



# Building Commitment and Resources

**From Starting a Foundation in Foundation  
Building Sourcebook: A practitioners guide  
based upon experience from Africa, Asia,  
and Latin America**

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## Section 2 Building Commitment and Resources

The following section examines how founders of foundations built commitment among key constituencies and developed plans to raise financial and other resources for their initiatives.

Example 1	A Feasibility Study <i>Puerto Rico Community Foundation</i>
Example 2	Outreach, Study Tours and Workshops <i>Foundation for the Philippine Environment</i>
Example 3	Consultation, Exchange Visits, Steering Committee <i>Foundation for the Western Region of Zimbabwe</i>

Who Should Be Consulted? Why?

The foundations highlighted in this chapter were started by a diverse set of individuals and institutions and were designed to serve the needs of a variety of "clients." They were developed to serve local communities in need of resources and also aimed to serve the needs of national and international donors desiring to maximize the impact of their contributions. To act as an efficient bridge between diverse constituencies, the founders of these institutions, and many other Southern foundations highlighted in this Sourcebook, carried out a process of consultations to clarify two important questions:

- Who will support the foundation politically, technically and financially?
- Who will benefit from the foundation?

The foundations discussed in this chapter all attempted to reach out to both potential supporters and beneficiaries. Consultancies for with these stakeholders during their periods of formation helped them to identify and define the roles their foundations would play, and how they could be best organized and governed. Such a consultation process also helps to identify where the foundation will get its resources (financial, material and human). Specifically, consultation has helped to:

- Determine the viability of the foundation
- Define its role and scope
- Identify leadership
- Define objectives, strategies and activities
- Define the structure it will adopt and clarify governance issues
- Stimulate interest among public and private actors

- Exchange information with well-established foundations/network with other relevant actors

Foundations usually consult with a variety of individuals and groups in the early stages including:

- Affluent citizens
- Key local organizations (other foundations, major nonprofits, business groups, etc.)
- Universities and leading academics
- Legal and accounting professionals
- Political leaders
- Influential community representatives of the geographic and demographic population the foundation will serve

#### *How Is Consultation Facilitated?*

Commitment to a new institution is built primarily through personal contacts. Founders in these cases spoke with a significant number of people within their own personal and professional networks. In all of the cases, however, they saw a need to broaden their existing networks in order to build adequate support to establish the foundation. Some of the ways in which they did this were:

- Feasibility studies to explore the viability of the venture. These studies can point out areas of potential conflict that might threaten the consolidation of the new initiative, such as whether other NGOs believe the new foundation to be in conflict with their own fundraising efforts. They can also identify whether the private sector would commit to the idea, and whether the legal environment is conducive to the enterprise.
- Study tours to learn about foundations and philanthropy in other places. These can take the form of exchange visits to other foundations in the country, region or overseas. These visits allow foundation-builders to benefit from the experience of established institutions, to exchange information and to learn from their peers.
- Workshops to build understanding of and agreement about the elements involved in establishing foundations (i.e. defining a mission, role, organizational structure and resources) and to exchange ideas among those involved. Participants can include founding members, representatives from other foundations and nonprofit organizations (local and/or international), government agencies, businesses, community leaders and wealthy individuals.
- Concept papers, also called “position papers” or “needs statements,” are descriptive pieces about the foundation, its purpose and role. These papers help to communicate the idea of the new institution and may lead the way to a stronger consensus about the grantmaking foundation. Concept papers can be shared with both potential beneficiaries of the foundation's eventual grants and to potential supporters. Founders will often solicit feedback on the concept paper in an attempt to perfect the idea and to arrive at the best way the communicate the idea to different constituencies.

## Summary Points

*Consultative processes can build your program, build legitimacy and build trust in your foundation.* Consultations are a way to learn from other individuals or institutions, discuss ideas critical to the foundation-building effort, share experience and skills, explore the viability of the initiative, communicate the idea to potential supporters, build consensus around the initiative, and guarantee the credibility and transparency of the whole process.

*Consultative processes are unique and respond to the specific needs of each foundation.* Consulting can take place through different approaches (disseminating concept papers, study tours, feasibility studies, workshops) depending on the objectives of the foundation. The process of consultation can be short or lengthy. For example, founders of the Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE)'s founders held meetings with over 600 stakeholders, a study tour to the United States and a major two-day workshop on governance and grantmaking.

*Opportunities for learning and exchange among foundations help gain access to new ideas and create bridges to other institutions.* The exchange of ideas and experience among grantmaking foundations helps create productive relationships and promotes the transfer of skills. In the case provided by the Community Foundation for the Western Region of Zimbabwe (WRF), there were visits organized in 1994 and 1996 to fourteen US organizations in addition to one foundation in Mozambique and one in South Africa. These visits were instrumental in helping WRF's founding members design the structure of the new foundation.

*Involving the intended beneficiaries helps build trust and ownership.* Consulting with the beneficiaries helps build trust and create a sense of ownership among those who will be directly affected by the work of the foundation. Consultations also provide intended beneficiaries a way to express their interest in the initiative as well as their expectations. In Zimbabwe, the founders of WRF actively sought the input of people at the community level resulting in a foundation that deeply reflected the community's needs.

### Example 1

#### A Feasibility Study

##### *Puerto Rico Community Foundation*

#### *Why Conduct a Feasibility Study?*

The National Puerto Rican Coalition received a US\$30,000 grant from the Ford Foundation to conduct a two-year feasibility study starting in the end of 1983. The study was designed to explore whether a new community foundation mechanism could be devised to significantly increase support from both US foundations and corporations operating on the island for community projects in Puerto Rico. The study attempted to answer four questions:

- Is there a sufficient population to be served by the foundation?

- Are there enough sources of wealth, "excess capital," to insure the long-term survival and success of the foundation?
- Is there a strong, deep sense of community cohesion, a "community spirit" that could be built upon?
- Are there community leaders, "movers and shakers," sufficiently motivated to carry out the difficult task of organizing, funding and sustaining the foundation?

#### *How the Study Was Conducted*

A leading Puerto Rican consultant, Alex W. Maldonado, was asked to undertake the study because of his extensive experience as a publisher, public relations executive and journalist. The consultant interviewed a total of 34 locally respected individuals from the following backgrounds:

<b>Consultations</b>	<b>Number<sup>16</sup></b>
Pharmaceutical Company Executives	5
Community and nonprofit Leaders	5
US Foundation Representatives	4
Bankers	3
Educators	3
Government Officials	3
Chemical Company Executives	2
Accountants	2
Corporate Lawyers	2
Manufacturers Association Representatives	2
Finance Broker	1
Chamber of Commerce Staff	1
United Way Fund Staff	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>

The interviews reached both community leaders and institutions including the largest commercial bank on the island, leading private conglomerates, law firms, and senior former government officials knowledgeable about US-Puerto Rico corporate tax issues.

Interviews were structured in three parts:

- Defining the concept of a community foundation, according to its knowledge and understanding
- Describing the firm or institution's policy towards community giving, its record in recent years and its plans for the future
- Providing comments and feedback on the idea of establishing a community foundation for Puerto Rico<sup>17</sup>

The purpose of the survey was to get responses from potential stakeholders, favorable as well as unfavorable, not to "promote" the project.<sup>18</sup> Many interviewees

expressed a willingness to support a community foundation like the one described, financially or by volunteering their services once it was established. For example, Sun Oil offered a \$5-10,000 grant to help finance the feasibility study, and a vice president of the Bristol-Myers Squibb company volunteered his assistance.

### *Results of the Study*

The study identified ideas about how to translate conceptual support for the idea of a community foundation into concrete financial support. To some, this support would depend on a series of factors:

- Support of a respected, known institution (like the Ford Foundation)
- The inclusion of business leaders with a solid reputation on the board
- The selection of professional staff—particularly the president or director—who are well-known and respected in the business community
- A focus on problems in areas that interest business leaders<sup>19</sup>

The consultant also interviewed several people on the US mainland, including corporate executives of firms with subsidiaries in Puerto Rico and top officials of foundations (Carnegie Corporation and Rockefeller Foundations). These organizations would later provide financial and programmatic support for PRCF. The study not only demonstrated the feasibility of establishing a foundation, but it helped to familiarize people with the concept.

The findings and recommendations of the feasibility study [condensed] were:

#### **Summary of the Findings:**

- The response of community leaders is positive; in most cases, it is enthusiastic
- Almost all interviewees answered that there is a need for a community foundation
- The PRCF not only would fill a philanthropy "gap" in Puerto Rico, but it had the potential of becoming a major catalyst to marshal the interests, energies and resources of the private sector
- Most corporate leaders responded that they would increase their participation in community projects if the PRCF succeeds in attracting US foundation funding and is staffed by known and respected professionals
- There are no legal impediments to organizing a community foundation in Puerto Rico
- There would be no difficulty in recruiting top community leaders for the foundation board of directors
- Many of those interviewed underscored the need to structure and maintain the PRCF totally divorced from island partisan politics
- The PRCF would not compete with the Puerto Rican United Way Fund
- The timing is good because corporations would welcome a catalyst and an instrument to "do more" in Puerto Rico. There is a growing consensus that the island needs to break the syndrome that only government can do things. Several new entities have been created recently by the private sector to increase its role in community affairs, and two private Puerto Rican foundations are in the process of significantly increasing their grant giving

**Summary of Recommendations:**

- The National Puerto Rican Coalition and the Ford Foundation should proceed with their initiative to create a Puerto Rico Community Foundation
- A seven-member core group should be organized to set in motion a four-step plan to establish the foundation, each step contingent on the success of the preceding step
- The goal should be to have the PRCF operational by July 1984. The following timetable is suggested:

<b>February:</b>	Core group formed
<b>March:</b>	Meeting of the organizing committee with the top leadership of national foundations
<b>April:</b>	PRCF formally established; board organized; beginning of public relations campaign
<b>May-June:</b>	Matching funds committed by the private sector
<b>July:</b>	PRCF begins operations

- The PRCF should be organized and operate under the laws of Puerto Rico and receive both federal and commonwealth tax exemption.<sup>20</sup>

**The feasibility study also served to identify and recruit the most enthusiastic of the Puerto Ricans interviewed to become part of the core or founding team.**

**These new members included:**

- the President of the largest Puerto Rican bank
- a former Secretary of the Treasury of Puerto Rico
- the President of a real estate conglomerate
- the Vice-President for public relations of a pharmaceutical company
- a partner of Price Waterhouse, an international accounting firm, in Puerto Rico
- prominent lawyers
- a university professor

## Example 2

Outreach, Study Tours and Workshops  
*Foundation for the Philippine Environment*

*Why the Founders Need to Consult*

The Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE) was the result of extensive negotiations that began in 1989 among the US Government, the Government of the Philippines, coalitions of Philippine NGOs, a lobbying effort based in Washington, DC, and the World Wildlife Fund (a US nonprofit organization). Philippine NGOs played a central role, and they were involved as early as the conceptualization stage of the foundation. Representatives from among the largest environmental and development NGO networks and coalitions, namely, the Green Forum, CODE-NGO, Philippine Federation for Environmental Concerns (PFEC) and Philippine Ecological Network (PEN) and environmental and NGO leaders were involved in discussions with Philippines mission of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) regarding the creation of the Foundation.

The process of formation of FPE has key differences from that of PRCF (discussed above). FPE's founders had secured a commitment of potential endowment funds for the foundation early in the process, so their primary need was not to identify financial support for the initiative, but to refine the idea and identify the potential beneficiaries. Consultations focused on reaching out to NGOs, with the participation of committed stakeholders (USAID and the Philippine government).

Between 1990 and 1992, consultations involved about 600 people. Given the wide range of stakeholders involved in the creation of FPE, the consultative process aimed at establishing credibility and building a consensus. Negotiations, broad-based consultations, and the participation of stakeholders were perceived as necessary in order to establish trust and transparency.

In setting up FPE, founders conceived of a "three phase" process of learning and consultation:

- Phase 1 - Outreach and consultation
- Phase 2 - Study tour on philanthropy
- Phase 3 - Governance and grantmaking workshop

*First Phase: Outreach and Consultation*

In September 1991, FPE's nine-member Interim Board was formed. The Board included a representative from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines, USAID (non-voting), leaders from universities, churches and the ranks of NGO coalitions and networks. The group tabled the selection of a chairperson until it could hold consultations with a broad cross-section of the NGO community. The Board rotated the task of moderating committee meetings among its members. The Interim Board had three main tasks:

- Preparing the articles of incorporation and by-laws of the foundation, a task that was entrusted to a local environmental lawyer. Throughout its monthly meetings, the members of the Interim Board provided guidance and inputs into the crafting of these documents. The

draft was then presented in a series of regional meetings with non-governmental and people's organizations (POs). After completion of the articles of incorporation and by-laws, the FPE was formally registered in January 1992

- Developing a process for selecting the regular Board of Trustees
- Administering the Interim Grants Program, which was to provide an immediate source of funds to the Philippine NGO and PO community during FPE's first year of operations<sup>21</sup>

Once it took office, the Interim Board initiated an extensive process of outreach and consultation aimed at explaining the FPE concept to various NGOs and institutions at the national level. Four objectives guided work in this phase:

- Introducing FPE nationwide
- Discussing initial ideas of policies, programs and project criteria
- Eliciting suggestions on the draft articles of incorporation and by-laws
- Presenting an overview of the mechanism to be used to create an endowment fund for FPE—the debt-for-nature swap<sup>22</sup>

The strategy developed to implement this outreach phase involved a series of meetings with key representatives from major NGO coalitions and networks, through the organization of consultation workshops in various parts of the country, which drew the participation of 512 individuals representing 334 NGOs and 24 academic institutions. Representatives from the Philippine Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Philippines Department of Finance and USAID were also present.

#### *Second Phase: Study Tour on Philanthropy*

The second phase in the consultative process involved a study tour on philanthropy to the United States, funded by the Ford Foundation, which took place between February and March 1992. The participants to the US study tour included one representative from each of the following institutions:

- the World Wildlife Fund
- the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources
- the Council for People's Development
- the Philippine Business for Social Progress
- the Foundation for Community Organization and Management Technology
- the Bishop-Businessmen's Conference on Ecology<sup>23</sup>

The study tour had two main objectives:

- To expose the Interim Board to organizations concerned with foundation governance and the process of grants management with whom they could exchange information and from whom they could learn
- To identify organizational models and governance structures for FPE that would best respond to the Philippine NGO constituency. The underlying aim was to avoid potential conflict of interest with the Board of Trustees, a body dominated by NGOs that would be potential recipients of FPE funds, and reduce FPE's susceptibility to political pressure<sup>24</sup>

The representative of the Ford Foundation for the Philippines—an adviser in the process of setting up FPE—hoped participants in the tour would learn about various approaches to governance that could help FPE in its role as a grantmaking foundation:

I was particularly concerned about the governance structure that had been originally drafted which followed a membership concept. Under that structure, the idea was that some set of NGOs would be members and they would represent the "general assembly" which would elect board members each year. My concerns were that this would lead to a highly politicized institution. Anyone in a foundation knows that one of the hard parts of the job is saying no, yet that is what you have to do a lot if you want to fund quality programs and have any hope of being reasonably strategic. So a decision-maker needs to be somewhat insulated from direct political pressure from folks that are unhappy because you said no.<sup>25</sup>

During the study tour, organizations visited included:

<i>Washington</i>	World Wildlife Fund, Philippine Development Forum, and USAID
<i>Chicago</i>	the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, The Joyce Foundation, and the Chicago Community Trust
<i>New York</i>	the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, The Synergos Institute, New York Community Trust, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, National Charities Information Bureau, New York Regional Association of Grantmakers, the Foundation Center, Consultative Group for Biological Diversity, and the Center for the Study of Philanthrop. <sup>26</sup>

Based on information acquired throughout the study tour, participants to the tour were able to draft a report that discussed:

- program priorities and selection criteria
- scope of assistance
- policy guidelines
- mechanisms and organizational structures that would minimize conflicts of interest with the Board of Trustees

#### *Third Phase: Governance and Grantmaking Workshop*

A final step consisted of a two-day workshop on governance and grant making in May 1992. Participants included 35 representatives of environmental NGOs from all over the country, academics, the Ford Foundation, the Asia Foundation, United Nations Development Programme, the Department of Finance and the Central Bank. Through dialogue and consultation, this workshop sought to:

- flesh out the Interim Grants Program formulated by the Interim Board
- discuss the role of the Interim Board
- design and adopt a viable model for governance
- define the process for setting up a regular Board of Trustees

- share information and learning from the outreach process, including the study tour on philanthropy

The potentially lengthy consultation process that founders can undertake in creating a foundation is illustrated in this five-year timetable of the founding activities of FPE [here condensed]:

#### Timetable of Activities

1989	November	• Meetings in Washington
1990	September	• Negotiations begin between Philippine Government, NGOs, USAID
1991	April	• Signing of cooperative agreement between World Wildlife Fund and USAID for technical assistance to FPE
	September	• Creation of first FPE Interim Board • Start of interim grants program
	Oct.-Dec	• Regional consultations (8) introducing FPE to NGO community nationwide
1992	Feb-Mar	• Study tour on philanthropy in US
	May	• Workshop on governance and grantmaking • Election of first regular members of board
	June	• Formal registration of FPE with Securities & Exchange Commission
1993	July	• First regular Board of Trustees takes office
	December	• Interim grants period ends
1994	January	• Turnover by technical assistance team to FPE • Start of regular period <sup>27</sup>

#### Example 3

Consultation, Exchange Visits, Steering Committee  
*Community Foundation for the Western Region of Zimbabwe*

#### *The Need for Financing for Community Initiatives*

By 1990, the Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP), a grassroots movement, had been working for a decade with rural communities in three provinces of Zimbabwe to solve problems by strengthening grassroots action. ORAP had assisted communities in constructing wells, dams and crèches, organizing community savings and credit programs, and had provided drought relief and technical support to agricultural improvement projects and micro-enterprises. ORAP found that, although these initiatives were having a positive impact in the lives of poor Zimbabweans, they lacked the financing they would need to affect sustained change and economic progress.

While exploring ways of creating such a financial base, ORAP and community members saw the possibility of using and expanding a collective savings tradition of Zimbabwean communities called *qogelela*. Many people became enthused about the idea of establishing some sort of financial institution that could build on this rural tradition and, at the same time, manage and raise new resources. Because of its

experience with similar efforts in other countries, ORAP asked The Synergos Institute to work with it in this effort.

The resulting consultations, which led to the formation of the WRF took place over five years, from 1993 to 1998 (when the foundation was launched). Through this process ORAP attempted to clarify and achieve consensus among the different stakeholders involved in the initiative (ORAP, national and regional NGOs and the communities) about the role the foundation would play and how it could be best governed and structured.

#### *Community Consultations*

ORAP consulted broadly with people at the community level to discuss issues critical to building an organization that would become a sustainable resource. Consultations involved the participation of people in the communities, ORAP staff, and Synergos staff. They were a key instrument in defining what the foundation would look like, what it would do and to whom it would belong.

Consultations were undertaken by ORAP staff members and mobilizers. These mobilizers—volunteers responsible for assisting communities to mobilize themselves around solving local problems—traveled to villages and met with groups of people under trees and in community halls to discuss the idea and build support for it. As a result, over 40,000 community members contributed—through the use of the *qoqelela*—the equivalent of about US\$6,000 as seed capital for the foundation's endowment. Communities hoped their savings would be matched by contributions from other donors to build an endowment to support development in the region.

Consultations increased awareness about the foundation, especially at the village level, collected funds and created a broad sense of ownership.

#### *Exchange Visits*

Exchange visits were a key part of the learning process. The concept of a grantmaking foundation was a relatively new one in Zimbabwe and community foundations were virtually unknown. ORAP wanted to take from the best ideas and practices of foundations in other countries and create a Zimbabwean amalgam that would be appropriate to its context and build on local traditional practices.

Objectives and the itinerary for the exchange visits were prepared in advance by ORAP and the Synergos Institute, which organized the trips. ORAP chose a mix of staff and community members to participate in each visit.

Exchange visit to the US: In August and September of 1994, three ORAP staff and three community mobilizers traveled to West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and New York. Synergos staff also participated in the visits. The visitors met with organizations and individuals involved in a range of nonprofit financing initiatives in the US rural South. Visitors learned about diverse and innovative experiences in fundraising for community groups and nonprofit organizations and explored ways

in which US organizations developed fundraising and nonprofit activities. They visited:

- A local newspaper
- A state economic development office
- A community development corporation
- A community investment company
- A nonprofit economic development organization
- A microenterprise and craft support NGO
- A community foundation
- A community investment company
- A grassroots development research center
- A community development corporation
- A religious organization
- A regional community fund<sup>28</sup>

In each of these organizations, they tried to get a sense of the best structure to fit their needs at home. The Zimbabweans found that they shared a lot of the same challenges and issues as their colleagues in the Appalachia region and this facilitated their learning. They were particularly interested in what they learned at the community foundations they visited. Here was a type of organization founded on community values and with the capacity to serve the interest of both philanthropists and beneficiaries in the community. They discovered that several of the organizations had begun by mobilizing local resources on the community level like they had in Zimbabwe. This confirmed their belief that donors need not be wealthy but can come from even the poorest segments of the community.

In New York, the group met with the United Nations Development Programme and the Carnegie Corporation of New York (a private foundation).

Upon their return to Zimbabwe, the group shared the experiences and learning resulting from the visits through a workshop with ORAP mobilizers and dozens of community meetings. ORAP's large community Board accepted their proposal to adapt a community foundation model. In addition, the idea that contributors to *qoqelela* would be the Foundation's first donors and have a seat on its board was also widely accepted.

*Mozambique and South Africa Exchange Visit:* Having a better idea now of what sort of an organization it wanted to found, ORAP wanted to see examples of how other foundations in Africa had been set up and organized themselves. ORAP was ready to begin clarifying issues at home and wanted to write a constitution that would serve as a blueprint for the foundation. Two ORAP staff visited the Foundation for Community Development of Mozambique (FDC) and then joined two mobilizers on a visit to the Kagiso Trust in South Africa in 1996. Before the visit, staff wrote a schema of questions they wanted to explore and answer through the visits:

**Grantmaking Criteria**

- To whom are grants given?
- In what form are grants given (credit, etc)?
- How is the grant making process carried out?
- How did the institutions visited differ from traditional donors?

**Endowment**

- How is the endowment being built?
- What is the proportion of local vs. external investment?
- How is the endowment managed?

**Formation of the Foundation (for FDC)**

- Why was a foundation established rather than a trust?
- What is the governance structure of the foundation?

**Relations with the Government**

- How do FDC and Kagiso relate to their respective governments?
- What are the legal issues around their work?

**Fundraising**

- What financing sources are being developed and exploited?
- How do the restrictions made by their donors affect the funding to their own grantees?

**Institutional Development and Communications**

- What institutional relations are prioritized by each institution? How are these maintained?
- How is external planning conducted?
- What are the institutional development activities planned for the future?<sup>29</sup>

At the FDC, for example, visitors met with staff and board members over several days. They discussed a broad range of issues and were particularly interested to learn about how FDC related with its grantees. They questioned FDC's practice of requiring financial and narrative reports from all its grantees. Although FDC staff explained the need for such reporting in order to account for its grant funding, the staff of ORAP felt that their new foundation would need to invest time and energy into developing a grantmaking approach that would be fully accountable in a way that would build on local practices understood by communities (for whom report writing is an imported skill). FDC staff found the idea very interesting and expressed an interest in visiting ORAP to learn more about its approaches to grassroots empowerment (FDC's Executive Director visited ORAP two years later in 1998).

Upon their return to Zimbabwe, the four ORAP members that had participated in the exchange wrote a trip report that specified key needs learned from the visit. Some of these lessons were:

- To separate ORAP's endowment from the endowment of the WRF
- To set up WRF as an institution independent from ORAP
- To include organizations and individuals with solid reputations and qualifications in the Steering Committee
- To discuss and clarify among the members of the Steering Committee the legal steps necessary for creating the Foundation
- To define programmatic objectives and grantmaking criteria
- To create a "working committee" that would engage in domestic fundraising<sup>30</sup>

### *The Role of a Steering Committee*

In 1996, ORAP reached a consensus within its staff and community members about the role ORAP should play in establishing the community foundation. ORAP's involvement would allow the foundation to benefit from its twenty-year experience working with communities in the region. They were concerned, however, that others might suspect that the new foundation was intended to serve ORAP interests, which was not the intention of the community contributors. Building an independent, volunteer steering committee, on which ORAP served as an equal member, was one way of overcoming this problem. Steering committees are a common practice in setting up new foundations. Members of the committee often become part of the board.

ORAP had actually set up two previous steering committees that had not succeeded. It felt that it had learned several important lessons from these experiences—including the need to ensure that steering committee members share a common value or objective and that they understand that they are chosen because of their willingness to contribute toward the effort. As such ORAP began a careful recruitment process. It started by writing a strategy for assembling a steering committee, which had six components [condensed]:

**Objective:** Assemble a steering committee (whose members can become part of the initial board of governors) to put in place the Foundation, working closely with ORAP and using the constitution agreed upon with the founding communities.

**Strategy:** Scout for potential steering committee members through meetings with influential social and economic leaders in Western Zimbabwe. Develop appropriate materials. Maintain a list of potential members, their other involvement, any character issues. Set up and prepare meetings.

**Time frame:** [assigns deadlines for the following] Working steering committee formed; initial Board of Governors appointed; process to identify Executive Director begun.

**Functions of steering committee:** Define start-up needs; scout and contract Executive Director; raise funds locally and internationally for operations and endowment; identify potential members of Board of Governors.

**Composition:** The steering committee will be composed of at least nine and no more than eleven members. Steering committee members should clearly share the values expressed in the constitution of the Foundation.<sup>31</sup>

ORAP articulated the characteristics of its ideal steering committee member and then sought out individuals who had:

- Access to funding resources
- Innovative ideas
- Ability and willingness to work hard
- Commitment to the idea of community self-help development
- Willingness to raise money
- Willingness to contribute money (in amounts relative to their personal circumstances)
- Credibility and high personal ethics<sup>32</sup>

In addition to these characteristics that elucidated a set of common values, they also sought individuals who would bring skills from each of the following backgrounds:

- Banking
- Political
- Legal
- NGO
- Accounting/Finance
- Management
- Civic<sup>33</sup>

Members of the steering committee of WRF were identified through meetings with influential social and economic leaders in western Zimbabwe, who were then invited to join. Below is a list of the occupations of the Steering Committee members, with the areas of expertise/sectoral background for which they were chosen in brackets. In the end, ORAP failed only in getting banking experience on to the committee, although, a bank executive had accepted but did not show up for meetings:

- A director of a skills training organization [NGO]
- The head of a major regional water project [management]
- Three representatives of communities [civic]
- The head of a rural district management company [accounting/finance]
- The training officer of a large agro-foods conglomerate [management]
- The fundraiser for the national science University [accounting/finance]
- The executive coordinator of ORAP [NGO]
- A respected regional historian and education specialist [civic]
- A government minister [political]
- A lawyer [legal]<sup>34</sup>

As each member joined, the role they would play in the following functions of the Steering Committee was identified based on their experience and interests:

- Refining the constitution
- Registering the foundation
- Producing clear terms of reference for the Board of Governors
- Appointing the Board of Governors
- Defining start-up needs
- Selecting and contracting the Executive Director
- Formulating a fundraising strategy to raise funds locally and internationally for operations and endowment<sup>35</sup>

The staff at ORAP worked with the Steering Committee to set objectives and clarify the timing of the work that needed to be accomplished. The result was the following two-and-half-year plan summarizing major activities for each phase of four broad objectives in the areas of institutional development, endowment growth, programs and networking [here condensed]:

Objectives	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
	Development & Research 10/96-6/97	Set-up & Resource Generation 7/97-12/97	Grantmaking & Regular Operations 1/99-6/99
Institutional Development	Steering committee begins identifying board  Constitution written Case & feasibility study complete  Workgroup developing Support	Deed of trust signed  First board meeting Director hired  Resources for initial operation secured  Initial needs defined & site identified	Basic administrative systems in place  Fundraising program Institutionalized
Endowment Growth	Potential sources of support identified  Proposals & approach for endowment building developed  Staff and other resources put in place		Director and board work together to raise endowment fund
Programs	Basic needs assessment conducted	Program development, long-term strategies & planning starts	Official program starts
Networking	Steering committee provides outreach to build support	Board provides assistance in expanding networks	Director & board sponsor national fora to build networks in civil society & participate in regional & international meetings <sup>36</sup>

As the needs and purposes of the planned foundation were debated by ORAP and the Steering Committee, they began to flesh out descriptive pieces to communicate their intentions and purpose to others. The concept paper was shared with a broad range of potential funders, businesses and others in Zimbabwe and abroad. The following excerpt from an early concept paper illustrates how the Foundation set the scene and made the case for itself:

*Background.* Over three million people live in the western provinces of Zimbabwe, Matabeleland North and South, and the Midlands, which are the poorest provinces in the country with 70 percent of their population living on degraded communal lands...

*Why a Community Foundation?* These communities feel the need for a sustainable source of financing for their initiatives because, after years of strengthening their social organization and capacity to launch action programs and projects, they are eager to tackle a wide range of social and economic development problems and improve local conditions...

*How will the Community Foundation Work?* The new foundation will mobilize both financial resources and technical assistance for community initiatives by serving as co-financer, broker, and builder of partnerships between communities and the existing development actors in the region.

The foundation will stimulate, identify, and circulate among potential partners ideas for co-financed community partnership initiatives...

In close consultation with other interested groups, the foundation will develop selected ideas for community partnership initiatives into concrete action proposals for co-financing by partners...

The foundation will join communities and their partners in co-financing agreed-upon initiatives and will assess the outcomes of these partnerships...

*Who Will Own and Operate the Foundation?* The foundation has been established as an independent private trust in Zimbabwe governed by a voluntary Board of Trustees drawn from distinguished citizens and community members throughout the region...

*Plans For Establishing the Foundation.* The foundation plans to operate with a small staff supported initially by grants from private foundations and multi and bilateral development assistance agencies...<sup>37</sup>

## References

- <sup>16</sup> Maldonado, Alex W. *The Puerto Rico Community Foundation. A Feasibility Study.* 1983.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>21</sup> Salazar, *op cit.*
- <sup>22</sup> Del Rosario, *op cit.*
- <sup>23</sup> Foundation for the Philippine Environment. Documents.
- <sup>24</sup> Del Rosaria, *op cit.*
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>26</sup> Foundation for the Philippine Environment. Documents
- <sup>27</sup> Del Rosario, *op cit.*
- <sup>28</sup> The institutions visited included the Lexington Herald-Leader, Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development, Human/Economic Appalachian Development Corp., Community Ventures Corporation, Center for Economic Options, Appalshop, East Tennessee Foundation, Community Shares, Highlander Center, the Inner City Community Development Corporation, the Commission on Religion in Appalachia and the Appalachian Community Fund.
- <sup>29</sup> Trip Report on the visit to the Fundação para o Desenvolvimento da Comunidade (FDC) and the Kagiso Trust by ORAP staff members
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>31</sup> Report on Strategy for Assembling a Steering Committee for the Community Foundation of Western Zimbabwe. Internal document. 1996.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>34</sup> Memo from the Synergos Institute to USAID, March 21, 1997.
- <sup>35</sup> Report from the First Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Community Foundation for the Western Region of Zimbabwe, April 11, 1997.
- <sup>36</sup> Proposal to the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Two Year Support for the Community Foundation for the Western Region of Zimbabwe, 1997.
- <sup>37</sup> Concept Paper on the the Community Foundation for the Western Region of Zimbabwe. Internal document, 1997.