

Research Report

Community Philanthropy in Malawi

Jonathan Makuwira 

¹Malawi University of Science and Technology, Malawi

²Department of Development Studies, Nelson Mandela University, Port Elizabeth, South Africa

*Correspondence to: jmakuwira@must.ac.mw

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND	2
Philanthropy in Context	2
Community Philanthropy in Malawi	2
PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY	2
Purpose	2
Scope of the Study	3
APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY	3
Theoretical Framework	3
Sampling and Sample Size	3
Data Collection Methods	3
<i>Desk review</i>	3
<i>Key informant interviews</i>	3
<i>Focus Group Discussions</i>	3
<i>Life histories and case studies</i>	4
ETHICAL ISSUES AND CODE OF CONDUCT	4
MAIN FINDINGS	4
Findings from Literature	4
Understanding Community Philanthropy	5
Gender Perspectives	5
Religion and Philanthropy	5
Ethnic Angle to Philanthropy in Malawi	6
Forms of Giving and Community Philanthropy	7
<i>Individual forms of giving</i>	7
<i>Community foundations</i>	7
<i>Informal crowd-funding platforms</i>	7
<i>Volunteer groups</i>	7
<i>Loose networks and social media networks</i>	7
Who Gives and Why?	7
<i>Examples of giving associated with community philanthropy</i>	8
<i>Views from Focus Group Discussions</i>	9
Factors Influencing Community Giving in Malawi	10
Social and Economic Status	10
Changes over Time?	11
Positives in Community Philanthropy in Malawi	12
CHALLENGES OF COMMUNITY PHILANTHROPY IN MALAWI	12
Challenges	12
Improving Community Philanthropy	14
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	14
Conclusion	14
Recommendations	15
References	15

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Studies in philanthropy.....	8
Table 2: Understanding philanthropy by gender.....	10
Table 3: Faith and philanthropy/Community Giving.....	11
Table 4: Ethnicity and views on giving (N=160).....	15
Table 5: Factors influencing giving in Malawi (%).....	18
Table 6: Reason for change in community giving.....	21
Table 7: Selected Stories of community giving.....	22
Table 8: Challenges to community philanthropy in Malawi (N=160).....	25
Table 9: How to improve community philanthropy (N=160).....	26

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Ethnicity and Community philanthropy/giving.....	12
Figure 2: Activities associated with community giving.....	16

This report was supported financially by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

BACKGROUND**Philanthropy in Context**

Systems of community giving and self-help have been in existence for time immemorial. By nature, humans were endowed with an innate character of caring for each other in their communities. This is attested by Hodgson (2020) who observes that historically, people have found ways to organize themselves and their resources collectively solve community challenges. Examples abound in many parts of the world where community philanthropy is common. For example, in Latin America there is a community work day called *minga*, while in Kenya, the *harambee* has been the hallmark of community giving. In Zimbabwe community philanthropy is known as *qogolela*, while in South Africa the concept is known as *stokvels*. All these are, by definition of community philanthropy, “a form of, and a force for, locally driven development that strengthens community capacity and voice, builds trust and, most importantly, taps into and builds on local resources, which are pooled together to build and sustain a strong community” (Doan, 2019, p. 9).

Philanthropy, defined as the desire to enhance the welfare of others or private initiatives for public good, has, over the past decade, captured the attention of both academic fraternity and development practitioners alike (Lutz, 2009; Mati, 2017; Murisa, 2020). In Africa, the practice is not only deeply rooted in our history but, over time, it has become part of African cultural fabric. A closer examination of the practice – from individual to institutional philanthropy, community fundraising to religious tithing, philanthropy occupies a key place across the continent. However, not only is there a paucity of proper documentation of philanthropic activities in both and formal settings through case studies but, overly, there is limited academic literature on African philanthropy. While there is an attempt by scholars to tease out the topic in broad terms (see Johnson, 2010; Moyo and Alagidede, 2020;

Wilkinson-Maposa and Fowler, 2009; Kilmurray, 2015), the dominant Western narrative still dominates the existing literature. Furthermore, the discourses on African philanthropy have been seen from one angle – where Africa is a recipient of Western-based giving. This is problematic not only from a theoretical angle but also from a development perspective where African social capital is not seen as part of the philanthropic narrative.

Community Philanthropy in Malawi

Malawi, like many sub-Saharan countries, suffers from poverty which, according to the National Statistical Office (2018), shows that between 2016 and 2017, 51.5% of Malawi’s population was considered poor, while 20.1% was considered ultra-poor. According to people’s incomes have shrunk by 6% over the past decade, despite trillions in government spending. Such deprivation and low social economic indicators not only signal the level of inequality but also highlight how community philanthropy is underutilized as a resource to spur economic development as a different kind of wealth (Hodgson and Knight, 2012). A review of what is in fact a thin body of literature on community philanthropy in Malawi has yielded very little evidence of how philanthropy is defined let alone practised. Yet, anecdotal evidence is replete with everyday experiences of community-based initiatives that reflect community giving and/or philanthropy. For example, initiatives that empower Malawians to construct community day secondary schools (Firelight Foundation, 2017); The Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF) where both rural and urban residents identify, design, implement, monitor and evaluate community-based development projects (Chilinde, 2012); the use of ‘Child Aid’ integrated model developed by the Federation Humana People to People where communities are empowered to identify and implement health, education and economic development projects (Development Aid From People to People

(DAPP), 2021), are but a few of the many examples that reflect community philanthropy although the dominant debate gravitating around community philanthropy is coined within the narrative of corporate social responsibility, rather the philanthropy as such. While this is the case, still there is a dearth of information as to what philanthropy looks like at a community level in Malawi, let alone, how it happens, who gives, and why.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Purpose

This study moved from focusing on big foundations to community-based philanthropic initiatives. Therefore, the main purpose of this research exercise was to develop a better understanding of community philanthropy through an in-depth analysis and/or mapping of community giving in its many dimensions. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to:

- Explore how community philanthropy and/or giving is understood by ordinary Malawians at a community level.
- Document what forms of giving are communities involved in.
- Explore who gives, why they give and with what effect.
- Analyse how Malawi's colonial past has shaped community philanthropy in its communities.
- Examining how the post-independence thinking and different regimes in the past 56 years (Hastings Banda, Bakili Muluzi, Bingu Wa Mutharika, Joyce Banda, Peter Mutharika and the current regime of Lazarus Chakwera) have shaped and is shaping community philanthropy in Malawi.
- Explore factors that drive/promote or hinder community philanthropy in various communities in Malawi.
- Critically analyse what community philanthropy looks like in different contexts (e.g., rural vs. urban, suburbs vs. townships vs. informal settlements).
- Documenting success stories of community philanthropy in various communities in Malawi.
- Explore ways in which these success stories can be replicated at regional and continental levels.

Scope of the Study

The study on community philanthropy and, in general, how people give, in the context of Africa, is not an easy undertaking. As acknowledged earlier, different societies have different motivations as to why and how they give. Malawi is a diverse society. While the study was conducted across Malawi and by involving different stakeholders both in the urban and rural areas, the study was however confined to selected communities both in the rural and urban areas. Conscious of conducting such a study a time when Covid-19 restrictions were enforced, created some limitations of access and even fear among participants. The study was predominantly focusing more on 'Horizontal' philanthropy which, according to Wilkinson-Maposa and Fowler (2005), is about ordinary poor people mobilizing

and sharing their resources not only in a display of solidarity but also to invest for the future.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Theoretical Framework

Initially, this study was informed by two major conceptual frameworks – the 'Social Movement Theory' (Buechler, 2016) and 'Philanthropic Collaboration Theory' (Miller-Stevens and Taylor, 2020). The Social Movement Theory or Framework is premised on the belief that when society is deprived of basic social services, there is an increased level of grievance which, in trying to respond to such grievances, people tend to develop common identities resulting in collective action (Eikenberry, 2006). To nurture this and to ensure the survival of such acts of collectivism, there is need for the formation of networks (social capital), mustering resources (financial and human capital), strengthened identities and feelings of being aggrieved. Similarly, the study also utilized Philanthropic Collaboration Theory which, according to Gray (1985), explores why individuals, groups and organizations participate in structured groups to solve social, economic, political and environmental issues by sharing resources and increasing available opportunities. Therefore, the application of these models as analytical tools provided in-depth understanding on how and why individuals and organizations give.

Given the desire to explore the various forms in which communities give, this was predominantly qualitative in methodological approach. It required collecting both primary and secondary data. However, due to the need to understand the social indicators of the participants, there was also an element of quantitative data to foreground the study.

Sampling and Sample Size

The study employed purposeful sampling technique. This was particularly suited to the study as it targeted participants who were engaged in community activities and were able to provide insights into the intricacies of community philanthropy. In addition, the study targeted participants from across Malawi in selected districts of Mulanje, Phalombe, Zomba, Mangochi, Dedza, Ntcheu, Lilongwe, Mzimba and Karonga. In total, 300 participants composed of 160 key informant (KI) participants, 117 who participated in Focus Group Interviews/Discussions and 23 who participated in sharing their life stories.

Data Collection Methods

Desk review

To appreciate the broader narrative of community philanthropy, an in-depth review literature was undertaken. The focus was on the theme 'community philanthropy'. The review started in analysing global perspectives in order to appreciate broader framing of the debate. Furthermore, an African perspective on community philanthropy was also being undertaken. This helped to understand the topic from an African perspective and from different African

societies. Lastly, a review of the literature on community philanthropy with a focus on Malawi was undertaken. In this regard, a deliberate effort was made to review current research in Malawi on the topic, as well as policy documents from various institutions.

Key informant interviews

The nature of this study required an in-depth understanding of the critical issues from specific people. As such, the study engaged 160 KIs. These ranged from traditional leaders, faith leaders, foundations and/or non-governmental organization (NGO) leaders largely from local organizations, government officials – both at the district and national levels, academics, coordinators of community-based projects – projects that are advancing philanthropic activities. These KI interviews provided an opportunity to understand the scope of community philanthropy in Malawi. While it was my intention to use a survey questionnaire, this did not happen but the KI questions were preceded by a section that solicited biodata.

Focus Group Discussions

Further views on how people give in their communities were solicited through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Fourteen (14) FGDs, composed of between 6 and 8 participants each, were undertaken with pretty much questions as in KIs. In total, 117 participants participated in FGDs.

Life histories and case studies

Life histories were used to collect information that uncovered, at a personal level, specific lessons and what sort of experiences exist when people give and/or receive from others. Such cases included individuals, community-based organizations and other forms of networks. As indicated earlier, a total of 23 individuals were interviewed to share their stories of the impact of community giving in their local areas.

ETHICAL ISSUES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

The study was undertaken under the Malawi University of Science and Technology ethical guidelines. These included

seeking informed consent (verbal and/or written) from all the participants, the use of pseudonyms in order to maintain the anonymity of all participants, providing sufficient information to participants about the research before any interviews or administration of a survey questionnaire was done and ensuring confidentiality and safe custody of data.

MAIN FINDINGS

Findings from Literature

In order to understand a strong foundation about community philanthropy, a number of documents and literature were reviewed. The overall picture emerging from various documents suggests a strong emergency of a new narrative on community philanthropy, although very peripheral to the mainstream debates. However, it became increasingly clear that the term ‘philanthropy’ and ‘charity’ seem to be used interchangeably. Furthermore, attempt to distil these documents precisely to focus on community philanthropy yielded very little results. Going back 10 years neither produced convincing results nor provided good lead in evidence of a strong research in the field. Table 1 summarizes the closest available studies.

In their paper, “Corporate social responsibility practices in developing and transitional countries: Botswana and Malawi”, Lindgreen et al. (2009) argued that the level of community philanthropy is overshadowed by the works of small and large organizations. This observation confirms the overlaps that exist among community development, community giving and community philanthropy broadly conceptualized. A further search using phrases such as ‘community-based development’, ‘community-led development’, ‘reciprocal giving in Malawi’, ‘culture of giving in Malawi’ and ‘grassroots development initiatives in Malawi’, just to mention a few, provided further evidence on how certain narratives may be problematic in understanding community philanthropy and how it is done in different contexts. These ‘pointers’ led to a reasonable conclusion that there are lots of philanthropic activities in Malawi only that the naming matters (see Kambalu, 2016; Davies, 2011; Verheijen, 2018; Munthali, 2019; Booyens and Crause, 2009). Such examples of giving, gifting, grassroots development, reciprocity and community responses to a myriad

Table 1: Studies in philanthropy

Name of author	Year	Themes addressed	Comments
Isabelle W. Uny	2008	Community volunteering in nursery feeding programs	Focus on factors. No philanthropy
Happy Kayuni	2008	Community development	This was a situation analysis
Zorah Jarrah, Augela Lee, Catherine Wright et al.	2013	Integrated community care management	Focus on costing and financing. No philanthropy
Joseph Chinkonda	2012	Role of traditional leadership in community development	Master’s Thesis. Masters. No mention on philanthropy
Charles Nyasa, Anthony Mwakikunga and Enoch Chisati	2019	Care for older people in Malawi. Situation analysis	This is situation analysis

of local problems just highlight the richness of community philanthropy and affirm the idiomatic mantra that *'mutu umodzi susenza denga'* (one head cannot carry a roof) – essentially a narrative which reflects interdependence and social capital.

This fluidity supports concerns raised by UNDP (2014) which, who in their analysis of the contribution of philanthropy in international development, acknowledged the problems of definitions and categorization, noting that “philanthropy, no matter where it originates, is driven by the imperatives to meet human needs, alleviate suffering and tackle the systemic challenges that prevent human development and progress” (p. 3).

While it was difficult to locate literature in form of academic papers and/or books in the field of philanthropic domain, there was and, indeed, there is a plethora of news articles gravitating around the theme. This anecdotal evidence does suggest a growing recognition of the burgeoning field with the development lexicon, of an awareness of the need for social support through concerted effects at a community level.

A further search to link this emerging field to national development policies provided further understanding in establishing a kind of social protection. For example, the National Social Support Policy (Government of Malawi, 2012) stipulates, in its preamble, that the policy has been formulated to contribute towards poverty reduction and vulnerability of such persons as the elderly, people with disabilities, the chronically sick, orphans and other vulnerable children and destitute families. This policy, and other pro-poor social policies, have provided a new platform for the engagement of other non-state actors who, in the context of this study, have emboldened the need for the participation of a wider strata of loose community-based indigenous efforts. These are the community-based efforts that are defining the nature and behaviour of people in terms of how they mobilize themselves amid continued government failure to meet its obligations in providing the basic social services and other related social protection initiatives.

One of the popular policies in Malawi's development endeavours has been the MASAF, whose 'Public works programme' has been instrumental in highlighting the power of incentivized community philanthropy in Malawi. Public works programmes, in which a beneficiary works in

order to receive cash or in-kind payment, are a common social protection programmes in many developing countries, Malawi included. While its impact is under intense scrutiny, by its nature, at least in the context of Malawi, has had an impact as an instrument of community philanthropy, where not only people gather to undertake community work but, very importantly, to show solidarity. This is particularly the case considering that the cash and/or in-kind payment does not amount to the often labour-intensive nature of work undertake.

Understanding Community Philanthropy

The finding from the study affirmed what emerging theories and understanding of the concept are all about. It was crucial to establish the basic understanding of community giving by different tribes in Malawi. While the literature seems to argue that there are fluctuation in how the concept is understood the results show a similar pattern where people's understanding of philanthropy differs in meaning but maintains one fundamental posture – that of *'social consciousness'*. Of the 160 KIs interviewed, 84 (52.5 %) indicated that they understood community philanthropy/giving as *'giving without benefiting'*, while 43 (26.8%) stated that it is *'helping the needy by making different kinds of materials available'*. Related to the previous text was the idea of *'sharing'* where 33 (20%) highlighted that giving is about voluntary act of benevolence.

The significance of these views to the current literature is apparent when we consider some of the sociological theories such as Social Consciousness Theory (Machalek and Martin, 2015) and Social Capital Theory (Bourdieu, 1985; Portes, 1998). Social consciousness or awareness of society cannot be separated from self-consciousness because by our nature, we cannot think of ourselves without reference to others who also are a social group. Similarly, social capital theory argues that social relationships are a resource that, when well utilized, can lead to accumulation of social capital. This view is amplified by Savage and Kanazawa (2004) who argue that if social capital is understood as a feature of relationships that yield productive benefits, then it can be inferred that the idea of giving without benefit is premised on this fundamental ideology, because humans have evolved preference for companionships.

Table 2: Understanding philanthropy by gender

Understanding of philanthropy	Women (N = 94)	Men (N = 66)
Help giving to those in need	60 (64.0%)	40 (60.6%)
Giving freely to the need without expecting any return	10 (10.6%)	8 (12.1%)
Helping each other with community resources without waiting for extend aid	10 (10.6%)	6 (9.1%)
Giving back to community	5 (5.3%)	3 (4.5%)
Sharing to improve well-being	5 (5.3%)	4 (6.1%)
Sympathy	4 (4.2%)	5 (7.6%)

Table 3: Faith and philanthropy/community giving

Understanding of philanthropy	Christian (N = 128)	Moslems (N = 22)
Help given to those in need	72 (52.2%)	14 (63.6%)
Giving freely to those in need without expecting any return	46 (33.3%)	6 (27.3%)
Giving back to community	10 (7.2%)	0 (0.0%)
Sharing to improve life	10 (7.2%)	2 (9.1%)

Gender Perspectives

The study put to the test-gendered perspectives on how community philanthropy is understood in Malawi. The findings suggest no difference in the way men and women view community giving. Table 2 summarizes the findings.

Religion and Philanthropy

There is a known interaction between ‘generosity’ and ‘religiosity’ in contemporary discourses in Africa, and Malawi in particular (Adler and Offutt, 2017; Barnes, 2013; Bennett and Einolf, 2017). While there is an appreciation of regional differences as to how culture, politics and faith interact to influence the nature of philanthropic activities, Malawi is rather invisible in the literature, although anecdotal evidence seems to suggest that the country is very Christian (Bompani, 2011). Putting this variable to test in the study has revealed that there are no variations as to how community giving is understood between men and women. Similarly, faith, as a variable, offered no significant difference. In fact, it was clear that people’s faith had a drive to give. This will be explained in the subsequent section to follow.

In this study, of the 160 key participants (KPs), 138 were of the Christian faith while 22 were of Islamic faith. However, despite their faith positions, this understanding of faith was consistently similar in acknowledging that community giving and/or philanthropy is about helping

the needy and, importantly, without expecting anything in return. Table 3 summarizes the findings.

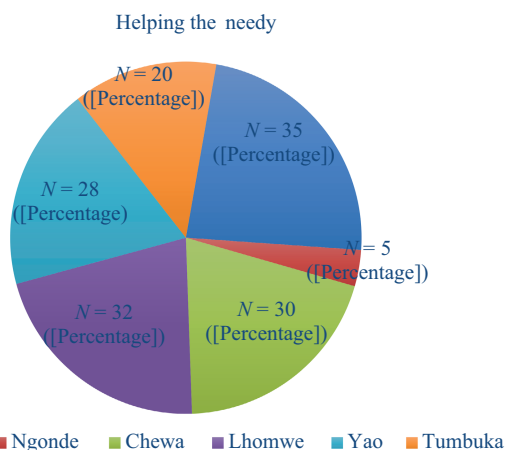
Ethnic Angle to Philanthropy in Malawi

Whether ethnicity has any bearing on how people give was also put to test in the study. While literature on the topic is very scanty in Malawi, elsewhere, the topic has received a significant amount of attraction (see Rovner et al., 2015; Salmon, 2003; Aina, n.d.). In the United States, African-Americans are more likely to give than non-black counterparts (Skidmore and Sellen, 2021). The current study has in part shed more light on how ethnicity plays a part in philanthropy. From the findings, it was difficult to separate and make sense of the results. However, it seems clear that the findings are leaning heavily towards a ‘moral foundation theory’, where philanthropic activities are based on caring for others, fairness, in-group loyalty and, generally, that of being sympathetic to the suffering of others (Nilsson et al., 2020). Based on this understanding of moral obligation – that of a ‘brother’s/sister’s keeper’ – the overall findings suggest that ethnicity does not have any significant bearing on how one gives. Figure 1 sums up the results.

If community philanthropy is understood from the position of “local people helping each other by sharing resources for the common good” (Doan, 2019), it can be argued, therefore, that humans act on shared moral platform irrespective of ethnicity and other factors such as race. In the context of Malawi, the findings may not necessarily break the ground but are sufficient enough to highlight emerging scholarship on African giving.

The findings are further amplified by views solicited through FGD. When the views are closely analysed using both social capital and social consciousness frameworks, they prove that while different viewpoints emerge on the meanings, one underpinning principle is clear that community philanthropy is about caring, expressing solidarity for each other. It is about human compassion. One participant in a focus group put it into this perspective:

In those days, we Malawians used to receive messages from the radio, encouraging us to work together and care for each other. I have grown in a village where people could bring food and share with each other. Our community was known for such kindness. So, if you ask me what I understand about community giving, it all comes to mean

**Fig 1:** Ethnicity and community philanthropy/giving.

caring for one another both in good times as well as in difficult times (FDG-P2).

Another view emerged from the FGDs, which supports some of the views from the KPs, as highlighted by one female participant who echoed.

As a mother, I cannot watch anybody undergo suffering. No, I can't. For me, community giving is to be able to care. I have to demonstrate that I can be a mother to everyone. This means I have to be sympathetic. This is what the Bible teaches us. (FGD-P4)

She furthered her arguments when she brought in a social justice angle to the conversation when she said: “*After all, in a country where there is high inequality, the only way we can close the gap is for us, in respective communities, to support one another without thinking that such a person comes from South, Centre or North*” (FGD-4).

There was also an emerging view from the youth in one of the FGDs which offers a sobering perspective on meanings of philanthropy. This view is grounded in Wilkinson-Maposa and Fowler’s (2005), where youth mobilization is now common in Malawi, as attested by a burgeoning number of youth-led community-based organizations which, in the wake of dwindling resource base, are offering their time in solidarity with ongoing initiatives. One of them gave her perspective:

Very often community philanthropy is seen in terms of money. We, the youth see philanthropy or giving in terms of our time. For example, I belong to a college youth support group. We go to clean hospitals and entertain the sick and their caretakers, we visit orphanages. We volunteer to clean hospitals, streets and churches. The spirit of volunteering motivates us to give back to the community.

These views are consistent with some of the literature on horizontal philanthropy rather than vertical framing (Wilkinson-Maposa and Fowler, 2009). What we see in these views is the ethos and practice of help that is innate in social life – more or less exemplifying the ‘umunthu’ and ‘ubunthu’ philosophy (Zimunya et al., 2015). In African culture, consideration to other and the community comes first. The individual is born into and out of a community and therefore be part and parcel of community fabric where interdependence, communalism, sensitivity towards others, and caring for others, are all aspects of community philanthropy or giving in general.

Also, hidden in these narratives are the socio-economic injustices. These voices convey a subtle message of resources deprivation and the failure of social contract between government and citizenry, broadly argued (Mottiar, n.d.). It is therefore comforting to notice semblances in the current results, supporting such contemporary views emerging from within the region.

Forms of Giving and Community Philanthropy

In Malawi, as is the case elsewhere, particularly in African countries (see African Grantmakers Network, 2013), community philanthropy can take different shapes and forms. Some are largely organized while in some settings it might be loose. In both cases, the desire and purpose remain the same – solving local problems using local and/or community-based solutions.

Given the predominance of this study on ‘horizontal philanthropy’, the findings have shown that in all the 10 districts, the forms of giving ranged from the individuals to locally based community foundations. For institutional forms of giving, there were differences. First, there were those that are highly organized and have fully functional stuff but without a Board of Trustees. In others, the institutions are loose and operate without any formal structure but largely based on trust and networking ability.

A careful analysis of the findings on the forms can be clustered around the following five areas.

Individual forms of giving

These are not necessarily what you would call high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs), but the individuals play a low profile but are passionate about giving rarely visibly but largely invisibly.

Community foundations

In Malawi, the word ‘foundation’ is not a common nomenclature when referring to local organizations. It is rather ‘community-based organizations’, commonly under the umbrella NGOs. These are the local NGOs that are common and functioning only when there is a need, like disasters and emergencies.

Informal crowd-funding platforms

These are loose and ad-hoc groupings of both men and women whose aim is to pool resources together to respond to a particular need without any return. It is NOT an investment platform, rather these platforms act more of a charity.

Volunteer groups

These are groupings of both old people and youth-based organizations which coalesce to offer mainly their time to respond, for example, during the time of disasters, emergencies and funeral (grave digging) just to name but a few examples.

Loose networks and social media networks

In Malawi, social groupings are growing into force, some bearing the label ‘Friends of.....’ are gathering pace. In some cases, there are ‘gifting’ circles.

Who Gives and Why?

In their article “*Giving while Female: Women are more likely to donate to charities than men of equal means*”, Skidmore and Sellen (2021) provide a snapshot in who gives. While the previous article focuses on gendered giving from the ‘Global North’, there is ample evidence of female engagement in community philanthropy in Africa, Malawi in particular (Yetu, n.d.; CAF Southern Africa, 2015; Al Jazeera, 2019). The gendered purpose on giving is significant in the current globally and ever-increasing resources-challenging world. A similar question was put to participants in the study. The answers overwhelmingly support some of the emerging trends which challenge the argument of who can be a philanthropist. In this study, it emerged that the majority are of the view that women/females give generously as opposed to men/males, by a ratio of 4:1.

The critical question that emerges from these findings is: what are both men and women giving to? Importantly, what are the catchment areas of giving. Findings from both KI interviews and FGDs point to giving, first, to what I want to call ‘inner circle’, in other words “charity begins at home”. Some of the following comments affirm this position. “*Women are more networked than men. So very often these networks are based on kinship. Malawians value kinship, therefore women give around family and friends*” (KP-17). Another view from a male in an FGD is even more sobering:

There is a saying that ‘charity begins at home’, therefore us women make sure that we solve our problems when we want to give. It is therefore common that many women who have formed groups will make sure we help ourselves. Then we also go into the hospitals, and in schools and assist with the little we can. Likewise, sometimes we go with our husbands. We also help relatives of our husbands if there is need. Then we can go to other extended family members. (FGD-7)

As can be seen from the comments and sentiments earlier, giving is about kinship and ensuring that those around are taken care of. This is consistent with reciprocal philanthropy. In fact some of the participants noted that when giving is outside the kinship circles, there is a lot of expectation for reciprocity which is common among Malawians. In addition, it comes out strong that not every giving is visible. There are a good number of people who give anonymously depending on the nature of need.

Against these findings were to find out if there was any link between ethnicity and how ‘gendered giving’ is viewed. The findings affirm the same positions that individuals have towards their perception about who gives between men and women. According to Table 4, there were more people in each district who support the view that more women than men give to community or charity.

There is one significant observation about the findings earlier which provides a new dimension in our understanding about gendered giving and ethnicity. This is noted between the Lhomwe and Yao tribes. Almost a third of the Lhomwes and about two-thirds of the Yaos firmly believe that men do significantly give. A closer examination of the reasons for the findings indicates something associated with culture and religion more than anything else. Within the Yao tribe and cultural practices, men are highly considered breadwinners more than women. The cultural conservatism on this extends into some parts of the so-called Lhomwe belt. Part of the belt harbours a mix of Yaos and Lhomwes, hence, not surprising that this aspect of the findings fits into this kind of explanation.

Examples of giving associated with community philanthropy

What constitutes philanthropic activity varied on the nature of need, and very often, it is dictated by the kinds of events that trigger community action. In this study, various examples were given, ranging from helping people with money to volunteering. Community action has also been at play during initiation ceremonies, during farming season where village members gather and tell a piece of land for a need household and/or individual for nothing except for a traditional brew. Figure 2 summarizes some of the common examples associated with community giving in Malawi.

Listening to the voice on giving provides a better source of empowerment. Hodgson and Pond (2018) have contributed to the topic, arguing that when communities get into action, people should not view such actions as just mere acts of charity. Rather we should see such actions as a process of power fluxes. ‘Acting Locally’ shifts power from the global to the local and, within that, is a source of ownership and the ability to show that ordinary people have the ‘capacity’ to change their situations. As stated earlier, some of these acts of benevolence depict not only community resilience but also a high level of consciousness of responsible citizenship through the utilization of community assets in support of grassroots community development initiatives.

Table 4: Ethnicity and views on giving ($N = 160$)

Category	Ethnicity					
	Chewa	Lhomwe	Ngonde	Ngoni	Tumbuka	Yao
Men	0	8	0	1	0	23
Women	16	33	7	19	19	34

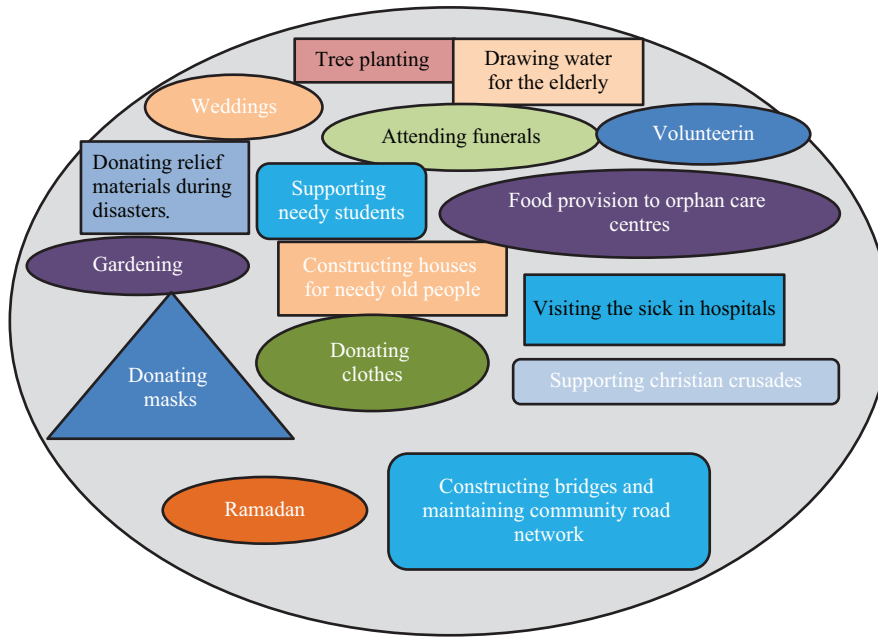


Fig 2: Activities associated with community giving.

While it was very difficult to rank them according to priority, the responses to the question “which of these examples of community giving is very important?” provided clues as to how local people view their problems. One KP said, “*To me, there is no problem that is bigger than the other. As long as such a problem affects one’s health, it is big. It requires our attention*”. (KP-8)

Others had different views:

Funerals, unlike any other event, is where we need to show solidarity. We can never get used to funerals. This is why you see a lot of people showing up on funerals. Because it is here where you can prove who is a real member of community and who really care. (KP-13)

Last year and this year, we have seen lots of people die due to covid-19. In our area we have lots of orphans. The best we can do as people is never to see these orphans die because we cannot support them – rather, it is our responsibility to do something about orphans. For me, this is my priority – to care for orphans and provide them with clothes, food, shelter and education. (KP-9)

These views not only consolidate how powerful horizontal philanthropy is in community giving but also attest to the need for a shift in the way community development initiatives can be enhanced using local resourcing. Underlying all these views is what has been alluded to already – ‘humanness’ which, in Malawi, plays out horizontally through examples highlighted in Figure 2.

Another perspective emerging from the overall analysis of the reasons associated with the gender aspect of giving,

points to the fact that women are sympathetic, understanding, they exercise a high level of responsible custodianship, they are naturally generous, kind-hearted – just to highlight a few. For why men give more than women, reasons range from high access to income, home managers, sympathy, financial stability – just to mention a few.

Views from Focus Group Discussions

In almost all the FGDs, there was unanimous agreement that women are more likely to give and/or donate than men. Although it was hard to quantify precisely, but the conversations were clear in terms of gender and giving. Of the 26 FGDs, composed of 70 participants in total, it became apparent that even the initiative to start a giving circle was more likely to be a female, more than a male.

The FGDs revealed further that women were engaged in activities intended to provide support to others than men would. Although rather loose, the intention to give was very clear based on the views from two Focus Group Interviews in two of the districts:

You can easily tell that woman give more than men if you observe what happens at a funeral. Check carefully. You will see that women are very active and run around to do things. Their skills in mobilizing resources tells you how kind-hearted they are, let alone to offer a meal to men who simply come to a funeral and sit to be fed by woman. Is there any harm why men can’t go and fetch firewood if, indeed, they are sympathetic? (FGD-P6)

On one occasion, I had the opportunity to understand women’s giving in action when my brother was in hospital

due to an accident. He stayed in a hospital for three months. I used to visit the hospital every weekend. On every occasion I visited the hospital, I noted that there were more organised female groupings to either donate food and/or other items or share a word of god to strengthen the sick, than men would. This give me an impression that I can claim that women are more compassionate than men. (FGD-P13)

In examining these issues, I am conscious of the challenges such kind of results pose when one examines the differences between the narratives of ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ on the one hand, and, ‘married’ and ‘single’, on the other, as the latter category’s decision to engage in charitable or community philanthropy may be influenced by a male or female counterparts (Einolf, 2011). However, research on this aspect overly scores women higher than men, although Piper and Schnepf (2007) found that while women may be overly generous, but men will give, for example, more money than women. This is consistent with studies conducted in 2012 and 2014 (Bognanno, 2019).

However, the reasons why men are likely to give less to charity, globally, is still unclear. As research into the area is still continuing, conflicting reasons as to why men are unlikely to give less generously is still ongoing (Caldwell, 2015). The paucity of data on this variable is very high. Nonetheless, this study has shed some light on why men are likely to give less. One of the popular reasons given, which contradicts the whole definition of community giving, was that when men give, they are likely to expect a return. One participant was quick to state that ‘Men are more selfish’ than women. Overall, it seems clear that this area requires more research given that within men are several other factors that require thorough tracing – for example, context, age, socio-economic status and faith. This is where I now turn.

Factors Influencing Community Giving in Malawi

The question on what motivates people to give in their communities is, in part, embedded in the definitions of community philanthropy itself. For this study, a combination of intrinsic motivations, namely, moral obligation, stood out very clear. Spirituality and/or religiosity, faith, culture and love for others were mentioned. Table 5 summarizes the key factors.

That philanthropic behaviour is a culturally rooted phenomenon manifested in different forms, which has been highlighted in a number of academic works (see Mati,

2016; Fowler, 2017; Centre on African Philanthropy and Social Investment (CAPSI), 2019). It is becoming increasingly clear that while ‘culture’ may dominate the discourse but other factors, as highlighted in Table 5, abound for the greater part, faith, as shown in the results of this study, has inspired community giving in different forms. Varied as faith traditions may be, the overarching theme is that of fighting poverty. This moral imperative is cross-cutting not only among Christians (Mukarji, 2001), but also in Islamic faith, where the moral imperative to support those in need is clearly encouraged through Zakat, one of the fundamental pillars in Islamic faith (Scott and Cnaan, 2018).

Malawi prides itself to be a God-fearing nation or, better put, as faith-based nation with 77.3% being Christians, while 13.8% are Muslims (National Statistical Office, 2018). The findings on the factors influencing giving seem to tow a similar trajectory, with the majority of participants (86.0%) admitting being influenced by their religious faith while 10.1% have been influenced by Islamic faith.

A closer examination of the findings also shows that ‘culture’, as a factor, plays a significant role in influencing our decision to give. Perhaps what is unclear is how ‘culture’ is understood in different contexts. Gauging from the voices in the FGDs, one important discourse is to do with the other two factors – ‘social capital’ and ‘relationships’. As one participant noted, “*The spirit of giving is in us Africans. Religious influence came after. It was not like we did not have the spirit of ‘umunthu’*” (referring to notions of humanness). Another participant supported the view and echoed that “*if you ask people who visit Malawi they will tell you that we are a peace loving nation, we are known as ‘The Warm Heart of Africa’. That shows people that caring and loving is our culture’*”.

The consistent message emerging from some of these Focus Group Interviews are not isolated from those that extend the ‘*ubunthu*’ philosophical worldview, in the context of charitable or community giving. The prosocial behaviour towed in some of the views mentioned earlier show the interaction among faith, culture, social capital and relational dynamics. Therefore, one cannot attribute such behaviour as solely responsible for the nature of community giving, given the fluxes human beings are inherently known for.

An attempt to also understand whether or not ethnicity had anything to do with why people give, proved insignificant, perhaps because, across Malawi, there is no ethnic grouping that is predominantly secular, as seen by statistics from the national statistics offices. Further to the issues of culture, the Focus Group Interviews provided a new dimension worth mentioning – that of ‘social identity’. While the original theorizing of the report is on

Table 5: Factors influencing giving in Malawi (%)

Factors				
Religion	Culture	Politics	Social capital	Relationships
38	22	8	18	14

social capital and social consciousness theories, I would argue that there is need to understand some of these factors from a ‘Social Identity Theory’ (Nadler, 2002; Tejfel, 1979).

It is not surprising, therefore, that there is a significant attention paid to collective social disadvantage which triggers collective response because, by definition, social identity theory posits that people strive to achieve and maintain a sense of positive distinctiveness for group membership. In part, the use of ‘us’ as an African identity, and where faith has reference, is consistent with group identity, to a degree and this can be harnessed to further spur collective action. Turner et al. (1987) did argue, in their seminal work, that social groups that people belong to shape their self-definition and prescribe their attitudes and behaviour in such a group. Therefore, socially desirable behaviours of giving are not by any means accidental. This is because they are, to a larger extent, a manifestation of how relationships and the rules as well as the ethos within a social grouping have been shaped over time.

Social and Economic Status

A question of “*What does it take to be a community philanthropist*” has been posed in several academic circles (Wilkinson-Maposa and Fowler, 2009; Wilkinson-Maposa et al., 2015). Few studies delving deep into socio-economic status have been conducted. Besides factors highlighted earlier, the study engaged 23 individual cases in order to further appreciate the concept of ‘*poor philanthropists*’ and how the concept is operationalized. From a few of these cases, it emerged that a person’s social-economic status has an influence on giving to charity or helping someone in need. This practice is common across all individuals in the social strata. These individual cases do not fall in the category of what you would call HNWI, but they are individuals who simply earn less but are very willing to share. A few of these cases shed more light on the extent of giving based as socio-economic status:

Case Study 1:

Mweruthu was an administrator who also owned a hospitality enterprise in one of the districts in Malawi. Before his death, he used to sponsor 10 needy students in one of the public universities in Malawi. No one knew about it, including the beneficiaries. He planned his support in such a way that a portion was deducted from his salary every month. Upon his death, and when the salary got frozen, it came to the attention of the management about the act of benevolence. Considering his passion and desire to make a difference in peoples’ lives, his wife has continued with her husband’s legacy.

Case Study 2:

Courageous was a teenage girl when, after the death of both parents, went into the street vending until, a charitable organization from UK, operating locally in the

Southern part of Malawi rescued her and put her in a primary school. After completing her primary school, she was selected to go to a day-secondary school. After hard work, she passed and was selected to go to the University of Malawi (Polytechnic) where she majored in Business Studies. After completing her studies, she found a job that pays her a salary equivalent to R8000, a month. Of this, she spends R3000 supporting an orphanage. She does so, arguably because she can sympathize given her experience as once a street girl but, secondly, her socio-economic status allows her to do so, otherwise she admits, it could have been tough to do anything substantial as, almost every day, the orphanage runs out of good and other essentials. Ordinarily, the salary and her dedication to community philanthropy are a complete mismatch. But she does so nonetheless.

The two cases offer insights of the complexity of giving. As already alluded to, it takes a heart to come and put oneself in the space of the other to appreciate the struggles of others which, in turn, one has to take as theirs for making a change in somebody’s life. In Malawi, these experiences are numerous. However, at the heart of these, acts of kindness go beyond charity. They mirror the saying, “It takes a village to raise a child”.

Changes over Time?

A question was asked as to whether the forms of giving have changed over time (Table 6). One of the challenges in getting answers to the question was the generational gap among the participants. However, the answer to the question was in majority: 81.25% for KPs and 90.0% for those in the FGDs. Similarly, there was an overwhelming agreement from the 23 case study participants (87.0%) who acknowledged a change in peoples’ relationships and how social capital has, over time, been replaced by individualism.

While regime change seems to be associated with declining spirit of giving, it has to be understood that the issue is not as simple as it may seem. The complexity of the narrative of community philanthropy in Malawi has, over the years, ‘collided’ with a development narrative where regimes and political party manifestos

Table 6: Reason for change in community giving

Reasons	N = 160 (KIs)
Change in government system/ruling party	36.9%
Mindset change of beneficiaries	25.6%
Religious motives	15.5%
Cultural shifts modernization	7.5%
Favouritism	7.5%
Cultural diversity	3.7%
Unemployment	1.7%
Financial stability	1.6%

literally made promises that they have not kept. When Malawi transitioned from one-party to multiparty political system, the narrative on ‘development’ went into convulsion, where ‘development’ was more or less like a commodity to be handed over to people by an institution called government. Chunga (2014) asserts that political parties have not always lived up to the expectation of the ordinary people, further arguing in support of Randall and Svasand (2010) that, very often, the promises of some African regimes have not advanced the desire of development through democratic processes. In the end, that narrative of ‘we shall give you development’ has had negative effect on the type of social capital with which Africans are known for Malawi being no exception.

Unsurprisingly, the findings have a direct correlation between change in government system and mindset change among people. Often times, discourses change people’s worldviews over time. Dukor (2009) contends that ideology serves as mirror through which society is viewed and, very often, gives social–political and economic direction in policymaking. While this report has limited space to delve deep into examining each of the political parties and their ideological positions which have served in shaping the philanthropic landscape in Malawi, the findings do provide an indicator of the dynamics of change in government ideologies, mindset change and modernity. Dukor further observes that Africa has lost its values “because a lot of values have been lost and a lot civilization in governance, economics, agriculture and technologies have equally been lost and submerged by the flood of ‘western and neo-colonialism’” (p. 27). While this claim may not be a conclusive truth, the number of clarities mushrooming in Malawi may, in part, explain the fears that modern philanthropy is not as original and authentic as it often serves capitalists who have accumulate wealth at the expenses of the majority.

Positives in Community Philanthropy in Malawi

It has been argued by Moyo and Ramsamy (2014), Mati (2016) and Atibi (2014) that philanthropy is the desire to promote the welfare of others, expressed by peoples’ generosity – be it through donation of money, property, expertise, time, compassionate care or work to good causes or needy persons. This definition leaves us with no doubt that, in whatever form it may take, community philanthropy has its own positives. As indicated earlier, the study employed case studies as a way of delving deep to unearth stories of how community philanthropy has made inroads in impacting people. While it has to be acknowledged that measuring impact is not as simple, the few stories gathered around the districts where the study took place provide the depth with which to appreciate that horizontal philanthropy can, and has the potential, to change lives. A summary in Table 7 provides a glimpse of the landscape from people’s own experience of community philanthropy and those that have witnessed it first-hand.

The previous stories provide a mixture of issues ranging from a state of destitution to scenes of hope through peoples’ solidarity. Time and again, the issue of helping with education resonates with findings from an earlier study by Chakamera (2021) who ascertained that most of philanthropic organizations in Malawi spend around 80.0% of their income on education, followed by health (66.0%). There is also a high level of consciousness that the only way people can be active participants in their communities is by empowering them through skills often acquired through education. More importantly is the belief that it is through collective action that communities can claim a development space and solve their own problems.

CHALLENGES OF COMMUNITY PHILANTHROPY IN MALAWI

Challenges

Commentators on the states of philanthropy often ask about what philanthropy means for Africa. The question is vital even when considering the state of Africa economies and poverty. While the study may have its own limitation in terms of reach and depth, there are emerging issues that help us understand the nature of community philanthropy in Malawi in particular. One of the emerging issues that come out of both the KI interviews and FGD’s is about each of financial support and lack of understanding of what community philanthropy is all about. Table 8 summarizes the key findings.

The results provide a conflicting picture of how community philanthropy is sometimes misconstrued as something not endogenous. Lack of financial resources as a major challenge presumes philanthropy as animating from outside people or communities themselves – an issue which is supported by poor understanding as correctly highlighted in the results. That philanthropy about community mobilization in order to produce financial resources seems contradictory. It is not surprising, therefore, that reasons that follow partially explain the low or poor participation in community initiatives. More importantly, the findings do also point to a call for effective civic education at a community level to deconstruct what community development. It highlights and supports the argument by Makuwira (2006, 2007, 2014). Whose philanthropy or development is it? Is it about ordinary people and how are they organized? All those questions have to be answered before any effort to enhance community philanthropy is embarked upon. If community philanthropy activities are not well organized, it is very easy to create apathy. The FGDs provided further insight into the intricacies of these challenges. Key to some of these challenges gravitates around ‘power’. Communities are not power-neutral. As apathy argued by Hodgson and Pond (2018), community philanthropy is about shifting power from the previous ones

Table 7: Selected stories of community giving

District	Impact Story 1	Impact Story 2
Blantyre	A church contributed fees for a needy child to complete his studies at Zomba Catholic Secondary School and later continued to support the boy up until tertiary education at College of Medicine	There was engineering male student at the poly-technic of Malawi who was unable to pay for his fees and upkeep. He was spending his nights in the guard quarters due to failure to pay for rent. PAFE, a humanitarian organization, helped him financially and reported his case to the dean of students who helped him secure accommodation on campus for free
Dedza	UNICEF organization gives money to students to buy food and other necessities of day-to-day life and also provides porridge flour for the students at school	There is a child headed family consisting of four girls who decided to start staying alone because their aunt was abusing them. The eldest became a sex worker and moved to Lilongwe, whereas the rest of them are in their teens and are with children. They get help from the well-wishers from the village they live in
Karonga	I have problems with my eye sight and then a charity group in the church bought me a pair of spectacles. They also paid for my transport to and from Ntcheu hospital where I bought the spectacles	Karonga mostly experiences different hazards like strong winds, earthquakes and floods. When these occur, they destroy a lot of things, like built structures, crops and even lives. The villagers mobilize resources to respond to or cope with the adverse effects of the hazards. Items like clothes and food are distributed to the victims in their homes. Sometimes the villagers build houses of the sick, elderly or disabled whose houses fell due to the hazards
Mzimba	A businessman constructed a bridge connecting Chanthamba and Mzimba town as a way of giving back to the community. The bridge is helping a lot to the people in the community by making it easier since it acts as a short route to town for people to conduct their day-to-day services, it has also promoted those who engage in business activities	There was an orphaned girl in Ekwendeni who lacked the necessities to proceed with her education. A well-wisher helped her with fees, notebooks and uniform. She was at an open day school by then, the help encouraged her to work hard to the extent that she passed her Malawi School Certificate of Education with flying colours and was selected to college of medicine
Lilongwe	In 1995, we had a group known as Chiyanjano Family Friends which had 20 families which we were contributing every month and at the end of the year the money we raised we visited places like orphanages, prisons, hospitals and cheering the elderly in the community and we bought essential materials like maize, soap and blankets	There is a school for the blind called 'Malingunde School for the blind'. The children there need basic needs and 'Mayi Owala group' from Nkhoma Synod radio station donate assorted items like soap, maize, salt and cooking oil just to mention a few
Phalombe	An organization of Friends of Phalombe managed to raise funds for two needy students to pay for an application and tuition fees into the Universities of Malawi. The boys both made it through to the universities one to College of Medicine and the other to Mzuzu University	There was an asthmatic man who had an asthma attack in the middle of the road. A stranger with a kind heart found him, took him to the hospital and paid for the purchase of an inhaler for the patient with MWK4000.00
Zomba, Phalombe and Nsanje	Empowering Malawian communities to protect their vulnerable against Covid-19 and its effects. The initiative involved the establishment of 'Coronavirus Community Care Funds' to be used to support households in isolation through the sale of subsidized masks and soap. More volunteers than vulnerable people to support people in isolation	Cyclone Idai – Joshua Foundation Action. A total of 147,958 households (approximately 739,790 people) were affected during the cyclone. However, communities around these households held together to mobilize each other locally to establish 187 shelters

to the following ones. It is about local agency. But even at the local level, power is exercised by ordinary people in ways that defy theory. One participant shared her story while she said:

Us women often think we can solve our problems very quickly. This is why we mobilize ourselves into groups and form village banks, but sometimes some of us are selfish when we fail to honour our promises. Than those

Table 8: Challenges to community philanthropy in Malawi (N = 160)

Challenges	%
Lack of financial supply	32.5
Poor understanding of philanthropy at community level	23.1
Low participation	16.9
Abuse of resources	6.3
Jealous	5.0
Favouritism	5.0
Lack of civic education	5.0
Lack of appreciation of the impact of philanthropy	3.1
Poverty	3.1

Table 9: How to improve community philanthropy (N = 160)

Improvement plan	%
Improve community mobilization	33.8
Civic education	27.6
Mindset change	8.7
Improved funding	7.5
Avoid nepotism and nepotism and discrimination	7.5
Tolerance	6.2
Monitoring on projects	6.2
Empowerment	2.5

women who are a little educated tend to control us. (FGD-P23)

One of the gentlemen in a Focus Group Interviews in the urban informal settlement had this to say:

Here in Ntandire, we are very organized, we have community development committees that make sure that we are treated fairly when engaged in some of these activities but as usual there are people who sometimes seek favours where some initiatives attract finances. Instead of looking at us as equals, they tend to favour those they know well and make sure some of the development activities are in their sub-communities. (FGD-P14)

The numerous stories of challenges, too numerous to document, are a testimony to the intricacies of local development. While the dilemma in most local communities in Africa is about resources, but most of all, it is about power. The sentiments expressed earlier are about power inequalities even at a community level. In addition, what that means is that community philanthropy cannot ignore issues of social justice as one of the core themes in development. After all, when people are poor, disempowerment sets in and by inference, inequality. Meaning that one of the first issues to address in community philanthropy is to address power gaps because it is only if the poor have power that they can leverage the resources needed.

Improving Community Philanthropy

Despite all the challenges, communities go through one thing that binds them in a common identity that they are in a common space where they share common problems (Table 9). When asked to suggest ways to improve on the conditions and/or challenges, it came apparently clear that a good community mobilization strategy is needed. In addition, there was a mention on improving civic education in order to shift people's thinking about community challenges.

The overwhelming agreement that the way to improve community philanthropy in Africa and Malawi in particular is consistent with what Mahomed (2020) argues far. While there is very little literature in community organizing from a Malawian perspective, the sentiments expressed here are, perhaps the impact of the role both international and local NGOs have on grassroots communities and organizations in Malawi. The political landscape in Malawi has over the past few years given way to a fluid space for civic engagement and formation of community organizing. This is why one of the suggestions to intensify civic education and change our mindset are highly prominent in the suggestions. This is not by coincidence, rather these views reflect a growing demand for organically and community-based development solutions to enhancing community development in Malawi, as is the case in many developing economies in Africa. The issues of empowerment and monitoring of projects come as no surprise—again, a very clear indication of the high level of consciousness about the need for transparency and accountability.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The study has unearthed very important issues which, when looked at from various vantage points, provide insights into our understanding of what community philanthropy is all about and, at the same time, what it is not. It seems reasonably clear that the Malawi case study has added value to the ongoing debate about the role of communities in enhancing human well-being although it can be acknowledged that there is still some work to be done in order to make sense of the complex issues gravitating around community giving and/or philanthropy.

From the findings, it can be concluded that indeed community philanthropy is about ordinary people getting together to pull their community resources to respond to pressing community needs. This is motivated largely by human consciousness and the desire for better life. It takes effort to mobilize such effort and, as highlighted in the study, organizing communities is not a simple thing because of the power dynamics at various layers of communities.

The clarity, confusion and complementarity between two concepts have been noted. On the one hand, there is a sense that community philanthropy is about charity. The

emphasis is very clear when defining community philanthropy is 'giving' out something to someone or some cause. The idea of 'philanthropy' may fit into this frame of thinking but, beyond that, community philanthropy goes beyond just doing charitable giving to encapsulate locally driven initiatives to solve local development challenges. The overlap between the two concepts is undeniably glaring.

The question of who gives and why they give has dominated the literature, and this study has proved exactly that. Women are considered more giving than men and the reasons are many. However, key to this claim is the fact that women, overall, are considered to be kind-hearted and responsible custodians of place. This comes as no surprise as there is significant evidence on the role of gender in community philanthropy both in Africa and beyond (Hodgson, 2020). Empathy, resourcefulness and the desire for difference are among the key factors motivating women to give as individuals, groups and in loose giving circles.

While regimes have come and gone, and whether there is any significance in the nature of regimes/political leadership on community philanthropy, remains an issue for further exploration. The study seems to suggest that overall the nature of giving in Malawi has changed over time. However, these changes cannot be attributed to regime change although, in this study, party manifestos have been put under microscopic scrutiny with no significant impact on the level and nature of giving in Malawi. On the greater part of this conversation is the role of culture and religion in giving. It is clear that, as a nation, Malawi's faith-based values have a significant impact on how people give. Embedded in this are issues of culture and relationships and/or social capital.

Recommendations

In view of the various issues raised in this study, it is recommended that

- An in-depth study needs to be conducted to document community foundations beyond what is visible through websites. There is irrefutable evidence that there are lots of community foundations that are very loose and not fully organized but they just need to be documented so that they can be profiled and followed upon through high-level funding mechanisms and support.
- District Development indicatives should make an effort to utilize community philanthropic foundations through seed funding to motivate active participation of various communities in Malawi. This should be underpinned by a deliberate effort to enhance community organizing.
- Given that there still is paucity in understanding of community philanthropy in Malawi, civic education has to be intensified to educate people on the need to harness community assets for local community development. Part of this initiative is to motivate men to participate.
- Universities providing programmes in Community Development and/or Development Studies should mount short courses on themes to do with philanthropy and community development. This will serve as a platform for civic education but with an academic angle to it.
- District Assemblies in Malawi should be encouraged to develop a register of all charities and/or NGOs operating in their districts and have an inventory of projects that are contributing to community development.
- More research is needed on the whole sector of community philanthropy with much emphasis strengthening foundations through capacity building. It is clear that part of the challenge is about capacity yet there seems nothing done to capacitate individuals to act accordingly.
- Malawi needs to have legislation on community foundations. This should be different from the NGO Law.
- The Council for NGOs in Malawi needs to be active in harnessing efforts between International NGOs and these Community Foundations through strengthening networking between fully established NGOs and loose community foundations.

REFERENCES

- Adler GJ, Offutt S. The gift economy of direct transnational civic action: how reciprocity and inequality are managed in religious 'partnerships'. *J Sci Study Relig.* 2017; 56:600–619.
- African Grantmakers Network. Sizing the field: frameworks for a new narrative of African philanthropy; 2013. <https://african-philanthropy.issuelab.org/resources/15190/15190.pdf>.
- Al Jazeera, Charity by name and nature: Malawi's extraordinary midwife; 2019. <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2019/8/29/charity-by-name-and-nature-malawi-extraordinary-midwife>.
- Aina, T. A. (2013). *The State and Philanthropy in Africa: Framing the Context, Giving to Help, Helping to Give*. Senegal: Amalion Publishing.
- Atibil CL (2014) Philanthropic foundations and civil society in Sub-Saharan Africa. In: Obadare E (ed) *The Handbook of Civil Society in Africa*. New York: Springer International.
- Barnes SL. Black church giving: an analysis of ideological, programmatic, and denominational effects. *SAGE Open.* 2013; 3 pp. 1–11.
- Bennett MR, Einolf CJ. Religion, altruism, and helping strangers: a multilevel analysis of 126 countries. *J Sci Study Relig.* 2017; 56:323–341.
- Bompani B. Religion and faith-based organisations in Africa: the forgotten actors; 2011. <https://www.e-ir.info/pdf/14362>.
- Booyens M, Crause E. Lessons from Andiamo, Malawi, on grassroots and globalization from below. *Dev S Afr.* 2009; 26(1):157–169.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). *The Forms of Capital*. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (pp. 241–258). London: Greenwood Press.

- Bognanno, T. (2019) Gender generosity: Who gives more and does it even matter? <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbes-nonprofitcouncil/2019/07/11/gender-generosity-who-gives-more-and-does-it-even-matter/?sh=29b3f48567da>.
- Buechler SM. Understanding social movements: theories from the classical era to the present. New York, NY: Routledge; 2016.
- CAF Southern Africa. I believe I can make a difference: individual giving by 'ordinary people' living in Gauteng Province, South Africa; 2015. <https://www.cafonline.org/docs/default-source/about-us-publications/cafsouthernafrica-individual-giving2015-infographic.pdf>.
- Caldwell P. Men give less to charity than women. TFN; 2015. <https://tfn.scot/news/men-give-less-to-charity-than-women>.
- Centre on African Philanthropy and Social Investment (CAPSI). The State of Africa Philanthropy: setting the agenda. In: Conference proceeding report; 2019. <https://capsi.co.za/wp-content/uploads/securepdfs/2020/05/CAPSI-2019-Annual-Philanthropy-Conference-Report.pdf>.
- Chunga JJ. Examining the relevance of political parties in Malawi. In: Afrobarometer briefing paper no. 125; 2014. <https://media.africaportal.org/documents/afrobrieffno125.pdf>.
- Chilinde, G. (2012) Decentralization and the Politics of Participation in Planning: Lessons from Community Based Rural Land Development Project in Malawi. Lap Lambert: Germany.
- Davies S. What motivates gifts: intra-family transfers in rural Malawi. *J Fam Econ Issues*. 2011; 32(3):473–492.
- Doan DR. What is community philanthropy? A guide to understanding and applying community philanthropy; 2019. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/per.2256>.
- Dukor M. Ideologies role in Africa's political under development. *Unizik J Arts Humanit*. 2009; 10(2):27–49.
- Eikenberry AM. Giving circles: growing grassroots philanthropy. *Nonprofit Volunt Sect Q*. 2006; 35(3):517–532. doi: 10.1177/0899764006287482.
- Einolf CJ. Gender differences in the coreless of volunteering and charitable giving. *Nonprofit Volunt Sect Q*. 2011; 40(6):1092–1112.
- Development Aid From People to People (DAPP). Outreach activities around DAPP TTCs with Child Aid. March 2021 DAPP Newsletter; 2021. <https://www.dapp-malawi.org/category/3>.
- Firelight Foundation. Empowering Malawian community-based organisations to create secondary school education pathways for vulnerable girls; 2017. <https://www.firelightfoundation.org/blog/2017/07/06/empowering-malawian-community-based-organizations-to-create-secondary-school-education-pathways-for-vulnerable-girls>.
- Fowler A. Chair in African philanthropy: Foundational paper for teaching research and outreach. Wits Business School; 2017, June. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.1852.1848>. <http://africanphilanthropy.issuelab.org/resources/25744/25744.pdf>.
- Gray B. Conditions facilitating inter-organizational collaboration. *Hum Relat*. 1985; 38(10):911–936. doi: 10.1177/001872678503801001.
- Government of Malawi (GoM)(2012) National Social Support Policy. Government Print: Lilongwe.
- Hodgson J, Knight B. A different kind of wealth: mapping a baseline of African community foundations. Johannesburg, South Africa: Global Fund for Community Foundations; 2012. https://globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/A_DIFFERENT_KIND_OF_WEALTH.pdf.
- Hodgson J, Pond A. How community philanthropy shifts power: what donors can do to help make that happen; 2018. https://grantcraft.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/12/Community_Philanthropy_paper.pdf.
- Hodgson J. Disrupting and democratising development: community philanthropy as theory and practice. *Gen Dev*. 2020; 28(1):99–116.
- Johnson P. Global giving, making a world of difference. Boston: The Philanthropic Initiative; 2010.
- Kambalu S. The culture of gift-giving in Malawi and my art; 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7oJROgtozIM>.
- Kilmurray A. Community philanthropy: the context, concepts and challenges: a literature review; 2015. <https://www.ngo-connect.net/sites/default/files/201905/Community%20Philanthropy%20Context%20Concepts%20and%20Challenges%20A%20Literature%20Review.pdf>.
- Lindgreen A, Swaen V, Campbell TT. Corporate social responsibility practices in developing and transitional countries: Botswana and Malawi. *J Bus Ethics*. 2009; 90:429–440. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-010-0415-3>.
- Lutz, David W. (2009). 'African Ubuntu Philosophy and Global Management', in *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 84, pp. 313–328.
- Machalek R, Martin MW. Sociobiology and sociology: a new synthesis. In: *International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences*. 2nd ed.; 2015 <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.32010-4>.
- Mahomed, H. Institutional philanthropy and popular organising in Africa: Some initial reflections from social movement activists. *International Review of Philanthropy and Social Investment Journal*. 2020; 1(1): 17–30.
- Makuwira JJ. Development? Freedom? Whose development and freedom? *Dev Pract*. 2006; 16(2):193–200.
- Makuwira J. Communitarianism. In: Anderson GL, Herr KG, editors. *Encyclopaedia of activism and social justice*. New York, NY: Sage Publication; 2007: 372–375.
- Makuwira JJ. People-centred development. In: Steger M, Battersby P, Siracusa J, editors. *The sage handbook of globalization Vol. 1*. Los Angeles: Sage; 2014: 902–918.
- Mati JM. Philanthropy in Africa: A review. *Volunt Rev*. 2016; 1(6):1–100.
- Mati, J. Philanthropy in contemporary Africa: A review. *Voluntaristics Review: Brill Research Perspectives*. 2017; 1(6): 1–100.
- Mottiar S. Philanthropy and development in Southern Africa: Philanthropy and resources governance; n.d. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274835182_Philanthropy_and_Development_in_Southern_Africa.
- Miller-Stevens K, Taylor JA. Philanthropic collaboration: a conceptual framework for giving circles. *Public Integrity*. 2020; 22(6):575589, doi: 10.1080/10999922.2020.1719808.
- Moyo B, Ramsamy K. African philanthropy, Pan-Africanism, and Africa's Development. *Dev Pract*. 2014; 24(5–6):656–671. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2014.937399>.
- Moyo, B, Alagidede IP. Editorial: Birth of the International Review on Philanthropy and Social Investment. *International Review of Philanthropy and Social Investment Journal*. 2020; 1(1): 1–4.

- Mukarji D. Traditions of giving in Christianity. *Alliance*, September 1, 2001.
- Murisa, T. (2020) Exploring the meanings of philanthropy in rural contexts: The case of Zimbabwe. *International Review of Philanthropy and Social Investment Journal*, 1(1) 31–44.
- Munthali T. Working with the grassroots to push the national development agenda; 2019. <https://lidc.ac.uk/working-with-the-grassroots-to-push-the-national-development-agenda/>.
- Nadler, A. (2002) Inter-group helping relations as power relations: Maintaining or challenging social dominance between groups through helping. *Journal of Social Issues* 58(3):487 – 502 DOI:10.1111/1540-4560.00272
- National Statistical Office (NSO) (2018). Malawi 2018 Population and Housing Census. Government of Malawi: Zomba.
- Nilsson A, Erlandsson A, Västfjäll D. Moral foundation theory and the psychology of charitable giving. *Eur J Pers*. 2020; 34:431–447. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/per.2256>.
- Piper G, Schnepf SV. Gender differences in charitable giving. In: Discussion Paper No 3242; December, 2007. <http://ftp.iza.org/dp3242.pdf>.
- Portes, A. (1998). Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24, 24(1).
- Randall V, Svasand L. Political parties and democratic consolidation in Africa. *Democratisation*. 2010; 9(3):30–52.
- Reflection from social movement activists. *Int Rev Philanth Soc Investment J*. (1):17–30.
- Rovner M, Leob P, Carson E, McCarthy D. Diversity in giving: the changing landscape of American philanthropy; 2015. <https://www.ctphilanthropy.org/resources/diversity-giving-changing-landscape-american-philanthropy/>.
- Salmon JL. Charitable contributions vary by racial group and ethnicity. *Washington Post* 11/18/2003; 2003.
- Savage J, Kanazawa S. Social capital and the human psyche: why is social life “capital”? *Sociol Theor*. 2004; 22:504–524.
- Scott ML, Cnaan RA. Religious congregations and poverty alleviation in the age of new public governance. *Nonprofit Policy Forum*. 2018; 8(4) pp. 391–410.
- Skidmore T, Sellen C. Giving while female: Women are more likely to donate to charities than men of equal means. *The Conversation*, February 25, 2021. <https://theconversation.com/giving-while-female-women-are-more-likely-to-donate-to-charities-than-men-of-equal-means-141518>.
- Turner JC, Hogg MA, Oakes PJ, Reicher SD, Wetherell MS. *Rediscovering the social group: a self-categorization theory*. New York, NY: Basil Blackwell; 1987.
- UNDP. Philanthropy as an emerging contribution to development cooperation; 2014. <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/publications/UNDP-CSO-philanthropy.pdf>.
- Verheijen J. Managing meagre means and reciprocal reputations: Women’s everyday survival tactics in Malawian village; 2018. <https://ideas.repec.org/h/eme/reanzz/s0190-128120180000038007.html>.
- Wilkinson-Maposa S, Fowler A. Horizontal philanthropy: a right angle on community philanthropy; 2005. <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/analysis/horizontal-philanthropy-a-right-angle-on-community-philanthropy/>.
- Wilkinson-Maposa S, Fowler A. “The Poor Philanthropist II: New Approaches to Sustainable Development.” Centre for Leadership and Public Values. Cape Town: University of Cape Town; 2009.
- Wilkinson-Maposa, S., Fowler, A., Oliver-Evans, C., & Mulenga, C. F. N. (2005). *The poor philanthropist: How and why the poor help each other*. Cape Town, South Africa: Southern Africa-United States Centre for Leadership and Public Values, Graduate School of Business, University of Cape Town.
- Yetu. Why Kenyans give: A nationwide survey of philanthropic behavior; n.d. <https://africanphilanthropy.issuelab.org/resource/why-kenyans-give-a-nationwide-survey-of-philanthropic-behavior.html>.
- Zimunya C, Gwara J, Mlambo OB. The feasibility of an ‘ubuntu’ ethic in a modernized world. *J Afr Foreign Aff*. 2015; 2(1–2):5–26.

