



# EUROPEAN COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: AN EMERGING GLOBAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

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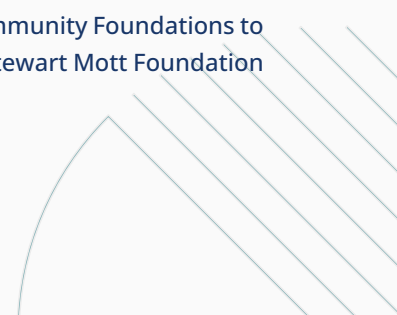
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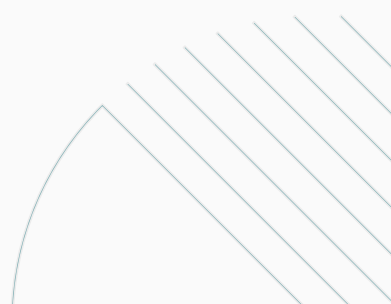


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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Globally, two thousand community foundations (CFs) enhance local communities' sustainability. However, their contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is not yet recognized, reinforcing the gap between global agendas and local communities. This analysis uncovers how CFs and CFSOs relate to the SDGs and the United Nations (UN) Agenda 2030.

Community foundations face a global context that increasingly impacts their local communities. Recent crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine accentuate the broader societal transformation generated by digitalization, technology advancement, and climate change. The ability of community foundations to connect to and understand global factors remains limited, an aspect that also impacts their capacity to contribute to the SDGs.

CFs hold the mission to enhance the capacity of local communities to take better care of themselves. Such mission positions CFs in a close relationship with the SDGs, given the joint focus on the well-being and sustainability of local communities. Community foundations are local organizations that emerged in the early 20th century and expose a long history of doing what the SDGs call for, building partnerships based on trust for a more sustainable future. As such CFs are already part of a global infrastructure that is needed not only for reaching the SDGs in their current form but also for continuing to do in the future as challenges to sustainability change.

In recent years the European community foundations movement is engaged in an SDG-related dialogue. Several CFs and community foundations support organizations (CFSOs) contribute to achieving the SDGs, including funding SDG-related projects, promoting the Goals in local communities, aligning their mission and operations with the SDGs, and organizing learning and training sessions on sustainable development. CFs find themselves fortunate to belong to a global network of community foundations. The network's global reach can be the basis for inspiration and testing various ideas to identify the best solutions for sustainability.

In their engagement with the SDGs, CFs and CFSOs encounter several challenges. Not all governments are focusing on the SDGs sufficiently, in consequence national contexts vary when it comes to the importance paid to Agenda 2030. Understanding the SDGs requires quantitative research skills, as an important part of the work relates to measuring indicators and gathering quality data. Generally CF and CFSO staff are not meant to hold research skills, making an in-depth engagement with the SDGs challenging. Local resources, often the primary source of funding for CFs, are not likely to support aligning to a global agenda. Therefore, financing adapting organizational processes and programs to the SDGs is difficult to resource. Finally, the connection to the UN, national governments, and the emerging SDG community is limited, making it hard to share lessons learned and contributions made to the SDGs.

While community foundations have existed for over a hundred years, the SDGs are a recent global effort to recognize the need for sustainability. The Goals are essential for bringing together multiple actors to address sustainability challenges. The next step is recognizing the need for local, national, and global levels to cater constantly for existing and emerging sustainability challenges and goals. For that endeavor, the emergence and resilience of community foundations is an important topic of inspiration. The global community and national governments can learn from the community foundations movement about the ingredients that make mechanisms sustainable and resilient at a local level. Replicating such mechanisms at national and global levels can enhance the prospects for a more sustainable world.





## INTRODUCTION

Close to two thousand community foundations (CFs) globally contribute systematically to enhancing the sustainability of local communities. However, their contribution to the SDGs is broadly not recognized, reinforcing the gap between global agendas and local communities.

The United Nations (UN) aligns a growing part of the international community, including some community foundations and community foundations support organizations (CFSOs), behind its 2030 Agenda. In 2015, the UN adopted an ambitious set of goals and objectives to be voluntarily achieved by 2030, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's aggression against Ukraine putting significant pressure on achieving the Goals, global interest in the SDGs mounted soon after their adoption.

Although the SDGs are well-received, current efforts are insufficient to meet the Goals. Even before the pandemic, the international community was already behind on several SDGs and associated targets. That raises questions about the strength of Agenda 2030 and the ability of motivated governments, communities, CSOs, and businesses to provide the resources needed for achieving the SDGs.

CFs are powerful local actors, given their mission, the resources they maintain and disburse, and their strategic oversight over their communities. However, the SDGs are a new global agenda, and CFs connect slowly to the Goals. In that context, how are community foundations contributing to Agenda 2030? And what is the role of the Community Foundations in advancing the SDGs – at global, national, and local levels?<sup>1</sup>

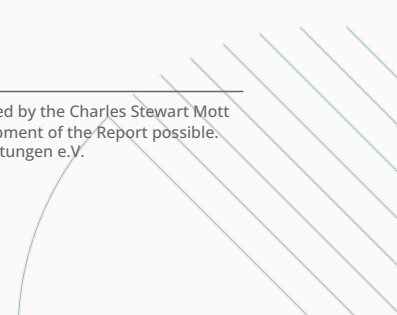
CFs' broad mission is to enhance local communities' capacity to address challenges and fulfill their vision. As such, CFs are relevant actors that could accelerate progress toward the SDGs. CFs could mobilize local resources, strengthen local capacities, and engage in the national, European, and global SDG debates while bringing valuable local perspectives, not least of the most vulnerable groups they serve.

The past five years have shown multiple ways CFs are making significant contributions to achieving the SDGs. However, these are yet to be known and acknowledged globally.

At first sight, one cannot but observe the substantial similarity between the mission of CFs and the SDGs. However, despite the natural fit, only a small proportion among the 875 European CFs<sup>2</sup> engage with the SDGs. Furthermore, CFs rarely engage in local, national, European, and global SDG-related debates and actions.

<sup>1</sup> This Report was developed as a part of the project Increasing the Contribution of European Community Foundations to the SDGs, supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. We are grateful to the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and all interviewees, respondents, and partners who made the development of the Report possible.

<sup>2</sup> Böllhoff, Anja and James Magowan (2020) State of the Community Foundations Field in Europe 2020, Berlin: Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen e.V.





Several potential reasons and challenges can explain this reduced engagement, including:

- There is no comprehensive data on how many CFs in Europe are engaged with the SDGs and in what way; the lack of data is obscuring the contribution CFs are already making and is also reducing potential synergies among CFs supporting Agenda 2030;
- According to the available data (i.e., ECFI, UKCF, Assifero, and the Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland), a small proportion of European CFs have taken practical action on the SDGs (10%);
- CFs broadly lack the knowledge and skills necessary to engage in the national, European, and global SDG processes and mechanisms. While civil society is generally present in voluntary review processes, CFs are not. For example, CFs were not, until recently, present at the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and in discussing the Voluntary National Reviews.
- Also, a certain reluctance towards Agenda 2030 can be perceived in interactions with some CF and CFSO leaders and staff.
- Although CFSOs could facilitate the CF field engagement with the SDGs, very few CFSOs have the necessary expertise and commitment.
- Furthermore, while few written guides for engaging with the SDGs emerged, some tailored for community foundations (such as those published by ECFI, CFC, and UKCF), more in-depth tools for CFs and CFSOs to use in engaging their communities with the SDGs are needed.

This report will explore the above aspects to offer an in-depth understanding of how European CFs and CFSOs engage with the SDGs today and their prospects for contributing to a more sustainable world. The analysis relies on primary quantitative and qualitative data, secondary data, and secondary literature. The report consists of three parts – a quantitative analysis, a social network analysis, and a qualitative analysis, drawing at conclusions based on the generated insights.





# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, THE SDGs, AND COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS: A LITERATURE REVIEW<sup>3</sup>

CFs are among the key stakeholders that can contribute significantly to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since the UN adopted the SDGs, several CFs and CFSOs have connected to Agenda 2030, driving impact in their communities along the 17 global Goals. Important examples include the effort driven by the European Community Foundations Initiative (ECFI) to support CFs and CFSOs in connecting to the SDGs. ECFI has put forward a brief report in 2019 showcasing examples of CFs engaging with the SDGs and proposing a whole-of-organization approach to embrace the SDGs.<sup>4</sup> Also, through targeted workshops, ECFI supports CFs and CFSOs in better understanding the SDGs and how they could relate to Agenda 2030.

Another positive example is the Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland, which runs the Global Challenges, Local Solutions Program (GCLS). Through GCLS the Academy extended over 40 grants to CFs proposing SDG-related projects.<sup>5</sup>

The Community Foundations of Canada (CFC) have aligned their earlier initiative, Vital Signs, with the SDGs, producing a powerful tool for monitoring progress towards the global Goals at a community level.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, CFC developed a Guide for supporting CFs to connect to the SDGs.<sup>7</sup> Following the Canadian example, several European CFs have harmonized their strategies or Vital Signs reports to the SDGs. Some examples include the London Community Foundation,<sup>8</sup> Northamptonshire Community Foundation,<sup>9</sup> and Braunschweig Community Foundation.<sup>10</sup>

In the light of recent interest in sustainable development, including the adoption of the 17 SDGs, we will review the literature to assess the relevance of CFs for community sustainability. The literature review explores publications focusing on community foundations and CFSO engaging with the sustainability of local communities and the SDGs while offering a broader framework for understanding the evolution of sustainable development ideas.

Local governments and non-governmental organizations are implementing initiatives that help address the challenges of local communities. Community foundations play a central role in that process. CFs emerged in the early 20th century US and became a global phenomenon. Each CF follows the basic model of an organization that seeks “charitable gifts from a broad base of donors – individuals, businesses, and sometimes government agencies - and uses those gifts to address local and or regional needs.”<sup>11</sup> All community foundations aim to address community issues and improve “the lives of people in a defined geographical area.”<sup>12</sup> Committed to strengthening that area’s capacity to achieve sustainability, they are essential to implementing the SDGs locally. At the same time, an ever-increasing network of peer organizations has the potential to raise awareness about SDGs beyond national borders.

<sup>3</sup> We express our gratitude to Bianca Borhina and Ștefania Radu for their contribution to the literature review.

<sup>4</sup> Böllhoff, Anja, Andrea Dicks, Dr. Annette Kleinbrod, Dr. James Magowan, Kaya Petryka (2019) Connecting Community Foundations with the SDGs, Berlin: Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen e.V.

<sup>5</sup> Data collected from <http://www.localsolutionsfund.org/news/>.

<sup>6</sup> Sidney, Alison (2019) How Canadian Community Foundations are using Vital Signs and community data to unlock local impact, CFC Community Data, September 30, 2019, <https://communityfoundations.ca/how-canadian-community-foundations-are-using-vital-signs-and-community-data-to-unlock-local-impact/>.

<sup>7</sup> Community Foundations of Canada (2020) SDG Guidebook and Toolkit for Community Foundations, <https://www.communityfoundations.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/CFC-SDG-Guidebook-and-Toolkit-FINAL.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Community Foundations of Canada (2019) How the London Community Foundation became a leader in applying the SDGs to local projects, <https://communityfoundations.ca/how-the-london-community-foundation-became-a-leader-in-applying-the-sdgs-to-local-projects/>.

<sup>9</sup> NCF (2020) United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030, <http://www.ncf.uk.com/about-us/community-leadership/united-nations-sustainable-development-goals-2030>.

<sup>10</sup> ECFI (2019) Filling the SDG void in Braunschweig/Germany, [https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/views\\_from\\_the\\_field/braunschweig-sdg-oct2019.pdf](https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/views_from_the_field/braunschweig-sdg-oct2019.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> Paula D. Johnson, Stephen P. Johnson, and Andrew Kingman. Promoting Philanthropy: Global Challenges and Approaches, (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation, 2004), 27.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.







According to a survey conducted in 2020, the number of community foundations in Europe increased from 798 in 2018 to 875 in 2020 in 23 countries, with at least 28 in development.<sup>13</sup> Such organizations receive support from 30 CFSOs in 25 countries in Europe.<sup>14</sup>

## Academic scholarship on SDGs and CFs

Agenda 2030 triggered a growing scholarly interest in sustainable development.<sup>15</sup> Through hundreds of targets and indicators, the SDGs touch upon a wide array of development-related topics, including poverty, gender equality, peace, justice, climate change, inequality, cities, and communities, to name a few. A recent study approaches the SDGs through the challenges of global governance.<sup>16</sup> Since 2020, a comprehensive 17-volume series has collected publications addressing each global Goal. One of the volumes, titled *Transitioning to No Poverty*, offers multidisciplinary perspectives on global poverty.<sup>17</sup>

Consequently, sustainable development is widely discussed in the literature and relies on bringing together two critical strands of earlier work – *sustainability and international development*. *Sustainable development* conceptualizations borrow from sustainability interest in the environment and intergenerational equity. In addition, development theory relies on decades of development practice, policy, and academic work. Its pragmatic-eclectic approaches of the 1990s consolidate the sustainable development agenda by substantiating its economic, social, and political characteristics.<sup>18</sup>

Yamaguchi et al. review the theoretical underpinnings of sustainable development emphasizing the SDGs' economic and positivist underpinnings. Alongside Shulla *et al.*, Yamaguchi *et al.* present substantive criticism from a complexity, systems theory, and postcolonial perspective. The SDGs continue a linear understanding of development trajectories, are embedded in a predominantly Western mindset and understandings of development, provide little space for diversity, and fail to include cultural and human rights aspects. At the same time, the SDGs bring a paradigmatic shift in the relationship between donor and recipient countries – unifying the set of indicators all countries should report on. That is a significant theoretical and practical departure from earlier mainstream development theories. The SDGs opened a qualitatively different space for engagement, dialogue, and collaboration among donors and partner countries, and an increasing number of non-state actors, on various development topics.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Anja Böllhoff and James Magowan, European Community Foundation Initiative, *State of the Community Foundations Field in Europe 2020* (Berlin: Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen e.V. [Association of German Foundations], 2021), 6.

<sup>14</sup> "The 'support ecosystem' for community foundations in Europe comprises 30 organizations and foundations active in the field that can roughly be categorized in two different groups: ones that are only dedicated to community foundations and those that see community foundations as important players in their whole range of activities in the field of philanthropy and civil society." Ibid, p. 16.

<sup>15</sup> Yamaguchi, N.U., Bernardino, E.G., Ferreira, M.E.C. et al. Sustainable development goals: a bibliometric analysis of literature reviews. *Environ Sci Pollut Res* 30, 5502–5515 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-022-24379-6>; Kalterina Shulla, B.-F. Voigt, Stefan Cibian, et al., "Effects of COVID-19 on the sustainable development goals (SDGs)," *Discover Sustainability* 2:1, (2021), accessible at <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s43621-021-00026-x>.

<sup>16</sup> Simon Dalby, Susan Horton, Rianne Mahon, Diana Thomaz, *Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals Global Governance Challenges*, Routledge Studies in Sustainable Development (London: Routledge, 2020).

<sup>17</sup> Isabel Günther and Rahul Lahoti, eds., *Transitioning to No Poverty* (MDPI - Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.3390/books978-3-03897-861-9>.

<sup>18</sup> Yamaguchi, N.U. et al. (2023), Maxfield, S., 'International Development' pp. 462-479 in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons eds. *Handbook of International Relations*, London, Thousand Oaks & New Delhi: Sage Publications, (2006[2002]), and Nederveen Pieterse, J., *Development Theory: Deconstructions/Reconstructions*, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications – pp. 1-17, 34-50, & 73-112 (2002[2001]).

<sup>19</sup> Yamaguchi, N.U. et al. (2023) and Shulla et al. (2021).





*The future of the UN Sustainable Development Goals* is a compendium of articles and studies whose authors reflect on questions such as: where is the global economy headed? And how do different continents and cultures acknowledge and prepare to invest in change?<sup>20</sup> The 17 SDGs are seen as universal and aim to mobilize stakeholders, especially the business community, into taking action and contributing in various ways, including financially.<sup>21</sup> They cover poverty eradication, food security, health, access to education, gender parity, inequality, water and sanitation, energy, climate change, economic growth, and job creation. Businesses are relevant actors in local areas by offering employment, services, and products, introducing new technology and influencing the local environment. They bring innovation and have a social responsibility to resolve the sustainability issues in their area. In this context, corporate social responsibility and sustainable development emerged as another critical research area regarding the SDGs. For instance, researchers in the field of management sciences increasingly support an “action-oriented research agenda,” with a growing number of publications inviting corporations to reflect on sustainable futures.<sup>22</sup>

Besides economic factors, the SDG literature encompasses numerous other research perspectives on analyzing sustainable development. Scholarly articles address the use of weather and climate information<sup>23</sup>, global mental health reports<sup>24</sup>, and educational statistics<sup>25</sup> to study the dynamics of implementing the global Goals. Researchers use insights from urban policy studies to localize the SDGs.<sup>26</sup> In the field of humanities, sustainable development is studied from a historical perspective<sup>27</sup> or through the prism of ethics.<sup>28</sup>

Philanthropy and sustainability are another key topic in academic literature. Harvard Kennedy School created a global research network to examine “the size, scope, and practice of institutional philanthropy across the globe.”<sup>29</sup> In a report from 2018, the initiative recognizes philanthropy alignment with SDGs as an essential research indicator. Community foundations are listed as an integral part of global philanthropic institutions along with independent, family, corporate, and government-linked foundations. According to recent publications, CFs can provide essential data for studying local dimensions of global issues.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>20</sup> See Samuel O. Idowu, René Schmidpeter, and Liangrong Zu, eds., *The Future of the UN Sustainable Development Goals: Business Perspectives for Global Development* in 2030, CSR, Sustainability, Ethics & Governance (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-21154-7>.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* 2015, accessed at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=400&nr=2051&menu=35>

<sup>22</sup> Amr ElAlfy et al., ‘Scoping the Evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Research in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Era’, *Sustainability* 12, no. 14 (January 2020): 5544, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12145544>.

<sup>23</sup> David Griggs et al., ‘Use of Weather and Climate Information Essential for SDG Implementation’, *Nature Reviews Earth & Environment* 2, no. 1 (January 2021): 2–4, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s43017-020-00126-8>.

<sup>24</sup> Nicole Votruba et al., ‘The Importance of Global Mental Health for the Sustainable Development Goals’, *Journal of Mental Health* 23, no. 6 (1 December 2014): 283–86, <https://doi.org/10.3109/09638237.2014.976857>.

<sup>25</sup> Ellen Boeren, ‘Understanding Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on “Quality Education” from Micro, Meso and Macro Perspectives’, *International Review of Education* 65, no. 2 (1 April 2019): 277–94, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-019-09772-7>. Elaine Unterhalter, ‘The Many Meanings of Quality Education: Politics of Targets and Indicators in SDG4’, *Global Policy* 10, no. S1 (2019): 39–51, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.12591>.

<sup>26</sup> Sylvia Croese and James Duminy, ‘Co-Producing Urban Expertise for SDG Localization: The History and Practices of Urban Knowledge Production in South Africa’, *Urban Geography* 44, no. 3 (16 March 2023): 538–57, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2022.2079868>.

<sup>27</sup> Martin Gutmann and Daniel Gorman, eds., *Before the UN Sustainable Development Goals: A Historical Companion* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2022).

<sup>28</sup> Hosseini, Seyed Ali. “Development as usual: Ethical reflections on the SDGs,” In *Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals*. Routledge, 2019.

<sup>29</sup> Paula D. Johnson, Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, “Global philanthropy report: Perspectives on the global foundation sector,” (2018), p.8.

<sup>30</sup> Brennan Lowery, John Dagevos, and Kelly Vodden, ‘Goal-Driven or Data-Driven? Inventory of Sustainability Indicator Initiatives in Rural Canada’, *Sustainability* 12, no. 20 (January 2020): 8601, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12208601>.





## Challenges and opportunities: publications about CFs' journeys toward the SDGs

The global network of CFs and CFSOs has also generated a set of publications on the SDGs. Such resources shed light on challenges and strategies for implementing the global Goals locally. The European Community Foundation Initiative (ECFI) offers a space for regular publications on the topic through an online knowledge center. Papers in the database examine SDGs in the everyday practice of local organizations.

For instance, the Federation of Community Foundations in Poland stresses the need to raise awareness about SDG among local communities. According to a recent survey by the Federation, “the level of knowledge and practical reference of community foundation activities to the SDGs is at a low level in Poland.”<sup>31</sup> The Polish organization conducted interviews from the network of European CFs to learn how other organizations tackle similar challenges in Italy<sup>32</sup>, Romania, and Serbia. The research concludes that European CFSOs took an active role in promoting SDGs.<sup>33</sup> Also, CFSOs introduced activities such as training and workshops focused on sustainability. They gradually introduce the global Goals by encouraging grantees associated projects with the SDGs.<sup>34</sup>

Across the Atlantic, recent research underscores the importance of such strategies. Starting a process of incorporating SDGs into grantmaking in 2016, the Southwest Florida Community Foundation identified the need for better communication between donors and grantees. The foundation mapped all nonprofit organizations using local issues and the SDGs aiming at “coordinating key stakeholders around particular issues and connecting stakeholders through issues where collaboration is needed.”<sup>35</sup> In this way, donors and future grantees became familiar with the relevance of the global Goals.<sup>36</sup> In a significant effort to connect CFs with the SDGs, Community Foundations of Canada initiated a nation-wide network of partners focusing on the SDGs – Alliance 2030.<sup>37</sup>

Other community foundations explain how local organizations focus on concrete SDGs in their initiatives. A case in point is the Northamptonshire Community Foundation which embraced SDG 16 on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions to promote safe and peaceful communities. To achieve Goal #16, the UK-based foundation encourages projects that promote education on and understanding of the rule of law and democracy.<sup>38</sup> “Promoting, funding and supporting physical spaces where under-represented communities can meet”<sup>39</sup> is another strategy to achieve safe and peaceful communities following SDG 16.

<sup>31</sup> Iwona Olkowicz, Federation of Community Foundations Poland, “To learn and understand the SDGs in order to be able to communicate the idea of the SDGs and their benefits to FFL members and develop guidelines for including the SDG in the day-to-day activities of FFL and its members,” ECFI (April, 2023), 2.

<sup>32</sup> The Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development published a comprehensive report on local initiatives towards SDGs. See Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development, Italy and the Sustainable Development Goals (2018) [https://asvis.it/public/asvis/files/ASViS\\_REPORT\\_2018\\_ENG\\_web.pdf](https://asvis.it/public/asvis/files/ASViS_REPORT_2018_ENG_web.pdf) Accessed: June 22, 2023.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p.8.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p.5.

<sup>35</sup> The article gives the example of how “one nonprofit’s mission — “helping youth develop into responsible and productive citizens and protect public safety” — is accomplished through programs aimed at keeping young people out of the criminal justice system. This most clearly connects to LEED local indicators for reducing school violence and the community crime rate, which are aligned with our Health & Safety cause and SDG 16, Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.” See Katie Leone and Tessa LeSage, “Where to Start? A Tool for Thinking about the SDGs and Community Foundation Work,” *The Foundation Review* 13, no. 4 (2021): 53. <https://doi.org/10.9707/1944-5660.1590>.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Community Foundations of Canada, Alliance 2030, <https://communityfoundations.ca/initiatives/alliance-2030/>.

<sup>38</sup> Rachel McGrath, Northamptonshire Community Foundation, “Northamptonshire tackles SDGs locally and comprehensively,” ECFI (October, 2022).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.





The foundation's annual report for 2021-2022 binds the impact of all local initiatives with specific SDGs. For instance, the organization estimates that 85,924 local people benefited from SDG 3 Good Health and Well-being activities.<sup>40</sup> An "impact case study" illustrates the strategy of reaching SDG 3: the not-for-profit voluntary organization Outside In Theatre received a grant award for "a multisensory immersive theatre project for older people, including those with dementia, in Northampton to help support emotional and mental well-being including reducing stress, anxiety and depression whilst also tackling loneliness and isolation."<sup>41</sup>

Evaluating local initiatives' social impact is common among UK community foundations. According to a document published by UKCF, donors and companies could also benefit from such impact evaluation reports. "The SDGs provide a framework for them to help support place-based solutions to local problems and through our national network we can connect donors with hyper-local organisations that are making a big impact,"<sup>42</sup> concludes UKCF. The focus on assessing impact and developing indicators connects UK community foundations to the SDGs.

## Learn and share: creating data and evidence-based approaches to the SDGs

As seen above, community foundations reached different stages of engagement with the SDGs, from launching basic information campaigns to measuring initiatives' impact according to specific global goals. Acknowledging such diverse experiences, Community Foundations of Canada published a comprehensive toolkit to support community organizations at all stages of engaging with the SDGs. The toolkit addresses the importance of learning and sharing knowledge about sustainability and establishing local and global partnerships. As the authors point out, "[p]artnerships are both an SDG unto themselves (SDG #17) and a key lever to advancing the 2030 Agenda."<sup>43</sup> The toolkit encourages local foundations to look for partnerships beyond peer organizations.<sup>44</sup> According to the publication, there are strategies to seek potential partners even among local actors reluctant to engage with SDGs: "[f]inding one common concern or issue as a soft entry point, then deepening the conversation by making connections to other issues using the SDG Framework."<sup>45</sup> The toolkit provides real-life examples from local foundations facing such challenges and other practical resources.<sup>46</sup>

Besides the toolkit, the organization regularly publishes other support materials. For instance, a fact sheet addressing SDG 14 – Life Below Water provides local approaches for reducing marine pollution and examples from initiatives engaged with Goal 14. Each example contains hyperlinks with background resources and further information about challenges related to the health of our oceans and marine ecosystems.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Northamptonshire Community Foundation, Impact Report 2021-22, p.9.

[https://www.ncf.uk.com/\\_site/data/files/users/template/files/6A36E4D0AAE03C6D206EAF8F1CABA1D1.pdf](https://www.ncf.uk.com/_site/data/files/users/template/files/6A36E4D0AAE03C6D206EAF8F1CABA1D1.pdf) Accessed: June 14, 2023.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> UK Community Foundations, Thinking globally, acting locally: How community foundations are contributing to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, p.13. <https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/media/vxbk01u2/how-community-foundations-are-contributing-towards-the-sdgs-final.pdf> Accessed: June 22, 2023.

<sup>43</sup> Community Foundations of Canada, SDG Guidebook and Toolkit for Community Foundations (2020), p. 32. <https://communityfoundations.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/CFC-SDG-Guidebook-and-Toolkit-FINAL.pdf> Accessed: June 14, 2023.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Among the practical resources, one can find a sample grant wording for community foundations encouraging grantees to align their projects with SDGs. Ibid., p.31. For further case studies on collaboration see Laurel Carlton and Sara Lyons, "Community foundations at work: Mobilizing and connecting place-based philanthropy," in Elson, Peter R., Sylvain A. Lefèvre, and Jean-Marc Fontan, eds. *Philanthropic Foundations in Canada: Landscapes, Indigenous Perspectives and Pathways to Change*. (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2020): 216-238; Marta Rey-Garcia & Rosane Dal Magro, "Walking the Talk on Sustainable Development Goals: The Case of Community Foundations in Canada," *The Foundation Review*, 13 no. 4 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.9707/1944-5660.1589>.

<sup>47</sup> Community Foundations of Canada, Fact Sheet: SDG 14 – Life Below Water. [https://communityfoundations.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CFC\\_Factsheet\\_SDG-14\\_EN.pdf](https://communityfoundations.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CFC_Factsheet_SDG-14_EN.pdf) Accessed: June 14, 2023.



Community Foundations of Canada developed the most extensive community-driven data program, Vital Signs. The project is aligned with the SDGs and collects “local knowledge to measure the vitality of a community and support action towards improving collective quality of life.”<sup>48</sup> By tracking local initiatives and introducing tools to analyze comparable and verifiable indicators, Vital Signs contributes to the joint effort to measure the progress toward the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, Southwest Florida Community Foundation aligns local indicators to SDGs. For example, the US-based organization uses data on kindergarten readiness to reflect on Quality Education (SDG 4).<sup>50</sup> Databases with measurable indicators allow numerous stakeholders to connect without “burdening partner organizations with tracking new information or requiring data-sharing agreements prior to having fully established trusting relationships.”<sup>51</sup>

Such evidence-based approaches inspired other CFs and CFSOs in Europe to collect data from diverse actors working on sustainability.<sup>52</sup> A case in point is a document titled “Connecting Community Foundations with the SDGs.”<sup>53</sup> It traces the experience of numerous European foundations and systematizes guidelines for new partners willing to start the journey towards the global Goals. “Every community foundation should take a thorough look at itself through an SDG lens and consider if it walks the talk in respect of the SDGs,” reads the section “Start with Yourself – The Sustainable Organization.”<sup>54</sup> The document recommends SDGs awareness on an organizational level by raising fundamental questions such as: “Does it raise awareness about the SDGs among its own board, staff and other volunteers and actively champion the SDGs? Does it seek to encourage and promote effective partnerships and collaboration between the public, the private sector and civil society?”<sup>55</sup> As the first steps towards embracing the SDGs, the publication encourages developing one’s knowledge about the SDGs, building own resources of reference material and good practice, and exploring and learning from what other community foundations have done.<sup>56</sup>

Other recent sources summarizing practical information for aligning community projects with the SDGs include *Philanthropy and the SDGs: Practical Tools for Alignment* and *Philanthropy and the SDGs: Getting Started*.<sup>58</sup> Alliance Magazine publishes articles that look at community foundations and the SDGs.<sup>59</sup> Community foundations can also rely on free access to numerous case studies from a global network of peer organizations through knowledge hubs with online resources.<sup>60</sup>

## Conclusion

The literature review examined publications reflecting how global challenges are tackled on a local level by community foundations. Gathering evidence-based reports and diverse accounts about local experiences related to sustainable development facilitates learning and can represent an important step toward engagement with SDGs. The literature review provided an overview of available resources and knowledge databases that CFs and CFSOs could use to develop sustainable organizations and communities while contributing to the global Goals.

<sup>48</sup> Community Foundations of Canada, Vital Signs, <https://communityfoundations.ca/initiatives/vital-signs/> Accessed: June 14, 2023.

<sup>49</sup> Beth Timmers and Alison Sidney, “Localizing the 2030 Agenda With Community Data: Lessons From the Community Foundations of Canada’s Vital Signs Program,” *The Foundation Review* 13, no.4 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.9707/1944-5660.1591>.

<sup>50</sup> Tessa LeSage, Aysegül Timur, & Dakota Pawlicki, “A Case Study on the Use of the SDGs With a Collective Impact Initiative in Southwest Florida,” *The Foundation Review*, 13 no. 4 (2021): 25. <https://doi.org/10.9707/1944-5660.1588>.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> See European Community Foundations Initiative, Telling the story of Community Foundations and SDGs.

[https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/views\\_from\\_the\\_field/sdg\\_stories.pdf](https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/views_from_the_field/sdg_stories.pdf) Accessed: June 22, 2023.

<sup>53</sup> Anja Böllhoff, Andrea Dicks, Dr. Annette Kleinbrod, Dr. James Magowan, Kaya Petryka, *Connecting Community Foundations with the SDGs* (Berlin: Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen e.V. [Association of German Foundations], 2019).

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>57</sup> Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, *Philanthropy and the SDGs: Practical Tools For Alignment* (2019) <https://wings.issuelab.org/resource/philanthropy-and-the-sdgs-practical-tools-for-alignment.html> Accessed: June 14, 2023.

<sup>58</sup> Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, *Philanthropy and the SDGs: Getting Started* (2019) <https://wings.issuelab.org/resource/philanthropy-and-the-sdgs-getting-started.html> Accessed: June 14, 2023.

<sup>59</sup> Alliance Magazine (Alliance for Philanthropy and social investment worldwide) <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/theme/sustainable-development-goals/>

<sup>60</sup> Organizations with online resources on community foundations and sustainability include European Community Foundation Initiative, Community Foundations of Canada, The Global Fund for Community Foundations, WINGS, and PHILEA.



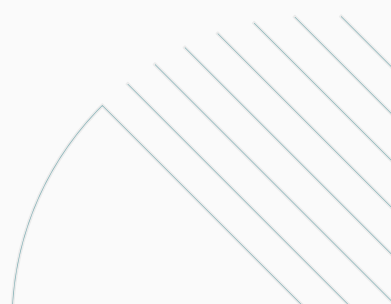


## RESEARCH METHODS

The report relies on a mixed-method research design, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. We analyze the engagement of community foundations with the SDGs by exploring individual CF and CFSO experiences and assessing quantitative data we collected over 18 months, December 2021 – June 2023. We collected quantitative data by employing two surveys – one for CFs and another for CFSOs. We relied on a research roundtable and semi-structured interviews for collecting qualitative data. The research roundtable brought together the following organizations: Community Foundations of Canada, European Community Foundation Initiative, Northamptonshire Community Foundation (UK), Central Florida Foundation, and UK Community Foundations. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with: Assifero (Italy), Association of German Foundations, Bonn Community Foundation, Braunschweig Community Foundation, Community Foundation Pfalz (Germany), Healthy City Community Foundation (Slovakia), Roots and Wings Foundation (Hungary) and Țara Făgărașului Community Foundation (Romania).

The phenomenon we are focusing on is the engagement of community foundations with the SDGs. Given the mission of CFs and the practice in local communities, this phenomenon reveals an engagement of community foundations with the SDGs at two levels – action for the SDGs and infrastructure for sustainability. CFs and CFSOs start to mobilize to achieve the SDGs. At the same time, from an infrastructure perspective, the CFs manifest themselves as mechanisms for local sustainability. They have done so before the SDGs and will do so after. The quantitative and social network analysis will enable us to generate insights for the former, while the qualitative analysis will generate insights for both.

The report comprises three parts. The first part presents a quantitative analysis of CF and CFSO engagement with the SDGs. The second includes a social network analysis of the relations among CFs and CFSOs in their SDG-related work. The third part provides insights based on qualitative data analysis, including multiple case studies. The report ends with conclusions and recommendations.





## A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF CF AND CFSO ENGAGEMENT WITH THE SDGS

While there are more than 850 community foundations in Europe, only a small number of CFs and CFSOs embraced the SDGs – notable examples include ECFI, UK Community Foundations, Northamptonshire Community Foundation, the Academy for Philanthropy in Poland through its *Global Challenges Local Solutions program (GCLS)*. European CFs and CFSOs have taken smaller or more significant steps toward engaging with Agenda 2030. We aim to explore various modes of and drivers for engagement, as well as reasons for skepticism towards the SDGs. Therefore, we launched a questionnaire and collected qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative analysis will reveal a general picture, while the following sections of the report will complement this broad perspective with more insights derived from social network analysis and interpretive analysis.

### General information on the sample

We asked over 450 community foundations and community foundation support organizations to fill in the survey about their engagement with the SDGs. Data was collected between December 2022 – May 2023. Approximately 10 percent of the contacted entities have completed the survey, the final sample consisting of 46 organizations, of which thirty-three are community foundations (CFs), and 13 are community foundation support organizations (CFSOs). Due to the limited sample size, the results are presented in absolute numbers rather than percentages.

In what follows, we will present the profile of the CFs and CFSOs that responded to our questionnaire and analyze their engagement with the SDGs. Analyzing the collected data will enable us to draw conclusions regarding today's CF and CFSO SDG-related practices.

### CFs and CFSOs in dialogue on the SDGs: Organizational profiles

In building the profile of the organizations that responded to our survey, we look at characteristics such as location, moment of establishment, types of supporters, and fundraising, financial, and grantmaking practices.

The CFs and CFSOs that responded to the questionnaire come from 17 European countries.<sup>61</sup> Most respondent organizations are from Romania (n=9), Poland (7), Spain (6), and Hungary (4). One foundation located in Mexico completed the questionnaire but was not included in the analysis. From among the responding CFs, twenty-five community foundations were formed before 2000 with the oldest in 1972 and eight in 2000, or after, with the newest formed in 2022.

<sup>61</sup> Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Spain, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom.





As shown in **Figure 1**, companies and individual donors are the most important supporters of the community foundations in our sample. Private foundations, (regranting) NGOs, and government institutions, to a lesser extent, also support CFs. Out of the 23 CFs that receive support from companies, 19 are supported by local or regional companies, one by a national company, and three by international corporations. Out of the 17 that receive support from individual donors, four foundations are funded by major individual donors, and 13 receive small and medium individual donations. Most private foundations or NGOs that support CFs (n=9) in our sample operate nationally. Four CFs are funded by international foundations or NGOs, and one from the local or regional level.

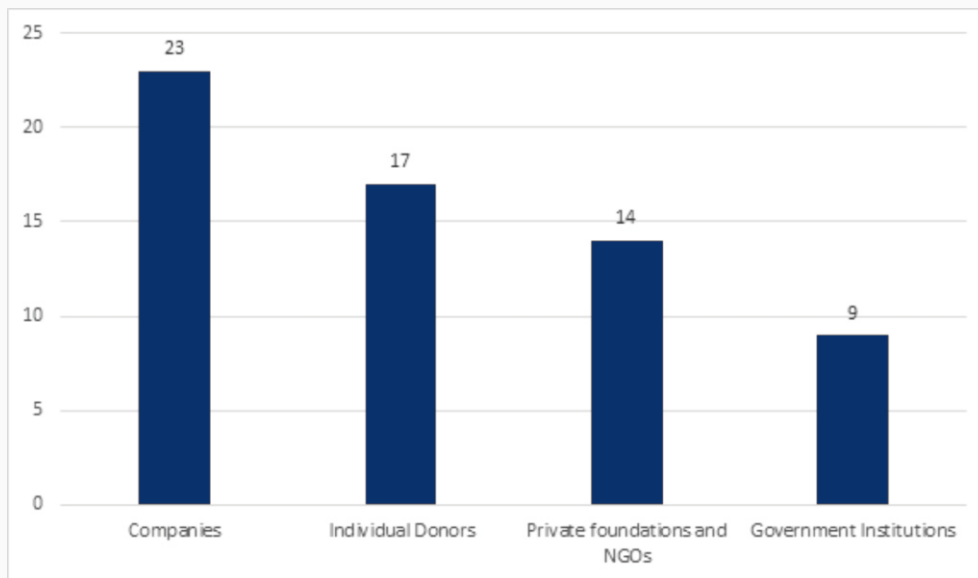


Figure 1. Top supporters of community foundations

The top supporters of CFSOs are private foundations or other NGOs (13), as shown in **Figure 2**. These are primarily international (7) and national (5) organizations, with only one local or regional supporter. Only three CFSOs receive support from companies, one operating at local or regional levels and two at national level. Two CFSOs have individual donors (large), two receive funding from government institutions, and two from intergovernmental organizations or donor agencies.

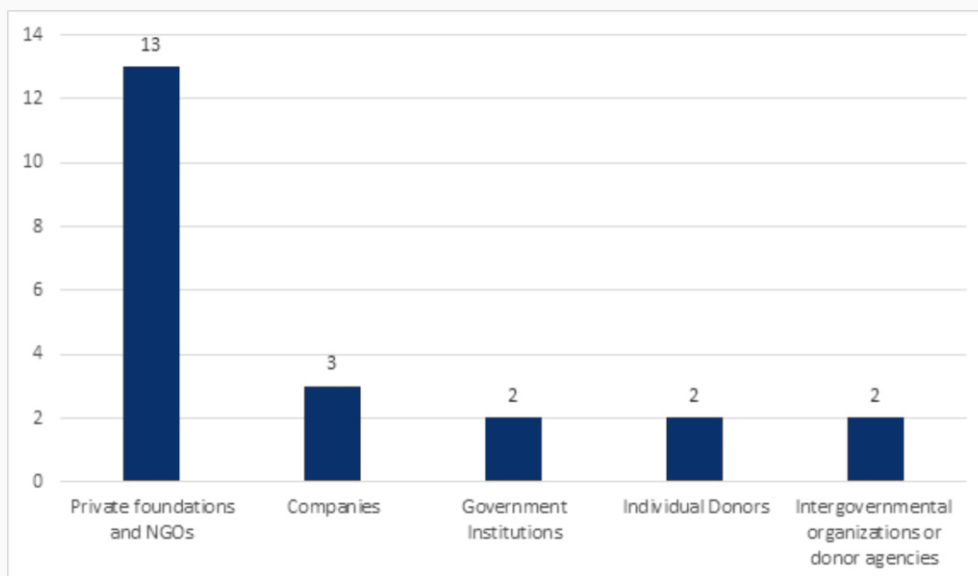


Figure 2. Top supporters of CFSOs





CFs and CFSOs rely on similar fundraising and fund development practices, while differences exist in the types of supporters they mobilize primarily. Most CFs (29) fundraise from individual donors, 19 from small and average donors, and ten from large donors). 12 CFs use the approach of developing thematic funds, ten rely on receiving support from government, seven develop named funds, while five obtain funds from endowment/investment revenues.

Most CFSOs (10) also fundraise from individual donors (six from large donors and four from small and average donors). Other strategies employed consist of developing thematic funds (used by two CFSOs), accessing support from the government (2), developing named funds (1), and endowment/investment revenues (1). 17 CFs and five CFSOs have an endowment.

Both CFs and CFSOs are grantmaking organizations. Community foundations provide support and grants in specific areas to entities like NGOs, initiative groups, governmental or educational organizations, churches, etc. As can be seen from Table 1, the main areas where the surveyed foundations provide grants are community organizing (14), education (13), civil society development (9), social inclusion of vulnerable groups (9), youth (8), and environmental issues and climate change (5). On the other end, only a few foundations provide funding for health (3), poverty eradication (2), or culture and arts (2). Areas like human rights, community security, or the elderly have only one community foundation to provide grants each.

CFSOs support and offer grants to community foundations. The 13 surveyed CFSOs are offering grants for growing CFs' capacity in grantmaking (4), learning (4), fundraising and fund development (3), and governance and board development (3). One CFSO indicated they offer grants for each of the following areas growing CFs' capacity to engage with the SDGs, growing capacity in communication, governance and board development, planning, monitoring, and evaluation, observing legislative requirements, financial management including audit, capacity in respecting CF standards, and transversal topics of interest for the community, such as education, health, etc.





<b>CFs Domains</b>	<b>Number of CFs that provide grants in that domain</b>	<b>CFSOs Domains</b>	<b>Number of CFSOs that provide grants in that domain</b>
Community organizing	14	Growing CFs' capacity in Grantmaking	4
Education	13	Growing CFs' capacity in Learning	4
Civil society development	9	Growing CFs' capacity in fundraising and fund development	3
Social inclusion of vulnerable groups	9	Growing CFs' capacity in Governance	3
Youth	8	Growing CFs' capacity to engage with the SDGs	1
Environmental issues and climate change	6	Growing CFs' capacity in communication	1
Health	3	Growing CFs' capacity in governance and board development	1
Poverty eradication	2	Growing CFs' capacity in planning, monitoring and evaluation	1
Culture and arts	2	Growing CFs' capacity in observing legislative requirements	1
Human rights	1	Growing CFs' capacity in financial management including audit	1
Community security	1	Growing CFs' capacity in respecting CF standards	1
Elderly	1	Growing CFs' capacity in transversal topics of interest for the community, such as education, health, etc	1

*Table 1: Domains in which CFs and CFSOs provide grants*





## CFs, CFSOs, and global challenges

Community foundations are place-based organizations and demonstrate a strong local identity. To understand how their place-based mission influence CFs' and CFSOs' approach toward global phenomena, we inquired how they view and connect to the global sphere. More specifically, we asked about work visibility and importance, challenges affecting local communities (for CFs) and CF's work in local communities (for CFSOs), and CF/CFSO engagement in advocacy work.

The community foundations' work is perceived as most visible at the local and regional levels, which appears to be very important for most responding organizations (Figure 3). At national and international levels, CFs' work is less visible. While the visibility of their work at the national level is moderately important for most of them, the same cannot be said about the international level, where the majority considers it less important or unimportant at all.

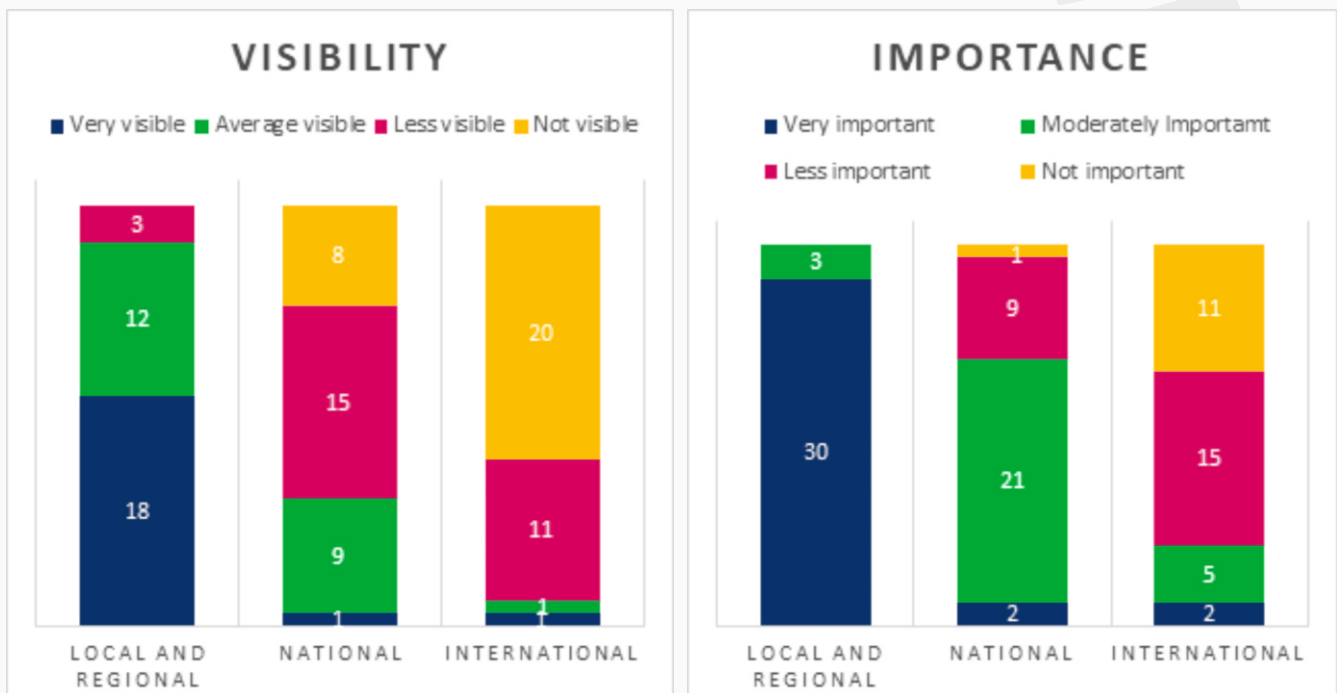


Figure 3. Visibility and Importance of Community Foundation's work at three levels: local and regional, national, and international

At the local and regional level, only half of CFSOs' work is appreciated as visible. Almost the same situation is found at the international level, while at the national level, CFSOs' work is perceived as having some visibility by most organizations. Most CFSOs consider the visibility of their work at the national level important. It is worth noting that at the international level, almost half of CFSOs attribute less importance to the visibility of their work. Local and regional levels are important for both CFs and CFSOs work, while the international level is significantly less important.



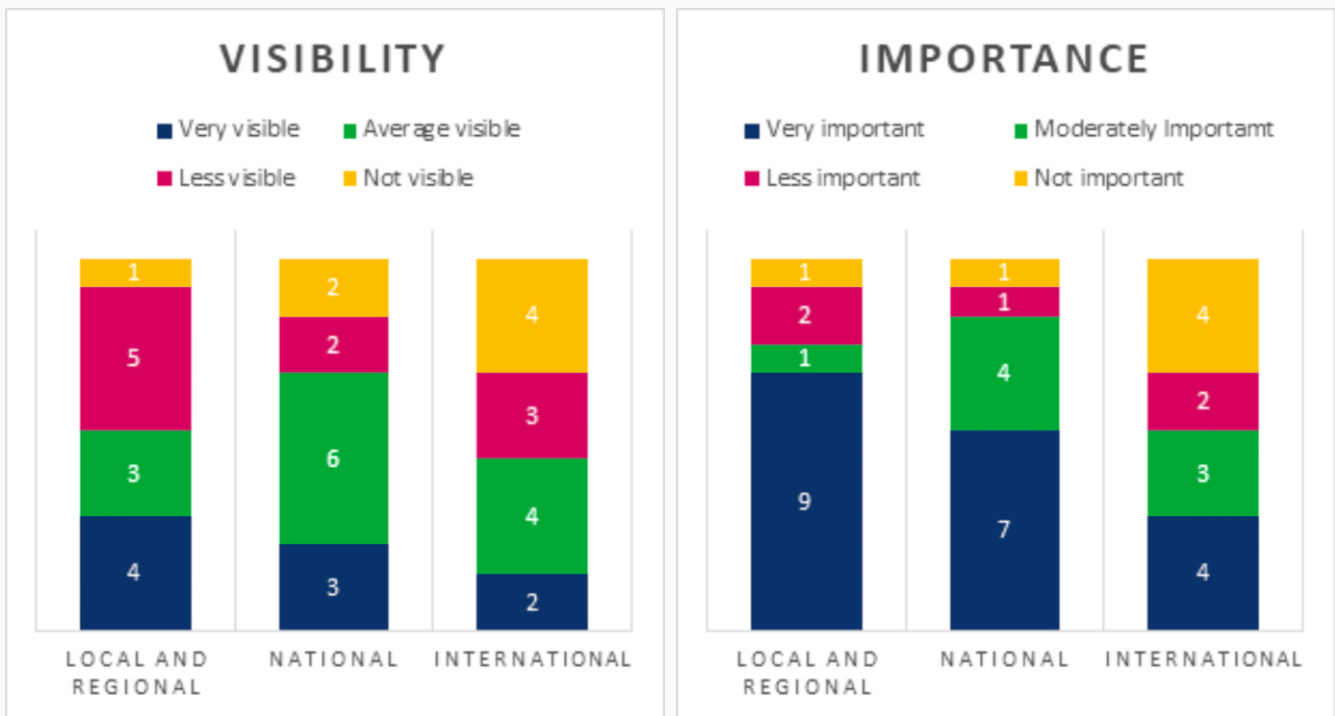


Figure 4. Visibility and Importance of Community Foundations Support Organization's work at three levels: local and regional, national, and international

Regarding challenges faced by CFs' local communities, local factors are perceived to have most influence, while international factors the least. In 22 cases, the challenges communities are facing are influenced by local factors to the largest degree, while international factors have limited or no influence for 26 CFs. Overall local, regional, and national factors influence mostly the challenges CFs encounter.

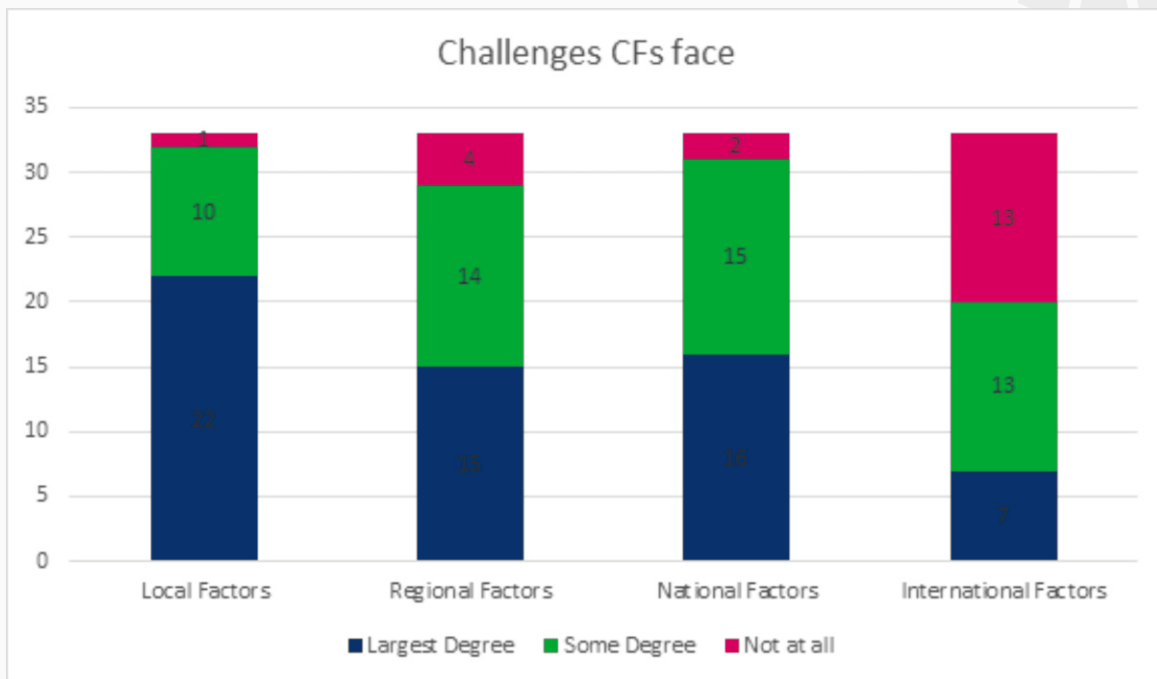


Figure 5. To what degree challenges encountered by local communities are affected by local, regional, national, or international factors?



Most CFs are engaged in advocacy work at the local level, while most CFSOs are engaged at the national level. Only one CF is engaged at the European level, and only one CFSO is engaged at the regional level. Three community foundations are not yet engaged but are planning to work on advocacy in the future. 12 CFs and three CFSOs appreciate that advocacy is not part of their mission.

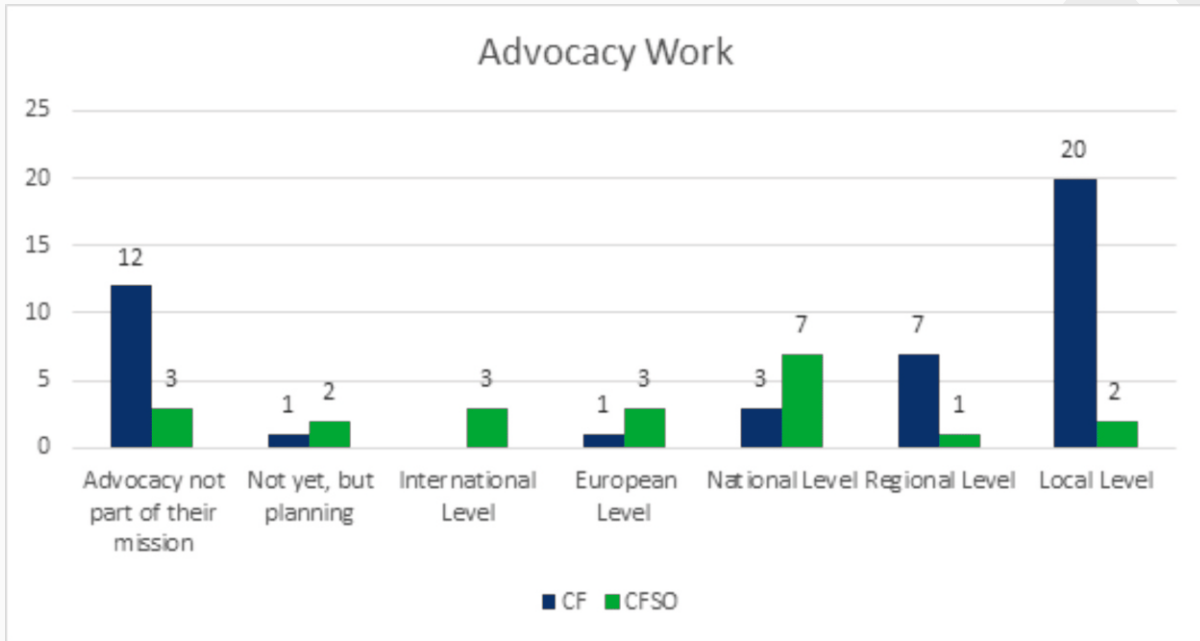


Figure 6. Engagement of CFs and CFSOs in Advocacy Work

The above data shows that community foundations and, to a large extent, community foundations support organizations are significantly impacted by their place-based commitment. Most CFs and CFSOs regard challenges unfolding in their communities from predominantly a local perspective, without seeing an impact coming from an international level. Such context indicates an outlook where a global agenda like the SDGs might encounter limited attention. Furthermore, a limited focus on advocacy also indicates that a UN-driven agenda might get less attention from CFs and CFSOs. Still, a good number of CFs and CFSOs are thinking of and engaging with the SDGs. We are next going to look at how they do so.

## CFs' and CFSOs' engagement with the SDGs

Although most of the CFs in our sample (28 out of 33) are familiar with Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), only 18 see them as either very relevant (7) or relevant (11) to their community. Six CFs have no clear view on the issue, considering them neither relevant nor irrelevant, while four see the SDGs as less relevant for their local community.

For five CFs, engaging with the SDGs in their work is highly relevant as they have based their strategy on the SDGs. In addition, a significant part of CF respondents (20) base some of their activities on the SDGs, while three are considering doing so in the future. Only two foundations do not intend to engage with SDGs because they do not see them as relevant.





One of the 13 CFSOs is not familiar with the SDGs. Two CFSOs consider the SDGs very relevant and four relevant to their community. Most (8) have some activities related to the SDGs. One has its strategy based on the SDGs, while only three do not have any activity related to the Goals. One does not yet have SDG-related activities but intends to have them in the future.

Five CFs and five CFSOs are part of SDG civil society networks in their country. Six CFs and three CFSOs are in touch with the SDG coordinating committee/department/office at a governmental level. The work of only one CF has been mentioned in the Voluntary National Review (VNR), while in the case of CFSOs, there were two mentioned in VNRs. Lastly, only one community produced a voluntary local review. We can see that CFs and CFSOs have a limited connection to the SDG world (dedicated governmental offices, specialized NGOs, or NGO networks) and that their work is, with one exception, not mentioned in the national reports on the SDGs.

## Ways of engaging with the SDGs

Most organizations from our sample (33) engage with the SDGs, while 13 do not. Out of the 13, six are not familiar with SDGs. Most of these community foundations were formed after 2010, except for two, which were formed in 2002 and 2003. None have large individual donors, intergovernmental organizations, or donor agencies as top supporters. One foundation has as main supporters national companies and one international corporations, two national companies, and two international corporations as their main supporters. Only one is engaged in advocacy at the international level, while all six of them appreciate that advocacy is not part of their mission.

None of those that engage with the SDGs in their work have local NGOs as top supporters. A majority (24) have expertise on community sustainability in their staff and 18 in their board, and 17 as external consultants or researchers.

From another point of view, considering all organizations (both CFs and CFSOs) who responded to what SDGs they are engaging with (N=34), most organizations (12) are engaging with four SDGs each, followed by six organizations that engage with six SDGs. The maximum number of SDGs that an organization engages with is ten (only one organization engages with 10 SDGs), while the minimum is one (two organizations engage with one SDG). Of the organizations engaging with six SDGs, five have expertise at the level of their staff, four at board level, and six have expertise through external consultants or researchers.

Twelve organizations are engaging with four SDGs each. Eight out of 12 have expertise on community sustainability in their staff and board and five out of 12 have expertise in community sustainability through external consultants or researchers. Furthermore, eight out of 12 are engaging in advocacy at the local level.

CFs are engaging SDGs in their work in different ways. Most of them (18) are working on the Goals that are a priority for their local community. Nine are building partnerships around the Goals. Seven give grants based on the SDG structure, and three have rethought their strategy to align with the SDGs.

CFSOs are building partnerships around the SDGs (7) and are working on a few that are a priority to their CF movement (4). Two give grants based on the SDGs structure. And two are rethinking their strategy to align with the SDGs.



The SDGs that the CFs are most engaged with are Quality Education (17), Sustainable Cities and Communities (16), Good Health and Well-being (15), No Poverty (10), Reduced Inequality (9), and Partnerships to achieve the Goal (10). Conversely, CFSOs are most engaged with Quality Education (7), Partnerships to achieve the Goals (6), Reduced Inequality (5), and Gender Equality (5). Only a limited number of CFs (5) and CFSOs (3) link their budget to the SDGs. The similar focus among CFs and CFSOs is expected, given the role of CFSOs to support CFs. The more important emphasis put by CFSOs on partnerships for the Goals (SDG no. 17) is also expected, given the role of CFSOs to enable connections within and beyond the CF field.

Sustainable Development Goals	Community Foundations	Community Foundations Support Organizations	Sustainable Development Goals	Community Foundations	Community Foundations Support Organizations
 1 NO POVERTY	10	3	 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	9	5
 2 ZERO HUNGER	2	3	 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	16	4
 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	15	3	 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	6	
 4 QUALITY EDUCATION	17	7	 13 CLIMATE ACTION	8	5
 5 GENDER EQUALITY	4	5	 14 LIFE BELOW WATER		
 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	3		 15 LIFE ON LAND	2	1
 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	2	1	 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	3	1
 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	8	2	 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	10	6
 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	1				





## Challenges in integrating SDGs in the strategy and practice of CFs and CFSOs

Working with the SDGs is not free of challenges. The main challenges that the CFs from our sample face are difficulty in communicating the SDGs in a language understandable to local actors (13 CF are confronted with this problem), the relevance of the SDGs to their communities (13), followed by the difficulty in engaging with the SDGs at a technical level concerning targets and indicators (11). A few CFs (4) face difficulties in understanding the SDGs. At the same time, one CF considers the reduced number of volunteers as the main challenge their community faces, which the SDGs do not capture.

Most CFSOs face similar challenges regarding the SDGs. Six (6) of them find it difficult to communicate the SDGs in a language understandable to national and local actors. Six find it difficult to engage with the SDGs at a technical level concerning targets and indicators. For five CFSOs, the community actors relevant to their work (CFs) do not engage with the SDGs, making Agenda 2030 less useful in their interactions with CFs. One CFSO finds the SDGs hard to understand, and four find the Goals irrelevant to their community, as outdated and without resources attached.

Implementing the SDGs requires measuring relevant indicators based on different data, such as “proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status, and geographical location,”<sup>62</sup> proportion of total government spending on essential services like education, health and social protection, or the “number of people covered by health insurance or a public health system per 1,000 population”<sup>63</sup> and many others. For several CFs (12) it is difficult to take part in such specialized discussion given their limited research capacity (i.e., colleagues who have quantitative research skills), eight CFs do not have reliable data gathered about their community, for five CFs, the indicators did not fit their community, and for two CFs it was neither easy nor difficult as it is similar to previous work they have been doing.

For six CFSOs, it is difficult to work with data about their community because they do not have reliable data gathered. Three CFSOs do not have the research capacity to do so, and for two CFSOs, their data does not match the SDGs indicators well.

## Benefits of integrating SDGs in the strategy and practice of CFs and CFSOs

Despite the challenges mentioned above, integrating the SDGs into their work is perceived to bring significant benefits for CFs. Some respondents see the SDGs as a useful organizing framework for community foundations, helping them in several ways. One such benefit is supporting prioritizing among key relevant topics for local communities (13). SDGs are also the basis for strategic partnerships, as eight CFs became natural partners for donors and sponsors or developed a strategic partnerships with their local governments (6) due to their dedication to the SDGs.

<sup>62</sup> Indicator 1.1.1 | Sustainable Development Goals. <https://www.sdgdata.gov.au/goals/no-poverty/1.1.1>  
<sup>63</sup> SDG3. [https://sdg3.nhsrc.pk/indicator\\_detail/65](https://sdg3.nhsrc.pk/indicator_detail/65)







A respondent shares, “donors and sponsors love the SDGs, so we are becoming a natural partner for them.” Other CFs found the SDGs helpful in structuring their work to achieve sustainability (8) as a means for additional visibility (4) and mobilizing local action, given the community's excitement about the SDGs (1 CF). In the words of one respondent, “our community is excited about the SDGs, and that helps in mobilizing local action.”

CFSOs similarly use the SDGs to structure their work to achieve sustainability (6) and to build strategic partnerships (5), including with the government (1). SDGs also help CFSOs receiving additional visibility (4), prioritizing key relevant topics for their communities (2), mobilizing local action (1), or becoming natural partners with donors and sponsors who appreciate the SDGs (1).

## Conclusion

The above results show that CFs and CFSOs tend to engage with the SDGs and do so in various ways. Given the relatively recent adoption of the SDGs, CFs, and CFSOs find themselves exploring the SDGs, learning about Agenda 2030, and creating ways of engaging with them. Depending on the internal expertise, national context, and inclination towards advocacy, CF and CFSO openness and prioritization of the SDGs may vary.

The CFs and CFSOs that do not engage with the SDGs tend to be younger organizations with no concern for advocacy. Those organizations might focus more on internal processes, CF mechanisms, and connecting to the local community. Furthermore, not being concerned with advocacy indicates that the respective organizations might not have broader policy concerns or might not have the capacity to engage at that level.

The qualitative analysis will enable us to look more in-depth at SDG-related types of actions and activities. Before analyzing the qualitative data and presenting case studies of CFs and CFSOs engaging with Agenda 2030, we will assess the SDG-related collaboration among CFs, CFSOs, and third partners.





## A SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS PERSPECTIVE ON COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS AND THE SDGs

Network science is an interdisciplinary field that studies and analyzes complex systems composed of interconnected elements, known as networks. These networks can represent a wide range of social, biological, or technological systems, and network science provides tools and techniques to understand their structure, dynamics, and behavior.

In the context of SDG collaboration among community foundations and community foundation support organizations in Europe, network science offers valuable insights into the patterns of interactions, relationships, and information flow within these networks. By applying network analysis methods, researchers can identify key actors, influential communities, and structural features that shape the functioning and effectiveness of these collaborations around the SDGs. Network mapping, a fundamental technique in network science, refers to visualizing and representing these interconnected relationships and structures, providing a clear and comprehensive overview of the collaboration network.

Survey-based network discovery leverages the power of questionnaires to gather data on relationships and interactions within a network. By administering nomination questions to community foundations in Europe, we collected information about collaborative partnerships and the potential for collaboration among community foundations and stakeholders around SDGs. The gathered data was complemented with further information about SDG-related partnerships shared by support organizations or funders. These data were used to construct a network map, illustrating the connections between different organizations involved in the collaborative efforts.

The strengths of survey-based network discovery lie in its ability to capture both formal and informal relationships, uncover hidden or undocumented collaborations, and provide a holistic view of the network. However, it is important to note that the survey-based approach has certain limitations, such as biases due to self-reporting or recall errors, difficulty in capturing complex and multidimensional relationships, and the reliance on respondents' willingness and ability to accurately report their connections. Therefore, it is crucial to use complementary methods and validate the survey results through additional sources of data, such as interviews or archival records, to enhance the reliability of the network mapping findings.

Due to these biases in the data collection method, the following analysis is more visual and qualitative than quantitative. It does, however, point towards the current landscape of collaborations around SDGs and a few key points of improvement for the ecosystem.

### Methodology Notes

We have asked community foundations in Europe the following questions to help us map collaboration and potential collaboration among CFs and with stakeholders on SDGs:

- Please name the CFs or CFSOs you are collaborating with concerning the SDGs.
- Please name up to five CFs or CFSOs you are currently not collaborating with on the SDGs, but would like to collaborate with in the future.
- Please name three stakeholders/organizations/institutions/companies you are collaborating with concerning the SDGs.
- Please name three stakeholders/organizations/institutions/companies you are not collaborating with in relation to the SDGs but would like to collaborate with in the future.

In total, 35 organizations answered the survey. Two hundred seventy-nine organizations were nominated.

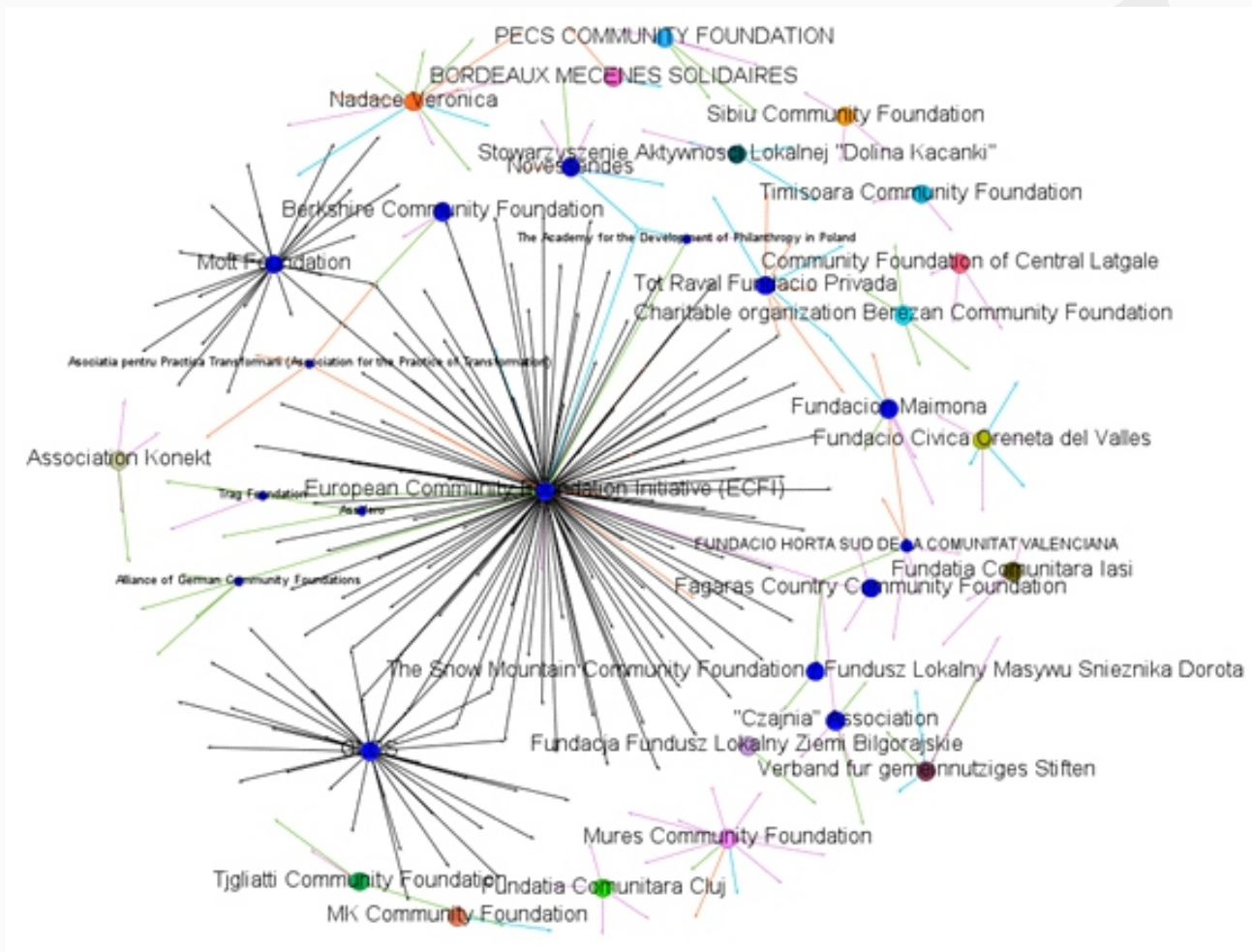


Figure 5. Survey-nominated collaborations and potential collaborations among Community Foundations and Stakeholders around SDGs

**Nodes** - organizations (CFs answering the survey + stakeholders / organizations / institutions / companies they collaborate or will want to collaborate with around SDGs)

**Node size** - closeness centrality (highlights respondent organizations)

**Edges** - existing collaborations or potential collaborations around SDGs

**Edge colors:**

- **Blue** - Stakeholder collaborations
- **Green** - CFs collaboration
- **Red** - CFs collaboration wanted
- **Orange** - Stakeholder collaboration wanted

**The most nominated organizations are:**

- Academy for the Development of Philanthropy, Poland (5)
- European Community Foundation Initiative (ECFI) (5)
- UN (3)

**The organizations that nominated or listed the most partners are:**

- European Community Foundation Initiative (ECFI) (117)
- GLCS (33)
- Mott Foundation (12)
- Nadace Veronica (12)
- Mures Community Foundation (11)
- Tot Raval Fundacio Privada (8)
- Novessendes (7)
- FUNDACIO HORTA SUD DE LA COMUNITAT VALENCIANA (6)
- Verband fur gemeinnutziges Stiften (6)
- Fundación Cívica Oreneta del Vallés (6)





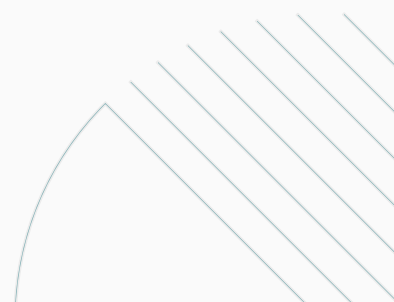
## The Largest Connected Component

The network is fragmented. There are 18 disconnected components (small islands of connectivity around particular responding organizations). A fragmented network means much effort is needed to connect these disconnected islands. Network theory suggests that disconnected components need particular interventions to facilitate connections based on trust. Shared interests, complementarity of resources, know-how, and knowledge exchange might be some elements that can bring together otherwise unconnected organizations.

However, a larger component emerges. Organizations within the largest connected component are more likely to be aware of each other's initiatives, projects, and expertise, enabling them to collaborate effectively and leverage shared resources to advance the SDGs. When a substantial portion of community foundations and stakeholders are part of the largest connected component, their collective efforts and impact are amplified. The connectedness within this component allows for better coordination, alignment of strategies, and joint action toward achieving the SDGs. By leveraging the resources, capabilities, and expertise of multiple organizations within the largest connected component, the ecosystem can foster synergies and maximize the collective impact on sustainable development.

The largest connected component often comprises influential organizations or stakeholders that play a key role in driving initiatives and shaping the direction of the ecosystem. These organizations may act as catalysts, connectors, or leaders within the network, influencing others and setting the agenda for collaboration around the SDGs. By identifying and engaging with the largest connected component, community foundations can tap into existing leadership and influence to drive positive change, mobilize support, and advocate for sustainable development. Moreover, the sustainability of the SDG initiatives is strengthened when a significant portion of community foundations and stakeholders are actively engaged in the largest connected component, as it ensures continuity, support, and a shared commitment towards long-term goals.

The largest connected component has 216 nodes (70% of the original network) and 227 ties (75% of the original network). The sub-graph is centered around ECFI because it nominated the most partners.



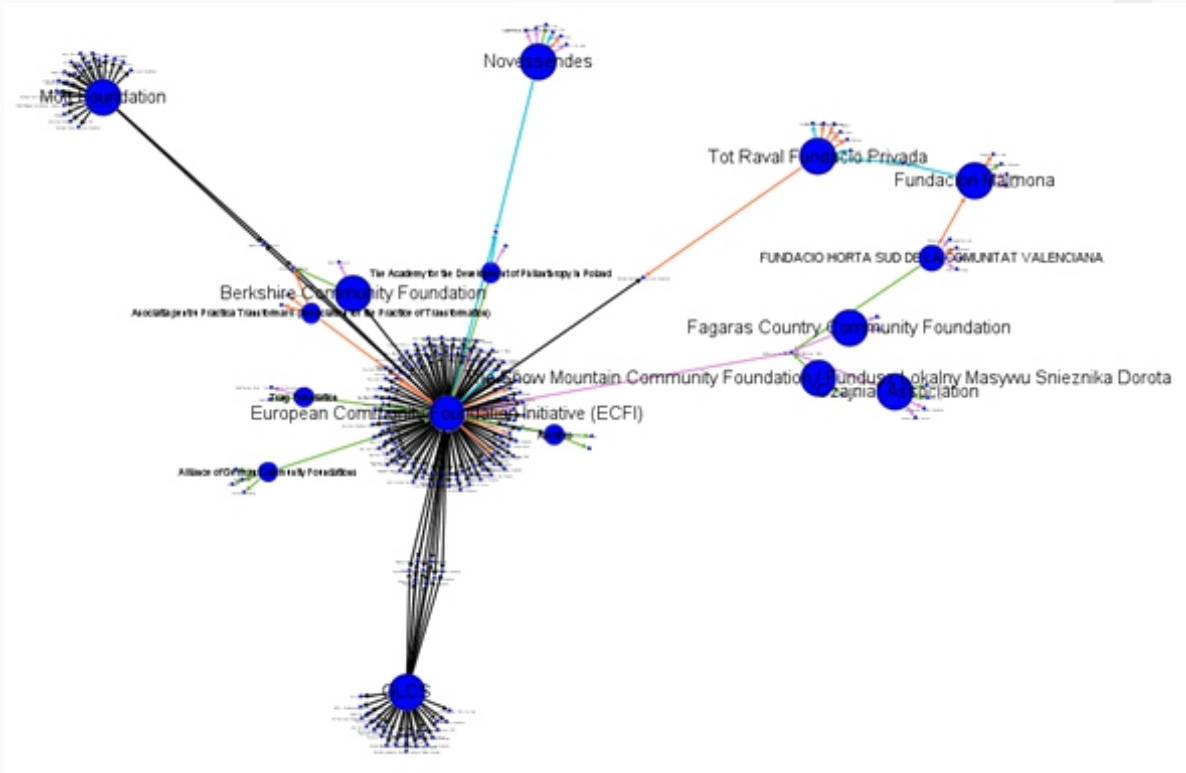


Figure 6. Largest Connected Component

**Nodes** - organizations (CFs answering the survey + stakeholders / organizations / institutions / companies they collaborate or will want to collaborate with around SDGs)

**Node size** - closeness centrality (highlights respondent organizations)

**Edges** - existing collaborations or potential collaborations around SDGs

**Edge colors:**

- **Blue** - Stakeholder collaborations
- **Green** - CFs collaboration
- **Red** - CFs collaboration wanted
- **Orange** - Stakeholder collaboration wanted

## High potential for transitivity

Network transitivity, also known as the clustering coefficient, is a measure of the degree to which nodes in a network tend to form interconnected triangles or clusters. It quantifies the likelihood that two nodes connected to a common node are also connected to each other. In other words, network transitivity captures the extent to which "friends of my friends are also likely to be friends with each other."

Network transitivity plays a vital role in building a resilient ecosystem of community foundations and stakeholders around SDGs by promoting collaboration, knowledge exchange, resilience, trust, cooperation, and the amplification of impact. Fostering a highly transitive network helps the ecosystem become more adaptive, interconnected, and capable of addressing complex challenges while working towards achieving the SDGs.





High network transitivity indicates that collaborations and knowledge exchange among community foundations and stakeholders are more likely to be reciprocated within the network. When there is a high level of transitivity, it implies that if two organizations are collaborating with a third organization, they are more likely to collaborate with each other. This mechanism fosters a resilient ecosystem by creating interconnected networks of collaborations and knowledge sharing, facilitating the flow of resources, expertise, and best practices among community foundations and stakeholders.

The mechanism of transitivity contributes to the resilience of the ecosystem by promoting redundancy. When collaborations and connections are highly transitive, it means that if one organization or cluster faces challenges or disruptions, there are alternative pathways for support and collaboration within the network. This redundancy helps mitigate the risk of failure or loss of resources by ensuring that multiple organizations are interconnected and can step in to provide assistance, share knowledge, and sustain the momentum toward achieving the SDGs.

High network transitivity often indicates a high level of trust and cooperation within the network. When organizations and stakeholders collaborate with one another and form interconnected clusters, it suggests a shared sense of purpose, trust, and mutual cooperation. Trust-based collaboration is essential for building a resilient ecosystem as it fosters long-term partnerships, effective coordination, and collective action toward the SDGs.

Amplifying impact: Network transitivity facilitates the amplification of impact within the ecosystem. When collaborations and connections are transitive, the impact of an organization or cluster can extend beyond its immediate network. By leveraging the interconnectedness and shared collaborations, the efforts of one organization or cluster can ripple through the network, influencing and inspiring others to join in the collective action for sustainable development.

In our network, the clustering coefficient is very small (there are no triangles forming). This suggests that so far there is no logic of 'a friend of a friend is my friend,' i.e., organizations grouping together in collaborations around SDG work. The main configuration is the hub and spoke one, where hub organizations (highlighted with larger node sizes) hold a high potential for fostering transitivity by facilitating collaborations among their otherwise unconnected partners.

## Network clustering

Network clustering is an important metric in mapping ecosystems of collaboration because it allows stakeholders to identify key partners, potential collaborations, and areas where resources can be effectively allocated to achieve the SDGs. By understanding the structure of the collaborative network and the formation of clusters, community foundations, and stakeholders can foster more targeted and strategic partnerships, enhance coordination among members within clusters, and leverage the strengths and expertise of each community to maximize their collective impact. Moreover, network clustering helps identify potential gaps or areas of limited connectivity, enabling stakeholders to focus on strengthening connections, fostering cross-cluster collaborations, and promoting inclusivity within the collaborative efforts around SDGs.

The following table shows the membership of organizations in network clusters. Organizations are placed in the same cluster because they are more connected to one another than with the rest of the organizations in other clusters. In the original network, 27 communities were found using the Louvain clustering algorithm. This information can be used by key organizations in each community to increase cohesion and collaboration within and across clusters.



# Community membership

CF Munich  
Mercator Foundation

1

Alliance of German Community Foundations  
Active Philanthropy  
CF Braunschweig

European Community Foundation Initiative (ECFI)

F20  
Philea  
European Economic and Social Committee  
UN  
Partners Albania  
Austrian Association of Charitable Foundations  
Marshallplan Jubiläumsstiftung  
ÖAD  
Öst. Studentenförderungsstiftung  
WWTF  
Foundation of Lille

Alliance of Community Foundations in Germany  
Bielefeld Community Foundation  
Bonn Community Foundation  
Braunschweig Community Foundation  
Community Foundation Cologne  
Community Foundation Heusenstamm  
Community Foundation Jena Saale Holzland  
Community Foundation Ludwigshafen  
Community Foundation Remscheid  
Community Foundation Wiesbaden

Foundation for civic engagement in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

Freiburg Community Foundation  
Hamburg Community Foundation  
Hannover Community Foundation  
Heidelberg Community Foundation  
Kreischea Community Foundation  
Landkreis Fürstfeldbruck Community Foundation  
Lebensraum Aachen Community Foundation  
Lilienthal Community Foundation  
Potsdam Community Foundation  
Rheda-Wiedenbrück Community Foundation  
Schweim Community Foundation  
Siegen Community Foundation  
Stormarn Community Foundation  
Stuttgart Community Foundation

Uno-Flüchtlingshilfe  
Wiesloch Community Foundation  
AGCult

Brescia Community Foundation  
Canavese Community Foundation  
Community Foundation Messina  
Community Foundation of Agrigento and Trapani  
Community Foundation of San Gennaro  
Community Foundation of Val di Noto  
Destination Makers

DI Bellezza Si vive  
Ebbene Foundation  
FOQUS

Munus Foundation  
North Milan Greater Area Foundation  
Porta Palazzo Community Foundation  
Prato Community Foundation

Salernitana Community Foundation  
San Giovanni Battista Foundation

Community Foundation Movement in Latvia  
Federation of Community Foundations in Poland  
Buzău Community Foundation

Galați Community Foundation  
Mureș Community Foundation  
Vâlcea Community Foundation

«The Mill» Foundation of Pryazha district  
ANO Razvitie

Arkhangelsk Centre of Social Technologies "Garant"  
Blago Daryu Community Foundation

Charities Aid Foundation Russia (CAF)  
Chelyabinsk Region Community Foundation

Community Foundation Dobry Gorod Petersburg  
Perm Alliance of Community Foundations

Russian Donors Forum  
TOS Visota

Raimat Lleida Community Foundation  
Community Foundation Dobrobut

2

<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Community Foundation of Ridnya Community Foundation Podilska Hromada Initiative Centre to Support Social Action (ISAR) Ednannia Prostir Teple Misto Community Foundation Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation Community Foundation for Lancashire and Merseyside Community Foundation for Northern Ireland Community Foundation for Surrey Community Foundation Tyne &amp; Wear and Northumberland Community Foundation Wales County Durham Community Foundation Devon Community Foundation Essex Community Foundation</p>	<p>Foundation Scotland Gloucestershire Community Foundation Kent Community Foundation Leeds Community Foundation Norfolk Community Foundation South Yorkshire Community Foundation / ASSIST Staffordshire Community Foundation Suffolk Community Foundation Sussex Community Foundation Two Ridings Community Foundation East West Management Institute The Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland UNGC</p>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Asociatia pentru Practica Transformării (Association for the Practice of Transformation) CEFIS Fägäräs Research Institute</p>	<p>UK Community Foundations Berkshire Community Foundation Reckitt - Corporate</p>
<p><b>4</b></p> <p>Assifero Arco Lab Asvis</p>	
<p><b>5</b></p> <p>Association Konekt CSO Network for financial sustainability Government of the Republic of North Macedonia</p>	<p>Local Community development Foundation Shtip Responsible Business Club</p>
<p><b>6</b></p> <p>BORDEAUX MECENES SOLIDAIRES FONDATION DE FRANCE PACTE MONDIAL</p>	
<p><b>7</b></p> <p>Charitable organization Berezan Community Foundation British Council Ukraine Global Fund for Community Foundations</p>	<p>International Renaissance Foundation ISAR Ednannia</p>
<p><b>8</b></p> <p>Community Foundation of Central Latgale Borisa un Inaras Teterevu fonds</p>	<p>"Light Guide Optics International" Ltd Preili municipality</p>
<p><b>9</b></p> <p>Novessendes Association for the Economy of the Common Good Ecological Transition Delegation of the region EU</p>	<p>Fundacio Horta Sud Fundacion Carasso Network of farmers in the region</p>



<b>10</b>	<p>Fundacio Civica Oreneta del Valles Badia del Valles Town Hall Bank of Santander Foundation Banking Foundation BBVA</p>	<p>Banking Foundation La Caixa City Hall of Sabadell Government of Catalonia</p>
<b>11</b>	<p>Romanian Federation of Community Foundations FUNDACIO HORTA SUD DE LA COMUNITAT VALENCIANA Aeioluz Cooperativa Col.lectiu Soterranya Fundació Novessendes Fundacion Maimona Mancomunitat Intermunicipal Horta Sud Asociación Espanola de Fundaciones Fundacion Daniel y Nina Carasso Fundacion Raymat Lleida</p>	<p>Junta de Extremadura Youth Business Spain Tot Raval Fundacio Privada Burgerstiftung Berlin Burgerstiftung Hamburg European Government Spanish Government The London Community Foundation Roots and Wings Foundation (Hungary)</p>
<b>12</b>	<p>Fundacja Fundusz Lokalny Ziemi Bilgorajskie Federacja Funduszy Lokalnych w Polsce</p>	
<b>13</b>	<p>Fundația Comunitară Cluj Asociația Smart Academy Cluj Local Water Forum</p>	<p>Clujul Sustenabil Inspectoratul Școlar Județean Cluj</p>
<b>14</b>	<p>Fundația Comunitară Iași Amazon Development Romania</p>	<p>BorwWarner Lidl Romania</p>
<b>15</b>	<p>Tuzla Community Foundation Odorheiu Secuiesc Community Foundation Făgăraș Country Community Foundation Cumbria Community Foundation Milton Keynes Community Foundation Northamptonshire Community Foundation Quartet Community Foundation Wiltshire Community Foundation GLCS Varna Community Foundation Community Donation Fund Sliven Foundation /CDF – Sliven/ Community Foundation Slagalice Obrenovac Youth Foundation Veronica Foundation The Usti Community Foundation Community Foundation Habitat Aachen Ferencvaros Community Foundation</p>	<p>Pecs Community Foundation Messina Community Foundation Mission Bambini Foundation Valmiera Region Community Foundation Charitable organization Charitable foundation Podilska Hromada Association The Nidzica Community Foundation Snow Mountain Community Foundation Foundation Step Forward (FSF) REVIA – Smallcarpathian Community Foundation Bardejov Community Foundation Healthy City Community Foundation Horta Sud Foundation Fundación Maimona The Community Foundation for Greater Manchester Foundation “Moloda Gromada” Non-governmental organization “This is Our Kyiv” Charitable Foundation “First L'viv Foundation”</p>

<p><b>16</b></p> <p>MK Community Foundation MK City Council</p>	<p>Fägärås Research Institute Mott Foundation Istituto Comunitario Grande Florianopolis Community Foundations of Canada Adolfo Ibanez University European Community Foundation Initiative, Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen Comunalia Community Foundations of New Zealand Global Challenges Local Solutions, Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland SGS Consulting</p>	<p>Brookings Institution Candid CFLeads, MA, USA Chicago Community Trust Cleveland Foundation Community Foundation of Greater Flint Grand Valley State University Indiana University Kansas Association of Community Foundations Puerto Rico Community Foundation Southwest Florida Community Foundation Welcoming America</p>
<p><b>18</b></p> <p>Mureş Community Foundation BringaAkademia - VUELTA Focus Oko Center GCLS Mayors Office Milvus Group</p>	<p>Ministry of Environment Mureş County Administration Pro Bicio Urbo Association Smart Think Tank unDAverde Association</p>	
<p><b>19</b></p> <p>Nadace Veronica Ustecka komunitni nadace Czech Challenge fund for SDGs Donorsforum European Community Foundations Initiative High School of Art and Design, department of Ecotextile design JIC (South Moravian Innovation Centre)</p>	<p>Generali Ceska pojistovna Komunitni nadace Tri brany Nadace Via Rezekvitek South Moravian Community Foundation South Moravian Region</p>	
<p><b>20</b></p> <p>Pecs Community Foundation People First Association Roots and Wings Foundation</p>	<p>The Local Basket Group The Power of Humanity Foundation Warsaw Academy of Philanthropy</p>	
<p><b>21</b></p> <p>Sibiu Community Foundation City Hall</p>	<p>County Hall Local IT cluster</p>	
<p><b>22</b></p> <p>Stowarzyszenie Aktywnosci Lokalnej "Dolina Kacanki" Federacja Funduszy Lokalnych Fundacja Aktywizacji i Rozwoju FARMA</p>	<p>Lidl Bulgaria Urząd Miasta i Gminy w Staszowie</p>	

23	<p>"Czajnia" Association Academy for the Development of Philanthropy, Poland Federation of Community Funds in Poland National Freedom Institute Polish American Freedom Foundation Ukrainian Eco Mercy Fund Făgăraş Country Community Foundation</p>	<p>AIESEC Global Diplomacy Lab The Snow Mountain Community Foundation / Fundusz Lokalny Masywu Snieznika Dorota The Federation of CF in Poland</p>
24	<p>Timișoara Community Foundation Timiș County Council Timișoara City Hall</p>	
25	<p>Togliatti Community Foundation Industry TogliattiKuybyshevazot</p>	<p>Penza CF Samara CF</p>
26	<p>Trag Foundation Global Compact Serbia Global Compact Serbia - Trag is running the Secretariat of GCS</p>	
27	<p>Verband für gemeinnutziges Stiften Austrian Ministry for Climate Protection Charles Stewart Mott Foundation ESF</p>	<p>Ministry for Climate Protection Ministry of Social Affairs SDG Watch</p>

## Conclusion

The above analysis shows an emerging network of community foundations, community foundation support organizations, and third partners. The emerging network is shaped as engagement with the SDGs is growing in the field. While now we can observe a small number of key organizations that are central in bringing CFs and CFSOs in contact with the SDGs, in the longer term we can expect that through continued engagement more connections will emerge among CFs and relevant stakeholders advancing community sustainability. To get a better understanding of current practices of CFs and CFSOs, the next section will present the analysis of qualitative data, including set of case studies and insights derived from interviews and a research roundtable.



## CASE STUDIES ON HOW CFs AND CFSOs ENGAGE WITH THE SDGs

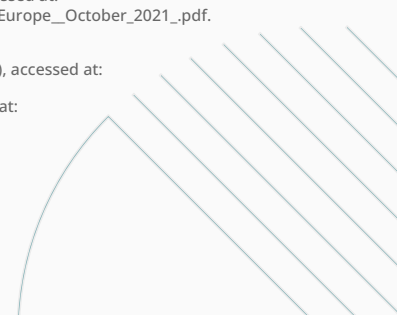
This section will include several case studies of CFs and CFSOs at different stages of engagement with the SDGs. Since their adoption in 2015, the SDGs have triggered various reactions by local community actors, including community foundations and CFSOs in Europe. The modes of engagement differ from strong engagement to restraint. This section aims to further explore these different modes of engagement to provide an in-depth understanding of how European CFs and CFSOs relate to the SDGs.

We begin at a national level with reviewing several CFSOs' engagement with the SDGs. From among the European CFSOs, we focus on Assifero (Italy), Roots and Wings Foundation (Hungary), Association of German Foundations (Germany), and UK Community Foundations (UKCF). We can observe a range of approaches to the SDGs, from strong engagement in the case of UKCF to moderate engagement in Italy and Germany and limited engagement in Hungary.

We continue with several case studies focusing on individual community foundations. Besides the references made to individual CFs in the CFSO case studies, we developed individual cases on community foundations from Germany (Bonn, Braunschweig, and Pfalz), Romania (Făgăraș Country Community Foundation), and Slovakia (Healthy City Community Foundation). Further case studies have been developed by ECFI, including Scotland Foundation (UK), Messina Community Foundation (Italy), Saint Petersburg Community Foundation (Russian Federation), Hamburg Community Foundation (Germany),<sup>65</sup> Braunschweig Community Foundation (Germany),<sup>66</sup> County Durham Community Foundation (UK),<sup>67</sup> Usti Community Foundation (Czech Republic),<sup>68</sup> Tuzla Community Foundation (Bosnia and Herzegovina).<sup>69</sup>

The following subsequent will focus on the European Community Foundation Initiative's (ECFI) role and learning processes together with other CFSOs. Finally, the section will present an analysis based on the presented data.

<sup>65</sup> Böllhoff, Anja and James Magowan (2021) Community Foundations Embracing the SDGs, European Community Foundation Initiative, accessed at: [https://www.buergerstiftungen.org/fileadmin/Redaktion/PDF/Service/Community\\_foundations\\_embracing\\_the\\_SDGs\\_-\\_Stories\\_from\\_across\\_Europe\\_\\_October\\_2021\\_.pdf](https://www.buergerstiftungen.org/fileadmin/Redaktion/PDF/Service/Community_foundations_embracing_the_SDGs_-_Stories_from_across_Europe__October_2021_.pdf).  
<sup>66</sup> Susanne Hauswaldt, Filling the SDG void in Braunschweig/Germany, European Community Foundation Initiative (2019), accessed at: [https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/Knowledge\\_Database/braunschweig-sdg-oct2019.pdf](https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/Knowledge_Database/braunschweig-sdg-oct2019.pdf).  
<sup>67</sup> Michelle Cooper, How County Durham Community Foundation (UK) embraced the SDG, European Community Foundation Initiative (2020), accessed at: [https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/Knowledge\\_Database/cf\\_durham-and-SDGs-edited.pdf](https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/Knowledge_Database/cf_durham-and-SDGs-edited.pdf).  
<sup>68</sup> Petr Veselý, Usti community foundation mobilises donors around the SDGs, European Community Foundation Initiative (2020), accessed at: [https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/Knowledge\\_Database/cf-usti-sdg.pdf](https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/Knowledge_Database/cf-usti-sdg.pdf).  
<sup>69</sup> Jasna Jašarević, Tuzla Community Foundation re-frames the SDGs, European Community Foundation Initiative (2019), accessed at: [https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/Knowledge\\_Database/cf-tuzla-sdg.pdf](https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/Knowledge_Database/cf-tuzla-sdg.pdf).





# ASSIFERO – THE ITALIAN ASSOCIATION OF FOUNDATIONS AND PHILANTHROPIC ORGANIZATIONS

by *Lutz Drieling*

Assifero, the Italian Association of Foundations and Philanthropic Organizations, is a Community Foundation Support Organization (CFSO) that supports more than 150 foundations, of which 31 are Community Foundations.<sup>70</sup> Assifero was founded in 2013 with to catalyze private resources for the common good. Twenty-two members of a National Council administer the Association.<sup>71</sup>

Assifero facilitates the exchanges between community foundations, cooperation organizations, and family foundations. In addition, it supports the foundations in North and South Italy working in totally different environments. While the political environment is not supportive of the operation of the community foundations, Assifero identifies the strengths of the community foundations in the different regions and shares that knowledge.

Assifero promotes Italian philanthropic work to become more visible and informed and tries to connect different actors within the philanthropic sphere. It focuses on human and sustainable development and shares information, good practices, and new approaches on national and European levels.<sup>72</sup> The team consists of 10 staff members.<sup>73</sup> Yearly reports since 2009<sup>74</sup> are available on their webpage, including the newest reports from 2022 (in Italian).<sup>75</sup>

Assifero implemented a 4C framework for evaluating their philanthropic support. It focuses on impact in four main areas, the Capability to strengthen the skills and know-how of its members, the Connections within the networks and partners outside of it, the Credibility of the Association and its values, and the Capacity to systematize the financial and non-financial resources of foundations and philanthropic entities.<sup>76</sup> One essential tool for Assifero's work is its Community Foundations Annual Conference. It focuses on strengthening the foundations and facilitating exchange and networking.<sup>77</sup>

## Contributions to community sustainability and the role of SDGs

Nationally, Italy has a good engagement with the SDGs. It is the first country to build a national alliance to fulfill Agenda 2030 objectives in 2016. Assifero is part of that alliance next to public institutions, private companies, and nonprofit organizations.

More specifically, Assifero offered an SDG workshop to their local community foundations. The SDGs are part of many community foundations' missions and are essential in grantmaking. Grantmaking focuses on projects which connect to the SDGs. Overall, community foundations' participation in contributing to achieving the SDGs needs to be better structured. However, community foundations and Assifero are starting to professionalize their interaction with Agenda 2030. In addition, Assifero started to work on focusing endowment-related investments on the SDGs. As of now, investments are not following sustainability criteria.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>70</sup> "Chi Siamo: Assifero: Associazione Italiana Fondazioni ed Enti Filantropici" (Assifero, ), <https://assifero.org/chisiamo/assifero/>.

<sup>71</sup> "Chi Siamo: Associati: Mappa interattiva degli associati ad Assifero" (Assifero, ), <https://assifero.org/chisiamo/associati/>.

<sup>72</sup> Assifero, "Chi Siamo: Assifero."

<sup>73</sup> "Chi Siamo: Staff" (Assifero, ), <https://assifero.org/chisiamo/staff/>.

<sup>74</sup> Accessible at: <https://assifero.org/chisiamo/bilanci-e-rapporti/>.

<sup>75</sup> Accessible at: [https://assifero.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Assifero\\_Bilancio-sociale-2022\\_compressed-1.pdf](https://assifero.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Assifero_Bilancio-sociale-2022_compressed-1.pdf).

<sup>76</sup> "Quadro strategico" (Assifero, ), <https://assifero.org/quadro-strategico/>.

<sup>77</sup> "Fondazioni di Comunità" (Assifero, ), <https://assifero.org/fondazioni-comunita/>.

<sup>78</sup> Francesca Mereta, interview by Ianis Rusitori, March 13, 2023.





Italian community foundations mainly focus on Reducing Inequalities (SDG 10), Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8), and Quality Education (SDG 4). Due to the urgency of the Climate Crisis, they also focus more and more on Climate Action (SDG 13). One critical activity here is the installment of solar panels and wind turbines. Community foundations are investing in the installment. From these investments, local communities benefit through cheaper energy and a lower cost of living.<sup>79</sup>

Messina Community Foundation (Messina CF) in Sicily also focuses on the Climate Crisis. It is tackling Climate Change as a social and economic crisis. Messina CF is launching a venture philanthropy fund in the equity of green social enterprises, addressing areas such as North Africa, South Europe, Palestine, and Turkey, among others. Messina CF is also the founder of the Forum of Inequalities, a think tank that fights inequalities and educational crises by employing a comprehensive approach.<sup>80</sup>

Furthermore, Messina CF is also focusing on impact evaluation. It has defined a broad framework for proving impact. Overall, project themes connect to the SDGs. Nevertheless, the evaluation is not focusing primarily on the SDGs. Community foundations do not set key indicators, as a culture of collecting data is not a given in Italy. National funds are available and focus on impact evaluation. However, the evaluations concern individual projects rather than the SDGs.<sup>81</sup>

## Stakeholder Collaboration

Stakeholder collaboration differs between the Southern part and the Northern part of Italy. The North is the wealthier part of the country and has community foundations with an endowment of up to 32 million euros. Community foundations here are financial intermediaries which are offering funds. Lately, they have started to change their actions and aim to become a catalyst in local communities. This change implies opening their management boards to members of civil society organizations or offering micro funds to small communities and individuals to implement projects and changes on the micro level.<sup>82</sup>

In the South financial resources are scarce, and community foundations focus on grassroots approaches and social capital. The impact of community foundations is highly efficient. One year after its establishment, one community foundation in Sicily became the focal point for local community actions during the COVID-19 pandemic while having limited financial means. The South has a broader understanding of collaborative solutions due to its financial constraints and is quite successful.<sup>83</sup>

Assifero is advising CFs to avoid dependency on public administration. The CF must be a collaborative partner and should not be too close to local governments. The frequent electoral processes in Italy are undermining the ability of CFs to collaborate with local administration on the long-term. Public administration is less efficient in the South, and community foundations struggle to cooperate with them.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Francesca Mereta, interview by Ianis Rușitoru, March 13, 2023.

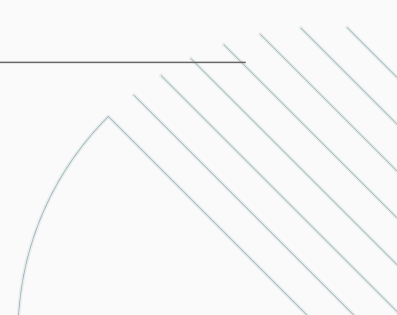
<sup>80</sup> Francesca Mereta, interview by Ianis Rușitoru, March 13, 2023.

<sup>81</sup> Francesca Mereta, interview by Ianis Rușitoru, March 13, 2023.

<sup>82</sup> Francesca Mereta, interview by Ianis Rușitoru, March 13, 2023.

<sup>83</sup> Francesca Mereta, interview by Ianis Rușitoru, March 13, 2023.

<sup>84</sup> Francesca Mereta, interview by Ianis Rușitoru, March 13, 2023.





Assifero, the Good Lobby,<sup>85</sup> and the European Community Foundation Initiative (ECFI)<sup>86</sup> are training community foundations to build solid and functional partnerships with local administration. Assifero also promotes collaboration between community foundations and cooperation and family funds. Here the CFSO is promoting community foundations as intermediaries that know well the local context and can direct investment toward local needs.<sup>87</sup>

## Challenges in the Italian Context

The main challenge for Italian community foundations and Assifero is accessing SDG-related training. Creating expertise around the Agenda 2030 requires resources for understanding the SDGs and investment in organizational capacity. The SDGs are known to the community foundations but connecting them with community foundation strategies is challenging. Due to low budgets, communication around the SDGs is insufficient. An annual event on the SDGs is augmenting communication around the Goals; however, it is not sufficiently used. Nevertheless, impact evaluation around the SDGs is increasing as a practice among other community stakeholders, such as companies. This context helps Assifero and community foundations to identify areas in need and to focus actions on urgent local issues.<sup>88</sup>

Community foundations find solutions for local problems, and Assifero and its network of members scale up those solutions and implement them beyond the local community. The collaboration with “The Good Lobby” addresses that aspect. However, regular changes within the government are making this endeavor more challenging.

Assifero implemented a 4C framework for evaluating their philanthropic support. It focuses on impact in four main areas, the Capability to strengthen the skills and know-how of its members, the Connections within the networks and partners outside of it, the Credibility of the Association and its values, and the Capacity to systematize the financial and non-financial resources of foundations and philanthropic entities.<sup>76</sup> One essential tool for Assifero’s work is its Community Foundations Annual Conference. It focuses on strengthening the foundations and facilitating exchange and networking.<sup>89</sup>

## Conclusion

Assifero works among other types of foundations with 31 community foundations. Despite the differences in financial resources between the Italian community foundations, Assifero builds cooperation and knowledge exchanges. It encourages actions to improve living conditions for all communities. It supports its community foundation members to direct financial as well as non-financial resources where they are needed. Regular changes in the local administrations and governments are weakening the ability of Assifero and its community foundation members to build strong networks with the administration and improve the lives of the citizens. With support from international associations like “The Good Lobby” and the collaboration with cooperation and family funds and ECFI, Assifero is empowering community foundations to focus their work on the SDGs and to become drivers of change.

<sup>85</sup> Accessible at: <https://www.thegoodlobby.eu/>.

<sup>86</sup> Accessible at: <https://www.communityfoundations.eu/about-ecfi/what-is-ecfi.html>.

<sup>87</sup> Francesca Mereta, interview by Ianis Rușitoru, March 13, 2023.

<sup>88</sup> Francesca Mereta, interview by Ianis Rușitoru, March 13, 2023.

<sup>89</sup> Francesca Mereta, interview by Ianis Rușitoru, March 13, 2023.





# HUNGARIAN COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS AND THE SDGs: LOCAL SUSTAINABILITY IN AN ILLIBERAL CONTEXT

*By Georgi Georgiev and Stefan Cibian*

“The quality of democracy decreased in Hungary. We have seen the biggest attacks on NGOs by the Government between 2016 and 2019-2020.”<sup>90</sup> The civil society movement in Hungary faces unprecedented systematic attempts to weaken and control the NGO sector through restrictive legislation introduced by the Hungarian government.<sup>91</sup> The sustainability of democratic communities in such a context is rather difficult. Survival is a constant concern instead of sustainability.

Despite the illiberal national context, the Hungarian community foundations movement is growing. According to data gathered from the Hungarian community foundations network, community development, health, and environmental protection are on the top of the list with civil initiatives financed through local grants.<sup>92</sup> Furthermore, while community foundations in Hungary do not explicitly address SDGs in their day-to-day work, they support causes that could be associated with the global Goals.<sup>93</sup> This case study explores the development of community foundations and their relations with the SDGs in a challenging national context.

## The evolution of the Hungarian community foundations' movement

The Roots and Wings Foundation (RWF) supports the development of the Hungarian community foundations movement. The Foundation was established in 2014 following the emergence of the first Hungarian community foundation in the 9th district in Budapest in 2011. Since then, the number of community foundations has grown to seven, explains Tamás Scsaurszki, Chairman of the Board of Trustees at RWF.<sup>94</sup>

## Community foundations and the capital of trust in local communities

Trust is a challenge in a society where the Government turns illiberal. “Hungary is clearly performing 'well' in the area of corruption. For the average Hungarian, news about corruption is commonplace and by now almost uninteresting,” emphasizes a report published by RWF.<sup>95</sup> According to Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index from 2018, the country joined the negative ranking of the most corrupt EU member states.<sup>96</sup>

From this perspective, community foundations bring hope that transparent support of local causes is possible. Hungarian community foundations are comparatively small and young organizations with reduced financial assets, but they have the potential to play a significant role in their communities. As Tamás Scsaurszki points out, Hungarian community foundations are responding to such challenges by building an excellent reputation through transparency in their grantmaking policies, leaving no space for corruption.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>90</sup> György Hátori, interview by Stefan Cibian and Georgi Georgiev, May 31, 2023.

<sup>91</sup> Havasi, Virág. "Power and powerlessness of the civil society in Hungarian illiberal democracy between 2010-2022" *Politics in Central Europe*, vol.18, no.4, 2022, pp.499-529. <https://doi.org/10.2478/pce-2022-0022>.

<sup>92</sup> Data provided by Roots and Wings Foundation.

<sup>93</sup> György Hátori, interview by Stefan Cibian and Georgi Georgiev, May 31, 2023.

<sup>94</sup> Tamás Scsaurszki, interview by Stefan Cibian and Georgi Georgiev, May 31, 2023.

<sup>95</sup> Tamás Scsaurszki, Iván Bardócz, Zsuzsa Rácz, Dóra Simay, István Sebestény, *A Guide to Community Foundations in Hungary* (Berlin: Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen e.V.), p.12.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*







Once they obtain the essential social capital of trust, community foundations nurture the values of independence, grass-root civil action, democracy, philanthropy, and work in a cooperative manner.<sup>98</sup> Cooperation is among the utmost motivational factors for members of local community foundations, concludes research conducted by György Hámori from RWF.<sup>99</sup> “It seems this factor remains among top reasons to continue working for a community foundation. Being in their respective groups is their main reason for their involvement and feeling motivated,”<sup>100</sup> observes György Hámori.

The support organization is concerned about polarization in local communities. In addition, the growing lack of trust in independent organizations not affiliated with the government is significantly affecting local dynamics.

## Local causes oriented toward the SDGs

Hungarian community foundations are well-connected to local communities and address local needs through their grantmaking practice. These needs include a focus on education, the environment, health, economic development, and inclusion – all topics well-aligned with the SDGs.

There are, however, also challenges in working on the SDGs. György Hámori stresses that constant changes in the legal environment often create obstacles for non-government organizations to contribute to critical areas of sustainable development such as environment protection, health, and building lasting partnerships with local governments and businesses.<sup>101</sup> However, The Roots and Wings Foundation and the growing network of Hungarian community foundations counterbalances such negative trends by using mechanisms of ongoing impact assessment.<sup>102</sup>

In 2017, RWF introduced a knowledge management system providing “an accurate and up-to-date picture about the work, achievements and social impact of community foundations.”<sup>103</sup> The platform strengthens partnerships with local communities and develops new strategies supported by data. RWF follows statistical information about those receiving long-term support from local initiatives and the number of long-term partnerships. This focus on collecting data about local communities and their challenges represents a sound basis for engaging with the relevant SDG indicators.

## Conclusion

The Hungarian community foundations movement is young. However, it is constantly put to the test by a problematic national context. Sustainability looks different in a country that turned illiberal and with increasing polarization. There, the mechanism of community foundation represents a significant contribution to holding trust and agency within local communities, bringing significant contributions towards SDG 16 and 17 besides their contribution to multiple SDGs through more hands-on work in local communities.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

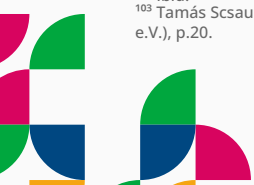
<sup>99</sup> György Hámori, “Motivation and group dynamics in Hungarian community foundations,” European Community Foundation Initiative Learning Lab (2021), p. 3-4.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, p.4.

<sup>101</sup> György Hámori, interview by Ștefan Cibian and Georgi Georgiev, May 31, 2023.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Tamás Scsaurszki, Iván Bardócz, Zsuzsa Rácz, Dóra Simay, István Sebestény, A Guide to Community Foundations in Hungary (Berlin: Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen e.V.), p.20.





# GERMAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

By *Andra-Octavia Drăghiciu*

There is an estimated number of 420 Community Foundations in Germany,<sup>104</sup> most of which are members of the Association of German Foundations (AGF). It is the largest and oldest European association of foundations, comprising over 4800 members, and host of the Alliance of German Community Foundations (AGCF) and the European Community Foundation Initiative (ECFI).<sup>105</sup> According to its mission statement, AGF represents the interests of German foundations in their relationship with politics and society, intending to: “showcase activities and commitment of foundations; advocate for better legal conditions for funders and foundations; provide comprehensive consultancy for funders and foundations; enhance exchange between our members.”

Every year, the AGCF communicates with the Community Foundations through a series of six regional conferences on different subjects. In 2020, the Sustainable Development Goals were on the agenda of these conferences, with the purpose of presenting them to the CFs and of finding out which CFs are already working with or towards the SDGs. The conclusion was that some CFs were incorporating the SDGs in their work, but not all representatives of the CFs had heard about them and Agenda 2030.<sup>107</sup>

Therefore, the AGCF decided to make the SDGs a greater part of their work in the subsequent year, 2021. In a series of webinars organized in collaboration with ECFI, several goals were bundled into themes and laid out for the CFs interested in discovering and working with the SDGs.<sup>108</sup>

Moreover, a report about community foundations and the SDGs clarified what the SDGs are and how CFs can actively contribute to achieving them.<sup>109</sup> The report stresses that sustainability in different sectors has been at the heart of the activity of German CFs long before the existence of the SDGs. Today, however, the issue has become acute and local measures are no longer enough – action must be taken on a national and global level. The report points out that these tasks are too big to be taken on alone and urges CFs to collaborate, as they represent a central part of civil society and are politically independent. This unique position allows them to foster cooperation and find innovative solutions both on a national and on an international level. Among the ways in which CFs can directly contribute to Agenda 30, the AGCF lists investing their capital in safe ventures which produce sustainable outcomes. Another important contribution would be to come up with a collaborative, unifying program, rather than focus on the fact that each CF contributes to the SDGs in its own way.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Interview with Ulrike Reichart.

<sup>105</sup> <https://www.stiftungen.org/en/home/association/about-us.html>.

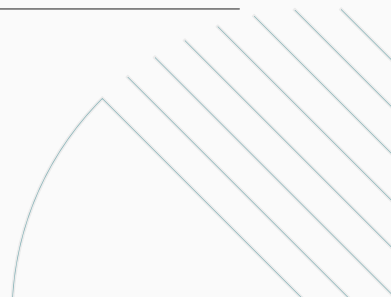
<sup>106</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>107</sup> Interview with Ulrike Reichart.

<sup>108</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>109</sup> Das Potenzial des Stiftens für die Nachhaltigkeitsziele | Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen.

<sup>110</sup> Wie können Stiftungen zu den SDGs beitragen? | Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen.





The conclusion is that, even though they might be interested in learning about and working towards Agenda 2030, some German CFs face limitations due to the lack of solid structures and resources, as a large part of the personnel works on a voluntary basis.<sup>111</sup><sup>112</sup> Thus, most German CFs do not organize their strategy according to the SDGs, but their purposes and agendas overlap, as the main sectors of focus are sustainability-oriented: social justice, education, environment and climate change.<sup>113</sup> For some CFs the lack of resources and time is a challenge as it limits their focus to activities at the local level and prevents them from collaborations with others.

The Alliance of German Community Foundations regards working with and towards the SDGs as an important collective task. It is therefore committed to furthering Agenda 2030 while encouraging its members to do the same by offering them support and training in this respect.



<sup>111</sup> Das Stiften und die SDGs | Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen.

<sup>112</sup> Interview with Ulrike Reichart.

<sup>113</sup> Ibidem.





# UK COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS AND AGENDA 2030: ENHANCING LOCAL IMPACT THROUGH THE SDGS

by Lutz Drieling and Stefan Cibian

UK Community Foundations (UKCF), the British Community Foundation Support Organization (CFSO), engages with Agenda 2030 at a strategic level. UKCF enables its community foundation members to use the SDG language and connect global priorities with local challenges. UKCF SDG-related activities include learning experiences for UK community foundations, sharing best practices, and improving communication of impact both on local and national levels.

## About UK Community Foundations

UKCF supports 47 accredited community foundations (CF). It is the 4th largest funder with over £1bn distributed grants and £76m of Emergencies Trust funding during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>114</sup> It was founded as the Community Foundation Network in 1991 and relaunched as the UK Community Foundations in 2013.<sup>115</sup> Besides UK community foundations, the Network includes three community foundations from Jersey, Bermuda, and Ireland.<sup>116</sup>

The UKCF has a board of 13 trustees, and its staff consists of 18 members.<sup>117</sup> Its 2022 charity income was £6,712,000, with £434,000 in investment gains. The expenditure was £8,000,000. 32% of the income comes from membership fees community foundations pay based on their endowments. The entire network of community foundations has a total endowment of £741 million. The endowment of the UKCF was £5.9 million on March 31, 2022.<sup>118</sup>

UKCF aims to give people access to a community foundation within their reach. CFs identify local needs and contribute to community improvement by encouraging “philanthropy, sustainable charitable funding, and local partnerships.”<sup>119</sup> In addition to leadership and national advocacy, UKCF offers training and resources to CFs to support their local communities. UKCF also implements national programs carried out by community foundations to deliver a widescale positive impact.<sup>120</sup>

Besides its annual reports dating back to 2016,<sup>121</sup> UKCF publishes reports on different aspects of its work.<sup>122</sup> One example is the 2021 report titled *Thinking globally, acting locally: How community foundations are contributing to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals*.<sup>123</sup> This report gives insight into UKCF's work and emphasizes community foundations' importance in fulfilling Agenda 2030.

<sup>114</sup> “The national voice for local communities” (UK Community Foundations), <https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/>.

<sup>115</sup> “Community foundations in the UK” (UK Community Foundations), <https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/about-us/our-story>.

<sup>116</sup> “Our international members” (UK Community Foundations), <https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/about-us/our-story>.

<sup>117</sup> Charity Commission for England and Wales, UK Community Foundations 2022, accessed at <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regId=1004630&subId=0>.

<sup>118</sup> “REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022” (UK Community Foundations, 2022).

<https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/media/x0lbhqa0/final-ukcf-board-approved-annual-report-and-financial-statements-2021-22.pdf> p.4ff.

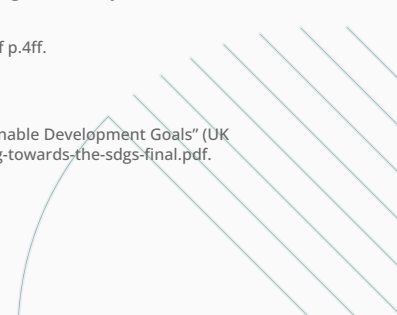
<sup>119</sup> “Our vision, purpose and mission” (UK Community Foundations), <https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/>.

<sup>120</sup> UK Community Foundations, “Our vision, purpose and mission.”

<sup>121</sup> “Annual Reports” (UK Community Foundations), <https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/about-us/annual-reports>.

<sup>122</sup> “Publications” (UK Community Foundations), <https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/publications>.

<sup>123</sup> Kezia Jackson-Harman et al., “Thinking globally, acting locally: How community foundations are contributing to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals” (UK Community Foundations, 2021), <https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/media/vxbk01u2/how-community-foundations-are-contributing-towards-the-sdgs-final.pdf>.





## UK Community Foundations work on the SDGs

Aligning the work of community foundations with Agenda 2030 is one of the key focus areas of the UKCF. Since 2020 UKCF has been sharing knowledge on how community foundations can interact with the SDGs. Through continued support from the European Community Foundation Initiative (ECFI),<sup>124</sup> community foundations have started translating the SDGs into their local contexts. Since 2021 UKCF has offered training and discussions within its network on aligning CF's action with the SDGs.<sup>125</sup> Furthermore, the 2022 UKCF Conference focused entirely on the SDGs. All sessions and workshops approached different aspects of the SDGs.

Besides engaging with the SDGs in general, UKCF is making steps towards working with individual Goals. UKCF is a member of the Mitigating Climate Change and Foundation Platform 20, which urges governments to act against climate change.<sup>126</sup>

UKCF is aware of the issues community foundations face in engaging with Agenda 2030. One challenging aspect is the need for more resources to align their work with the SDGs. Implementing the SDGs within the UKCF work is also perceived as complex. However, slowly, everyone starts to follow the same structure and use the language and framework of the SDGs.<sup>127</sup> Donors increasingly understand the SDG language. UKCF observes a shift from ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) towards social peace and SDGs. This shift makes it easier for the CFSOs and CFs to start partnerships with corporations and acquire new donors.<sup>128</sup>

Community foundations include the SDGs within their strategies and align them with their investments and activities. Next to grantmaking, the language of the SDGs is increasingly used by community foundations to communicate Agenda 2030 to their communities. UK community foundations discuss various approaches to address the SDGs with companies, individual donors, and local community groups.<sup>129</sup>

The UKCF sees how the SDGs are bringing people together. The SDGs can unify efforts from organizations working on common challenges and enhance their impact. The UKCF does not perceive the SDGs as the main driver for their work but rather as an additional piece of the puzzle that gives meaning to community actions.

UKCF includes the SDGs within its data collection mechanism for capturing community foundations' activities and impact.<sup>130</sup> Translated into local indicators, the SDGs offer community foundations a starting point to analyze their actions and measure their impact. A standardized approach to impact assessment is critical since smaller community foundations cannot compare their efforts and impact with larger community foundations like the one in London. The SDGs offer, therefore, a framework for directing work and resources towards local challenges.<sup>131</sup>

<sup>124</sup> <https://www.communityfoundations.eu/home.html>.

<sup>125</sup> "Sustainable Development Goals" (UK Community Foundations), <https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/our-impact/sustainable-development-goals>.

<sup>126</sup> UK Community Foundations, "<https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/about-us/our-commitments>."

<sup>127</sup> Rosemary Macdonald, Rosemary Macdonald, FRI Roundtable: Exploring the potential of CFs for strengthening UN's Agenda 2030, April 12, 2023.

<sup>128</sup> Rosemary Macdonald, FRI Roundtable: Exploring the potential of CFs for strengthening UN's Agenda 2030, April 12, 2023.

<sup>129</sup> UK Community Foundations, "Sustainable Development Goals."

<sup>130</sup> Rosemary Macdonald, FRI Roundtable: Exploring the potential of CFs for strengthening UN's Agenda 2030, April 12, 2023.

<sup>131</sup> Rosemary Macdonald, FRI Roundtable: Exploring the potential of CFs for strengthening UN's Agenda 2030, April 12, 2023.





## Example of CFs engagement with the SDGs in the UKCF context

Given the work of UKCF and ECFI on engaging UK community foundations with the SDGs, several CFs responded positively to the challenge. Below we include a few such examples.

Northamptonshire Community Foundations (NCF) is one of the SDG leaders in the European community foundations movement. NCF has taken multiple steps to connect the work of the Foundation with Agenda 2030 meaningfully. NCF agreed on ambassadors for the goals from among the Foundation's team. In Rachel McGrath's words, "[w]e have taken a slightly unique approach in which all of our staff and trustees are global Goals ambassadors. So, I am an ambassador for UN SDG #16, peace, justice, and strong institutions. We have a whole toolkit that we take out to community forums." Furthermore, NCF re-conceived its strategy alongside grantmaking, finance, communications, and other internal processes of the Community Foundation to reflect the SDGs.<sup>132</sup> Further details on NCF's engagement with the SDGs can be found in the case study written by Rachel McGrath, the NCF Director.<sup>133</sup>

The Leeds Community Foundation (Leeds CF) selected, together with its trustees, five SDGs that best capture their work. Strategic focus helped identify local challenges and solutions and augment project impact. The Leeds CF also included the SDGs within its grantmaking calls. Leeds CF will focus more on climate change actions alongside other SDG-relevant work areas in the future.<sup>134</sup>

In its 2021 Vital Signs Report, The Community Foundation of Tyne & Wear and Northumberland focused on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and, more specifically, on Women, people with physical disabilities, Ethnic minority communities, LGBTQIA+, and people with learning disabilities. Through its active participation with members of the communities and engagement with the SDGs, the Community Foundation identified an essential need for more decisive actions toward SDG 10.<sup>135</sup>

Foundation Scotland integrated the SDGs into its ten-year strategic plan (Strategic Plan 2030).<sup>136</sup> This plan is an impact framework aligned with the SDGs. It helps the Community Foundation to analyze its grantmaking and move endowment into impact investment funds, which focus on the SDGs. Thus, donors can have an impact by investing in the Community Foundation's endowment and companies that contribute to the SDGs. This lighthouse project raised the interest of British and European community foundations in this new approach towards Agenda 2030.<sup>137</sup>

## Conclusion

UK Community Foundations is bringing together 47 Community Foundations in the United Kingdom. With over £1bn distributed grants, the UK community foundations are the 4th largest funder in the UK. UKCF supports community foundation efforts in engaging with Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. Next to providing training on the SDGs, UKCF is regularly publishing resources, exchanging best practices, and facilitating discussions on how CFs can align themselves with the SDGs. The UKCF has several members that provide good examples of aligning their work with Agenda 2030. UKCF is also an example of how to encourage community foundations to strengthen their impact through the SDGs, contributing to more sustainable local communities.

<sup>132</sup> Rachel McGrath, FRI Roundtable: Exploring the potential of CFs for strengthening UN's Agenda 2030, April 12, 2023.

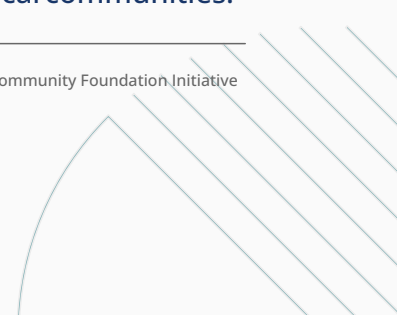
<sup>133</sup> Rachel McGrath, Northamptonshire Community Foundation, "Northamptonshire tackles SDGs locally and comprehensively," European Community Foundation Initiative (October, 2022).

<sup>134</sup> Rosemary Macdonald, FRI Roundtable: Exploring the potential of CFs for strengthening UN's Agenda 2030, April 12, 2023.

<sup>135</sup> Jackson-Harman et al., "Thinking globally, acting locally," p. 7.

<sup>136</sup> <https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/about-us/how-we-work>.

<sup>137</sup> Jackson-Harman et al., "Thinking globally, acting locally.," p.11.



# COMMUNITY FOUNDATION BONN AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: BETWEEN LOCAL ACTIONS AND THE GLOBAL VISION

By *Lutz Drieling*

The Community Foundation Bonn (CFB) sees the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as “a guideline for a better world.”<sup>138</sup> This conviction is guiding the Community Foundation to support Agenda 2030. As a partner of Foundation 20, CFB is active in international SDG networks and committed to implementing the SDGs locally.

## A brief introduction to CFB

CFB was founded in 2001/2002 by *Sparkasse Köln Bonn*. In 2020 the Community Foundation received its new headquarters. It also got awarded the Seal of Quality by the Association of German Foundations, which calls explicitly for independence from administration, banks, and individuals.

The CF offers a place for citizens, companies, and organizations to engage in the local civil society. Everyone can participate by investing time, money, or ideas. Volunteers support the Foundation in their operational work as well as in projects. CFB is primarily active in social work, education, support for the socially disadvantaged, art and culture, and environment and climate protection, be it through the implementation of its projects or grantmaking.

The Foundation supports ideas for improving Bonn generated by local citizens. The focus lies on sustainable impact. Here the Foundation is working on systematizing the process of getting new ideas and trying to find a way to collect ideas and transform them into new pilot projects.<sup>139</sup> Lighthouse CFB projects include Open Bookshelves (Offene Bücherschränke), Education Fund Bonn (Bonner Bildungsfonds), Initiative for Children's Rights, and school mentoring projects.<sup>140</sup> The CFB is well connected with various local actors for strengthening the commitments towards the SDGs.<sup>141</sup> CFB is also engaging with the SDGs internationally. It is a partner of *Foundations 20*, a network that calls for aligning G20 politics with the Paris Climate Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>142</sup>

The management of the CFB consists of 2,6 full-time positions supported by ten volunteers. There are 94 volunteer committee members of the *Bürgerstiftung Bonn*, serving on committees related to various foundation funds and trust foundations. Twenty-three volunteers are project managers or mentors, and additional 168 volunteers are working on projects.<sup>143</sup> The value of the Foundation's endowment is 12.568.468€. CFB had an expenses budget of 457.590€ in 2021.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>138</sup> Wolfgang Doose, interview by Lutz Drieling, 03.04.2023, Microsoft Teams.

<sup>139</sup> Interview with Wolfgang Doose Wolfgang Doose, interview by Lutz Drieling.

<sup>140</sup> “Über uns” (Bürgerstiftung Bonn), <https://www.buergerstiftung-bonn.de/ueber-uns/>, Wer ist die Bürgerstiftung Bonn.

<sup>141</sup> Bürgerstiftung Bonn, “Über uns”, Wer ist die Bürgerstiftung Bonn.

<sup>142</sup> “About F20” (Foundations 20, ), <https://foundations-20.org/about-us/>.

<sup>143</sup> Bürgerstiftung Bonn, “Über uns”, Team, Bilanz und Zahlen.

<sup>144</sup> Bürgerstiftung Bonn, “Über uns”, Bilanz und Zahlen.



## Contributions to community sustainability and the SDGs

The work of the CFB is related to all SDGs. The CFB projects mainly concentrate on the following SDGs: 4 Quality Education, 10 Reduced inequalities, 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities, 13 Climate Action, and 17 Partnerships for the goals.<sup>145</sup> The Foundation's Board understands the SDGs' importance well, as expressed by its participation in the Foundation 20. "The board sees the necessity of the SDGs and supports the transformation of the global SDGs into local actions."<sup>146</sup>

One large field of CFB actions is concentrating on SDG 4 Quality Education. CFB has several projects, including the Bonner Education Fund that in 2022/2023 had a budget of 168.500 € and was distributed to 15 primary schools and 36 kindergartens. The above-mentioned institutions are getting a budget that they can use for supporting children in need.<sup>147</sup>

Open bookshelves are a concept for exchanging books. People can take or bring books to the open bookshelves. These shelves are accessible for everyone and offer an opportunity to get access to books for free as well as to give books away and ensure that each book is read more than once. The concept is used internationally, and the CF Bonn has installed several open bookshelves throughout the city.<sup>148</sup> In addition to SDG 4, the shelves support SDG 10, 11, and 12.

The project *Gross&Klein* (Tall and Little) uses an interdisciplinary approach to SDG 4. The project trains volunteers to become *Schulpaten* (School mentors), who will support all-day schools in different domains. They help with homework, in the library, cooking or baking, crafting, gardening, teaching German, or assisting pupils with disabilities.<sup>149</sup> The Foundation contributes to SDGs 2, 8, 10, 11, 13, and 17, next to SDG 4, through this project.

Two projects are concentrating on SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities. The project *Theater für dich und mich* (Theater for You and Me) aims to give underprivileged children access to theaters. By partnering children with mentors, those children get access to theater plays. The tickets are bought by the mentor. When the mentor is a student, the ticket is paid for by the CFB. The children and their mentors are meeting at the theater. They watch the play together, discuss what they saw, and sometimes get the chance to talk to the actors about the play. The children receive a theater book containing the plays they will watch. The book also offers space for their thoughts and pictures.<sup>150</sup>

The project *Zusammen.Wachsen* (Grow Together) is mobilizing volunteers to support a school in Bonn to shift back to regular schooling after the COVID-19 pandemic. This project concentrates specifically on underprivileged children who suffered from the pandemic more than others. Volunteers are needed for extra support, especially for pupils who could not keep up with studying during the pandemic. This project is implemented in partnership with a local company.<sup>151</sup>

A project in connection to SDG 4 and SDG 13 is the *BONNi&BO-Klimaführerschein* (Climate License). The Foundation Bonner climate ambassadors implement the project. It targets pupils in their 3rd primary school year. The pupils solve electricity, recycling, transport, nutrition, heating, and water tasks.<sup>152</sup>

<sup>145</sup> "Projekte der Bürgerstiftung Bonn" (Bürgerstiftung Bonn), <https://www.buergerstiftung-bonn.de/projekte/>.

<sup>146</sup> Wolfgang Doose, interview by Lutz Drieling.

<sup>147</sup> "Bonner Bildungsfonds" (Bürgerstiftung Bonn, ), <https://www.buergerstiftung-bonn.de/projekte/bonner-bildungsfonds/>.

<sup>148</sup> "Offene Bücherschränke" (Bürgerstiftung Bonn, ), <https://www.buergerstiftung-bonn.de/projekte/offene-buecherschraenke/>.

<sup>149</sup> "Groß & Klein" (Bürgerstiftung Bonn, ), <https://www.buergerstiftung-bonn.de/projekte/gross-klein/>.

<sup>150</sup> "Theater für dich und mich" (Bürgerstiftung Bonn), <https://www.buergerstiftung-bonn.de/projekte/theater-fuer-dich-und-mich/>.

<sup>151</sup> "Zusammen.Wachsen" (Bürgerstiftung Bonn), <https://www.buergerstiftung-bonn.de/projekte/zusammenwachsen/>.

<sup>152</sup> "BONNi & BO-Klimaführerschein" (Bürgerstiftung Bonn), <https://www.buergerstiftung-bonn.de/projekte/bonni-bo-klimafuehrerschein/>.







## How CFB makes sense of the SDGs

The Community Foundation tries to implement locally what the SDGs envisage globally. The SDGs categorize problems facing local communities. CFB supports the SDGs also by joining *Foundation 20*. Through this, CFB wanted to set an example and show its commitment to the SDGs. It shows the global character of local actions, and it makes local activities more visible and tangible. CFB addresses all SDGs through its work.

The priority of the community foundation is the local impact in and around Bonn. As with all German community foundations, its action is bound to its statutes defining their field of work, which means acting locally. CFB efforts are in decided upon by the Foundation's board.<sup>153</sup>

"If the SDGs cannot be experienced, they remain a puzzle."<sup>154</sup>

Community foundations depend not just on their staff but also on their network - on municipalities, stakeholders, and citizens. Trust is one of their main assets, and a supportive environment is key to the community foundations' efforts. "Without the people, it does not work".<sup>155</sup> New people must be found, motivated, and integrated within the actions of the community foundation. "This kind of resilience is a key factor for a stable future of the SDGs."<sup>156</sup>

It is essential to implement sustainable structures to ensure long-term local impact. Therefore, the community foundation tries to keep its course by creating and implementing pilot projects and scaling up success stories so Bonn is closer to becoming a sustainable community.<sup>157</sup>

## Conclusion

The Community Foundation Bonn participates in Foundation 20 and implements the SDGs locally. Through this, it became a global and a local actor for the SDGs. CFB's engagement with the SDGs sets an example for the people of Bonn, other community foundations, and third stakeholders who believe we need more sustainable communities. The projects presented above touch upon multiple SDGs having an impact on the lives of those living in Bonn and beyond. CFB is transforming the SDGs into local reality and is therefore not just acting on them but also demonstrating to the local community that more sustainability translates into a better life for all.

<sup>153</sup> Wolfgang Doose, interview by Lutz Drieling.

<sup>154</sup> Wolfgang Doose, interview by Lutz Drieling.

<sup>155</sup> Wolfgang Doose, interview by Lutz Drieling.





# BRAUNSCHWEIG COMMUNITY FOUNDATION: THE IMPULS REPORT AND SDG PROMOTION

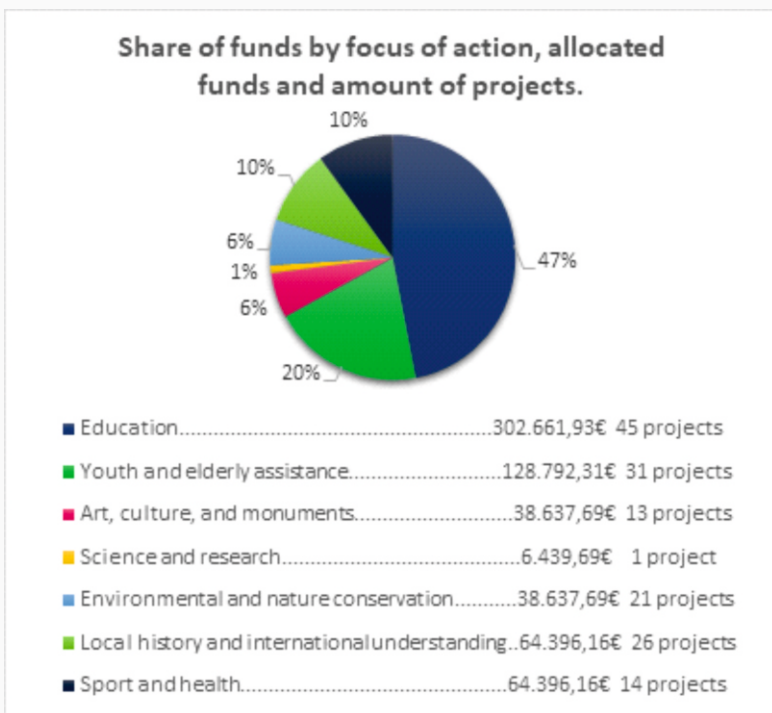
by Lutz Drieling

With its imPuls Report, the Braunschweig Community Foundation<sup>158</sup> (BCF) is utilizing the SDGs as a local tool for determining the state of its communities. Based on the SDGs, indicators were created to identify community challenges that can be acted upon.

The BCF promotes the SDGs through its work. The BCF uses specific projects to promote the SDGs and show their importance to the citizens of Braunschweig. Especially interesting is the above-mentioned imPuls-Report, which uses the SDGs to determine Braunschweigs' sustainability challenges and offers orientation for setting up future projects.

BCF aims for a socially peaceful, culturally diverse, and active city. BCF sees itself as an institution that supports civic engagement and tries to support the citizens of Braunschweig.<sup>159</sup> The Foundation was established in 2003. It has been a member of the *Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen* since 2004. It has held the Seal of Quality for trust foundation management since 2015.<sup>160</sup> The Foundation has seven main areas of focus: education; youth welfare and assistance for the elderly; art, culture, and the protection of historical monuments; science and research; environmental protection and nature conservation; local history and international understanding; and sport and health.<sup>161</sup>

Braunschweig Community Foundation had an endowment of 13.095.122,66 € in 2021. The BCF has a capital maintenance reserve of 320.000€ and a reserve for administrative expenses of 170.000€. In 2021 the BCF collected 405.965,51€ in donations, while the income from the endowment was 401.292,71€.<sup>162</sup>



The annual budget consists of 44% donations, 44% revenues generated by investments, and 12% revenues generated by the administration of other foundations. From the annual budget, 47% was allocated for Education, 20% for youth and the elderly, and 10% each for sports and health and local history and international understanding projects. Overall, the BCF funded 151 projects in 2021 with 643.961,55€.<sup>163</sup>

Figure 7. Share of funds by focus of action, allocated funds and amount of projects.

<sup>158</sup> Bürgerstiftung Braunschweig: The Management consists of five individuals supported by the foundation's council consisting of seven additional individuals. The foundation office consists of five full-time positions, five part-time positions, and eight volunteers. The projects of the foundation are supported by more than 300 volunteers. The yearly reports of the CF can be found online. It is part of a network with two other foundations from Braunschweig with which the CF shares the premises.

<sup>159</sup> "Über uns" (Bürgerstiftung Braunschweig, ), <https://www.buergerstiftungbraunschweig.de/ueber-uns/buergerstiftung/>.

<sup>160</sup> "Selbstverpflichtung" (Bürgerstiftung Braunschweig, ), <https://www.buergerstiftungbraunschweig.de/ueber-uns/buergerstiftung/selbstverpflichtung/>.

<sup>161</sup> "Engagementbotschafter" (Bürgerstiftung Braunschweig, ), <https://www.buergerstiftungbraunschweig.de/ueber-uns/buergerstiftung/engagementbotschafter/>.

<sup>162</sup> Bürgerstiftung Braunschweig, "Wo das Herz schlägt: Jahresbericht 2021" (Bürgerstiftung Braunschweig, 2021),

<https://www.buergerstiftungbraunschweig.de/infos/jahresberichte/> p. 67 ff.

<sup>163</sup> Bürgerstiftung Braunschweig, "Wo das Herz schlägt."



## Contributions to community sustainability and the Role of SDGs

Through its work, BCF can show the importance of the SDGs and make them visible to citizens. The strategy and strategic priorities of BCF are determined by its statutes. The core seven areas covered by the Foundation's Statutes connect to the SDGs. In addition to their work and orientation on creating sustainable projects, the Foundation invests its funds respecting ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) standards by working with asset managers who follow these criteria.<sup>164</sup>

For the future, the BCF executive manager, Susanne Hauswaldt, wishes that the SDGs are better integrated in the city's politics and that people are more aware of the SDGs and the impact their behavior can have. She would like a regional, national, or even international platform where SDG-related actions are listed so people can join them. Through such an approach, people could become active drivers for change, supporting the fulfillment of the SDGs.<sup>165</sup>

All projects implemented by BCF are presented online. The projects are categorized by the seven fields of operations and by year. Even though they are not created based on the SDGs, the seven fields go in the same direction as the SDGs.

The imPuls Report of CF Braunschweig is a flagship project concerning the SDGs. The report presents data about life in Braunschweig while connecting each area with SDG indicators. It gives information and facts about Braunschweig in the following categories: Braunschweig, Diversity, Education, Inequality, Environment, and Braunschweig holds together. The indicators include birth rate, number of pupils, Co2 emissions, and share of School leavers without qualifications. The report presents aggregated data about the city and its citizens and it also shows issues that should be further worked on.<sup>166</sup>

The report was first published in 2020. The aim of CFB is to publish it every second year. The report for 2022 is also available online. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Foundation could not sufficiently promote the report. In 2021 the CF Braunschweig conducted several interviews with experts and individuals from Braunschweig to discuss different topics and offer citizens deeper insights. The interviews were held with politicians, scientists, other foundations, and NGOs, and all are marked with the relevant SDG on their webpage.<sup>167</sup>

Another project of CF Braunschweig that connects to SDG 4 and SDG 8 is *Sommerakademie Braunschweig 2023* (Summer Academy Braunschweig 2023). The main goal of the project is to improve pupils' professional development. The pupils shall become aware of their options and opportunities and develop an interest in their future. This shall help them choose a career they would like to follow after they finished education.<sup>168</sup> The summer academy is a three-week summer camp followed by a one-year accompaniment. Thirty-five pupils have the chance to prepare themselves for the transition to the job market. The participants cooperate with local companies to improve their skills and gain insight into future opportunities. After the summer camp meetings, projects and exchanges take place and the pupils improve their skills and personal development. The summer academy targets pupils in grades eight and nine. The projects are funded by the CF Braunschweig, Federal Employment Agency, Foundation *Unsere Kinder in Braunschweig* (Our Children in Braunschweig), Volkswagen Employee Foundation, and Ulrich Perschmann Foundation.<sup>169</sup>

<sup>164</sup> Susanne Hauswaldt, interview by Lutz Drieling, March 22, 2023, Microsoft Teams.

<sup>165</sup> Susanne Hauswaldt, interview by Lutz Drieling.

<sup>166</sup> "Braunschweig imPuls" (Bürgerstiftung Braunschweig, ), <https://braunschweig-impuls.de/wp-content/uploads/Braunschweig-imPuls-2022-Buergerstiftung-Braunschweig.pdf>, p. 2ff.

<sup>167</sup> Susanne Hauswaldt, interview by Lutz Drieling.

<sup>168</sup> "SOMMERAKADEMIE BRAUNSCHWEIG 2022: MOTIVIEREN STÄRKEN ORIENTIEREN" (Bürgerstiftung Braunschweig; Phase BE, 2022), [https://www.buergerstiftungbraunschweig.de/fileadmin/Medien/Text/Infos/Flyer/konzept\\_sommerakademie\\_braunschweig\\_2022.pdf](https://www.buergerstiftungbraunschweig.de/fileadmin/Medien/Text/Infos/Flyer/konzept_sommerakademie_braunschweig_2022.pdf).

<sup>169</sup> "Sommerakademie Braunschweig 2023" (Bürgerstiftung Braunschweig, ), [https://www.buergerstiftungbraunschweig.de/projekte/projekt/?tx\\_bsdv\\_projekte%5Baction%5D=show&tx\\_bsdv\\_projekte%5Bcontroller%5D=Projekt&tx\\_bsdv\\_projekte%5Bobjekt%5D=827&cHash=b0c04a9679830874419eb4549a7c56df](https://www.buergerstiftungbraunschweig.de/projekte/projekt/?tx_bsdv_projekte%5Baction%5D=show&tx_bsdv_projekte%5Bcontroller%5D=Projekt&tx_bsdv_projekte%5Bobjekt%5D=827&cHash=b0c04a9679830874419eb4549a7c56df).





*The Nachtschicht 2023, 8 Stunden für den guten Zweck* (nightshift 2023, 8h for a good cause) is a project supporting SDG 17, SDG 11, and other SDGs depending on the focus of engaged organizations. It gives local organizations access to knowledge, expertise and affordable solutions. The *Nachtschicht 2023, 8 Stunden für den guten Zweck* project targets NGOs and other non-profit organizations. CF Braunschweig connects these NGOs with creatives covering different topics. Organizations present particular challenges the creatives could provide help with. In the 8 hours, the organizations and the creatives are working together on this small project with the goal that at the end of the night, the organizations go home with a result. The creatives donate their time, skills, and knowledge to the good cause of local organizations, often including social media campaigns, marketing, print media, corporate identity, and webpage development.<sup>170</sup>

## Bürgerstiftung Braunschweig and the SDGs

The core focus areas of the Foundation include education, youth welfare and care for the elderly, art, culture and the protection of historical monuments, science and research, environmental protection and nature conservation, local history, and international understanding, and sport and health.<sup>171</sup> The applicable SDGs depend on the scope of supported projects. A project within the sphere of Arts could deal with gender equality, zero hunger, or sustainable cities in communities. BCF staff reflects on the Foundation's projects and determine how they fit with the SDGs. The relevant SDGs are indicated in the yearly report. By this, BCF hopes to make the SDGs less abstract for local citizens and show that everyone can create an impact through participation.

The SDGs are perceived as too abstract and complicated to be easily understood and set into context by everyone. Therefore, BCF uses its work to promote and make the SDGs visible. In addition, the imPuls-Report also shows the SDG's relevance for Braunschweig. The Foundation reveals where work and improvement are necessary by showing Braunschweig's development challenges. It remains important for the BCF management to convince people, internally and externally, of the necessity and importance of the SDGs for the regional context.<sup>172</sup>

## Conclusion

In this case study, I presented the work of the Bürgerstiftung Braunschweig. With its imPuls-Report, the Community Foundation took a big step in making the SDGs accessible in the regional context. It also uses the SDGs as indicators for identifying areas and issues to act on and to create and implement projects for. CF Braunschweig uses its implemented projects and their effects for promoting the SDGs within its community and showing how local actions play a part in contributing to the SDGs and therefore improve the life of the people in Braunschweig. The management of the community foundation is eager to use the SDGs as a tool to improve life and use their work to promote the SDGs in their community.

<sup>170</sup> "Nachtschicht 2023 - 8 Stunden für den guten Zweck" (Bürgerstiftung Braunschweig), [https://www.buergerstiftungbraunschweig.de/projekte/projekt?tx\\_bsdv\\_projekte%5Baction%5D=show&tx\\_bsdv\\_projekte%5Bcontroller%5D=Projekt&tx\\_bsdv\\_projekte%5Bpr ojekt%5D=826&cHash=a1d199dd07316776199f1982d47ae719](https://www.buergerstiftungbraunschweig.de/projekte/projekt?tx_bsdv_projekte%5Baction%5D=show&tx_bsdv_projekte%5Bcontroller%5D=Projekt&tx_bsdv_projekte%5Bpr ojekt%5D=826&cHash=a1d199dd07316776199f1982d47ae719).

<sup>171</sup> "Satzung der Bürgerstiftung" (Bürgerstiftung Braunschweig, ), [https://www.buergerstiftungbraunschweig.de/ueber-uns/buergerstiftung/satzung/52\(2\)a-g](https://www.buergerstiftungbraunschweig.de/ueber-uns/buergerstiftung/satzung/52(2)a-g).

<sup>172</sup> Susanne Hauswaldt, interview by Lutz Drieling.





# COMMUNITY FOUNDATION PFALZ: SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES AT THE CORE OF A COMMUNITY FOUNDATION MECHANISM

By *Andra-Octavia Drăghiciu*

## About Community Foundation Pfalz

One foundation which was created on the idea of regional sustainability is the Community Foundation Pfalz, based in Klingenmünster, Rhineland Palatinate. It was founded in 2005 comprising the private funds of concerned citizens with the purpose of supporting the sustainable development of the communities in the Pfalz.<sup>173</sup> Their main objectives are preserving and protecting the natural environment in the region, stimulating sustainable economic models, enhancing the quality of life of disadvantaged people, and reviving the region.<sup>174</sup>

## A systemic engagement with the SDGs

The United Nations program of action Agenda 21,<sup>175</sup> a predecessor of the SDGs, served as a basis for this vision, which has remained unchanged since the foundation of the CF.<sup>176</sup> These principles are at the core of one of the Foundation's main projects – a hotel. Pfalz Community Foundation runs one of Germany's most sustainable hotels and conference centers, owned by the foundation.<sup>177</sup> It is an inclusive project, with 40% of the personnel consisting of people with disabilities, thus ensuring social inclusion. Moreover, the food, especially the vegetables, is purchased seasonably and regionally, the hotel has its own herb garden and is surrounded by a 7000 m<sup>2</sup> park. It also serves as the residence for the foundation's Academy.<sup>178</sup>

A second important project is accompanying the villages in the region on their path towards sustainability. Using the SDGs as a compass, ten fields of innovation have been defined, such as energy, sustainable construction, mobility, subsistent economic circuits, healthy nutrition, sustainable agriculture etc. Each village must choose at least five goals and will then be supported financially by the Community Foundation in implementing them. These are called “villages of the future” (Zukunftsdörfer) and should become sustainable and self-sufficient by producing their own energy, for instance.<sup>179</sup>

As nutrition is a priority for the Pfalz Community Foundation, a third project focuses on bringing together producers and consumers of foodstuffs to create a more sustainable and environmentally friendly supply chain. To this end, the CF has championed a regional initiative that sets up communities of producers and consumers in order to facilitate the dialogue between them.<sup>180</sup>

Due to its focus on sustainability, the Pfalz Community Foundation regards itself as a pioneer of sustainability among German community foundations.<sup>181</sup> According to Christine Steinmetz, member of the board, the Foundation has been making its own way, doing things differently than other community foundations ever since the beginning, not only because of the strong focus on sustainability and self-sufficiency, but also because they invest their capital in the hotel and in the “villages of the future” project rather than depositing it in the bank.<sup>182</sup>

<sup>173</sup> Interview with Christine Steinmetz conducted by Andra-Octavia Drăghiciu, 2023.

<sup>174</sup> <https://buergerstiftung-pfalz.de/>.

<sup>175</sup> <https://www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21/#:~:text=Agenda%2021%20is%20a%20comprehensive,human%20impacts%20on%20the%20environment.>

<sup>176</sup> Interview with Christine Steinmetz conducted by Andra-Octavia Drăghiciu, 2023.

<sup>177</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>178</sup> <https://stiftsgut-keysermuehle.de/nachhaltig/>.

<sup>179</sup> Interview with Christine Steinmetz conducted by Andra-Octavia Drăghiciu, 2023.

<sup>180</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>181</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>182</sup> Ibidem.





She stresses that it has not always been easy, especially 16 years ago, when they started implementing this model. Their initiatives and ideas such as not serving meat at the hotel's restaurant were met with skepticism, but they decided to stay true to their beliefs and to prove that it was possible to do things differently.<sup>183</sup> Now that the SDGs are increasingly visible and sustainability has become an imperative, the Community Foundation has been receiving more support and understanding from local communities. They feel, however, that German community foundations have a long way to go in this respect.<sup>184</sup>

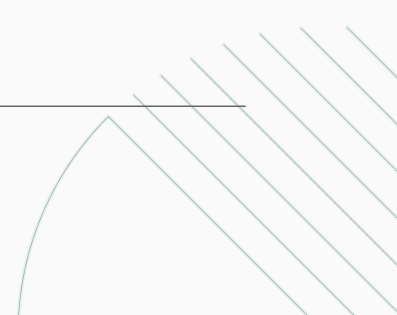
The importance of the SDGs is growing in the German community foundations landscape, but they have yet to become an integral part of the foundations' agenda. Whereas some foundations in large cities have oriented their entire activity towards meeting the SDGs, smaller community foundations have limited knowledge and capacities to contribute to Agenda 2030. This, however, does not mean that sustainability is not a priority for them. On the contrary. The mission of German community foundations such as the Bürgerstiftung Pfalz is very similar to that of the SDGs, their main objective being to increase sustainability on a regional level in sectors such as environment, social inclusion, education, mobility, or economics.

## Conclusion

The contribution of Community Foundation Pfalz to the SDGs in Europe is therefore a local one, not incorporated in a national or European strategy to further Agenda 2030. Whereas there is some exchange with other regional actors, the Foundation pursues its own projects aimed at furthering sustainability in the region.



<sup>183</sup> Ibidem.  
<sup>184</sup> Ibidem.





# FĂGĂRAȘ COUNTRY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION, YOUTHBANK, AND AGENDA 2030: STEPS TOWARD A MORE STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT WITH THE SDGs

*By Edi Dragoș Beserman*

In Făgăraș, Romania, the SDGs empower youth to think about their future. The Făgăraș Country Community Foundation<sup>185</sup> (FCCF) approached the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by connecting them with their youth program, YouthBank Făgăraș,<sup>186</sup> before streamlining the Goals at a strategic level.

FCCF aims to develop philanthropy, leadership, and civil society in the Făgăraș area, as well as its capacity as a sustainable foundation.<sup>187</sup> FCCF's strategy emphasizes four areas of focus: natural and built environment, education, entrepreneurship and economic development, and arts, culture, and sports.

## More about the Făgăraș Country Community Foundation

FCCF was established in 2013 when approximately twenty people from the local community and the Association for Community Relations joined forces to raise the necessary funds. The initial idea of the founding members was to support local people to organize themselves better so they would have a more significant impact on the local community. The first activities focused on education, health, and the environment and included:

- collecting funds for scholarships,
- buying bed linen for the pediatrics section of the Făgăraș Municipal Hospital,
- planting trees in the region.

Due to the above experiences, those involved in establishing the FCCF understood the importance of the community foundation mechanism for improving the quality of life in the region.<sup>188</sup>

## FCCF's engagement with the SDGs

The Foundation is a local funder that supports ideas, initiatives, projects, NGOs, and the business environment in the Făgăraș Country. It identifies the needs and problems of the community and then finds resources to address them. To identify community assets, needs, and problems, the Foundation organizes “community cafes” on various topics, all core for the SDGs. For example, Emilia Ciurchea, the FCCF Executive Director, shared the story of one of their new donors interested in solving community educational needs. The Foundation gathered pupils, students, teachers, NGOs, authorities, and entrepreneurs for an open discussion on educational topics to identify and better understand such needs. Based on these discussions, FCCF wrote a report about local educational needs, problems, and assets and received funding from the donor.<sup>189</sup>

When speaking about the SDGs, the Foundation tries to focus on all SDGs by supporting different initiatives on topics covered by the Goals. For example, the Foundation had discussions with the business environment in Făgăraș Country to see how local entrepreneurs can integrate or rethink their business models by relating to the SDGs.<sup>190</sup>

<sup>185</sup> Fundația Comunitară Țara Făgărașului (FCTF) in Romanian.

<sup>186</sup> YouthBank Făgăraș, <https://fundatiactf.ro/youthbank-2/>.

<sup>187</sup> Făgăraș Country Community Foundation, <https://fundatiactf.ro/despre-noi/>.

<sup>188</sup> Emilia Ciurchea, interview by Edi Dragoș Beserman, June 2023.

<sup>189</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>190</sup> Ibidem.





Since 2019 FCCF connected the SDGs with YouthBank Făgăraș.<sup>191</sup> The YouthBank team constitutes, promotes, and administers transparently a special fund for financing projects proposed by high school students. The program focuses on youth between 15 and 20 years of age. It aims to offer youth a framework to work for making decisions concerning their community. The program fosters behaviors like youth leadership, generosity, philanthropy, responsibility, and civic initiative. To encourage youth to think more holistically about their communities, the Foundation approached the SDGs. FCCF integrated the Goals into the program's structure.

The Foundation's earlier work on connecting the SDGs with the YouthBank Făgăraș program proved instrumental in scaling up engagement with the SDGs. A deeper integration of the Goals into the Foundation's practices occurred in 2022 when FCCF included the SDGs in their strategy.<sup>192</sup>

Further steps towards engaging more with the SDGs include integrating the Goals into other programs and their annual report and raising awareness about Goals. However, further SDG-related plans still need to be determined as only two persons from the foundation consider that SDGs should be prioritized.<sup>193</sup> Thus, the problem of integrating SDGs into the Foundation's strategy is due to internal issues rather than the difficulty in understanding them. For Emilia Ciurchea, these issues relate to a need for consensus between members and awareness of the SDGs' possible impact and benefits. In her words, “[there is a] *lack of understanding about benefits and impact – what impact would it have on our community if we focus on the SDGs. Would we bring more donors? Would we bring more funds? Would we bring more partners?*”<sup>194</sup>

## Conclusion

FCCF commenced its engagement with the SDGs at the level of a specific program – YouthBank Făgăraș. Currently, it is exploring the Goals' strategic implications for their region's sustainability and, implicitly, for the work of the Foundation. While connecting to and localizing the Goals is not an easy process, the SDGs triggered more robust thinking around the sustainability of local communities in FCCF's practice.



<sup>191</sup> FCCF's engagement with the SDGs has been supported by the Global Challenges Local Solutions program of the Academy for Philanthropy in Poland.

<sup>192</sup> FCCF took part in SDG-related discussions organized by the European Community Foundation Initiative and the Făgăraș Research Institute through its Global Diplomacy Lab at Făgăraș project.

<sup>193</sup> Emilia Ciurchea, interview by Edi Dragoș Beserman.

<sup>194</sup> Ibidem.







# HEALTHY CITY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AND THE SDGs: SUSTAINABILITY AS A PART OF COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS' DNA

*By Stefan Cibian and Lutz Drieling*

The Healthy City Community Foundation (HCCF) in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia, started in 2022 to engage with Agenda 2030 and is currently considering a more strategic engagement with the SDGs. HCCF connects to sustainable development discussions based on its experience with activating local communities in its region and enhancing community resilience.<sup>195</sup> Currently, HCCF is exploring how to make sense of Agenda 2023 in their local context.

HCCF is the first community foundation established in Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>196</sup> After the fall of communism, the local Rotary Club of Banská Bystrica wanted to renew its activities. They decided to start a foundation in 1992. The Foundation's first project was a playground that failed because of the suspicion and lack of support from local community members. After visiting American community foundations, the Healthy City Foundation was transformed into the Healthy City Community Foundation, which distributed its first grant in 1994. The mentioned playground was finished five years later through community participation.<sup>197</sup> Twenty years after its establishment, HCCF continues to bring the community and its members closer together and strengthen collaboration and the motivation to participate within the community.

## How does HCCF work?

By focusing on small grants, HCCF engages multiple local actors in their grantmaking practice, becoming a trustful partner for the community. In 2022 HCCF offered 12 grants in the local community. Over the Summer of 2023, the HCCF offers grants up to 500€, focusing on the participation of families and women who fled Ukraine after the Russian Invasion. Occasionally HCCF also offers higher grants. Grantmaking calls are mostly focused on specified topics. Resources for grantmaking are sometimes generated through live-funding events and activities like 'Soup of Aid'.<sup>198</sup> Here donors are invited for soup and are asked to donate the money they usually would have spent for lunch. Partner NGOs then distribute the donations to families in need.<sup>199</sup>

In recent years, the HCCF has seen more and more informal groups applying for grants connected to diverse events and more regular activities, especially in local neighborhoods. The trust of the community in HCCF grew. While the character of these events did not change over time, the focus did. Initially, activities were strongly connected to environmental issues, then shifted to social issues, and now are more connected to active neighborhoods. Young people are especially active. A specific topic does not dominate HCCF-funded projects. The Foundation is proud to be one of the community foundations that works with Roma communities in Slovakia.<sup>200</sup>

In addition to the concrete outcome of the projects, the HCCF tries to bring the community closer together. After a clean-up project, community members identified the reason for garbage in the surrounding nature. A follow-up grant solved these issues by investing in new dumpsters. Environmental pollution became a topic for further projects in the local community.<sup>201</sup>

<sup>195</sup> Bevan, Joanna (2013) Resilience Rainbow: What role can community foundations play in increasing community resilience, Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society and the Graduate Center at City University of New York. Accessed at: [https://www.gc.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/2021-05/Joanna-Bevan\\_Resilience-Rainbow.pdf](https://www.gc.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/2021-05/Joanna-Bevan_Resilience-Rainbow.pdf).

<sup>196</sup> "O Nadácii: Poslanie" (Komunitná nadácia Zdravé mesto, ), <https://knzm.sk/o-nad%C3%A1cii/index>; Hirt, Beata (1998) Banská Bistrica - Eastern Europe's first community foundation, Alliance, accessed at <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/feature/bansk-bystrica-eastern-europe-s-first-community-foundation/>; Sacks, Eleanor W., (2000) The Growth of Community Foundations around the World: An Examination of the Vitality of the Community Foundation Movement, Council on Foundations, accessed at <https://www.issuelab.org/resources/13803/13803.pdf>.

<sup>197</sup> Beata Hirt, interview by Stefan Cibian, May 19, 2023.

<sup>198</sup> Soup of Aid is also analysed as Cause-Related Marketing by Vitálišová, K., Borseková, K., Vaňová, A., Rojiková, D. (2021). Project "Soup of Aid" as a Cause-Related Marketing Campaign. In: Galan-Ladero, M.M., Galera-Casquet, C., Alves, H.M. (eds) Cause-Related Marketing. Classroom Companion: Business. Springer, Cham.

[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-65455-9\\_9](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-65455-9_9).

<sup>199</sup> Beata Hirt, interview by Stefan Cibian, May 19, 2023.

<sup>200</sup> Beata Hirt, interview by Stefan Cibian, May 19, 2023.

<sup>201</sup> Beata Hirt, interview by Stefan Cibian, May 19, 2023.





Central factors for HCCF's persistence in the local community is owning a building and financing one staff member from endowment revenues. Additional staff members are financed through specific projects. An essential part of the HCCF sustainability strategy is to build strong partnerships with NGOs and civil society actors and to engage youth.<sup>202</sup> Given the history of the region characterized by reduced social capital.<sup>203</sup>

Through HCCF practices, the community became more resilient and active in crisis. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this ability was demonstrated. While governmental actions were delayed, the network around HCCF was able to engage and provide support. The Foundation also adapted its way of operating digitally.<sup>204</sup> Similar was the community's response at the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.<sup>205</sup>

## The Healthy City Community Foundation and the SDGs

In recent years, HCCF has explored a stronger connection with Agenda 2030. HCCF's work on *"diverse, inclusive, and cohesive communities"* is recognized as good practice by the Global Challenges Local Solutions (GCLS) grantmaking program.<sup>206</sup> While it sees potential for engaging with the SDGs, HCCF also encounters challenges. Beyond their partners, it is complicated to communicate the SDGs and make them accessible to community actors.

Overall, people aware of the SDGs take them quite seriously, while people who do not, tend to be overwhelmed by the amount of new abstract information. Larger and bigger foundations in Slovakia also struggle to communicate the SDGs within their networks of partners, donors, and recipients. The HCCF sees the need to offer information about Agenda 2030 in a more straightforward and more accessible way to its community, focusing on SDGs that are relevant to the local community.

In this direction, the Community Foundation is trying out modalities to bring more capacity on SDGs both within the Foundation and in the broader community. One example refers to an HCCF Board Member that participated in a European Community Foundation Initiative (ECFI)<sup>207</sup> learning experience on climate change. The insights gained will be shared with the HCCF Board and disseminated to local communities and the broader public.<sup>208</sup>

The HCCF is also aiming to streamline the SDGs in its grantmaking practice. While relying on the SDGs is envisaged, the Foundation is aware of the complexity of the SDGs and that it may discourage local initiatives from applying for funding. The Foundation hopes to show the importance of the SDGs for the community while making the SDGs more accessible.<sup>209</sup>

The HCCF also considers how to ensure that the city administration takes SDGs and the Agenda 2030 into account. One step is to bring professionals into the municipality's committees who are aware of the relevance of the SDGs for the local communities.<sup>210</sup>

<sup>202</sup> Beata Hirt, interview by Stefan Cibian, May 19, 2023.

<sup>203</sup> Knight, Barry and Andrew Milner (2013) "Restoring Trust in Civil Society: Healthy City Community Foundation, BANSKA BYSTRICA, SLOVAKIA," pp. 24-29 in What Does Community Philanthropy Look Like? Case Studies on Community Philanthropy – Vol. 1. Global Alliance on Community Philanthropy. Accessed at <https://www.mott.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/WhatDoesCommunityPhilanthropyLookLike.pdf>.

<sup>204</sup> European Community Foundation Initiative, n.d., Healthy City Community Foundation, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia – Adapting in-person programs to online delivery, ECFI. Accessed at: [https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/Knowledge\\_Database/Adapting\\_in-person\\_programs\\_to\\_online\\_delivery\\_-\\_Slovakia\\_Healthy\\_City\\_Community\\_Foundation.pdf](https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/Knowledge_Database/Adapting_in-person_programs_to_online_delivery_-_Slovakia_Healthy_City_Community_Foundation.pdf).

<sup>205</sup> Beata Hirt, interview by Stefan Cibian, May 19, 2023.

<sup>206</sup> Accessed at <https://www.localsolutionsfund.org/good-practices/support-for-diverse-inclusive-and-cohesive-communities/>.

<sup>207</sup> The European Community Foundation Initiative.

<sup>208</sup> Beata Hirt, interview by Stefan Cibian, May 19, 2023.

<sup>209</sup> Beata Hirt, interview by Stefan Cibian, May 19, 2023.

<sup>210</sup> Beata Hirt, interview by Stefan Cibian, May 19, 2023.





Challenging here is the need for more capacity within HCCF. Agenda 2030 is already part of the Foundation's strategic documents and Management Board discussions. However, it is difficult to implement the SDGs in daily operations and to make them part of all levels, from the management board to the applicants.<sup>211</sup>

HCCF uses Vital Signs<sup>212</sup> to implement a survey together with the local universities. Since 2014 surveys have been conducted in the local community. Even though data about the HCCF community is available, it is not yet connected to concrete Goals which could be instrumental for grantmaking and actions.<sup>213</sup>

Beata Hirt, the HCCF Executive Director, sees that the Community Foundation has been working on SDGs-related topics since its founding. Furthermore, a more strategic connection to the SDGs would empower the community to see how their local actions have a global impact and might open opportunities for additional funding for the HCCF from larger companies, institutions, and professionals.<sup>214</sup>

## Conclusion

The Healthy City Community Foundation is strongly engaged in its local community. HCCF empowers leaders to become impactful in local communities. HCCF and its community are at the beginning of considering a more sustained engagement with the SDGs for planning, implementing, and evaluating their impact. Nevertheless, sustainability is a part of the DNA of HCCF. The Foundation engages with its community and maximizes its impact beyond the scope of specific projects by constantly strengthening the community, bringing people together, and creating strong and resistant local networks. The over 20 years of local engagement of HCCF speaks for its mission and mode of operation, which will be further strengthened by a more profound engagement with Agenda 2030.

<sup>211</sup> Beata Hirt, interview by Stefan Cibian, May 19, 2023.

<sup>212</sup> Vital Signs, accessed at: <https://communityfoundations.ca/initiatives/vital-signs/>.

<sup>213</sup> Beata Hirt, interview by Stefan Cibian, May 19, 2023.

<sup>214</sup> Beata Hirt, interview by Stefan Cibian, May 19, 2023.





## ECFI's role in CF and CFSO engagement with the SDGs

ECFI, the European Community Foundation Initiative is meant to strengthen the community foundations movement. It does so through learning and inspiration, capacity building, research, analysis, and, not least, raising awareness about the SDGs among CFs and CFSOs. For several years, ECFI has been organizing numerous workshops on SDGs for community foundations and has facilitated field-wide discussions about the role of the Goals in local communities. ECFI positions itself as a program that holds the space for European CFs and CFSOs to come together and engage with the SDGs.<sup>215</sup> A peer evaluation of ECFI's work was conducted in 2022 and highlighted ECFI's central role in opening a space for dialogue on SDGs among European CFs and CFSOs.<sup>216</sup> Recently ECFI convened a workshop with CFSOs to discuss further engagement with Agenda 2030. The meeting generated relevant insights included in a brief report. Some of the critical learnings relate to the difficulty for CFSOs and CFs to engage with the SDGs in a meaningful way.<sup>217</sup>

For ECFI, engaging with the SDGs is a strategic priority. Since 2019 ECFI thought of various ways to engage the CFs and CFSOs. ECFI recognized early on that the departing point must be the current contributions of CFs. Furthermore, ECFI developed guides, case studies, workshops, and events where CFs and CFSOs could further engage with the SDGs.

## CF and CFSO practices in their engagement with the SDGs<sup>219</sup>

In the above, we developed several case studies that help us understand more in-depth how CFs and CFSOs engage with the SDGs. These case studies complement those already existing in the literature and the field and offer a picture at a moment when CFs and CFSOs are exploring ways to engage more with the SDGs and upscale how they think about and act to enhance their communities' sustainability. This section will further analyze the modalities of engagement and challenges for CFs' and CFSOs' engagement with the SDGs.

Community foundations have a particular position in local communities – they bring together various resources and work on enhancing community capacity. That position is essential for exploring sustainable development options for local communities and for supporting action that contributes to more sustainable futures. In certain countries in Europe and North America, CFs have developed endowments that enable them hold significant annual grantmaking budgets – e.g., the UK, Canada,<sup>220</sup> and the United States. To contribute to their communities' future, CFs need a robust engagement with sustainability choices and challenges to sustainability. Therefore, the SDGs represent a good start in tackling complex sustainable development issues as they challenge current thinking among CFs and CFSOs. In the words of an interviewee, “members have difficulties in understanding the intersectionality of the SDGs.”

<sup>215</sup> ECFI, <https://www.communityfoundations.eu/learning-opportunities/connecting-community-foundations-with-the-sdgs.html>.

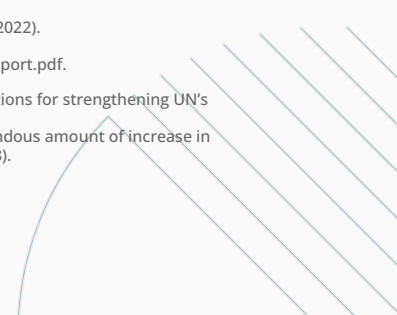
<sup>216</sup> Cibian, Stefan, et. al., “The European Community Foundation Initiative: A peer evaluation,” Făgăraș Research Institute Publishing House (2022).

<sup>217</sup> European Community Foundation Initiative, “The SDGs are Good For Us: Report on Workshop 28-29 June, London,” (2023), accessed at: [https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/Knowledge\\_Database/The\\_SDGs\\_are\\_Good\\_For\\_Us\\_-\\_workshop\\_report.pdf](https://www.communityfoundations.eu/fileadmin/ecfi/knowledge-centre/Knowledge_Database/The_SDGs_are_Good_For_Us_-_workshop_report.pdf).

<sup>218</sup> James M., ECFI, Roundtable, April 2023.

<sup>219</sup> This section of the report is based on analyzing the data collected through the roundtable Exploring the potential of Community Foundations for strengthening UN's Agenda 2030, which was organized on April 12, 2023.

<sup>220</sup> “We've seen immense growth in community foundations. We're sitting at just over \$7.3 billion in total assets. And we've also seen tremendous amount of increase in grants [...] we're currently sitting at over 400 million per year.” (Tracy Vavrek, Community Foundations of Canada, Roundtable, April 12, 2023).





Agenda 2030 creates a worldwide community of concerned citizens, organizations, companies, and states. CFs and CFSOs see how the Goals become important in engaging with various actors in their communities. The story of CFs' and CFSOs' engagement with the SDGs also shows how these Goals are increasingly becoming popular at national and local levels. As such, the Goals help actors concerned with sustainability to better communicate their desired impact, activities, and actions. In Rosemary Macdonald's words, "when you use the SDG model, you can tell the story better. We [UKCF] had our conference in October, and all of our sessions were mapped against the SDGs. [...] I think lots of community foundations are now using SDGs on their websites and for their reporting. We've done a report on our work with the SDGs." (Roundtable, April 2023)

At a strategic level, a limited number of CFs and CFSOs are using the SDGs to advance their thinking on community challenges<sup>221</sup> and update their mission statements. That is a fundamental impact of Agenda 2030 on local organizations and demonstrates first a commitment of CFs and CFSOs to the future of their communities. Second, it shows the strategic proximity between the Goals and CF missions.

Getting there is, however, not an easy path. As Rachel McGrath of Northamptonshire CF explains, it took years "getting the SDGs on the organisation's agenda, leading to alignment of its strategy with the SDGs and to the point where 'The Goals are in the community foundation's DNA."<sup>222</sup> NCF transformed its vision as follows: "Our Vision is about the growth of our Community Foundation to help our community thrive and survive locally, with a focus on building philanthropy and generosity. We will strive to champion diversity, equality, inclusion whilst working towards supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals; we want to think global and act local."<sup>223</sup>

What appears to happen whenever CFs and CFSOs become aware of the relevance of the SDGs is a reframing of what it means to be a place-based organization. As stated above, NCF aims to "think global and act local," which counters the trend we have seen in the quantitative analysis – where most respondent CFs and CFSOs do not place much importance on global factors.

A core challenge for CFs revolves around recognizing the impact of global factors on local communities. Most CFs and CFSOs we engaged with are yet to recognize the widespread effect of global factors on their local communities. While the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Russian aggression against Ukraine are two global crises that show how sensitive local communities are to global events, the impact of global factors goes much further. Due to globalization, a global economic system, advancements in technology, and climate change, we can argue that the global and the local spheres are increasingly intertwined. Therefore, if CFs aspire to support their communities to become more sustainable, they must develop a good understanding of global phenomena affecting their communities. Furthermore, to address global challenges such as climate change, the behavior of everyday citizens in local communities is essential.

Despite the importance of the SDGs for connecting to global efforts for sustainability, often CFs and CFSOs do not have the capacity to engage. Working on the SDGs is perceived as complicated and resource intensive. At times, CFs and CFSOs see their work on the SDGs as a burden.<sup>224</sup>

<sup>221</sup> Such an example comes from the US where Central Florida Foundation implemented an approach called the 17 rooms -- "what we did was a two-day session where we, on the first day, talked about the work that's already being done in our community by nonprofits, and then also the research being done at the university level. And then the second day we delved into the rooms and then we came out with the recommendations. And we've started over the past year to work on those recommendations." (Sandi Vidal, Roundtable, April 2023).

<sup>222</sup> European Community Foundation Initiative, "The SDGs are Good For Us: Report on Workshop 28-29 June, London," (2023).

<sup>223</sup> European Community Foundation Initiative, "The SDGs are Good For Us: Report on Workshop 28-29 June, London," (2023).

<sup>224</sup> Roundtable, April 2023.





Further limitations may arise from the external environment. Certain governments do not prioritize the SDGs, which impacts the business sector and civil society in general. Government inaction is perceived to take two forms. Governments may talk about the SDGs but not act on their words,<sup>225</sup> or they may not talk at all about Agenda 2030.<sup>226</sup> Also, skepticism exists about the potential impact of community foundations on achieving the SDGs, “the SDGs are not going to be realized by community foundations or community projects.” (Participant, Roundtable, April 2023)

Despite these challenges, a slowly increasing number of CFs and CFSOs have started engaging with the SDGs in multiple ways. An example of a planned action for aligning with the global Goals comes from the UK, where the CRM of UKCF will be adapted to the SDGs. In Rosemary Macdonald's words, “[w]e're [UKCF] getting everybody onto the same CRM system [...] and will then be able to look at all of the grants made, certainly across all UKCF programs, and be able to map those against SDGs.” (Roundtable, April 2023) Such development is expected to bring more CFs in discussions on the SDGs, as the new system entails a “standardized impact reporting around the global Goals, which is a really big piece of work. I think that would incentivize a lot of community foundations to start adopting it in their work.” (Rachel McGrath, Roundtable, April 2023) Community foundations in other countries, including Canada, the United States (Thrive<sup>227</sup>), and Germany, also use data-gathering mechanisms showing CFs' impact on the SDGs.

Further actions revolve around a stronger engagement with the UN, given that the UN is the home international organization for the SDGs. At the 2023 UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)<sup>228</sup> the US community foundations will be present and facilitate an event on SDG 11. (Roundtable, April 2023) Overall, the engagement of CFs and CFSOs with the UN or national government SDG departments remains low. That leads to little visibility in the global SDG community for CF and CFSO work.

## Lessons learned by CFs and CFSOs in their engagement with the SDGs

We can observe that the CFs have been engaging with the SDGs for several years by now. That experience leads to a few lessons that CFs and CFSOs have shared. These lessons revolve around establishing partnerships for the Goals, community, and community actors' responses to engagement with the SDGs, internal challenges in aligning with the SDGs, and the relevance of a global CF community.

In Europe, the partnerships built among ECFI, CFSOs, and CFs, lead to increased discussions on the SDGs — these partnerships developed in time, leading by now to established collaboration on sustainability. CF and CFSO engagement with the SDGs is a process that requires resources of various types. Having reliable partners with knowledge of the SDGs represents vital support when further CFs are ready to engage with the SDGs.

<sup>226</sup> “So, in some places [...] it's a nonstarter because there's absolutely no interest at any level of government.” (Participant, Roundtable, April 2023).

<sup>227</sup> “We developed a framework that we call Thrive, which is really focused on taking the SDGs and mapping them to the social determinants of health, [...] and then taking them down to five areas which were economic stability, community and social connection, education, health care and livability, which encompasses environment and neighborhoods. [...] We've created a couple of dashboards and we've been really trying to integrate the work into everything we do, and it's become part of our DNA when it comes to the more national approach.” (Sandi Vidal, Roundtable, April 2023).

<sup>228</sup> The UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) takes place annually and is a Forum where several UN Member States report on their progress towards some of the 17 SDGs. More about the HLPF 2023 can be found at <https://hlpf.un.org/2023>.





Cfs and CFSOs in Canada and the United States have made an extra step in reaching out to the broader communities. Two examples help explore their experiences. Community Foundations of Canada initiated Alliance 2030, a partnership of multiple stakeholders working on the SDGs.<sup>229</sup> In the US, Central Florida Foundation has engaged in multiple ways with local stakeholders. In Sandi Vidal's words,

*"What we realized pretty quickly was that we needed to look beyond just our organizations and start to look at the community as a whole. And so, I was able to engage some of our government leaders. [...] And then our East Regional Planning Council, which covered about eight counties in our area, and the University of Central Florida. And we started to really talk about how we could engage the larger community in the SDG work. And the city was already working on the SDGs. They were in the process of doing a Voluntary Local Review."* (Roundtable, April 2023)

Based on CFs' experience, the interest of companies in the SDGs is mixed, although rapidly evolving. Some companies are only working with non-profits that align with the SDGs, while others are not interested in Agenda 2030 altogether. Rachel McGrath's presents her experience from the UK,

*"we found that corporate donors have had a very strong appetite because of a CSR perspective and would not actively give through a trust or foundation unless they were doing their impact work around the global Goals. [...] It's been a very mixed bag. Some of our donors, they're not particularly interested. They're still very much focused on a place-based giving. The goals have haven't really resonated with them."* (Roundtable, April 2023)

The partnerships mentioned above within the CF field and in local communities indicate that CFs are strategically located to invest in projects for achieving the SDGs and to convene and further stress the importance of sustainability for local communities.

Not all efforts to engage local communities with the SDGs are successful, however. As pointed out above, the SDGs may be difficult to understand locally. Tracy Vavrek shares her experience from a small community in Canada where "the community didn't view themselves as being part of the SDGs. And so, we needed to look at how we engaged the community to understand that the SDGs did reflect on the work we were doing at a local level and how that local work was pivoting to the global aspect."

The importance of building readiness to engage with the SDGs is a lesson also within the national CF movements. The case of Assifero in Italy is an example, as they started working on the SDGs early on when their members were not ready to engage. Assifero had to get back to the SDGs after several years. In Francesca Mereta's words,

*"we kind of embraced the SDGs too early. [...] As soon as they were out in 2015—2016. We embraced them, but the context wasn't ready. [...] So, we picked up the conversation back again in 2019, thanks to the work that ECFI did around the world to embrace the SDGs and connecting the SDGs to community foundations. [...] So, we specifically focused on community foundations. We translated the guide that was in English at the time, and we translated in Italian. We shared it with our membership, and we did in 2020, an in-person workshop dedicated to community foundations. It was hosted in Messina, so it was a two-day workshop on why the SDGs matter to community foundations."* (Roundtable, April 2023)

<sup>229</sup> "Alliance 2030 is also something that's organized under the Community Foundations of Canada. And it's a way for us to collectively, not just with community foundations, but work with all the other interested parties that are working towards the SDGs." Tracy





Challenges at the national CF movement level were expressed in all European countries, “it’s quite difficult for us to integrate the SDGs into [our] work.” (Participant, Roundtable, April 2023) The national CF movement is, however, important in various ways. First, as learning happens most often at the national level, enabling foundations to learn from each other can increase engagement with the SDGs. In the UK, learning experiences for boards may lead to more SDG engagement, “some trustees were more challenging to persuade than others. I feel that third party endorsement really works.” (Rachel McGrath, Roundtable, April 2023)

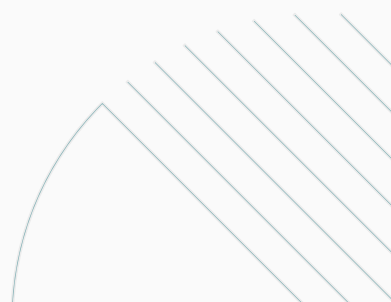
Second, CFSOs covering the national level are essential given the large number of CFs in Europe and globally. European-wide or global support initiatives can find it difficult to reach all CFs. In contrast, CFSOs understand well their national and local contexts, as well as the specificities of CFs. CFSOs can leverage knowledge and resources for those CFs open to grow their capacity to support local sustainability. (Participant, Roundtable, April 2023)

More than collaboration at a national or continental level, CFs and CFSOs realize that the global network of community foundations is becoming an essential asset in a world where global phenomena increasingly impact local communities. Belonging to a global network can bring credibility, knowledge, connectedness, and multiple resources for each CF in their local community. Rachel McGrath explains how she sees the importance of the global CF movement,

*“we are a global movement, and that’s something that we start to talk about a lot now. We talk about the fact that we’re one of 1800 community foundations. So, we are embedding that, basically, within our DNA – the global Goals – because we all act locally, but we’re part of the global movement. And I think that’s really powerful, rather than people seeing you as an isolated community foundation. You’re talking about the global goals, but, actually, you’re just one community foundation in locality. If you talk about 1800 community foundations simultaneously doing something within their locality, it’s a much more powerful vision and buy in for the global goals.”* (Roundtable, April 2023)

## Conclusion

European CFSOs and CFs find themselves at the beginning of their engagement with Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. Factors within the field, such as ECFI, GCLS, and the C.S. Mott Foundation, and in the local communities or at a national level, such as the strong focus on the SDGs by the corporate and governmental sectors in some countries, determine CFs and CFSOs to consider Agenda 2030 and engage with the SDGs.







## CONCLUSIONS: CFs AND CFSOs AS ESSENTIAL PIECES OF A GLOBAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The above sections of the study focused on how European community foundations and community foundations support organizations engaged with the SDGs. We employed quantitative and qualitative methods, including social network analysis, to present and analyze how CFs and CFSOs think about and connect to Agenda 2030. The final section will review the findings and articulate recommendations.

### Key insights and implications for CFs and CFSOs

CFs and CFSOs demonstrate a track record of meaningful contributions to the sustainability of local communities. As such, connecting to the SDGs is a natural step for most CFs and CFSOs aiming to strengthen their strategy for enhancing community sustainability. Community foundations and CFSOs begin a journey where their contribution to community sustainability is about to become more structured and embedded in a new set of partnerships and practices.

A central insight relates to the significant overlap between the mission of community foundations and Agenda 2030's focus on sustainability. Moreover, the increased relevance of global challenges (climate, security, pandemics, etc.) for local communities ties together the SDGs and community foundations. The SDGs provide insights for CFs, given that the Goals are well-tuned to global challenges. At the same time, CFs become mechanisms that contribute to an emerging infrastructure for sustainability that transcends the local-global divide. Community foundations are a global network of locally based organizations. While this alignment is not yet fully recognized by CFs and the UN, it is a matter of time until synergies are developed, as the Goals cannot be achieved without substantive contributions from local communities.

Community foundations had started working on local community sustainability long before the United Nations was established. The more than a century history of community foundations as mechanisms working on community sustainability reframes their positioning in relation to the SDGs. The SDGs represent a set of objectives adopted eight years ago by the United Nations; a global institution structurally little connected to local communities. If the SDGs are to be achieved, a transnational sustainability infrastructure is needed – a set of governmental, civil society, business, and other actors working together to continuously address sustainability challenges and fulfil current and future sustainable development goals. Community foundations are already a significant component of such a transnational sustainability infrastructure.

A significant challenge for the European community foundations relates to the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of the SDGs. As presented in the literature review, the SDGs rest conceptually on two threads of thinking – sustainability and development theories. Conceptually development theory is related to the realities of developing countries and is articulated in a language broadly disconnected from communities and policy debates in European countries. That disconnect also leads to several targets and indicators being less relevant for the level of development of most European communities. Understanding the genesis of the SDGs may help CFs in their efforts to find ways to communicate such a complex agenda to their local communities.





A related challenge relates to the critical development theories, which emphasize the detrimental historical impact of racism and colonialism on communities in the Global South. European community foundations serve communities that hold a specific place in a global system that continues to generate inequality. Sooner rather than later, a community response on these sensitive but essential topics will be necessary.

Despite these limitations, literature on sustainability and development theory can offer an invaluable asset for CFs and CFSOs. Both kinds of literature systematically explore how societies work and present perspectives on challenges and already tried-out solutions in communities around the world. At a substantive level, these two literatures can offer insights into how local communities function, how they respond to various stimuli when local challenges are confronted, and, not least, a good starting point for understanding how global phenomena impact local communities.

Community foundations are also slowly realizing the added value they bring to a discussion on sustainability and sustainable development. CF experiences and practices in local communities expose an incredible array of modalities to contribute to sustainability on all SDGs and beyond. A systemic disconnect between the local and global levels limits the visibility and appreciation of such contributions – global institutions are often far away from local realities. In contrast, local organizations, such as CFs, are often not confident enough to dialogue with global institutions.

Global-local dynamics have already transformed due to technology advancements and multiple emerging global challenges, including climate and security. We already live in a world where local and global phenomena are intertwined to the point of becoming transnational. That implies that the place-based identity of CFs is a limitation in correctly assessing CF external environment, including threats and opportunities for CFs and their communities. That also limits the ability of CFs to see their value in an increasingly transnational reality.

To connect to and understand such transformation alone requires effort and adequate resources. Adapting working methods, institutional design, and strategy generate further needs that CFs and CFSOs expose in their engagement with the SDGs. It is little likely that local actors and local resources are well positioned to support such adaptation. Therefore, an important question revolves around how CFs and CFSOs can enhance their capacity to comprehend global trends, dynamics, and challenges and adapt their approaches and way of operation to support communities in such transformed contexts.

The above shows that CFs are important for achieving the SDGs, and the SDGs are important for CFs to substantiate their understanding of current global realities. However, various factors limit European CF and CFSO engagement with the SDGs. Based on the quantitative and qualitative results, the most important factors appear to be the overall commitment of a respective society towards the Goals. In countries where the governments manage to mobilize a wide set of actors to engage, where corporations take their ESG commitments seriously, and where the SDGs fare high on citizens' agenda, CFs and CFSOs find themselves in a resourceful and, to some extent, constraining, context that enables them to engage. In countries where the SDGs are less popular, CFs and CFSOs tend not to engage. Other factors that limit engagement relate to the lack of capacity to understand Agenda 2030, the lack of resources to adapt institutionally, and the lack of trained human resources to be able to engage at a technical (quantitative research, sustainability, international development, etc.) level in work around indicators, data validity, research design, and research on phenomena underpinning each of the SDGs.





At a more practical level, when CFs and CFSOs do engage substantively with the SDGs, they tend to observe that Agenda 2030 is close to their mission and that often it brings more substance, structure, and resources to their sustainability thinking and practice. CFs and CFSOs gradually align to the SDGs at strategic, program, budget, and operational levels. Each level generates specific experiences, new practices, resources, and partnerships.

It is likely that CF and CFSO engagement with the SDGs will expand in the upcoming years. CFs and CFSOs can still benefit from the window of opportunity opened by two aspects, limited awareness about the SDGs and significant struggles in reaching several of the SDGs worldwide. Given the convening power and asset-based development focus of CFs, they can assume much stronger leadership in leading local communities and the world toward more sustainable futures.

## Conclusion

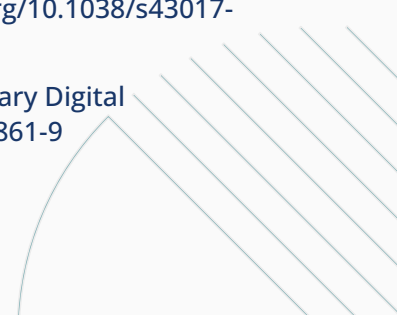
The report offers an extensive overview of how community foundations and community foundation support organizations engage with the SDGs. Based on qualitative, quantitative, and social network analysis, the various sections of the report describe and analyze multiple ways CFs and CFSOs contribute to enhancing community sustainability. The report explores factors that inhibit or augment the propensity of CFs and CFSOs to engage with the SDGs. Furthermore, the analysis looks at how CFs and CFSOs connect to the broader field of international development and highlights the contribution CFs and CFSOs can make globally today.





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## RESOURCES AND DATABASES WITH PUBLICATIONS ON CFs AND SDGs

### **European Community Foundation Initiative (ECFI), Knowledge Centre**

[https://www.communityfoundations.eu/community-foundations-in-europe/knowledge-centre.html?tx\\_t3sknowledge\\_search%5Boffset%5D=0&cHash=af01f022892029c475d1d0940ce1df3e](https://www.communityfoundations.eu/community-foundations-in-europe/knowledge-centre.html?tx_t3sknowledge_search%5Boffset%5D=0&cHash=af01f022892029c475d1d0940ce1df3e)

### **Community Foundations of Canada, Resource Library**

<https://communityfoundations.ca/resource-library/>

### **The Global Fund for Community Foundations, Knowledge Centre**

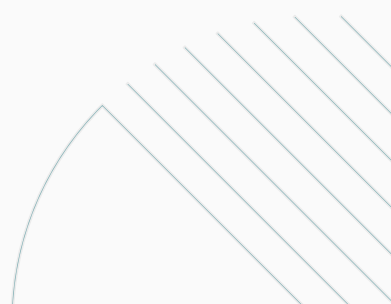
<https://globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/resources/>

### **WINGS, Knowledge Hub**

<https://wingsweb.org/en/knowledge-hub>

### **PHILEA, Knowledge Centre**

<https://philea.eu/how-we-can-help/knowledge/>



## ANNEX

*Annex 1. Organizations that completed fully or partially the questionnaire; city, region and country of origin and type of organization (Community Foundation or Community Foundation Support Organization)*

<b>Completed questionnaire</b>	<b>Name of organization</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Type</b>
Partially	"Czajnia" Association	Tomaszów Lubelski	Lubelskie	Poland	CF
Fully	Alliance of German Community Foundations	Berlin	Berlin	Deutschland	CFSO
Fully	Asociación Española de Fundaciones (Spanish Association of Foundations)	Madrid	Madrid	Spain	CFSO
Fully	Asociația pentru Practica Transformării (Association for the Practice of Transformation)	Brașov	Brașov	Romania	CFSO
Fully	Assifero	Rome	Lazio	Italy	CFSO
Fully	Association Konekt	Skopje	Skopje region	North Macedonia	CFSO
Partially	Association of German Foundations	Berlin	Berlin	Deutschland	CFSO
Fully	Berkshire Community Foundation	Reading	Berkshire	England	CF
Fully	Bordeaux Mecenes Solidaires	Bordeaux	Nouvelle-Aquitaine	France	CF
Partially	Cambridgeshire Community Foundation	Cambridge	Cambridgeshire	United Kingdom	CF
Partially	Charitable organization "National Network for Local Philanthropy Development"	Kyiv	Kyiv	Ukraine	CFSO
Partially	Charitable Organization Charitable Foundation Teple Misto (co Charitable Foundation Teple Misto)	Ivano-Frankivsk	Ivano-Frankivsk region	Ukraine	CF
Fully	Community Foundation of Central Latgale	Preiļu nov.	Latgale	Latvija	CF
Fully	Community Foundation Pančevo	Pančevo	Vojvodina	Republic of Serbia	CF
Fully	Comunalia	Monterrey	Nuevo León	Mexico	CF



Completed questionnaire	Name of organization	City	Region	Country	Type
Fully	Covasna Community Foundation	Sf Gheorghe	Covasna	Romania	CF
Partially	Cumbria Community Foundation	Cockermouth	Cumbria	United Kingdom	CF
Fully	ECFI	Berlin	Berlin-Brandenburg	Germany	CFSO
Fully	Făgăraș Country Community Foundation	Făgăraș	Brașov/Romania	United States	CF
Partially	Federation of CFs in Poland	Bystrzyca Kłodzka	Dolnośląskie Voivodship	Poland	CFSO
Partially	Fondation Orleans	Orelans	Region Centre Val De Loire	France	CF
Partially	Fondation Territoriale De Falaise Sous L'egide Le La Fondation De Lille	Falaise	Normandie	France	CF
Partially	Fondazione Con Il Sud	Rome	Rome	Italy	CFSO
Partially	Fondazione Messina	Messina	Sicily	Italy	CF
Fully	Fondazione Monte dei Paschi di Siena	Siena	Tuscany	Italy	CF
Partially	Fondazione Rome	Rome	Lazio	Italy	CFSO
Partially	Fondazione Vallesina Aiuta E.T.S.	Jesi	Italy	Italy	CF
Partially	Foundation ZAMAH	Zagreb	Croatia	Croatia	CF
Fully	Fundació Cívica Oreneta Del Vallès	Badia del Vallès	Cataluña	España	CF
Fully	Fundació Horta Sud de la Comunitat Valenciana	Torrent	Valencia	España	CF
Fully	Fundación Maimona	Los Santos de Maimona	Extremadura	Spain	CF
Partially	Fundacja "Fundusz Lokalny Ziemi Płockiej - Młodzi Razem"	Słubice	Mazowieckie	Polska	CF
Partially	Fundacja Fundusz Lokalny w Leżajsku	Leżajsk	Podkarpackie	Poland	CF
Fully	Fundacja Fundusz Lokalny Ziemi Biłgorajskiej	Biłgoraj	Iubelskie	Poland	CF
Fully	Fundația Comunitară Banatul Montan	Reșița	Caraș-Severin	Romania	CF





Completed questionnaire	Name of organization	City	Region	Country	Type
Partially	Fundația Comunitară Buzău	Buzău	Buzău	Romania	CF
Fully	Fundația Comunitară Cluj	Cluj-Napoca	Cluj	Romania	CF
Partially	Fundația Comunitară Dâmbovița	Cândești-Vale	Dâmbovița	Romania	CF
Fully	Fundația Comunitară Iași	Iași	Iași	Romania	CF
Fully	Fundația Comunitară Vâlcea	Râmnicu Vâlcea	Vâlcea	Romania	CF
Partially	Galati Community Foundation	Galati	Galati	Romania	CF
Partially	Healthy City Community Foundation	Banská Bystrica		Slovensko	CF
Fully	Jóbuda Közösségi Harmadik Kerületi Alapítvány	Budapest	Budapest	Magyarország	CF
Fully	Kétker Community Foundation	Budapest	Budapest	Magyarország	CF
Partially	Komunitna Nadacia Modra Torysa / Blue Torysa Community Foundation	Lipany	Presov	Slovakia	CF
Partially	Local Community Development Foundation Shtip	Shtip		North Macedonia	CFSO
Fully	Lokalna fondacija Stara Pazova	Stara Pazova	Vojvodina	Serbia	CF
Fully	MK Community Foundation	Milton Keynes	GB	United Kingdom	CF
Fully	Mures Community Foundation	Târgu Mureș	Mureș	Romania	CF
Fully	Nadace Veronica	Brno	South Moravian Region	Czech Republic	CF
Partially	Nidzicki Fundusz Lokalny	Kamionka	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	Polska	CFSO
Partially	Northamptonshire Community Foundation	Northampton	Northamptonshire	United Kingdom	CF
Fully	Nottinghamshire Community Foundation	Mansfield	Nottinghamshire	United Kingdom	CF
Fully	Novessendes	Betxí	Comunitat Valenciana	Spain	CF
Partially	Obrenovac Youh Foundation	Obrenovac	Beograd	Srbija	CF



Completed questionnaire	Name of organization	City	Region	Country	Type
Fully	Pecs Community Foundation	Pecs	Baranya	Baranya	CF
Fully	Roots and Wings Foundation	Budapest	Budapest	Hungary	CFSO
Fully	Sibiu Community Foundation	Sibiu	Sibiu	Romania	CF
Fully	Stowarzyszenie Aktywności Lokalnej "Dolina Kacanki"	Wiązownica-Kolonia	Świętokrzyskie	Polska	CF
Fully	Stowarzyszenie Dobroczynne "RAZEM"	Zelów	Zelów	Polska	CFSO
Fully	Stowarzyszenie W.A.R.K.A.	Warka	Mazowieckie	Polska	CF
Partially	Streekfonds West-Vlaanderen (Community Foundation West Flanders)	Kortrijk	Province of West Flanders	Belgium	CF
Partially	The Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland	Warsaw	Mazovia	Poland	CFSO
Fully	The Centre for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia	Tbilisi	Tbilisi	Georgia	CFSO
Partially	The Community Foundation for Staffordshire	Stafford	Staffordshire	United Kingdom	CF
Partially	The Romanian Federation of Community Foundations	Bucharest	Bucharest	Romania	CFSO
Fully	The Snow Mountain Community Foundation (Fundusz Lokalny Masywu Śnieżnika)	Wójtowice	Dolnośląskie	Poland	CF
Fully	Timișoara Community Foundation	Timișoara	Timiș	Romania	CF
Fully	Togliatti Community Foundation	Togliatti	Samara	Russia	CF
Fully	Tot Raval Fundació Privada	Barcelona	Catalonia	Spain	CF
Fully	Trag Foundation	Belgrade	Belgrade	Serbia	CFSO
Fully	Verband für gemeinnütziges Stiften	Vienna	Vienna	Austria	CFSO
Fully	Workshop for Civic Initiatives Foundation	Sofia	Bulgaria	Bulgaria	CFSO
Fully	Благодійна організація "Фонд громади Березані" / Charitable organization «Berezan Community Foundation»	Березань / Berezan	Київська / Kyiv region	Україна / Ukrayina	CF