to working together.

Rethink the purpose of fundraising and grantmaking.

Breaking down silos between fundraising and grantmaking. Fundraising and grantmaking are traditionally viewed as separate activities with a separate purpose, but this rigid distinction needs to be reconsidered if the aim is to build constituencies. Community philanthropy stands out as an effective framework because fundraising (the collection of money) and grantmaking (the distribution of money) are considered two sides of the same coin. As Jenny Hodgson, Executive Director of Global Fund for Community Foundations said, "Community philanthropy rejects the traditional NGO and grantmaker binary—that one side of the NGO is tasked with raising money and the other is tasked with spending money—when the job is in fact to get money one day and give it the next . . .because you are both a fundraiser and a grantmaker." Local fundraising and grantmaking work symbiotically as tactics for community organizing and public education, and organizations use them in conjunction with each other to build constituencies and make long-term impact.

A different understanding of the relationship between fundraising and grantmaking calls for different success metrics. Success on the fundraising side is not, as traditionally viewed, the overall amount of money raised, or on the grantmaking side, the sheer numbers of people impacted by the project, though these are interesting metrics to track and understand within the context of a community philanthropy initiative. More appropriate metrics might indicate levels of grassroots and individual contributions, strength of and impact of relationships, and degree and type of societal engagement.

From punitive and pessimistic to hopeful and fun. Tactically, the human rights movement in general has focused on "naming and shaming" repressive governments and on appeals to international governing bodies that are increasingly toothless or discredited.[7] Even words such as "peace" in places like Palestine have become so politicized that younger generations want no part, having lived through a "peace process" that creates both figurative and literal separation of people and communities.[8] Given this understandable pessimism, fundraising that sparks inspiration, hope, and solidarity is refreshing and powerful. For example, the Dalia Association in Palestine has renamed fundraising "fun-raising," and its most successful initiatives are those that emphasize joy and play and help community members—diaspora and

[7] Interview with Khaled Mansour.
[8] Interview with Rasha Sansur and Lina Isma'il, Dalia Association.

local—to meet, celebrate, discover common ground, and feel connected to each other and to the specific project, issue, or initiative at hand.

Center community as your north star.

Trust in communities. Many interviewees from funding organizations stressed that communities know what their needs and priorities are and are best positioned to find solutions. Most of the successful funds started with leaders on the ground, who understand the priorities and are trusted by local people. A couple of decades ago in Poland (before the launch of FemFund, featured in this report), international donors and activists attempted to create a women's fund, but the effort failed in part because local activists weren't involved in a meaningful way to help create it and public buy-in was lacking.[9]

For regional organizations serving many communities, the key is to have representatives on the ground on whom the organization counts to learn what is happening locally. Rima Mismar, Executive Director of Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, stressed that their success depends on team members based in different countries keeping the head office apprised of the local arts scene and helping artists connect to AFAC. In a similar vein, organizations that support people with a shared identity, such as The Other Foundation that defends the rights of the LGBTQI community, draw from the lived experience of staff and advisors from that community to determine how to make the biggest impact.

Maintain flexibility in terms of outcomes, strategies, and issues. When nearly every community in the world is confronting multiple crises—from health pandemics to civil unrest over racial inequity to climate change-induced disasters—it is important to resist becoming too focused on any single solution. Successful organizations are agile enough to respond to the needs of their constituency. In the recent COVID-19 19 crisis, Jenny Hodgson described how "gender rights groups are giving out hand sanitizer and happy to do it" because that is what the moment calls for. Maintaining this flexibility helps funding organizations see and act upon other opportunities that help accomplish the larger goal of community organizing and constituency building.

Balancing structure and simplicity*.* Funds that aim for a high level of public engagement, especially in societies where shared decision-making and community voice are rare, need to provide sufficient structure, training, and public education to familiarize people with and generate enthusiasm for the model. Trust and capacity building take time, and the more decentralized the decision-making, the more coordination and communication required. Yet structures and processes that are too bureaucratic or cumbersome are demotivating.
It's important to determine early on what level of commitment community members, grantees, and other stakeholders are willing and able to make and to budget accordingly. Avila

[9] Interview with Magda Poche , FemFund..

Kilmurray, former Director of the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland and now a consultant with The Institute for Integrated Transitions urged, "Try and keep things as simple as possible. . . People tend to walk away" if roles and expectations aren't clear.

Balance external and local funding.

Be open to support in all forms. All organizations interviewed for this report depend on external funding (international grants and/or donations not sourced from the communities directly engaged) to some degree, especially for initial seed funding. Avila Kilmurray said that over the past decade the community foundation movement has "over-egged" the possibilities of relying strictly on locally mobilized funds and that in reality most community foundations, especially those in more developed economies with a higher cost of living, do need some outside financing.

However, interviewees have found creative ways to generate revenue without diminishing the sense of local ownership that comes from involving the community in decision-making, valuing existing assets, and cultivating trust. Some organizations (including Tewa women's fund in Nepal and Monteverde Community Fund in Costa Rica) earn income through rental of their facilities, and others raise revenue through fees for community classes or other services. Dalia Association offers donor-advised funds through which donors (community members at various income levels, local institutions, and Palestinians in the diaspora) can match their interests with community priorities and collaborate with community members to select projects. Other programs with the business sector, such as arrangements with local restaurants in Palestine or tourist services in Costa Rica, can raise significant revenue. One advantage to partnering with local businesses in wealthy but autocratic societies is "the greater latitude for action because the for-profit sector is less scrutinized," and if done carefully, such partnerships can "increase the money available for social causes."[10] That said, successful relationships in the corporate or business sector, especially on a large scale, require time, familiarity with corporate culture, and the right networks.[11]

Stay true to the mission. Of course, being open to all forms of capital doesn't mean that all forms of funding should be accepted at any cost. Rima Mismar stressed the importance of communicating the organization's mission and working only with donors whose vision and approach align with the mission. Donors may expect a discrete return-on-investment, especially if they give in response to crises or emergencies, but it's important to communicate how they are contributing, collectively, to long-term impact and fulfillment of the organization's purpose.

[10] Hartnell, Caroline. "Philanthropy in the Arab Region," p 47.
[11] Interview with Khaled Mansour.

Several interviewees said the flexible, multi-year funding they have received from international and institutional funders has been invaluable and has given them the stability to build more meaningful, on-going relationships with their communities. Of course, many institutional funders do not operate from the principle of ceding power to communities, putting the burden on organizations to help funders expand their view. One of the biggest challenges for the staff of UHAI EASHRI has been managing external funders' expectations around conflict of interest policies for its peer-advisor grantmaking model in East Africa, specifically that those who make decisions on grants may also receive grants. Mukami Marete, Co-Executive Director, advises that leaders setting up participatory funds discuss this aspect of their model relatively early with funders and ensure processes and policies (e.g. for conflict of interest) anticipate funders' expectations.

Ensure that external funding is catalytic. Hilary Gilbert stated that "it's always extremely difficult to raise money (for human rights) where you hope to distribute it." Given this reality, external funding will, in most cases, always need to be part of the mix, though it should be viewed as an investment to jumpstart or expand strategic initiatives with a goal of increasing percentages of local funding and resources over time. Tewa started with local donations to fund small grants and leveraged that income to solicit matching donations from external sources to grow the grant program; the Monteverde Community Fund is developing alternative revenue streams to cover international grants that will end in a few years. FemFund does receive outside financial support but has set a goal to be 100 percent movement-funded in ten years.

3. CONSIDERATIONS FOR DESIGNING FUNDS

Most of the organizations featured in this report use various forms of local resource mobilization and participatory grantmaking toward the larger goals of:

- Harnessing assets
- Building capacity, and
- Cultivating trust

Together these form a scaffolding of complementary elements—assets, capacities and trust (ACT)—that strengthen the voice and power of communities, thereby building constituencies for human rights.

Harnessing Assets

A key feature of the ACT framework is how assets are defined and deployed. In conventional philanthropy, financing and in-kind donations are considered the primary assets. In the ACT framework, assets include not just money and materials but other intangibles such as

knowledge, relationships, expertise, and extant networks. This distinction becomes important especially in areas of extreme income inequality or reduced financial resources. Greater numbers of people can contribute to and feel a sense of ownership in a fund if their non-monetary contributions are recognized and valued, fostering solidarity. When things like knowledge, relationships, and data are also considered assets, people are more likely to see their value and leverage them to come up with creative solutions.

Power and Creativity in Peer Associations

Arnaud Quemin, formerly with Handicapped International (HI) and now a director with Mercy Corps in the Arab region, managed a program for HI to rebuild the rural community of Bam in southern Iran after an earthquake and support people disabled in the natural disaster, most of them in wheelchairs as a result of the damage. At the time, Bam did not have much associative life. The project's implicit goal was to create an association but not in a top-down fashion. The key to outcome sustainability, the HI team understood, was not to organize an association for them but to show them the power of peer association through experience.

HI initiated this process by bringing the disabled cohort together every week or two for sessions with doctors, lawyers, and accountants from associations for people with disabilities in Tehran (all in wheelchairs) to demonstrate how to live everyday life, engage in sports, etc. During Ramadan, HI staff even coordinated a pilgrimage to Mashad for a group of 20 people in wheelchairs. While a logistical ordeal and costly, this group of rural folk who had never in their lives been on an airplane found the experience to be extremely empowering: their wheelchairs enabled them to make a statement about access, and officials bent over backwards to help them.

Initially, HI planned and budgeted for at least two years to support the formation of the association, but ultimately it was established in just a few months. It had become clear to the cohort what they could accomplish together. A few years later, the only thing that had survived of the HI program was the association. This was the real legacy: the network, the trust, the bonds of people with disabilities within the community. As Arnaud Quemin stated, "The group had to create it themselves. Our role was simply to provide peer experiences and peer training to promote trust, optimism, and inspiration.[12]"

The act of donating matters more than the amount. In the process of pooling resources, the focus shifts from soliciting large donors—whose expectations and goals may not align with the fund's mission—toward building collective wealth to support collective solutions that reflect community priorities. For example, at Tewa, everyone (including the board, past presidents, the founder, members, volunteers, and even grantees) is a fundraiser. Basanti Lama said that "volunteers are the pillars of the organization," not only participating in Tewa's programs, but serving as ambassadors and raising money among their peer and family networks. Tewa considers donations of any size to be worthwhile, and from the beginning the message has been that donors are making a commitment to the rights and lives of women in Nepal rather than just funding an organization. Founder Rita Thapa demonstrated this commitment when she donated money that relatives and friends gave her upon her husband's death to Tewa.

[12] Interview with Arnaud Quemin, Mercy Corps.

Customarily these are considered personal offerings to individuals in time of need, not donations to organizations, but this example ignited a spark of solidarity and encouraged others to imagine how their traditional funeral gifts can serve the broader community.

Small donations can be mobilized quickly in the right circumstances. In repressed or closed societies where governments can seize bank accounts or other fungible goods, or in unstable contexts where physical goods and infrastructure can be destroyed[13], it can be advantageous to harness assets spontaneously for specific purposes or for an organization to provide small funds to match what community members can contribute themselves. Hilary Gilbert of the South Sinai Foundation in Egypt said that because of high demand for support and a small organization budget, the team began to request that communities pitch in what they could to offset project costs. In many cases, communities were able to pool some donations among themselves, not only helping to stretch the Foundation's grant but increasing the community's investment in the outcomes. In southern Uganda, rural community members of the Twerwaneho Listeners' Club, which began as a local radio station to inform rural and indigenous communities about their land rights, raised about US$5,000 just among themselves to cover travel and other costs for community members to testify at hearings to oppose illegal land appropriation.

Grants can be flexible assets, not just outflows. Grants themselves may also be considered part of the "assets" of an organization, and many of the organizations interviewed for this report offer a range of grants in different amounts for different strategic purposes. UHAI EASHRI offers one-year grants of up to US$5,000 for seed funding and multi-year grants of up to US$250,000 in core support for large organizations. Several organizations emphasize the importance of small grants and flexible funding. The Reconstruction Women's Fund in Serbia offers rapid response grants; grants addressing thematic areas such as nationalism, militarism, and racism; and general operating grants ranging from about US$1,500 to about US$20,000. Grants from FemFund, while small (most are up to US$1500), are attractive even to large women's rights NGOs because they are unrestricted, unlike most grants from institutional funders. The Other Foundation offers small grants of around US$600 for individuals but also makes much larger strategic grants for organizations working nationally or throughout southern Africa.

Networks are invaluable. Networks are also recognized as assets and serve several purposes. They allow an organization to increase its capacity—through sharing knowledge and resources— without losing touch with community leaders and priorities. They also break down silos and help bridge sectors. FemFund has connected informal, grassroots groups working on women's rights and development with large NGOs and others in the professional human rights sector. Regional organizations such as Edge Fund[14], The Other Foundation, and UHAI EASHRI that bring peers together to make grants also build bonds among people across geographies.

[13] Ibid.
[14] We consulted the Edge Fund case study in the desk review for this report. See Appendix D.

These relationships in turn increase opportunities for collaboration, deeper understanding, and accountability.

Building Capacities

Community-driven processes—through which people come together to identify their needs, raise money to meet them, distribute funds to groups or individuals doing the work, look at the impact of their collective investment and conceive of new ways of doing things—foster solidarity and problem-solving. These skills are essential to supporting human rights work and building the constituency for it, especially in divided societies.

Participatory grantmaking yields more than the sum of its parts. Participatory grantmaking, tailored to the context, can be a powerful tool to enhance solidarity and problem-solving. In the FemFund model, applicants from each grant cycle come together to review their proposals and reach consensus on which of them will receive funding. Women with different identities from all over Poland working on different priorities get to know each other. Magda Pocheć explained that "what is transformative in our work is that we… show many various faces of feminism," and some organizations apply just for the opportunity to learn what is happening in other sectors and communities. The Twerwaneho Listeners' Club does not make "grants" but instead brings local people together to discuss the problem and determine the solution, collects donations from the community members, and disburses the money according to the community's directive to cover project costs. UHAI EASHRI, working in seven countries in East Africa, convenes a committee of LGBTQI and sex worker activists nominated by their communities across the region, ensuring that "activists are not just beneficiaries of support but also decision-makers for that support," according to Mukami Marete. The peer reviewers' lived experience and deep knowledge of the field enables them to make effective recommendations: of the 600 grants the organization has made in eleven years, only three percent fell short of expectations.

These approval processes are more labor-intensive than the conventional decision-making by a long-standing, established, and sometimes more insular board. But their purpose goes beyond approving grants. Organizations that use some form of participatory grantmaking invest significant time and money in outreach, training, and communication, not only to facilitate disbursing of funds but to share the impact of the work, engage new people, maintain transparency, and ultimately build public support. Many organizations involve the community in horizontal decision-making around programs and strategic development. Rather than being a "cost," this investment is considered an asset that is harnessed for movement-building, which lays the foundation for societal impact. Magda Pocheć said when the political environment in Poland improves, the FemFund wants to have the resources to create more systemic change, but "for now the revolution is between daily interaction with people."

Flexibility is a crucial capacity. In obstructed, repressed, or closed societies, organizations sometimes lead with "development" work or "social services", in part because these projects

can more easily fly under the radar of autocratic governments and reduce risk for local businesses that want to support the community. Advancing human rights may not be an explicit goal, but it is often an outcome. Both Maadi Community Foundation (Mu'assasat Waqfeyat al Maadi al Ahleya)[15] in Cairo and South Sinai Foundation began by funding community development projects such as youth education, women's income generation, and art, but because of their track record and trust with communities, the organizations were called to help defend democratic participation and human rights during the Arab spring. In the post-Arab Spring era human rights work is now far too dangerous to do overtly especially on the Sinai peninsula, but as Hilary Gilbert explained, the South Sinai Foundation continues to help people defend their rights without calling too much attention to their efforts. For example the Foundation was able to cover fines for mothers in a small co-op (that received a small grant from the Foundation) who were threatened with jail when they couldn't repay a small business loan.

Skills are symbiotic and transferable. In other cases, defense of human rights leads to improved development outcomes that, in turn, support human rights. The Twerwaneho Listeners' Club began as a locally run radio station educating communities in southern Uganda about illegal land evictions and helping them access free legal services to defend their territory. The TLC helped communities raise money first to fight the evictions and then to improve conservation and sustainability practices, which helped secure the land rights gains. TLC helped communities acquire implements and training to protect the watershed, making fishing more sustainable and making it more difficult for the government and corporations to justify evictions on the premise that communities are not protecting natural resources. The community radio station is an asset that TLC continues to use to increase community capacity: local people share their stories on air, educate one another about community philanthropy and local resource mobilization, and report on legal and political developments.

Another approach to capacity building is to invest in training and support for a cohort of activists from different areas who then use their skills to organize their local communities. The Mongolian Women's Fund (MONES) provides training and coaching for a cohort of women leaders who learn how to convene their local communities to identify needs and assets, design projects that address local priorities, and then generate local donations and mobilize other resources to fund those projects. The Reconstruction Women's Fund in Serbia hosts a multi-day gathering, How Sisters Could Do It Best, that brings together grantees, activists, and leaders from across the country not only to raise money for RWF but to train attendees in raising money through events in their own communities, among other topics.

Cultivating Trust

Trust is both the ingredient that allows people to pool their assets and increase their capacity and the byproduct of those processes. The seeds of trust often start with on-going local

[15] We consulted the Maadi Community Foundation interview with Global Fund for Community Foundations. See Appendix D.

relationships and knowledge, which can make the difference between success and failure. Rasha Sansur and Lina Isma'il of Dalia Association stated that part of the organization's success has been its attention to relationships and the time the team can spend visiting communities. In 2018 following public outcry against draconian restrictions on women's rights, FemFund was launched by locally known and trusted activists in Poland who collaborated with the community to design the fund. While heightened public awareness created an opening, trust in the leadership and their demonstration of solidarity with the community established the organization as a valuable, national resource for women.

Strong communication and accountability structures are also critical, but it can be challenging to balance transparency with safety concerns in threatening environments. Regional funds like UHAI EASRI, based in Kenya but supporting human rights work in closed societies such as Burundi and The Democratic Republic of the Congo, manage this by publishing their processes and methods on their website but keeping their grantees and peer grant reviewers' identities confidential. In areas where a formal, registered organization is threatening to an authoritarian regime by its mere existence, people form looser associations or clubs with an intent to organize for their rights. They may need to disband if the government targets them, but their bonds of trust allow them to regroup and even continue the dissolution and reconstitution process several times if necessary.[16]

The Other Foundation, based in Johannesburg and making grants throughout southern Africa, follows the privacy and security recommendations of local activists regarding its grants in closed societies but invests in social media, events, and other communication in South Africa where the environment is more open. One goal is to provide transparency from The Other Foundation to donors and the public (the organization also has internal measures to ensure local activists and grantees are accountable without sacrificing their safety). Another goal is to educate influential sectors of the public, especially local churches, the media, and middle and upper class donors, about LGBTQI rights through a local lens: LGBTQI rights are about community and compassion, values that are important to all Africans and that Africans, not outsiders, are fighting for.

[16] Interview with Arnaud Quemin, Mercy Corps.

Putting It All Together: How Organizations Weave Assets, Capacities, and Trust in Grantmaking and Resource Mobilization

This table, featuring a sample of organizations we interviewed, illustrates how each fund weaves participatory grantmaking and local resource mobilization tactics to harness assets, build capacities, and cultivate trust, all of which support the goals of constituency-building and long-term impact.

Organization Details	Harness Assets	Build Capacities	Cultivate Trust
Dalia Association Budget: US$360,000 Staff: 8 Focus: community development, youth, women, community philanthropy, community mobilization Area served: Palestine Civic space rating: repressed	*Grantmaking* • Seed grants (up to US$1,500), open call and public voting to choose winners • Special focus areas (women, youth) *Resource Mobilization* • "Funraising" events, donor-advised funds, diaspora program • External institutional funding • Require communities that apply for grants to raise minimum 25% of budget from local funds and/or non-cash contributions	• Workshops to bring groups (women, youth, etc.) together so they identify needs, priorities, solutions • Fundraising is an organizing and public education tactic • Convenings ("learning together", not unidirectional workshops), white papers, etc. to help people share knowledge, educate public, influence policy makers	• In-person visits, long-term commitment, keeping within a certain size to maintain relationships and trust • Work continues whether or not there is funding • Nurturing neighborhood/ community relationships, horizontal communication builds trust
FemFund Budget: US$260,400 Staff: 5 Focus: women's rights Area served: Poland Civic space rating: Narrowed	*Grantmaking* • Small, unrestricted grants; short and multi-year • Strategic grants to fill gaps *Resource Mobilization* • Some institutional funding • Local supporter program: approximately 200 monthly local supporters, raised	• All applicants review and select grants, receive training • Program is helping redefine feminism in Poland • A lot of training and communication on values, process, etc. • Model promotes learning about different regions, issues, priorities, people • Fundraising is a	• Open to anyone, from small grassroots groups to large NGOs • Bridges people in different parts of country, professional women's rights NGOs and informal groups • Community involved in developing multi-year strategy • Decisions shared openly, transparent communication; "conflict of interest"

	approximately US$14,000 in 2019; goal to be 100% movement funded in ten years	public education and organizing tactic	isn't a problem because people decide collectively
The Other Foundation Budget: US$875,000 Staff: 15 Focus: Rights for LGBTQI communities Area served: 17 countries in Southern Africa Civic space rating: narrowed, obstructed, and repressed	*Grantmaking* • Flexible small grants of different amounts, including to individuals • Larger strategic grants to complement participatory grants *Resource mobilization* • External institutional funding • House party fundraising *Other* • Local activist network in multiple countries • 280,0000 Facebook followers and other social media engagement	• Create accountability mechanisms (TOF to donors, activists to TOF and vice versa, TOF to community) • Some training for grant reviewers • Host annual convenings for activists, donors, etc. • Influence public opinion/policy through strategic grants and media work • Local fundraising is a public education tactic	• Grants open to anyone in region • Balance grassroots grants with big grants to large organizations to influence public opinion and policies • Has helped start new conversation about LGBTQI issues driven by Africans • Peer reviewers' bios on website • Grantees, activists, others involved in strategic planning, program goal-setting
Twerwaneho Listeners' Club Budget: N/A Staff: N/A Focus: land rights, governance, and environmental conservation Area served: 8 rural districts in southern Uganda Civic space rating: repressed	*Grantmaking* • Does not make "grants"—pools small contributions from individual community members, who decide collectively how money is spent *Resource mobilization* • Some institutional funding for operations • Began with US$5,000 from individual community contributions	• Education, outreach, mobilizing through community journalism—stories from local people, community philanthropy model, updates on land rights' issues, news, outreach • Community decides how to use money collected, builds on existing consensus decision-making model • Training and capacity building on conservation, eco-	• Shared crisis (land evictions, journalists threatened by government) brought people together • TLC leaders were already trusted because they provide free legal resources, share news about government evictions and human/land rights, etc. • Easy to implement community philanthropy model once people understand it • TLC works with

	(approximately $30/person) for legal challenge Other • Community radio station started with local people's contributions, "spirit of self-help"	tourism, sustainable resource management to improve people's lives—both an organizing strategy to protect against land appropriation and tangible improvements in people's lives • Fundraising is an organizing tactic	communities that have shared values and interests; some communities mistrust each other
UHAI EASHRI Budget: US$3.5 million Staff: 15 Focus: Rights for LGBTQI communities and sex workers Area served: East Africa Civic space rating: repressed, obstructed, closed	*Grantmaking* • Open calls for seed funding or core support grants, range from small (up to US$5,000 for one year) to large (US$50,000-$250,000 for two years) *Resource mobilization* • Some local funding • External institutional funding *Other* • Activist peer reviewers in multiple countries	• Learning and capacity building around decision-making, setting policies, creating agendas for and running convenings, etc. • Training for peer reviewers	• Conflict of interest managed by peer reviewers group to balance maximum participation with impartiality/fairness; confidentiality protocols protect grantees • Term limits for peer reviewers • Site visits to potential grantees • Activist-driven bi-annual conference determines organization's strategic direction

4. FUND MODELS

Below we present five possible models that synthesize the findings from the research and offer different methods at different scales for harnessing assets, building capacities, and cultivating trust. We describe purpose, functions, challenges, benefits, and important considerations, such as socio-economic and cultural issues and applicability to more closed or more open societies. We also suggest fundraising and grantmaking ideas from a menu of options (described in sections 5 and 6.) These models are **highly** context-dependent, however, and do not reflect the myriad granular factors that may come into play depending on where they may be considered for implementation.

The models are presented roughly in order of most locally focused (e.g. one neighborhood or village) to most broadly focused (national and/or region-wide, serving two or more Arab countries) in terms of scale. "Community" can be defined in many ways, but for the purposes of this discussion we offer two parameters that underpin the models presented below:

- ***Geography***. Communities of people naturally form around shared resources (e.g. a lake, a forest, an agricultural plot, a highly-visited tourist spot), or around place at different scales, such as neighborhood, county, sub-region, nation or multi-national region.
- ***Identity and experience***. Communities of people also naturally form around identity, experience and culture (e.g. women, youth, LGBTQI, Palestinians globally), and are not limited by geography.

Model 1: Neighborhood/Grassroots Fund

PURPOSE	To bring people in a rural community or urban neighborhood together to solve a problem that local people determine is a high priority and is associated with human rights (as defined in the local context).
CORE FUNCTIONS	Coordinate with community members to define problem, explore solutions, identify and harness existing assets, and decide how to use the assets to solve the problem.
ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS	Build and strengthen relationships, build or enhance collective decision-making practices, strengthen community's capacity to advocate among external power-brokers, and/or protect community members and/or community resources.
KEY CHALLENGES	Needs strong, credible leaders and support for those leaders; needs catalyzing event or other problem that most people in community identify as a priority; needs clear and on-going communication to build trust, prove concept, etc. Leaders need to articulate the goal (building a collective response for the long-term vs. coming together to solve a one-time problem) and assets necessary to achieve that goal.
KEY BENEFITS	Can start informally with community members learning together and building structure as they go; can be flexible, responsive, and transparent with the right leadership; requires few financial resources to start; doesn't necessarily require grant administration/transactions. Greater protection because people work in a group and insulate individual leaders from persecution/threat. Can potentially work under the radar of repressive regimes.
FUNDRAISING OPTIONS	Community members all pitch in small amounts or whatever they can, either raise as much as needed for a specific solution or slightly more to create a reserve, cover basic

	administrative costs, etc.
GRANTMAKING OPTIONS	Rather than make formal "grants," community members convene to decide how they want to solve the problem and decide collectively how to allocate the funds (e.g. travel and legal support for local representatives to give testimony at public hearings on land rights violations).
CIVIC SPACE & OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	Can work in **repressed** or **closed** societies. Best for an existing community that has enough infrastructure to come together (either physically or online), has an urgent and important problem that can be addressed with a concrete solution, and has an existing culture or practice of self-help. May eventually evolve a more formal organizational structure. In closed societies, neighborhood-specific manifestations of philanthropy may be considered less threatening to the governmental superstructure, such as communities that have coalesced around schools, clinics, affordable housing, self-help groups.

Model 2: Sub-Region Community Fund

PURPOSE	To make small grants to local projects in a relatively small geographic area such as a county, district, province, etc.; more formal structure than the neighborhood/grassroots fund.
CORE FUNCTIONS	Bring people together on on-going basis (as opposed to crisis/urgent issue response) to support locally driven development processes, bond people in a community, build capacity for informal groups to self-organize.
ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS	Meet tangible needs/priorities but also educate about human rights, build support for local human rights campaigns, etc.
KEY CHALLENGES	Needs strong, credible leaders and support for those leaders; needs clear and on-going communication to build trust, prove concept, etc. May be launched as a result of a catalyzing event, but should involve community planning activities to ensure that the fund can serve broad local needs over time.
KEY BENEFITS	Makes small funds available for tangible needs, builds solidarity and capacity for community problem-solving, exposes wider audience to community-driven projects and groups. Can be flexible and responsive but also establish a reputation as an on-going community resource.
FUNDRAISING OPTIONS	Events, peer-to-peer fundraising, monthly donor, and crisis-inspired campaigns are well-suited to this model, depending on context.
GRANTMAKING OPTIONS	Applicant decision-making, popular vote, and blended models are well-suited to this model, depending on context.
CIVIC SPACE & OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	Can work in **repressed**, **obstructed**, or more open societies. May work in **closed** societies but activities may have to be carefully framed as development instead of human rights. Best for communities that are already connected (or defined geographically) in an area with enough infrastructure to come together (either physically or online). If an existing culture or practice of self-help doesn't exist, will require activists or leaders to socialize the public around collective giving concepts.

Model 3: Nation-wide Identity Group/Constituency Fund

PURPOSE	To make grants to support projects by a particular marginalized constituency (youth,

	women, indigenous groups, people with disabilities); works at a national level.
CORE FUNCTIONS	Provide flexible funding, small grants for informal groups, strategic grants to bridge groups working in different sectors. Activities are centered around events to build trust and transparency and networks across geographic communities. Promotes bonding within the local constituency or other sub groups (e.g. if fund supports people with disabilities, young people with physical disabilities might be a sub-group).
ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS	Public education and advocacy for group's rights, linking to other sectors (business, universities, etc.).
KEY CHALLENGES	Need strong communication practices and infrastructure to keep people engaged across geographies; requires more financial resources than local models; may need greater organizational capacity for grant management.
KEY BENEFITS	Can help connect isolated organizations and build a field or strengthen a movement; can advocate at national or regional level to support/increase impact of local groups; may have resources to take on risky or expensive legal projects to benefit vulnerable populations or organizations. Because community is identity-based, not geographically based, may be able to connect with global supporters and victories.
FUNDRAISING OPTIONS	Events, peer-to-peer fundraising, local business partnerships are especially well-suited, though all fundraising options could work.
GRANTMAKING OPTIONS	Blended decision-making is well-suited for this option, though applicant decision-making could be effective depending on the size of the organization and constituency.
CIVIC SPACE & OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	Can work in **narrowed** and **obstructed** contexts, and possibly in **repressed** contexts. May come under more scrutiny because of national scope and more organization of marginalized constituencies. May be necessary to frame the work more explicitly as development (e.g. youth economic empowerment instead of civic education or training). Leaders need to be well-known and/or trusted by enough people in local areas to create buy-in.

Model 4: Regional (multi-country) Fund

PURPOSE	To make grants for human rights projects and organizations (both "professionalized" and led by ordinary people) in various countries; board representation for each country, but (compensated?) grantmaking committees that live and work in each country make decisions on grants for their country.
CORE FUNCTIONS	Grants of various ranges to support established organizations working at systems level and informal/start-up/grassroots efforts in communities, devolved decision making to promote local control, networking, knowledge sharing.
ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS	Maps issues and power dynamics, identifies areas to link human rights to other issues, influences regional policies and donor organizations, supports grantees and other partners in developing effective local messaging around human rights.
KEY CHALLENGES	Legal, logistical complexity of international financial transactions; need more financial resources to maintain communication, coordination with grantmaking committees, and alignment with other partners across geographies, countries, languages and cultures. Will likely need more significant external funding than other models.
KEY BENEFITS	Can channel support to organizations in repressive societies; can help raise visibility of/support for field while local funds do on-the-ground work; can help coordinate more expensive or risky legal or political strategies and reduce vulnerability for local groups; can build relationships with other sectors (women's funds, indigenous rights funds,

	environmental justice funds, etc.).
FUNDRAISING OPTIONS	Local business partnerships in wealthy countries, crisis-inspired campaigns, and fee-for-service options may be well-suited for this model.
GRANTMAKING OPTIONS	Peer advisor decision-making is well-suited to this model, if peers in each local area have final authority to make grants in that area.
CIVIC SPACE & OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	Should be based in the most open society in the Arab region (**obstructed**) for least government interference. Grantmaking committees should include specialists with on-the-ground knowledge at the most local level feasible (e.g. not just Egypt but Sinai). Need explicit structures or processes to balance efficiency with well-maintained local relationships.

Model 5: Field-Building Fund

PURPOSE	Regional (multi-country) fund that supports local or national human rights funds that then make small grants to local initiatives (instead of making grants directly to NGOs or other groups that implement projects.)
CORE FUNCTIONS	Provides seed funding for core support for local or national funds; convenes partners (local or national funds) to share ideas, build network, etc.; provides initial training, coaching, etc. to help local activists and community members start funds, etc.
ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS	Maps issues and power dynamics, identifies areas to link human rights to other issues, influences regional policies and donor organizations, supports fund partners in developing effective local messaging around human rights.
KEY CHALLENGES	Legal, logistical complexity of international financial transactions; need to work closely with partners to foster local ownership of local funds; will likely need some external funding, so will need messages that appeal to regional and external donors.
KEY BENEFITS	Can channel support to organizations in repressive societies; can help raise visibility of/support for field while local funds do on-the-ground work; can help coordinate more expensive or risky legal or political strategies and reduce vulnerability for local groups; can build relationships with other sectors (women's funds, indigenous rights funds, environmental justice funds, etc.)
FUNDRAISING OPTIONS	Local business partnerships in wealthy countries, crisis-inspired campaigns, and fee-for-service options may be well-suited for this model.
GRANTMAKING OPTIONS	Applicant decision-making is well suited to this model.
CIVIC SPACE & OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	Should be based in the most open society in Arab region (**obstructed**) for least government interference; leadership should be diverse (geographically representative, a mix of grassroots activists and human rights technical professionals, gender and ethnic diversity, etc.).Should explore the possibility of representatives from local fund partners or others in their network serving on the board or in other leadership positions.

5. MENU OF FUNDRAISING (RESOURCE MOBILIZATION) OPTIONS

These fundraising options help generate local resources and may be effective in any society (from open to closed), depending on how they are implemented.

For examples of how organizations we interviewed implemented these ideas, see Appendix B.

Crisis-inspired campaigns
Description: Solicit donations, volunteers or other collective action in response to a shared crisis (e.g. illegal government confiscation of land, highly-visible violence against women, an environmental crisis caused by an oil spill, etc.) Outreach and donations through events, meetings, online giving platforms, traditional media, social media, etc.

Considerations: The urgency and emotional intensity of a crisis can be a strong impetus for short-term and one-off giving, but it is difficult to maintain and leverage a crisis to generate long-term and regular giving. Need to craft asks so that potential donors understand how giving to the organization helps in the immediate crisis and serves as a stable community resource. In more closed societies is most effective and least risky if the crisis narrative is apolitical and more human interest-related in nature.

Events
Description: Meetings and gatherings organized around fun activities or celebration (house parties or dinners, art shows, etc.). May also be organized around trainings or other more professional topics.

Considerations: Important both for fundraising and building bonds, showing impact of work, and communicating with existing and potential donors. Some events require people to be in person, but some can be adapted for online formats. Require more time, effort, and in some cases money than other fundraising options. More informal events are most appropriate for more obstructed, oppressed, closed societies, while more formal, professional, capacity-building and explicitly self-organizing events are more appropriate for more open or narrowed societies.

Local business partnerships
Description: Identify businesses in the fund's geography or sympathetic to its primary constituency and arrange a portion of proceeds to go to the fund (e.g. percentage of local restaurant profits donated to farmworkers protection fund.) May also organize in-kind or financial donations for annual events that have marketing benefit for the business.

Considerations: Requires time and effort to build on-going relationships with business community; messaging may need to be apolitical to appeal to businesses; can generate regular revenue at higher levels with less financial investment from the organization.

Diaspora
Description: The diaspora population is a constituency that various fundraising techniques can engage to support fund in the home country. Ideas include partnering with intermediaries outside the country to channel donations, organizing travel for diaspora members visiting the home country, and coordinating virtual house parties.

Considerations: Diaspora populations typically have a strong personal connection to the geography or culturally-specific community but should not be seen or treated as a source of easy money. Trust-based funding inherent in community-led funds may resonate with them, but engagement requires tailored messaging and consistent outreach.

Fee for service/earned income
Description: Classes offered to the public; income from rental of offices, facilities, or equipment; consulting to businesses or project coordination for foreign volunteer programs, etc.

Considerations: Can generate greater return on investment than other options. Income from this option is usually unrestricted. Provides other opportunities to engage with community and can help establish organization as a multi-purpose local resource. May require capital outlay to acquire facilities or equipment.

Monthly donor campaigns
Description: Donors make regular contributions of the same amount each month automatically through bank transfer or credit card charge.

Considerations: Makes budgeting and cash flow management easier because donations are consistent and reliable. Requires less staff time and effort than some other options, but continued donor engagement is important to maintain and grow donor pool. Highly suitable for diaspora givers if the organization invests in content and communication tailored to this group. Can be used to convert fundraising around a crisis or emergency into regular donations, but organization has to describe the need and advantages of long-term investment.

Peer-to-peer funding
Description: Volunteers, donors, or other supporters fundraise among their friends, family, and other networks on behalf of the organization. Campaigns can be conducted through online crowdfunding platforms, in person, at events, etc.

Considerations: Usually requires less staff coordination and financial resources because supporters take responsibility for raising money. Organization has less control over amount raised or whether targets are met, but can raise significant revenue quickly and easily. Important to have effective tools (e.g. simple online platforms, guidelines to help supporters plan their campaigns, etc.) and staff available for help as needed.

6. MENU OF GRANTMAKING (RESOURCE ALLOCATION) OPTIONS

The four participatory grantmaking options below offer varying degrees of shifting decision-making power to communities or grantees.

Applicant Decision-Making
Process: Staff receive grant applications through an open call and pre-screen to eliminate those that do not meet minimum criteria. Applicants are trained in how to review and evaluate proposals based on fund guidelines, etc. Applicants meet as a group to review each other's proposals and decide together who will receive funding.

Considerations: This option increases groups' exposure to others' work and communities and builds collective decision-making skills. Applicants bring direct knowledge of the work and needs, and the process can increase transparency and legitimacy of funding decisions. This option does require time and people (staff or volunteers) to coordinate training, which needs to be repeated for each cycle of applicants (assuming new applicants participate each time). Applicants also need to commit the time to participate in review. This option may not be feasible if the applicant pool is too large.

This or similar model used by: Edge Fund, FemFund

Peer Advisor Decision-Making
Process: Staff receive grant applications through an open call and pre-screen to eliminate those that do not meet minimum criteria. Reviewers receive training as necessary in proposal review and evaluation. Peer activists from the same field as grantee organizations review proposals and either make recommendations to the board or make final decisions.

Considerations: Peer reviewers bring expertise and first-hand knowledge of issues, field, and actors, so their decisions will be more informed and likely result in more successful grants. If peer reviewers are chosen in a democratic and transparent way, they may also increase the legitimacy of funding decisions, and they may become more cohesive and efficient as a decision-making body if they continue working together over multiple cycles. Potential conflict of interest issues need to be addressed early and transparently, and it is important to rotate members occasionally to bring in new ideas and perspectives. This option promotes bonding among peer reviewers but not among applicants.

This or similar model used by: Headwaters Foundation[17], The Other Foundation, UHAI EASHRI

[17] We consulted materials for the U.S.-based Headwaters Foundation as part of our desk review. See Appendix D.

Popular Vote
Process: Groups or individuals submit proposals to the fund in an open call, and staff select finalists. Finalists pitch projects at an event for community members and other members of the public. The public has a vote and an impartial group of judges has a vote. The winner is awarded the grant.

Considerations: Fewer grants are awarded through this option, but more people can weigh in on the decision. An impartial group may be necessary to balance the vote if friends and family of the finalists vote and are biased toward certain projects over others. Projects and the organization receive a lot of visibility, which can be a benefit or a liability depending on the environment. This option requires an orientation for the public to take a vote, but the training is less time-intensive than with other options.

This or similar model used by: Dalia Association

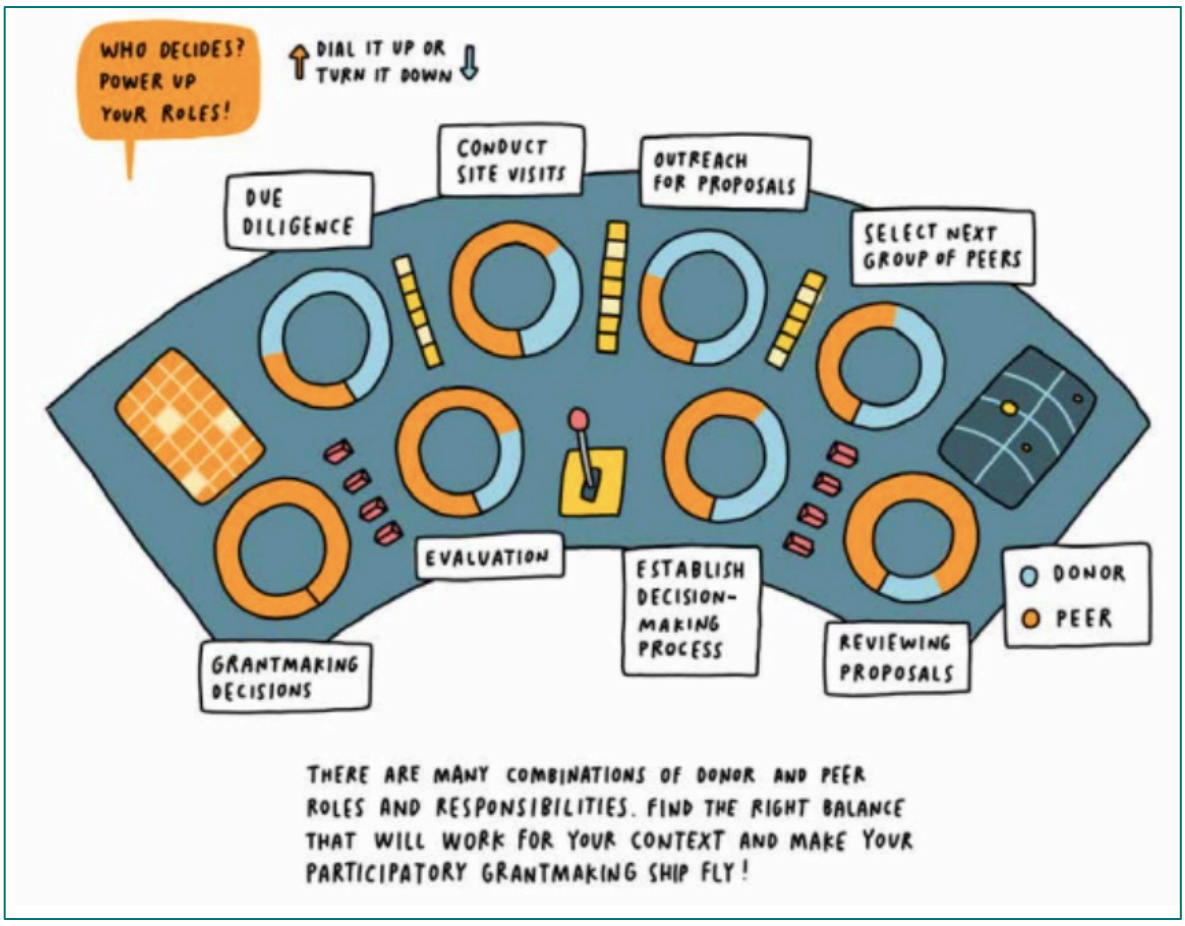
Blended Decision-Making
Process: Some grants are decided by applicants, peer advisors, or popular vote, and others are decided by staff and activists/experts who review proposals (through open calls or invitation-only).

Considerations: The blended option offers the benefits of community involvement but also allows staff to fill in gaps for issues or groups that did not receive funding through community or peer decision-making. Staff can also target strategic funding to leverage the grants made through participatory mechanisms. It is necessary to be transparent with grantees, community members, donors, and other stakeholders which grant decisions are made by staff and which are made through participatory means, and why.

This or similar model used by: FemFund, The Other Foundation, UHAI EASRI

7. OTHER TACTICS FOR SHIFTING POWER IN GRANTMAKING

In addition to resource allocation options described in the previous section, organizations such as UHAI EASHRI and others we interviewed noted that power can be shifted to constituencies throughout the whole grantmaking cycle via a participatory approach. As the illustration below shows, fund staff can design processes which engage donors or community members ("peers") to varying degrees at significant points in the grantmaking lifecycle, with the end result being greater collaboration and community ownership of the fund as a whole.



From Deciding Together Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking by Cynthia Gibson and Jen Bokoff.

We highlight below three other points in the grantmaking cycle where a new fund in the Arab region could explore shifting power to community members.

Grantmaking Strategy and Criteria Development

In the development of new grantmaking strategy and proposal criteria, staff plan for and execute mechanisms enabling community review, input, and decision-making. Examples might include creating an advisory board or steering committee of peers, existing grantees, or other professional and community leaders who advise, guide, and/or have final say on future strategy and criteria; and posting the draft strategy and soliciting feedback online. These tactics enable communities to be involved in the establishment of key infrastructure of grantmaking—namely strategy and grant criteria—which are often viewed as opaque and arbitrary in more traditional, hierarchical grantmaking scenarios. Most of the organizations we interviewed, as well as Edge Fund, involve communities at this stage.

Building the Grant Pipeline

In a fully participatory grantmaking cycle, funders endeavor to make it as transparent and easy as possible for potential grantees to share their ideas. Rather than decline unsolicited proposals, which is a common practice in conventional philanthropy, participatory funders publicize requests for proposals widely, accept applications in non-traditional formats (recycled proposals, proposals submitted to other funders, videos, recordings, a phone interview, proposals in various languages, etc.), or have staff travel to communities to solicit and listen to potential grantees' ideas. MONES Mongolian Women's Fund and Peery Foundation[18] use these tactics.

Post-Grant Evaluation

Rather than traditional evaluation processes that reinforce hierarchy and division by developing metrics and measuring outcomes without community input, a participatory approach starts with an appreciation for community assets and strengths rather than an expectation of community deficiencies. The focus is on continuous learning versus valuing the "worth" of an organization and on real-time feedback loops versus "one-and-done" evaluations at the end of a grantmaking period. Practically, this translates into developing success metrics with communities; building in frequent, regular, low stakes conversations with all stakeholders to assess what is working and what is not; and co-creating solutions or actions to retain what works and address what does not. The Collins Foundation uses these practices.[19]

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The different cultural, political, and economic environments in the Arab region, as well as the varying levels of repression, pose a challenge for creating a human rights fund based in the region that can serve many populations well. But that diversity also makes it possible to envision options where operations in less restrictive societies can support local efforts in more restrictive ones, as demonstrated by the two regional African funds featured in this report.[20] Scope is another key consideration, both in terms of the amount of resources that will be necessary and the visibility that larger organizations can often attract, to the benefit or detriment of the effort. In light of these factors and the outcomes of this research, we offer these recommend to those shepherding the next steps:

- Consult with diverse stakeholders, including professional and community activists.

[18] Although we did not conduct an interview with the Peery Foundation, the organization's work on grantee-centric philanthropy is relevant to this research.
[19] Interviewees for this research did not speak explicitly about grant evaluation, but they may use some of these tactics. Abby Sarmac, who works with the Collins Foundation on post-grant evaluation, provided this information.
[20] Some smaller funds, including South Sinai Foundation and Dalia Association, are registered in the U.K. and Europe respectively, which has aided, rather than hampered, their efforts to cultivate a sense of local ownership. It was also a legal necessity for Dalia Association, since at that time (2007) local organizations could not register and operate.

- Engage leaders in open discussion to define the initiative's community and design parameters.
- Share data more broadly and generate interest in the concept.

Identify and consult with a diverse set of leaders.

We recommend starting with your existing networks, where trust has already been built, and asking your contacts to recommend others who may not typically be involved in this kind of effort but who understand or have experience with the principles described in this report. The participants should represent a range of societies (from narrowed to closed), including people who may be the most vulnerable in certain regions of a country and those with a keen local perspective.

Develop a core list of 10-15 key leaders in the Arab region comprising:

- Professional human rights activists. A subset of the working group's existing activist network, located in the Arab region, who are inspired by community philanthropy practices to build a broader human rights constituency. Human rights work for these stakeholders is a paid profession, within a formal organization or research institution.
- Local activists and/or those with lived experience of human rights challenges that are respected in their community. They may be working on projects that combine development or social services with human rights advocacy. They may be volunteers and may or may not be affiliated with a formal organization or association.
- People in the region already working in community philanthropy organizations (South Sinai Foundation, Waqfeyat al Maadi Community Foundation, Dalia Association, and others).

Engage in open-ended discussions to define "community" and the design parameters.

We highly recommend that your key participants be engaged initially through open-ended conversations, one-to-one interviews, and/or focus groups to discuss local needs and assets, capacities, and trust related to human rights. With a broad discussion you can explore the strategic goals of regional funding and avoid narrowing too quickly around a specific problem to solve. Some questions to consider are:

1. How do you define the community you represent or work with?
2. What assets exist in that community and how easily can they be harnessed? What are the existing capacities?
3. Which capacities need to be developed in the short term?
4. What are the areas of greatest and least trust?

5. What kinds of activities can start to build trust in the short term? And how can these activities reinforce capacities?

Next we recommend narrowing down to top priorities:

1. What are the most important needs in the community?
2. Which need would be easiest to address first and still make a meaningful difference?
3. How will addressing the need build trust and capacities?
4. What power structures or relationships will help meet the need, and which will hinder it?

Once you have collected answers and insights on these questions, more clarity should emerge about the scope and purpose of a fund or funds. At that point, explore different fund models and other data from this report with your core group of leaders and get reactions on what they think would be most helpful in their neighborhood, region, country, or area.

Generate feedback and interest from a broader set of stakeholders.

Using feedback from the in-region participants and the guidelines of this report, develop a survey to consult a broader audience, corroborate or refine the data (including reactions to potential models), build momentum for the idea, and identify future potential partners.

After implementing the survey, and analyzing data, the working group and participants should be able to coalesce around a model (or portions or combinations of models) that reflect a realistic scope and can then convene a diverse, knowledgeable group of community representatives and others to begin design.

Additional Suggestions from the Participatory Grantmaking Collective

Promote inclusion by removing barriers to participation. When considering whom to consult, engage and invite into this process, consider the community the initiative wishes to center and identify what barriers (either on the community side or the organizers' side) might prevent these community members' full and authentic participation. These might include language, financial resources, assumptions, or implicit bias. In any case, compensate those with whom you consult for their time and expertise, in particular the practitioners and community activists who are NOT immersed in human rights or community activism as a paid profession.

Do not expect perfection; be prepared to learn and adapt. While there is general agreement on the values underpinning participatory philanthropy, it takes many different shapes, depending on the needs and opportunities within the groups and communities implementing such initiatives. Trust in the communities with which you are partnering and believe that the process is itself part of the intended outcomes of the engagement. It will be important to be flexible at all stages and to take a learning, iterative approach to the initiative.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEWEES LIST

Representatives from Funding Organizations

NAME	ORGANIZATION	REGIONS	CIVICUS RATING
Asmaa Falhi	Fund for Global Human Rights	Morocco	Obstructed
Bolor Legjeem	MONES Mongolian Women's Fund	Mongolia	Obstructed
Galina Maksimovic	Reconstruction Fund for Women, Serbia	Serbia	Obstructed
Gerald Kankya	Twerwaneho Listeners' Club	Uganda	Repressed
Hilary Gilbert	South Sinai Foundation	Egypt	Closed
Magda Pocheć	FemFund	Poland	Narrowed
Maria Vargas and Tim Curtis	Monteverde Community Fund	Costa Rica	Open
Mukami Marete	UHAI EASHRI	East Africa	Obstructed, repressed and closed
Rasha Sansur and Lina Isma'il	Dalia Association	Palestine	Repressed
Rima Mismar	Arab Fund for Arts and Culture	23 countries throughout the Middle East and Africa, plus United States and Europe	All civic space categories
Sebenzile Nkambule	The Other Foundation	southern Africa	Narrowed, obstructed, and repressed
Urmila Shrestha, Basanti Lama, and Srishti Jayana	Tewa	Nepal	Obstructed

Other Experts

NAME	AFFILIATION	AREA OF EXPERTISE
Arnaud Quemin	Mercy Corps Middle East	Humanitarian aid / international development in the Arab region
Atallah Kuttab	SAANED for Philanthropy Advisory	Human rights and funding in the Arab region
Avila Kilmurray	Social Change Initiative, Institute for Integrated Transitions	Community philanthropy and global human rights

Jane Leu	Smarter Good / Migrant Ventures	Global capacity development provider / impact investor refugee-led enterprises
Jenny Everett	Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs	Global and alternative funding network
Jenny Hodgson	Global Fund for Community Philanthropy	Community philanthropy & people-led development
Khaled Mansour	Independent consultant	Human rights, development, and humanitarian aid in the Arab region
Nada Darwazeh	Board member for the Arab Human Rights Fund	Women's rights, international development in the Arab region
Omar Nashabe	Researcher and Lecturer specializing in Criminal Justice and Human Rights	Human rights and funding in the Arab region
Ted Levinson	Beneficial Returns	Global and alternative funding mechanisms (lending)
Will Jacobsen	Kiva	Global micro-finance / lending mechanisms

APPENDIX B: FUNDRAISING EXAMPLES

All organizations featured in this report depend on some external funding, and most raise money locally. Below are examples of some established campaigns and resource mobilization tactics that are designed to generate a regular flow of local income.

Reconstruction Fund for Women (Serbia)

Civic space rating: obstructed

Description

- Events held at least three times per year to bring their core community together (including activist-donors, community members, and champions) around a fun activity like karaoke or theatre. Creates opportunities to strengthen bonds and update the community on key issues of the field, how funds are being spent, and what projects are being funded.
- Multi-day events with approximately 40 participants—70 percent are RFW grantees and 30 percent are activists, community members, and others. Integrates workshops to train activists to raise money in their local area; includes events such as Fun runs (to support RFW), self-care activities, art, theatre, and other fun ways to engage their community.
- "Joyfulness/Craziness": At least one big annual event is held at public venues (parks, museums, plazas, etc.) and in partnership with organizations that work with constituencies outside of those the Fund usually works with in order to explicitly bridge to new networks, and uncover new supporters, donors and champions; where RFW meets their most unlikely donors.

Key characteristics:

- Raise money **and** update the community on RWF's work and activism to reflect key organizational value of transparency: if community members are donors, they need to know what is going on and keep RWF accountable as well.
- Some of the RFW team members have theatre/arts background, and mobilize local artists to use performance and fun to entice the community and inspire them to be a part of it.

Challenges:

- Expanding beyond existing circles. Planning to engage with local businesses that have diverse, progressive values and women-led businesses. Also looking at options for people in the diaspora.

Monteverde Community Fund (Costa Rica)

Civic space rating: open

Description:

- Capital campaign
    - Raised money from local tourism businesses to buy office building. Used by MCF staff, additional space rented to support 30% of operations costs
    - Helped strengthen relationships with local businesses, show importance of MCF to community
- Travelers' philanthropy
    - Program to encourage local businesses to contribute a portion of tourist revenue to MCF. Now laying groundwork for tourism rebound after COVID-19 pandemic.
    - Used success of capital campaign to reinvigorate program and customize giving plans for businesses
- Amigos de Costa Rica
    - Online crowdfunding for foreign travelers, volunteers, Costa Ricans abroad, and locals
    - Recently used platform to raise US$20,000 for COVID-19 relief efforts (35 percent from locals or Costa Ricans abroad)
    - Some general operating/monthly donations
- Youth program
    - Fundraising events led by youth for youth-led grantmaking, small donations from individuals and business community

Key characteristics:

- Investment in on-going relationships with business community
- Participation on multi-stakeholder committees to discuss economic development & community development needs
- Communicating value of MCF in community resilience and bringing tourism industry and other local sectors together
- Leveraging international and national tourism, people's connection to Monteverde

Challenges:

- Gradually reducing dependence on international institutional funding
- Effort and time required to maintain continuity in donor relationships

Tewa (Nepal)

Civic space rating: obstructed

Description:

- Successful capital campaign raised money for a complex that generates rental income to cover administrative costs
- Events and activities to raise money for local grants (sales of tree saplings for community tree plantings, 7K walk, donation piggy banks in public places to collect small donations from passersby, etc.). designed to build a sense of that everyone involved in Tewa (volunteers, staff, donors, public) is part of a family supporting women

Key characteristics:

- Everyone is a donor—the board, past president, the founder, staff, friends, volunteers, and grantee partners; continuous circle of giving and receiving is built into Tewa culture
- People encouraged to give whatever the can; even small amounts add up
- Giving to Tewa is giving to support women; people give to the organization because of the network of personal relationships
- Tewa founder set example of giving to Tewa as an alternative to giving for religious or cultural holidays

Challenges:

- Expanding beyond existing network (75 percent of local funds come from Kathmandu region)
- Donor fatigue
- Adapting fundraising events to COVID-19 restrictions

Dalia Association (Palestine)

Civic space rating: repressed

Description:

- Peer-to-peer "fun-raising" events that locals or people in the diaspora can do with their friends or others in their networks to raise money for the organization (e.g. car washes, dinner parties, tea salons, sporting events, etc.)
- Donor-advised funds: donors identify a cause they care about, set up a fund with Dalia, raise money and work with community committees to choose grantees (e.g. A social-enterprise owner started a youth education fund and motivated community members to host multiple fun-raising events, including face-painting, quiz nights, bicycle tours and online donations, raising around US$7,400 (in addition to an initial support from an external grant of US$3,000)
- Live social change auction: community leaders pitch initiatives to group of potential donors who then donate to the initiative of their choice at the event
- Business partnerships and revenue: donations from restaurants and other local businesses; Dalia's second-hand shop (Dukkan) and guest house; and event hosting at Dalia's open space (Al Saha)
- Diaspora and travel program: earned income coordinating volunteer travel tours and in-country volunteer experiences for people in Palestinian diaspora and foreign visitors
- Women's fund: women receive funds and return them at zero-interest
- Diaspora giving: partners with Center for Arab American Philanthropy for online donations from Palestinians in the diaspora

Key characteristics:

- Staff support for ambassadors raising money: toolkits with simple ideas on how to "fun-raise" (link to toolkit)

- Emphasis on fun, relationships, and reciprocity (women's funds designed to create circular giving and receiving; restaurant donations go to three local agriculture/community garden projects to reinforce cycle of giving and receiving)

Challenges:

- Staff capacity (requires high/touch regular contact with communities)
- Overcoming paternalism and distrust in NGO culture

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APPENDIX D: CASE STUDIES AND ORGANIZATION RESOURCES

"Mechanics of Participatory Grantmaking." October 2, 2018. GrantCraft by Candid.

- Edge Fund case study
- Haymarket People's Fund case study
- UHAI EASHRI case study

Twerwaneho Listeners' Club case study
Waqfeyat al Maadi Community Foundation interview/case study

Headwaters Foundation for Justice giving project model
Dalia Association "Fun-raising" tool kit

FemFund Videos: donor messaging and projects

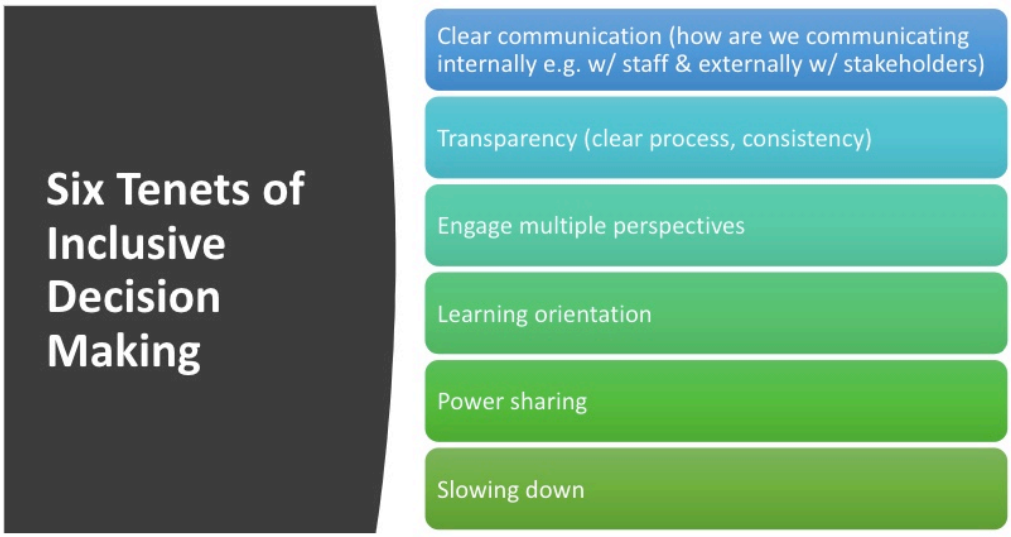
- I want a better world for her. You too?
- 2019 Grantee Partners on FemFund and their initiatives

APPENDIX E: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. CIVICUS civic space monitoring ratings and world map

2. Center for Equity and Inclusion Participatory Decision-Making and Equity Tools

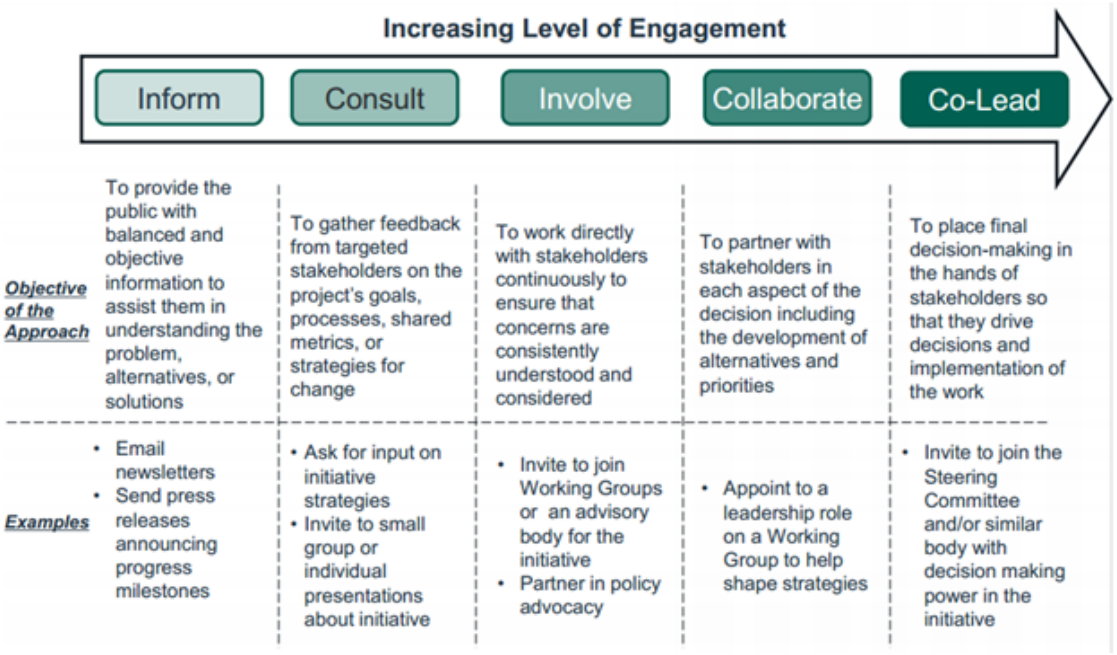
Six Tenets of Inclusive Decision Making



SAMPLE Equity Review Tool

Set Outcomes	What is the outcome/s we are hoping to create? What assumptions are we bringing into the issue?
Engage Multiple Perspectives	How are we engaging multiple perspectives? How are we engaging key stakeholders impacted by this policy, decision, or practice? How will this increase or decrease racial or cultural equity?
Attend to Unintended Outcomes	What are the potential unintended outcomes or barriers to more equitable outcomes? How will we address impacts or unintended outcomes?
Communicate	How will this decision be communicated? How do we ensure communication takes place in an inclusive, culturally sensitive, and responsible manner?

3. IA2P (International Association for Public Participation) Community Engagement Spectrum



Source: Collective Impact Forum, adapted from Tamarack Institute and IAP2