# Did the Global Summit on Community Philanthropy Produce Lasting Change?

## 

## Introduction

This report examines the added value of [The Global Summit on Community Philanthropy](http://cpsummit.ngo/should-i-attend/) one year after it took place.

The Summit was held in Johannesburg on 1st and 2nd December 2016 with three objectives:

1. To shift the fields of development and philanthropy towards a new paradigm of ‘people based development’, giving primacy to building local assets, capacities and trust (#ShiftThePower)
2. To bring together a diverse set of philanthropy and development institutions as actors (rather than just participants) working together in joint pursuit of this first objective
3. To build momentum towards a joined-up process that capitalizes on the energy of the Summit and draws in and contributes to other, complementary processes

[An evaluation](http://www.globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/latest-news/2017/3/17/will-the-summit-change-anything-a-first-look-at-the-evaluati.html) that took place six weeks after the event showed encouraging results on the first two objectives. This paper addresses the third objective of the Summit, namely whether the meeting had a lasting effect on the movement to #ShiftThePower.

## Method

The method was to send an online survey to all those who attended the Summit. The survey was also sent to all those on the mailing list of the Global Fund for Community Foundations. The purpose of doing this was to assess the effects of the Summit on people who were not there as well as those who were not. The survey was sent out on 26th February and closed on 12th March 2018.

The survey asked for four main items of information. The first was basic information about the respondent, including the kind of organization they represent, the country they came from, and whether they had attended the Summit or not.

The second was about how they saw the effects of the Summit, using six criteria:

1. Awareness of, and visibility around, community philanthropy
2. Understanding of the role of community philanthropy as a key ingredient for durable development
3. Awareness of the need to #ShiftThePower to local actors in development
4. The rise of #ShiftThePower on social media
5. Awareness of the tools and techniques of people-led development
6. Reference to the Summit in subsequent meetings in development and/or philanthropy

The third question asked for stories of changes made since the Summit. People were asked to say whether they were doing things differently, either personally or through their organization, and whether the field had changed because of the Summit. Finally, people were asked to say whether they had other comments about the Summit.

## Respondents

There were 142 responses to the survey. Of these, 94 had attended the Summit and 48 had not. These numbers were sufficient to make comparisons between the two groups on key findings.

People were asked to say what kind of organization that they represented. The distribution of answers is shown in the following chart.



Examining the “other (please specify)” category, it was possible to recode these into the main categories to enable comparison between types of organization. Having done this, there were sufficient numbers to be able to compare responses from (a) civil society actors, (b) community philanthropy organizations, (c) funders/donors, and (d) philanthropy support organizations. The distribution of types of organizations based on the recoding is shown in the next table.



The 142 respondents came from 45 countries (listed in Annex A). Each region of the world was represented and the distribution is shown in the following table.



Again, it is possible to compare responses by continent, though numbers are too small for the Middle East and North Africa to be included in comparisons.

## Findings

Overall, the survey reveals strong positive effects of the Summit. The main question was “Regardless of whether you attended the Summit, please consider the following statements and let us know what kind of effect you feel the Summit had. Answer options included (a) “major effect”, (b) “significant effect”, (c) “slight effect”, and (d) “no effect”.

Summary results are shown in in the next chart. For all six criteria, most respondents reported a “major effect” or a “significant effect”.



The two biggest effects were on the awareness of the need to #ShiftThePower and the rise of #ShiftThePower on social media. Next in line came the two items concerning the role of community philanthropy. Lower were the reference to #ShiftThePower in meetings and lowest of all the tools and techniques of people-led development.

We can conclude that, overall, the Summit was very successful as measured against the six criteria of assessment.

### Did attendance make a difference?

The next table shows that this was true both for those present and those who were not there. The analysis in the table depends on developing [Likert scales](https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/3ebe/1b5c7e927be0221788348973b17c9de3bf05.pdf) for each of the ratings. The coding was as follows: “no effect” was awarded a score of 1, “slight effect” a score of 2, “significant effect” a score of 3 and “major effect” a score of 4.

The analysis shows that for most of the criteria, there was little difference between those who were present and those absent suggesting it had an effect beyond the conference hall. The table uses a range of criteria to assess this, including the mean, standard deviation and standard error of the mean. Differences between the two groups were assessed using a T Test for Independent Samples.



At the same time, there was one highly important difference, which was highly statistically significant. Those who were at the meeting were more likely to say that the meeting had a major effect or significant effect on the awareness of the need to #ShiftThePower. The next table shows the distribution of scores between the two groups.



While we can see that there is a clear difference, it is also striking that those who were not present also reported large effects. However, being there meant that people were much more likely to report “significant” or “major” effects. We will return to this topic when we examine the qualitative data.

### Did type of organization make a difference?

We also looked to see whether different kinds of organizations assessed the effects of the Summit differently. There were two noteworthy differences. Community philanthropy organizations were more likely than funders to see the Summit as having a major or significant effect on the need to #ShiftThePower, but funders were more likely than community philanthropies to observe the rise of #ShiftThePower on social media. Both differences were significant statistically.

One interpretation for this apparently paradoxical result might be that funders see the trend but not feel its importance to the same extent. At same time, it is important not to exaggerate this difference. The mean scores suggest that for both groups, positive effects of the Summit were manifest, but the two groups different in the degree with which they held these views. Results can be seen in the following chart.



### Did geography make a difference?

There were regional differences in the assessment of the effects. The following chart looks at the effects of the Summit on the “awareness of the need to #ShiftThePower to local actors in development”, dividing responses both by region and by whether respondents attended the Summit or not.



The chart shows that the regional variation between people who attended the Summit was quite low (with all mean scores at ‘significant’ or above). However, there was much greater variation between respondents who were not present. It was clear that messages were carried effectively to Eastern Europe, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean, but not to Western Europe or North America. It appears that the effects of the Summit resonated more in the Global South than in the Global North.

We will now dig deeper into the data, by examining the qualitative responses to the survey.

## How did the Summit affect people?

We will now dig deeper into the data, by examining the qualitative responses to the survey. We begin by looking at how people answered the question about the effect the Summit had on them personally. It was noteworthy that the question did not require an answer, and people were tell to tell a story only if they wanted to. Of 142 respondents, 100 chose to do so. Responses were typically both substantial and thoughtful.

### Inspiration

A frequency count of the terms used spontaneously to describe feelings about the Summit yields a clear winner: “inspiring”. It is remarkable how often this term was used. Here are some examples:

“It was very inspiring and kept me motivated as I could see clearly the role of our organization and my role.”

“I left feeling inspired by the group of people who spoke so passionately about their efforts and were willing to take great risks for justice.”

“The spirit of the event was inspiring and showed the commitment and passion of those working at a local level, and their determination to work for structural change.”

“Inspired me to try and nudge toward collaboration.”

“Enrichened end inspired by ideas and (some) people.”

“It was absolutely inspiring for me know and share different points of view with so many people from different countries, communities, their different way of works, for me it was a great experience.”

“Inspiration + open the curiosity to learn more and read more on Global Fund and the new concepts and thinking on community philanthropy.”

“Broadened my understanding of community philanthropy but more than that I got to know so many wonderful people who are working in different locations each with a unique approach to community philanthropy. Was very inspiring.”

“I appreciate the ongoing conversation that has been sustained through social media. The recent video postings show that there is much content to be shared from the talks by keynotes -- all were inspiring and galvanizing. Great thanks to the organizers.”

### Mind-set change

What was striking in the responses was the changed mind-set of participants. Here is a selection of typical responses:

“A complete overhaul of my understanding of and approach to development.”

“The Summit was profoundly moving, and demonstrated the thirst for change in the development paradigm.”

“Better understanding of relationship with local organizations.”

“Eye opener on community development issues and grassroots participation.”

Even among people who were not present, there was evidence of shifting attitudes:

“For me, even if I didn't attend, the idea of #ShiftThePower has really shifted my thinking and helped to look at things from different perspectives. I have participated in a session curated by Global Fund at the CF Conference in Canada in May 2017 and there I had the chance to internalize the idea of shifting the power and see how it can work at local level, in different countries around the world. This hashtag also helped me question our position as support organization in relationship with our grantees.”

Sometimes the shift in mind-set triggered profound questioning of practice:

“I learned a lot at the Summit and traveling to South Africa was an amazing experience, but I left with more questions than answers – questions that can apply to philanthropy anywhere in the world: Is it possible for me to suspend my own privilege and assumptions to fund programs and project that ‘I don’t know and don’t understand?’ What happens when the solutions a community requests support for are different from the solutions I want to fund? What if I don’t morally agree with what they want to do? Can institutional philanthropy ever shift resources and power closer to communities when their board members and staff members oftentimes have no lived experience in the communities they serve? Is it possible to dismantle the gate that separates institutional philanthropy from community?”

As the last quotation shows, though a changed mind-set may be a necessary condition, it is not a sufficient condition because there are large structural barriers. The Summit put people in touch with this. One person noted:

“I have a broader understanding and confirmation of the importance of community philanthropy and the major challenges yet to be overcome.”

Another pointed out:

“There is still a long way to go with the traditional state of mind of philanthropy.”

### We are not alone

For some participants, it was less a change of mind-set, and more a question of finding that their existing mind-set was shared by others. Some people came to the Summit feeling that they were working on issues of community philanthropy only in their own space, but during the process of the Summit found fellow travellers. Here are some examples:

“Since we are one of the few grassroots based community foundations in Central America, we can feel isolated. Coming into contact with so many other organizations which have faced and overcome similar struggles and challenges was heartening and encouraging. I feel like I have support and friends in the field.”

“I realized we are in this together.”

“Gave a space for us to discuss the transformative social movement which is very rare. It gives relevance to our work and is a friend on the lonely path.”

“A great space for the community foundations and women’s funds to get to know each other.”

“Great connections.”

“Widen my networks in this field, particularly in Africa.”

“Good to understand that many of our issues were common to others.”

### #ShiftThePower

As implied by earlier sections, the inspiration and change of mind-set most commonly focused on the issue of power. This was evident in the statistical results reported earlier and is manifest in the qualitative data. This has led to a new understanding of power since the Summit. Here are some typical comments:

“I have become acutely aware of the 'power' that comes with my position as ED that could shut others out; not hearing the power voice of others. #ShiftThePower for durable development is my mantra and one that I try to honour and live out.”

“The awareness of the need to #ShiftThePower to local actors in development was a great move that made me realize that there is power in the communities. Since then I have made it a point that I make community realize the power they have.”

“I am hyper conscious of implicit and explicit power structures.”

“The importance of #ShiftThePower in ensuring people led and durable development.”

“I am more aware of the need of changing the system than the situation.”

### From mind-set to behaviour change

The change in mind-set led to a changed sense of agency among many participants. Not only did they feel differently after the Summit, but they acted differently too. There were a range of comments about this, but overall people implemented lessons from the Summit in their day-to-day work. Here are some examples:

“I felt encouraged to take the lead in the refugee support for our organization and reach out into the community.”

“I have made sure to make financial contributions to local non-profit organizations and initiatives.”

“It's definitely a bigger piece of the thinking for our small part of [the official development agency].”

“The Summit energized me to try and see how we can encourage community philanthropy.”

“I am now working much more closely with the Global Fund for Community Foundations.”

“Owing to new contacts and partners at the Summit…, we start testing a new technology of fundraising, in March we start to carry out similar projects in Russia.”

“Thinking constantly of ways of how to find or design projects in a way that money comes from community and goes to community.”

“More appreciation of the importance of allowing beneficiaries of a project to lead their own development to ensure sustainability.”

“I strongly believe that community philanthropy is the only way out to address the community need. I have been devoting considerable time with the community.”

### Social media

One of the acknowledged successes of the Summit was its use of social media, a technique that managed to get the proceedings across to a global audience in a way that would not have been possible twenty years ago. The earlier evaluation drew attention to this, and the question now is: what is the perception a year later? It was clear that, overall, #ShiftThePower had become an emblematic hashtag and is a rallying call way beyond the expectations of the conference hall in Johannesburg in December 2016. Here is a selection of what some people said about it:

“Twitter has been widely used in the #ShiftThePower movement and it's hard to ignore such. This is powerful.”

“We held KCDF's 20 year anniversary celebration in 2017 and the overriding theme and hashtag for the 2 day conference #ShiftThePower. “

“We're using #ShiftThePower in every related publication.”

“There is much traction on social media among a self-selected audience.”

“I use the #ShiftThePower hashtag to share stories / tools / news / resources about anything that has to do with raising the voice and participation of people in their own development and where the agency for change (be it philanthropy or other), lies with the people. We use Facebook and Twitter to promote community philanthropy and community led development.”

“How #ShiftThePower was used was a powerful lesson in how to develop long lasting impactful hashtags.”

“It is a very effective tool and I use it frequently.”

“A lot of people in the philanthropy field have heard about the Summit, and the hashtag #ShiftThePower has been mentioned in conversations well beyond the 'normal suspects' in the community philanthropy field.”

While acknowledging this success, many community philanthropy practitioners appear to be quite slow on the uptake on social media. Here are some comments:

“Still needs improvement.”

“I am aware that I need to exploit more opportunities to use social media for social change.”

“Not too much.”

“I am not confident to handle Twitter.”

“The only time I ever tweeted was during the Summit.”

“I remain a luddite.”

There were clear signs of improvement and the Summit had much to do with this:

“I have undertaken training in the use of social media since the event.”

“I have improved a lot.”

“The Summit influenced my setting up a twitter account.”

“I started using Twitter.”

“Improved (introduced to Twitter by Jenny Hodgson).”

“We are thinking more of incorporating the use of hashtags in communications.”

“I am not very active on social media but the Summit challenged me on this. I need to up my game!”

“There is much improvement on the use of social media as a result of the Summit.”

“We adopted many ideas from the conference and made our own social media much more performant than before.”

“More active and actively searching for news and developments on the topic.”

“I think the Summit made me better informed and improved my information sources, which informs my posts.”

“The exposure was good, but we haven't improved our abilities greatly. We are beginning a Capital Campaign this year, so hopefully we will be able to put some of the experiences to the test to see if we can channel resources via crowdsourcing.”

“A work in ongoing progress with so much room for improvement.”

“I am not sure that I have used the hashtag, maybe once at the conference in Canada, but I give it as an example of sophisticated and effective communication every time people try to find a good hashtag. As a professional with a strong background in the communication, I understood that a hashtag is more than a search item and that a good hashtag is the one that starts conversations.”

## Organization

Having asked how the Summit affected them personally, we asked people to say what the effect had been on their organization. Again, there were fulsome answers to this question with contributions from 107 of the 142 respondents. Responses were almost all positive. We set them out here, starting with the effects of the Summit on organizational planning.

### Planning

Several organizations noted that the Summit had informed a new strategic plan. Here are some examples:

“The Summit helped the organization to rethink on the organizational stance on local philanthropy and community engagement in decision making.”

“The center has built into its new strategic plan an intention to integrate a global perspective into its work and my participation with both the research efforts before the Summit and reflections I shared from my participation at the Summit helped influence this direction.”

“It has helped us rethink our community development strategies and priorities by making efforts to #ShiftThePower to the grassroots organizations to be central in planning and executing their development projects without reliance on external support. We are strengthening community philanthropy for all our initiatives. Some grassroots groups have adopted this and will soon graduate from our organization.”

“We increased our engagement in networking, advocating and lobbying around community philanthropy. We increased by number of inputs when creating our strategic plan to include interviews and focus groups with more than 60 leaders and clients across the sectors, survey responses from nearly 300 non-profit leaders and 900 residents in low-income communities.”

“The Summit certainly helped in part to intensify our philanthropic engagements both with smaller organizations as well as with donors and private sector. Our new vision document certainly reflects this change, that aims at establishing our organization as a hub for social justice philanthropy.”

### Programme

Some organizations used the ideas behind the Summit to mount new programmes:

“We designed a new platform to support community foundations.”

“We have started the community philanthropy in the Northeast Region. Ensured that our partners also understand the community philanthropy concept and put community at centre while planning the project.”

“The Summit presented a wide variety of models and views on the role of local philanthropy in the development of the economy and communities in different countries. This palette of opinions gave rise to initiate an assessment of our role the development of local philanthropy in Russia. And a year later, in November 2017, we began this project.”

### Practice

Other organizations made modifications to their practice. There were many examples of this approach:

“We are more aware and willing to try out alternative financing models to shift the power to local organizations. "#ShiftThePower" is a commonly used phrase at our organization now when we talk about localizing development efforts.”

“A more international and collaborative outlook; concrete effects = grant to work on immigration issues within our community.”

“Usage of #ShiftThePower increase between grantees, volunteers, staff.”

“Direct impact in our team, we are using some tools for the organization.”

“Shift towards sustainability and changing from total donor dependence to looking at other.”

“The foundation took the right decision to be independent and not to be influenced and limited to actions by external donors (stepped out form national program financed by USA governmental funds).”

“We followed footprints and translated them as much as feasible within constraints peculiar to India where philanthropy has been traditionally focused on feudal pattern and religious practices. Initiatives such as those by Global Fund have made notable contribution even on the small scale of such intervention.”

Sometimes, the Summit meant that funders were more likely to learn about needs in different contexts before awarding grants, as in the next example:

“We have conducted more than ten meetings in different part of the country. Learning about organizations like Red Umbrella and the 16 Days of Activism underscored the idea that context matters. It challenged me to consider how my own experiences and cultural norms influence the way I lead grantmaking in my institution. If I only fund the things I recognize and are familiar with, how can I effectively employ grantmaking in communities and cultures that are different than my own?”

One specific strand of changed practice was to give greater weight to grant recipients:

“Our ability to listen to partners’ concerns, especially our grantees.”

“Made us involve our grantees in this new world we discovered.”

“Reviewed the process of the foundation's engagement and consultation with external stakeholders to ensure effective participation in decision making.”

“Helped improve grassroots participation and decision making.”

“Reinforced and enhanced our knowledge and practice of participatory grantmaking.”

“Considering modes of participatory granting, mechanisms of listening, aligning granting with self-determined community need.”

“Continuous review of how we can #ShiftThePower to local people.”

“It has empowered grassroots organizations to continue with the community driven development approach despite the dynamics in the donor world.”

“A great change in that it has made us to focus more on the community themselves to be the agent of change.”

One of the respondents had been particularly thorough in addressing the question of who holds the power:

“We are more aware of our power, how we use it, how our actions can mediate and increase (or not) the power of the members of the communities we work in. We are better aware of the need to collect feedback from our communities, and thinking of thorough methods to do this regularly. We are starting to use a different narrative of accepting mistakes in order to learn from them, and discussing challenges more transparently. As a very direct result of the Summit, we have partnered with an organization from a different continent to exchange experiences and learn from each other.”

A further strand of practice to emerge from the Summit was the beginning of organizations beginning to advocate for a new model based on #ShiftThePower. Here are some quotations that illustrate this:

“A higher commitment on promoting community philanthropy.”

“We identify with the #ShiftThePower campaign and build on it / use it as often as we can. We find that #ShiftThePower is an effective tool to focus our conversations/work/ resources on effective methods and approaches to social change - these might be existing or new but they are different from the dominant methods of doing things in development that we can see now are disempowering and corrupt and have failed creating dependency and perpetuating the inequality.”

### Confirming practice

Some organizational behaviour focused less on changing practice and more on affirming and reinforcing existing practice. As we noted before, some organizations recognised that they were not alone and that there was a body of practice of which their work formed part. Here are some relevant comments:

“We are more confident as an organization that we are on the right track in regards to the theory that underpins our work with communities. we are a big proponent of the shift the power narrative and what it truly means in Kenya and beyond.”

“Reaffirming our commitment to community philanthropy.”

“The regional meeting prior to the Summit as well as the Summit itself really helped me to understand the concept of community philanthropy and how women's funds fit into that broader community. As we continue to practice participatory grantmaking and promote feminist, rights-based philanthropy in Mexico, we are now more fully aware of how our work at the national level forms part of a global effort to #ShiftThePower in the global philanthropic field.”

“Affirming.”

“Awareness of being part of a global community.”

“Big effect. The global perspective and feeling to be a greater community of similar workers helped us a lot to foster our relationships with local partner in the refugee programme. This work is still a challenge, even though the focus changed from welcoming and first help towards supporting true and long-lasting integration.”

“#ShiftThePower was always central to our discourse and work ethic. However, post the Summit, the deeper meaning of shifting power requires ongoing vigilance and attention. It's not a one-time exercise. The GFCF Burning issues grants helped keeping the conversations alive and present. We do not hesitate to follow through on ideas and new approaches; test it and to speak about the failures as the beginning of new opportunities. #ShiftThePower in the community conversation space was a re-affirmation of agency and voice. Community representatives could re-imagine their role and the power that comes with it, hence the successful launch of the community funds.”

“Reassured and reaffirmed that we were on the right track.”

“Confirmation that many people are working in this vein, and of the importance of this approach to supporting social change.”

“Feel part of a global movement.”

“The Summit illuminated the similarities between community philanthropy and international development which has led me to see our role in an international movement.”

### New relationships

Some organizations developed new partnerships because of the Summit. Here are some examples of what people said:

“We made contact with the Network of Community Foundations of Latin America and Spain which has opened up both opportunities and learning for our organization through sharing of written materials, as well as, physical exchanges with other similar organizations.”

“As a women’s fund, we participate in the previous workday that gathers the women´s funds together with community philanthropic organizations. There I enter into contact with one from Uruguay. She is now in our database, we always need allies in the different countries where we work!”

“We met new partners and get new possibilities of experience exchange.”

“I met people and one of them resulted in cooperation to do fundraising.”

“We made several new partnerships following the Summit and increased our focus on enabling community philanthropy in developing economies.”

“New international relations, new network and partnerships.”

“Linkages with other community philanthropy related organizations.”

“Efforts to collaborate and find ways to connect with community foundations, as well as understanding community philanthropy as a broad term that encompasses women's funds.”

“More focused search for community foundations as partners - one partnership already formed on a new project, others will hopefully follow. Also, we are more aware of extractives - paying more attention / monitoring.”

“We made some very useful connections at the Summit which we have gone on to develop into working relationships which is very pleasing.”

### Learning and sharing

Participants typically debriefed their colleagues about the Summit. This was an important mechanism for learning and sharing. Here is a selection of what people said about this:

“Many people in our organization participated in the Summit, including people from my team. After they have returned we had a gathering during which they shared information about the Summit. It was a very good sharing session, especially as each of them has noticed or was impressed by different things.”

“We are working and internalizing this concept.”

“Awareness raised in the staff and leadership.”

“We had a pretty large debriefing on the Summit, and I still remember some of the stories told, so it was pretty impressive for my participant colleagues.”

“Increased awareness within the organization of the power of philanthropy especially the power of community philanthropy.”

“The individuals who attended spread the message at staff level and board level. The concept of community philanthropy was well received and people became curious.”

“The Summit enabled us to crystallize our understanding of our work in the community philanthropy context.”

## Field

Having asked questions about the effects personally and on people’s organization, we asked about the wider impact on the field. Responses to this question were fewer (82) and less substantial than the answers to previous questions. There were many more “don't knows” among the answers too. Once again, responses were generally positive, though tempered with the awareness of how much work still needed to be done to address the dominant top-down narrative used by development agencies. We start with the clear benefits. These were in several categories.

### Event

The Summit spawned several events. As one participant noted:

“It’s worth noting that one of the direct outcomes of the Summit included the North American Community Foundations Summit in Mexico City this year, as well as the Francophone Summit hosted adjacent to Community Foundation of Canada's Belong 2017 conference. Both ideas came out of bilateral meetings (hallway chats) held in Johannesburg.”

“In Kenya, conversations on the same are gaining traction and the Kenya Community Development Foundation had a 20-year anniversary themed around #ShiftThePower and durable development.”

### Conversations

Such events were the visible signs of different kinds of conversations gaining ground following the Summit. Many people noted how discussions about #ShiftThePower and durable development were gaining traction:

“It does seem like community philanthropy is discussed more - we have also been lucky in that the narratives from leadership on self-reliance and ending the need for foreign assistance dovetail nicely into the community philanthropy conversation.”

“I feel the Summit has shifted the global conversation about community philanthropy towards the global south and the importance of power.”

“Not sure of the broader impact. However, in the Western Cape, the Summit's footprint is visible, engaging and advancing.”

“Definitely seeing a shift in conversations with regards to shifting power. I think the Summit was timely and has leveraged much more awareness on the need to reflect more critically.”

“Not much so far, but we are launching the concept on the 15th March.”

“The Summit has remained a reference point for many conversations. We referred to it in a meeting in India as late as last week.”

“The concept of #ShiftThePower to local actors has been well received by communities as they are now taking a leading role in community development.”

“I hear more, I see more discussion and events going on.”

“Raising awareness of the issues of community philanthropy.”

“The #ShiftThePower framing helped draw connections between organizations and people, it helped anchor many conversations.”

### “It’s a thing”

The events and conversations mean that many people commented that the field of community philanthropy is now recognized as a legitimate one. Some of the comments follow:

“Well, I didn’t know there was such a thing as "community philanthropy", which may of course just be me, but regardless, I observe now that it is very much a ‘thing’.”

“Definitely secured the place on the map for it.”

“I think the Summit was a turning point to think about the community foundation field.”

“The Summit unpacked what community philanthropy is while providing an opportunity for very unlikely allies to share their experiences. The deliberations were not prescriptive but provided a comprehensive way of anchoring the community philanthropy tenets in different contexts.”

“The Summit enlightened the development world about the advantages of the #ShiftThePower concept.”

“It has helped to raise the profile of participatory/ democratic/ people led models in philanthropy and social change processes as a credible alternative to the dominant Anglo Saxon/ top- down development and philanthropy approaches.”

“The global community is shifting power to local organizations by providing technical support and showing them that it’s doable!”

“It is a process to enabling the global philanthropy appreciate the capacity and results in community development in terms of increased direct support to the community with limited expenditures in terms of logistical support through the bigger organizations.”

“Raised awareness and showcased the importance of this fast-growing movement.”

### Solidarity

One of the reasons for the lasting impact of the Summit is that it managed to enable people to connect with one another and to find things in common. The sense of being all in it together led to a range of comments about social bonds having been created and strengthened at the Summit:

“It fostered greater solidarity and shared identity.”

“We broadened and deepened. I wasn’t aware of the global community beforehand. I feel much more connected and know how to find my peers across the world as a result.”

“Strengthened the spirit of belonging - learning, sharing and innovation at its best.”

“Milestone in awareness of the possibilities and opportunities of a global community.”

“It helped to encourage cross-borders coalitions of community foundations (such as the North American one). People realize that coalition building is essential in today’s world to be more impactful.”

“Sense of community, of solidarity - confidence of voice.”

“Fostering a sense of belonging and a firm identity among community foundations. And giving us pride in our work.”

“Collective impact, shared understanding on equity.”

## Lack of follow through

Some of the feelings of solidarity created at the Summit did not always translate into sustainable action. As is well known, excitement about new partnerships is difficult to maintain once people get back into their working environments and feel the pressure of day-to-day work. Here is an example of this:

“Networking: we created a Facebook for all Latin American attendees and we kept in touch some. It’s been a while since we’ve connected but still exists. Maybe one day we will utilize more.”

The next respondent commented about the difficulty of keeping up with people from all over the world:

"The experience personally was great. The longer lasting relationships seem, however, to be more regionally based which might be in part because of language and cultural ties.”

More seriously, some of the funders did not seem to take the messages of the Summit seriously. One respondent noted:

“The […] Foundation was a disappointment. I contacted them as soon as I returned home and their immediate response was that they don't fund outside of the US except for some very specific projects in Mexico. I had hoped that their presence at the Summit might have opened their heart and grant funds!"

Another respondent commented:

“We were hoping that we would find another source of funding or funders. I made a concerted effort to try to get support from some of the contacts that we made in the Global north, but to no avail. We suggested the idea of becoming sister organizations with funding organizations in England, New Zealand and Canada, but have not had any positive responses. Perhaps there is a better way to establish relationships that can be mutually beneficial for larger, more financially stable organization in the Global North to support smaller grassroots community foundations such as ours in the Global South, but we haven't yet found the way forward for this.”

A third noted that the way that funders structure themselves means that the aid architecture finds change difficult:

“The development sector is still skewed and the top-down approach is still dominating specially from the big-aid agencies. This leaves very little room for grassroots organizations to do proper participatory planning. The possible solutions are still pre-fixed. So, community philanthropy as alternative development approach requires deeper understanding and needs promotion among the development aid forums.”

There was a general feeling that such change would take time and while some funders understand the issues, others don’t:

“The success we have achieved in growing local resources would not have been possible without the support of allied donors such as the […] Foundation, who have allowed us to invest funds geared toward strengthening local fundraising strategies. Most donors want to directly support the human rights work being carried out on the ground, and they want that work to be sustainable. But to achieve that sustainability, it is critical that NGOs, funds, and private foundations in the Global South have start-up capital that they can invest in promoting local cultures of philanthropy. I hope the Summit inspired more donors to understand the powerful role they could play in providing seed funding for local, sustainable philanthropy.”

These comments show the difficulty of changing embedded systems.

## Overall assessment

### Jubilation

As will be evident from earlier sections of this report, the assessment of the lasting effect of the Summit was – in general – highly positive. At the risk of repetition, the vast majority of respondents gave enthusiastic responses to the role that the Summit had played in their lives. Here is a selection of comments:

“The Summit brought the development world into Southern Africa. The effects of the Summit will be felt for years.”

“It represents a milestone in creating new paradigms in donors-community relationship.”

“The Summit was like a splash of fresh, cool water, which challenges my thinking and improved my focus. I feel fortunate that I was able to attend, connect with my peers around the world and engage in honest and inspiring dialogues about the work that needs to get done.”

“Truly an awesome experience!”

“It was a great learning experience and gave me unique insights on different ways of approaching related work in Mozambique.”

“This kind of personal exchange on a global scale is very special and helpful and I felt honoured to participate.”

“There is no turning back. The Global Summit has provided tools, ideas, resources and a network of people, all set to transform workplace, pertinent issues, communities, and self.”

“It taught me that "Shifting the Power" is an idea whose time has come and so development practitioners must embrace it for sustainability.”

“For me, the Summit had the role of connecting the people in the field. I think is crucial to have the occasion of learning from people from different cultures, make friends and import best practices. I also think that one can have great revelations when talking to an audience of professionals from other countries. Things that you take for granted back home, when presented to people that do not know your local context, take a different turn and give you a wider understanding.”

### Disappointment

There was a small group of people who were more sceptical about the value of the Summit because they could not see effects. Here are some of the comments in response to the question about how did the Summit affect the community philanthropy field:

“I'm not sure how the Summit impacted the global community philanthropy field.”

“No real change given its core significance to our mission.”

“Not much enduring effect. Good conversations post the conference.”

“Not feeling the effect as yet.”

“Less than I hoped.”

“Not sure, but I am ready to join forces to make it stronger.”

Such comments were typically brief with little sense of putting them into the context of what the expectations had been, what had or hadn’t happened, and what might be done about it.

### The need for follow-up

One almost universal view was that the Summit needed a follow-up. Here is a selection of comments:

“You guys did a great job at organizing the Summit. It will be great to have a platform - online or face-to-face - where we can continue some of the discussions at the Summit and keep the relationships with those whom we met.”

“It was a lovely event -- fantastic location, great people. There was not enough time for networking, and not enough attention to local resource mobilization, which is the only way we'll end dependence on international aid. Perhaps a follow-up?”

"I'm not sure if another community philanthropy conference is planned, but I think follow up conference would really cement a lot of the thinking and connections established or carved out at the first one, even if it is 5 years later although perhaps future events should have a regional focus to allow for more context specific discussions."

“It was a unique and rich experience for me. I learned a lot and am hoping to continue to dive into this work and find ways to collectively rebalance power. I've seen how the #ShiftThePower has popped everywhere (sometimes have seen people use it without them knowing that this movement started at the Summit, which is a testament to how the movement has grown and spread). I hope to be able to participate in the next Global Summit!”

“Need for continued update and clarity on the next steps”

“Good energy, would be good to see a follow-up event.”

“An excellent initiative which needs to get strengthened, and continue to expand.”

“The Summit marked a significant stage in the development of the community philanthropy field. It was a solid foundation 'building block'. It will take time to influence the philanthropy and development sectors to the point that they take this agenda seriously; and both passion and persistence will be required to make an impact on shifting power. We should celebrate the success of the Summit and commit to the long struggle of achieving the full potential of the movement for change. “

“A single event rarely can claim a legacy in its own right, but as one thing among many the field moves closer to the tipping point.”

“There should be a momentum maintained from this process. Similar gatherings in different parts of the world with affinity groups and networks need to be started.”

“I look forward to hearing more about the next theme and conference. I think that you managed to shake the current mainstream thinking and paradigm on philanthropy and to re-shape the work in the field.”

“The Summit and Community Philanthropy and #ShiftThePower continue to be raised at various meetings I attend (limited those these may be). There does need to be some follow-up - reinforcement, continue to ask the tough questions and prevent slide back and/or continuation of the status quo.”

"Organise a follow up Summit! It was very impressive to see how a small team organised such a well-thought out event that sought to unite and bring to the next level a range of conversations about philanthropy. Many of us can learn from the GFCF's leadership in the field, as well as its ability to move from vision to concrete action.”

“Ensure that at the next Summit or in events under the umbrella of #ShiftThePower community representatives are included more visibly in its design and implementation.”

“Expand speakers - the same people seem to be the spokespeople for CP and/or #ShiftThePower in different events. Having a wider range of voices and perspectives in spaces (both at events and in written form) will only strengthen the case you are making.”

“I believe the Summit has had an unquestionable impact on a wide and diverse but also likeminded group of engaged community philanthropy practitioners and thus their respective work and organizations. How to transfer that spirit and engagement to an even much bigger group of more 'conservative' and less open-minded people who are in a way linked to community philanthropy seems to be a real challenge as my impression is the Summit has mainly managed to additionally inspire and engage the already most inspired and engaged people around.”