

From Pledges to Practice

Shifting Conservation Funding
Approaches to Better Support
Local African Organizations

About Maliasili and Synchronicity Earth

Maliasili and Synchronicity Earth share a commitment to community-based approaches to conservation that benefits local people, strengthens and reinforces human rights, and works towards social justice. As organizations working to support a diverse range of partners working at the local and national scale in different parts of Africa, we are working together to find ways of improving funding flows and practices for our partners and other local organizations, so that they can achieve more.

Acknowledgements

This report was authored by Brendan Buzzard. Maliasili and Synchronicity Earth would like to express our gratitude to all the individuals, organizations, and foundations who provided their valuable insights and experiences to contribute to this report.



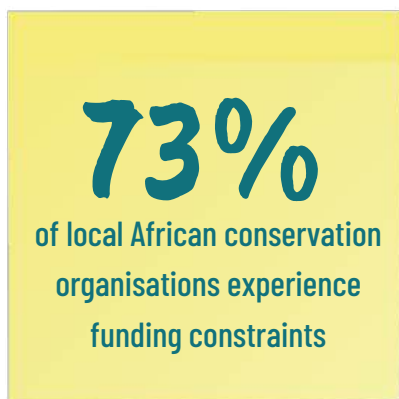
Contents

Introduction	4
Context	6
Progress.....	7
Challenges.....	7
Finding a way forward.....	9
Methodology	10
Funder Overview and Profiles	12
Wildlife Conservation Network (WCN).....	13
Christensen Fund	14
Cartier for Nature.....	16
Good Energies Foundation	17
Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation (LCAOF)	18
Bezos Earth Fund.....	19
LGT Venture Philanthropy.....	21
Funding Practices to Better Support Community-led Conservation	22
Foundational values and a guiding strategy.....	24
1. Clear strategy that recognizes local rights and leadership	24
2. Clear recognition of the importance of local organizations and their expertise	24
3. Defining and living by guiding values	25
Establishing an equitable and trust-based approach to doing business	26
1. Framing funding support within equitable, aligned partnerships.....	26
2. Viewing local organizational capacity as a conservation outcome.....	27
3. Shifting power through unrestricted, flexible funding.....	29
4. Committing to long-term relationships	31
Operationalizing locally-centered practices	33
1. Commitment to and establishing structures for meaningful engagement.....	33
2. Go direct or through intermediaries.....	34
3. Simplifying administration and reporting.....	35
Creating a culture of learning, reflection and change	37
1. Creating structures of inclusion and participation	37
2. Intentional awareness and self-reflection.....	38
Outstanding Questions and Learning Opportunities	39
Conclusion.....	41
References	43



Introduction

Local organizations are growing and strengthening community-led conservation across Africa, creating innovative solutions that conserve biodiversity, address climate change, and meet the needs and aspirations of people.¹ Despite their widespread achievements, however, getting the resources that they need is a major challenge, with 73% of local African conservation organizations experiencing funding constraints.²



With the increasing recognition of the importance of locally-led efforts in addressing global challenges, and in line with global calls for more equity in conservation,³ an urgent priority is to get more funding to the local civil society organizations working alongside and in service of the local communities that steward and manage the majority of Africa's biodiversity and ecosystems.

The goal of this report is to outline principles and practices that can guide the development of funding approaches that are more supportive and enabling of the efforts of local conservation organizations. To do this, we draw from interviews with a handful of “early mover” international funders who are intentionally thinking about and shifting their approaches to supporting conservation in Africa. Based on their experiences and learnings, we identify building blocks (the principles and practices) of more effective and equitable funding approaches and use them to illustrate how this transition can be achieved. Our hope is that this report will inform the evolution of the wider conservation funding ecosystem and provide specific guidance for other funders interested in making similar meaningful shifts.

This report builds on earlier research and analysis to understand the constraints around conservation funding in Africa.⁴ While the emphasis here is on Africa since that is where Maliasili and Synchronicity Earth's efforts are concentrated and where we have networks of partners to inform this analysis, the principles and practices outlined here are much more broadly applicable.





Context

Progress

We're seeing the following shifts and trends when it comes to global conservation, especially in Africa:

- 1. The critical role of local communities is increasingly recognized:** The lands and management practices of Indigenous Peoples and local communities are critical to sustaining biodiversity and ecosystems. Globally, these groups manage at least one-third of the planet,⁵ protecting 36% of intact forests,⁶ 22% of tropical forest carbon,⁷ 36% of global key biodiversity areas and, in the process, are conserving habitat for the majority of terrestrial mammals.⁸ When their local governance and management structures are empowered and their rights are recognized, they are best placed to effectively conserve nature while providing diverse benefits for people.⁹
- 2. With more recognition, more money and support are committed:** Getting support and resources to initiatives led by communities is one of the most effective ways to catalyze local conservation, and there has been an upsurge in funding commitments. This is exemplified by the \$1.7 billion Glasgow Climate Pact, where governments and philanthropy organizations committed to increasing funding for forest tenure and management to Indigenous Peoples and local communities. More funding to these groups is about not only conservation effectiveness, but also equity, as many of them have historically been marginalized and excluded from conservation decision-making.¹⁰

Challenges

Despite the increase in recognition and commitments, significant barriers remain:

- 1. Funding is not reaching people on the ground:** Indigenous Peoples and local communities are only accessing 1% of global climate funding, and between 2011 and 2020 they received only 17% of the funding intended to support their forest tenure rights and management approaches.¹¹ Recognizing this shortfall, funding commitments increased since 2020,¹² but the fraction getting into their hands remains minimal. With half of the \$1.7 billion Glasgow pledge already disbursed, for example, only 2.1% has gone directly to locally-led organizations, networks, or funds, while 43% has gone to international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and 20% to governments.¹³
- 2. Lack of recognition and support for local organizations:** An effective way to get resources to local communities is through the local organizations that work alongside and in service of them.¹⁴ Local organizations understand the context, bring in resources and develop partnerships, provide mobilization, technical, and capacity support, and have an

important role in advocacy. Localization has become a buzzword and a trendy concept, yet support to local organizations is slow to materialize across the entire donor space. In 2019, for example, of the \$8 billion made in global grants by US-based foundations, only 13% went to local organizations.¹⁵ In Africa, despite private philanthropy comprising over 60% of local organizations' budgets, only 10% of philanthropic funding has been invested in African conservation.¹⁶

3. Funding approaches inhibit rather than support local organizational growth and impact: When funding does flow to local organizations, its design is often top down and restrictive rather than enabling. Challenges include:

- ➔ The majority of funding continues to target and flow through intermediaries, primarily international non-governmental organizations;
- ➔ When funding does reach local organizations, it often lacks alignment with existing and proven local strategies, and instead pushes local organizations in other directions;
- ➔ It tends to be project-based and directive instead of providing whole-organizational support;
- ➔ It is layered with administrative burdens that diverge from local organizational systems, approaches, and ways of defining and measuring impact;
- ➔ All of this reinforces long-held inequitable power dynamics of who is designing, driving, and ultimately benefiting from solutions on the ground.

Defining 'local'

Different ideas of what local organizations are and what locally-led conservation is continue to hinder African conservation. While diverse vehicles and structures might facilitate getting funding to people on the ground—such as projects by in-country branches of INGOs or government initiatives that might channel resources more locally—we are instead emphasizing the organizations that are rooted in the communities they work with, and where their strategies are informed by input from the people they serve. It is these organizations that are shaping the future of community-led conservation in Africa. They are characterized by:

- ➔ Being based not only in country, but often in particular landscapes and cultural contexts
- ➔ Actively working to build local leadership within themselves and amongst the communities they support
- ➔ Implementing intentional governance structures whereby the communities they work with can shape decisions, guide direction, and inform organizational growth

Finding a way forward

In African conservation, local organizations are clear about the shifts they want to see within the funding ecosystem to better support their efforts:¹⁷

- The need for more core, capacity-focused, and unrestricted funding.
- More emphasis on investing in the organizational strategies and solutions they have developed in response to their local context and challenges, instead of using local organizations to implement external goals and agendas.
- That funding become more integrated into a trust-based approach to partnership instead of being a transactional relationship.

To achieve this, funding approaches need to evolve and become more intentional. Some ‘early mover’ funders are listening and are actively growing approaches that more meaningfully support local organizations. By documenting the experiences and learning from these funders, this report outlines principles and practices that can guide more meaningful funding approaches. Our hope is that this provides a resource that funders might use and apply across their own approaches to enable local conservation organizations to flourish.





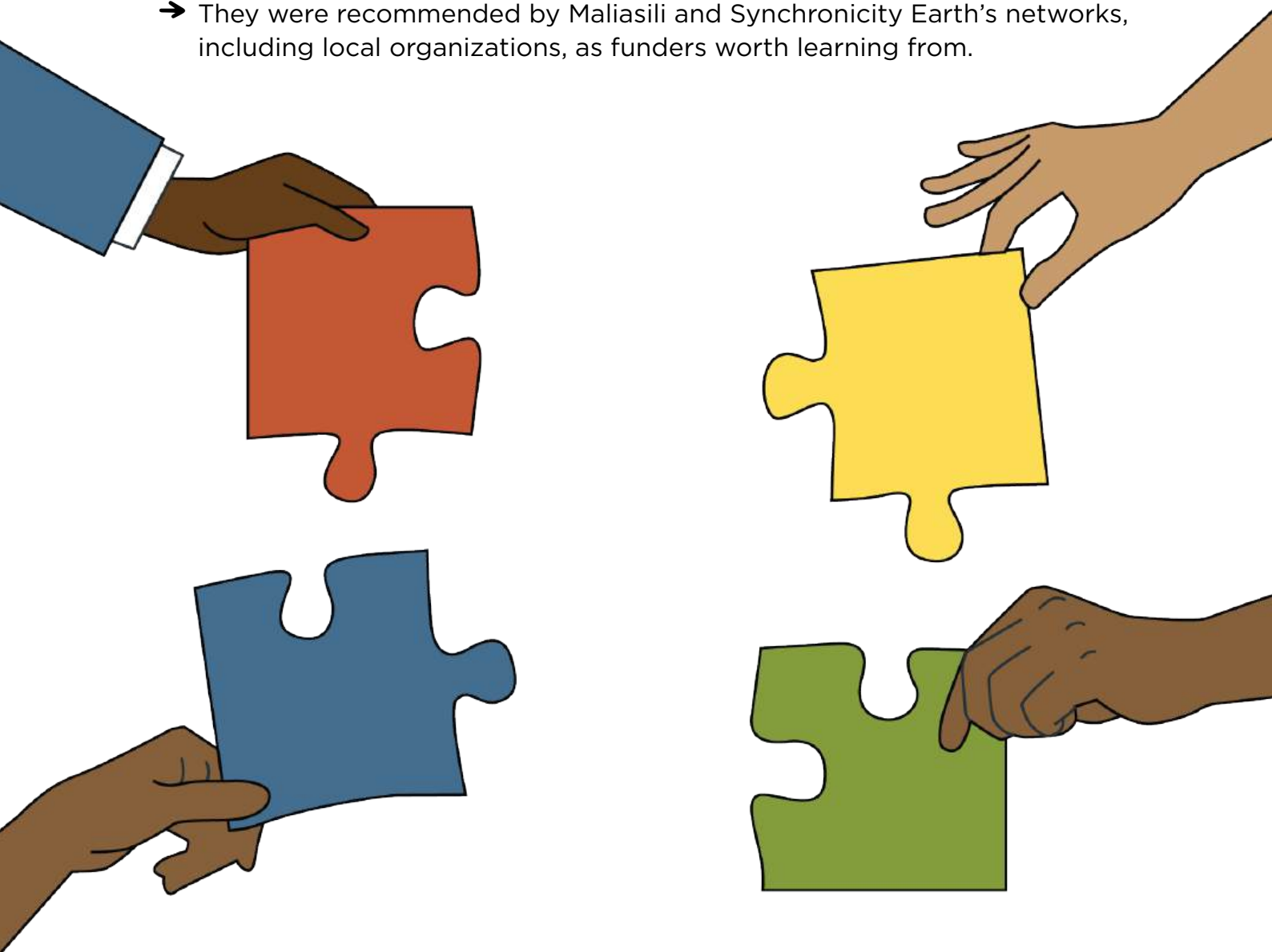
Methodology

This report draws from the experiences and insights of a handful of funders who are intentionally reflecting on and developing practices in the hope of getting more meaningful funding to local organizations.

We interviewed seven funders to understand their approaches, the key changes they have made to realize a deeper commitment to local agency and action, and how they are continuing to learn and evolve.

We selected funders based on the following criteria:

- They are private philanthropies, foundations, or re-granters that support African conservation
- They recognize the importance of local organizations and are making an intentional effort to get more funding to them in more supportive and meaningful ways
- They reflect on and are seeking to improve their own approaches
- They were recommended by Maliasili and Synchronicity Earth's networks, including local organizations, as funders worth learning from.





Funder Overview and Profiles

Wildlife Conservation Network (WCN)

Since 2002, the Wildlife Conservation Network has been a key catalyst for local conservation organizations working at the interface of people and wildlife. WCN acts as a fiscal sponsor, re-granter, and networking body, raising and disbursing funds for locally-led initiatives, emphasizing support to local organizations and then providing capacity support to help them become more impactful.



Funding

In 2023, WCN raised and disbursed over \$50 million across its strategies, with a significant portion going to local organizations. In Africa specifically, about 65% of its 2023 funds went to local organizations (\$19 million). Some of the impactful local organizations WCN supports include Conservation Through Public Health in Uganda, Grevy's Zebra Trust in Kenya, and the Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association.



Philosophy & approach

Recognizing the importance of local and place-based organizations to the future of African conservation, WCN has developed a unique strategy, the Partner Network, which directly partners with and provides a range of support services to strengthen local organizations and help them become more impactful. This includes fiscal sponsorship and fundraising, connecting local organizations with resources and supporters, leadership development, strengthening organizational systems and capacity, along with providing

support for specific projects and initiatives led by these partner organizations. 100% of donations allocated to specific partner organizations are redistributed directly, with zero overhead removed by WCN.

WCN's second strategy, the Wildlife Funds, also offers flexible grants to projects to protect threatened species across their habitats. Wildlife Funds invests in effective projects from a wide range of organizations, kickstarting new approaches and bolstering tried and true conservation efforts. Each fund amplifies donor support by combining contributions, allowing for the biggest impact possible. 100% of donations to WCN's Funds are redistributed directly to grantees, with zero overhead removed by WCN.

Lastly, WCN's third strategy, Rising Wildlife Leaders, empowers conservationists native to a region of focus by providing them with financial support, educational resources and professional training, hands-on experiences, invaluable mentorship opportunities, and access to peer support networks. By helping

these leaders either start or sustain their conservation careers, WCN aims to have a greater and more lasting impact for wildlife around the world. 100% of donations to specific Rising Wildlife Leaders programs are used for those programs.

“We try to have an open mind and focus on organizations that are most impactful. Our belief is that in most cases organizations that are run by local nationals or have a strong component of local nationals are going to be more successful for a number of reasons. One is the longevity and connection to place: when this is your home, you are deeply invested, you have a socio-cultural understanding, you have a political understanding. So, organizations that have these deep roots are an important part of success.”

By directly engaging with and supporting frontline partners, WCN has developed a strong vision and understanding of what characteristics comprise an effective local organization and what the building blocks are, in order to succeed long-term. This experience and clarity, along with their own internal processes and learning around how best to support and build strong, trust-based relationships with their partners, provide useful lessons on how to get funding and support directly into the hands of local organizations.

The Christensen Fund

The Christensen Fund, established in 1957, works “to support Indigenous Peoples in advancing their inherent rights, dignity, and self-determination”. With a focus on rights and place-based equitable grantmaking, The Christensen Fund supports local Indigenous-led and Indigenous-serving organizations engaged at the ground level. As the organization has evolved, it has shifted from engaging in a wide range of issues that affect Indigenous Peoples to becoming more focused and targeted on supporting rights, recognizing that rights are foundational to self-determination.



Funding

The Christensen Fund supports local organizations across diverse geographies, including those engaged in specific country and cultural contexts along with those engaged at the global level. Between 2023-2024, The Christensen Fund awarded 205 grants across its portfolios, with 72% of those grants going to Indigenous-led organizations and 81% comprised of unrestricted and flexible funding. Within

Africa, The Christensen Fund awarded \$5.9 million in grants for the same period, with 78% of its Africa support going direct to Indigenous-led organizations. 67% of these consist of flexible and unrestricted funding.



To embody its commitment to an equitable and rights-based approach, The Christensen Fund's grantmaking is oriented around building trust-based relationships, emphasizing unrestricted and long-term support to enable local organizations to pursue their own goals and strategies. In Africa, The Christensen Fund's support has catalyzed efforts by local organizations that work to secure Indigenous and community rights alongside conservation, such as the pioneering work of the Ujamaa Community Resource Team (UCRT) in Tanzania that helps

Indigenous communities obtain collective land titles to secure their rights and promote conservation. With a desire to support new, catalytic opportunities, The Christensen Fund helped jumpstart REPALEAC (Network of Indigenous and Local Populations for the Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa), working to secure forest tenure rights across eight countries in central Africa, and helped to bring in resources from other funders.

In addition to its direct grantmaking, The Christensen Fund also engages with and advocates for Indigenous rights and self-determination within the wider philanthropy ecosystem, including efforts to boost commitments and establish new funding models. It is a member of the \$1.7 billion Glasgow Pledge, for example, to provide more support to Indigenous and local communities to protect tropical forests. As part of this, it was a trailblazer in transparent tracking and reporting of where funds were deployed. It also supports the development of Indigenous-led funds seeking to restructure decision-making and governance around funding.

“Our purpose is to uphold the declaration of the rights of Indigenous Peoples throughout all our philanthropic practices. So how do we do that? Unrestricted funding whenever possible. It is the closest thing that philanthropy has to supporting Indigenous Peoples’ rights to self-determination.”

This commitment to self-determination in funding practices, embodied in its flexible and tailored approach to grantmaking, provides useful insights into funding practices that can better support local organizations, and internal levers of change funders might implement to approach these partnerships in more equitable ways.

Cartier for Nature

Cartier for Nature was established in 2020 as a philanthropic initiative of Maison Cartier to help achieve its sustainability commitments “by providing grants to effective non-profit organizations to help protect, restore and sustainably manage ecosystems for the benefits of human well-being and biodiversity.” It supports efforts across important conservation landscapes around the globe, funding both specific country programs and projects of international NGOs along with direct support to local organizations. It has built a solid portfolio in Africa.

Cartier for Nature



Funding

50% of Cartier for Nature’s funding goes to local organizations, half of them located in Africa. Its grants range from \$200,000-500,000 per year over a multi-year period. They keep their funding below 30% of a partner’s operating budget, meaning they are targeting mid-range organizations with diverse funding sources, and they emphasize unrestricted support where possible.



Philosophy & approach

Cartier for Nature supports local organizations that have demonstrated the impact of their models and seek to take them to scale. It awards multi-year grants to power local organizational strategies, trusts their expertise and builds long-term relationships. Its intention is to support and supplement what local organizations are already doing, elevating impact while investing in the leaders, teams, organizational systems, and strategies that are having an impact on the ground.

In the few years since its establishment, Cartier for Nature has partnered with impactful local African organizations. In East Africa, it is supporting their ambition to strengthen community-led conservation efforts and to scale their scope and impact. In Southern Kenya, for example, it is supporting the South Rift Association of Landowners’ (SORALO) goals to strengthen the governance and management of 11 community conservancies and to establish four new ones by 2025. Across the border in Tanzania, it is supporting the Honeyguide Foundation to strengthen the governance and management of Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), and to expand its work across 10 WMAs. Cartier for Nature’s partnership approach and support of impactful local strategies provide useful insights into enabling funding approaches shaped around alignment and trust in local leadership.

The Good Energies Foundation

The Good Energies Foundation is a Swiss-based philanthropy that is part of Porticus, the private philanthropy of the Brenninkmeijer family business owners that aims to help “create a just and sustainable future where human dignity flourishes.” Across its environmental programming, Good Energies supports access to clean energy and the conservation of tropical forests. In Africa, a primary focal area is the Congo basin forests.



The Good Energies Foundation sees support to local organizations as a key part of building a strong civil society that improves the well-being of people. Within its environment-focused support in Africa, it emphasizes the protection, restoration and sustainable management of tropical forests as fundamental to mitigating climate change.

To achieve this, its funding support is informed by a strategy that recognizes the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities as a key building block of effective forest conservation, and that support to the local organizations that work alongside and support local communities can be an important lever of change. In the Congo basin, for example, Good Energies recognizes that a lack of secure rights by forest peoples makes forests more vulnerable to industrial-scale destruction through logging and agri-business. Accordingly, to boost funding available to local organizations and re-frame how they access it, Good Energies is a key investor in a pooled fund established by Synchronicity Earth to provide more and less restrictive funding to local frontline organizations supporting communities in forest conservation.

“We believe that if you want change over time, we need to make sure that the local civil society landscape is strong. We make a purposeful effort to fund local organizations, listen to the needs of these partners, and this also means we need to support the organization and not focus on project-based activities.”

This commitment to locally-led approaches and trying to re-shape and engage with funding pathways that are more equitable and impactful is a testament to the important principles Good Energies has embodied as it has evolved and grown. These include providing flexible funding, investing in local leadership, trusting local partner strategies and approaches, promoting opportunities for collaboration, and staying agile and open to change. These principles and approaches provide useful insights into how to embody strategic funding practices that support the rights and leadership of local people and frontline organizations.

Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation (LCAOF)

The Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation has been supporting conservation in Africa since 1987, when community conservation was gaining traction and its support targeted initiatives that supported both people and nature. Nearly one third of its grantmaking focuses on Africa, where focal regions include the savannahs of East Africa, the central African forests, Madagascar, and more recently the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area in southern Africa.



While LCAOF funds diverse partners, including international NGOs along with local organizations across its target landscapes, it is increasingly shaped by an evolving commitment that conservation needs to be led locally and is increasingly supporting local organizations. Its \$10-12 million annual budget is being increasingly targeted to local organizations, emphasizing those that are already established with strong leadership, effective

systems in place, are supported by science, and are having an impact on the ground. In 2017, 28% of LCAOF's grants went to local organizations outside the United States, and in 2023 this had risen to 55%.



LCAOF takes a 'landscape approach' to funding and impact, seeking to understand the context, the actors, and potential levers of change that the funding might target and support. To guide its grantmaking and partnerships, LCAOF emphasizes five enabling conditions for locally-led conservation to be successful: sound ecological information, well-managed and connected conservation areas, supportive government and policies, empowered local communities, and sustainable and diverse financial support.

In Africa, LCAOF supports activities by both international NGOs and local organizations, but is increasingly interested in local organizations that help to create the enabling conditions for successful locally-led conservation and that are providing innovative solutions for both people and nature. In the east Africa rangelands, for example, it supports the impactful work of organizations like the South Rift Association of Landowners that is strengthening community conservation areas in southern Kenya, and the Ujamaa Community Resource Team that is supporting Indigenous communities to secure the rights and conserve and manage rangelands in northern Tanzania.

“We identify and invest in promising organizations that have the potential to grow into really impactful organizations.”

As LCAOF grows its support to local organizations, this evolution has been accompanied by intentional shifts and changes within LCAOF’s own internal structures and processes to enable it to provide more support to local organizations. The intentional reflection process around this evolution, along with the shifts in their practices and approaches, provides valuable lessons and insights into how funders might commit to and adjust to provide more support to local African organizations.

Bezos Earth Fund

The Bezos Earth Fund was established in 2020 and is one of the world’s largest nature and climate-focused philanthropic initiatives. In Africa, it is making a big bet on land restoration as a key component of achieving regional climate goals and actions, and wants to see an exponential increase in the pace of delivery of restoration goals across Africa.



The Earth Fund has made a 10-year, \$10-billion funding commitment across a wide range of programmatic goals, strategies, and geographies. \$2 billion has been committed to the restoration and conservation of nature, with a significant focus on Africa.



The Earth Fund is guided by core principles that include local commitment, scientific and technical rigor, and fostering collaboration. With a focus on large-scale impact, the organization seeks out and invests in catalytic opportunities that bring together a coalition of partners, including grassroots organizations that work on the ground along with national and international partners that can provide technical support and leverage additional funding. The intention behind these strategic investment is to create initiatives that take on a life of

their own, creating the infrastructure to support activities beyond what the Earth Fund could fund directly. Within the Africa landscape restoration program an example of this is TerraFund, which they seed-funded and developed in partnership with the World Resources Institute, that has been able to mobilize additional funding to support restoration projects led by social enterprises and community organizations. Since 2021, TerraFund has channelled more than \$33 million to 200 local restoration groups across 27 countries.

Where the Earth Fund directly invests in local African organizations, it focuses on networks that then mobilize further local action. In 2023, for example, the Earth Fund made a direct, multi-year commitment to the Albertine Rift Conservation Society (ARCOS), a CSO network that in turn supports other stakeholders and community organizations. Through this support, ARCOS is seeking to restore areas of the Rift Valley in Kenya and the Rusizi River basin in DRC, Rwanda, and Burundi. As an example of how the Earth Fund's support is intended to catalyze further impact, ARCOS has in turn led the development of a 16-country network of African NGOs to help push the continent's restoration movement forward. Among other programmatic goals, the Earth Fund is supporting the rapid increase in funding available for African restoration organizations. As a new funder established in the last few years, the Earth Fund provides insights into how to embody a commitment to local support from the outset.

“If carbon mitigation and nature protection are the Earth Fund’s reasons for being, the only way we are going to make progress towards these goals is if we are empowering and engaging the local frontline groups who are grappling with these crises and who are actually doing the work to conserve or restore or to more sustainably manage their land. That is our bedrock philosophy.”

LGT Venture Philanthropy

LGT VP is an independent charitable foundation established in 2007, supporting local organizations in Africa and India to support and scale locally-led solutions across health, education, and environment program areas. The foundation provides flexible, multi-year core funding and builds long-term partnerships to catalyse collaboration and collective impact. LGT VP's environment strategy is to "protect and regenerate ecosystems" with a focus on supporting "scalable, community-based efforts to protect and regenerate ecosystems through community conservation models."



LGT VP believes that for philanthropic funding to be truly transformative, it must strengthen the capabilities of organizations delivering effective solutions so that they can drive more significant impact and embed their models in wider systems. LGT Venture Philanthropy believes that "local communities hold the knowledge to successfully protect the ecosystems they live in and are also best placed to manage them sustainably." To support this, LGT VP focuses its funding efforts on strengthening local organizations as key

leaders and drivers of long-term change. Instead of funding specific projects or activities, LGT VP emphasizes the capacity of local organizations, orienting its support around important enabling principles of flexible core funding and long-term trust-based relationships, with the belief that once local organizations have strong systems and capacity in place, they can attract other supporters and funders. In addition to their funding support, LGT VP also supports local organizational capacity through the LGT VP Impact Fellowship program, where fellows with key skills become embedded as staff members within local organizations. Around 40% of these fellows end up staying with the organizations they serve, a testament to the value they bring to the local organization.

LGT VP's engagement in Kenya is a good example of its funding approach, where it has been supporting community conservation for over a decade. Its funding is an important contributor to local organizations leading Kenya's conservancy movement, and is fast emerging as an exciting model of community-led conservation reaching a national scale. Through over \$1 million of core funding support to the Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Association (MMWCA) and \$1.7 million to the Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA), LGT VP is catalysing the ability of these organizations to implement their own goals and strategies. Particularly for an advocacy and policy-oriented organization like KWCA, where it is a major challenge to attract flexible, core funding, LGT VP's long-term and flexible funding approach is valuable in helping them change and adapt to shifting policy contexts. LGT VP's approach and commitment to local organizations provides valuable insights into how to get funding to frontline groups in meaningful ways.



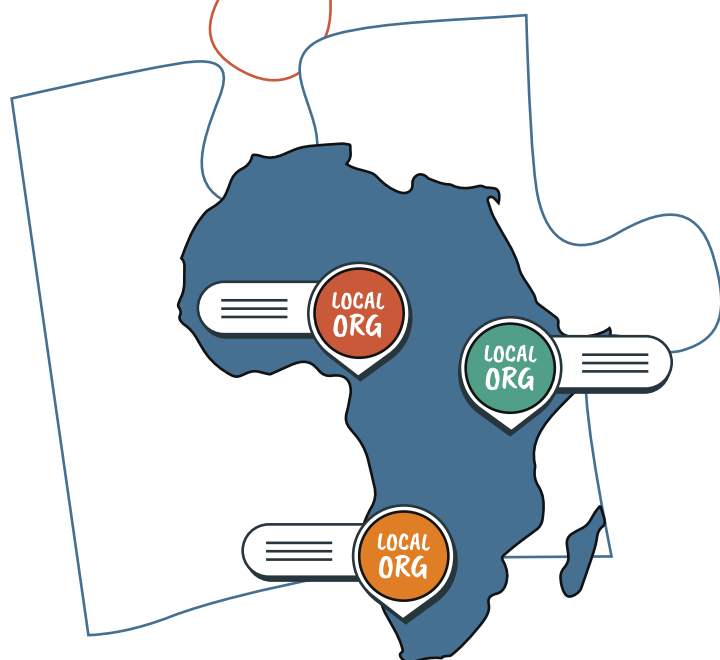
Funding Practices to Better Support Community-led Conservation

Based on the interviews and our analysis, we outline several principles and practices to help guide and inform a more meaningful approach to supporting local conservation organizations:

Foundational values and a guiding strategy



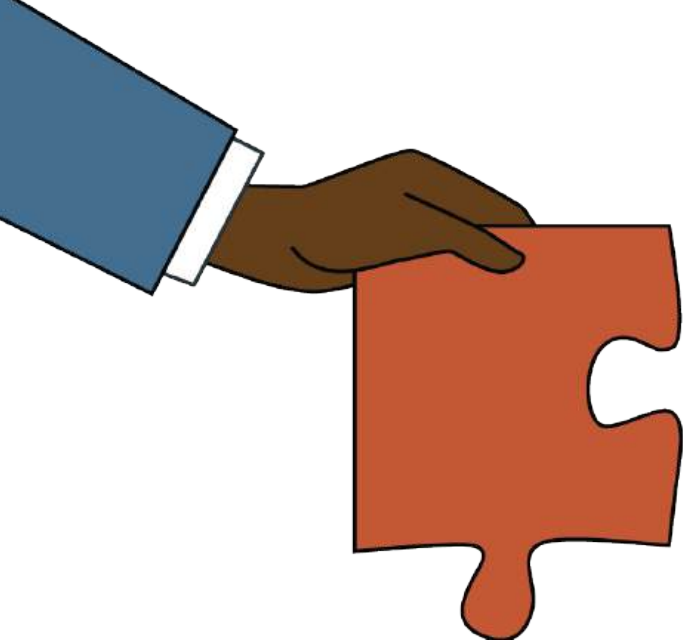
Establishing an equitable and trust-based approach to doing business



Operationalizing locally-centered practices



Creating a culture of learning, reflection and change



Foundational values and a guiding strategy

1. Clear strategy that recognizes local rights and leadership

Funders that are providing more meaningful support to local organizations recognize in their strategies that the rights and leadership of Indigenous Peoples and local communities are fundamental to effective and equitable conservation outcomes.

- Good Energies's strategy, for example, clearly links forest conservation outcomes in central Africa with strengthening the rights of forest peoples, guiding what the funding intends to help achieve.¹⁸

“This strategy is at the heart of our thinking. If local people have rights, they can better manage their forests.”

- The Christensen Fund, with its commitment to self-determination, recognizes Indigenous and community rights as a first step to any meaningful and sustained conservation outcome. This principle guides the 90% of its funding that flows to Indigenous Peoples and local communities, creates alignment across the organization, and informs how the funder works and engages with local partners.

2. Clear recognition of the importance of local organizations and their expertise

A clear recognition that local organizations are vital in supporting communities to secure their rights and grow their agency is a key step in evolving a community-led conservation paradigm. Their contextual knowledge, direct and deep relationships, proven expertise, and ability to mobilize are all critical and unique assets.

- LGT VP clearly recognizes local organizations as key agents of change, framing their funding within the belief that “building local organizations is the best long-term strategy.” This guides who the funder partners with, and the targeting of is support to organizational capacity and leadership instead of project activities.

Key barrier

Local organizations are often seen as implementers of funder goals instead of being valued as experts and leaders guided by their own strategies.

- WCN believes conservation is most impactful when led at the local level, with particular attention to those who have historically been underrepresented. The development and growth of WCN's Partner Network, specifically, is a response to the recognition of the important role of local conservation organizations, and that supporting them to become stronger and more impactful is a key step in achieving broader conservation goals.
- LCAOF has gradually evolved to direct more of its support to local organizations, recognizing that if its commitment to community-led conservation is to be realized, then the leadership of this is often best done locally.
- For Good Energies, forest conservation outcomes in Africa are nested within a strong civil society, and strengthening this is an important part of any conservation strategy.

3. Defining and living by guiding values

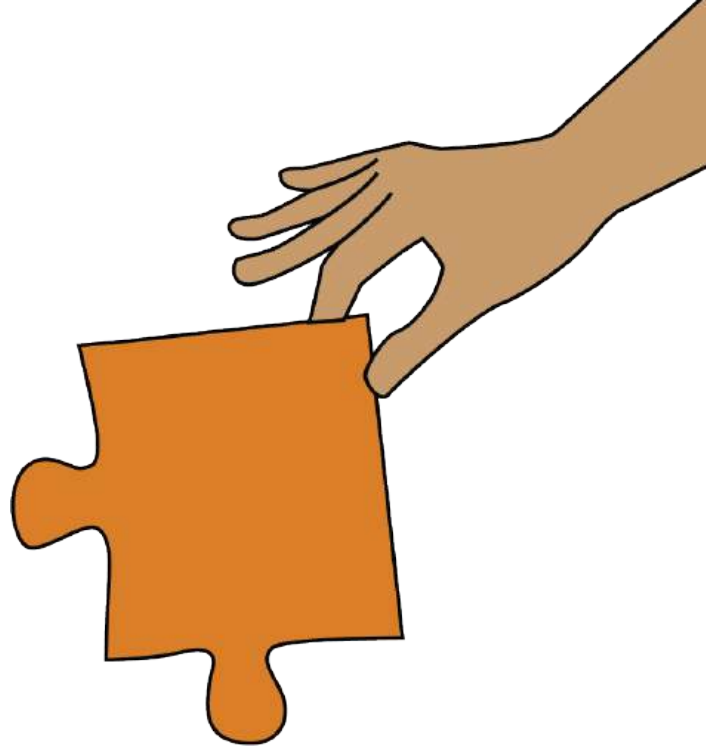
Articulating and embodying a way of working provides an important foundation for funders to establish alignment internally about how they want to establish meaningful partnerships externally.

- An important value of The Christensen Fund is the deep commitment to the rights and self-determination of Indigenous Peoples, providing a road map for everything they do, including shaping their own processes and structures and how they grow relationships with partners.
- Good Energies draws from the concept of "Daring Goals" to guide its work, one of which is the concept of 'meaningful participation,' emphasizing inclusivity in decision-making that helps guide its relationships with partners.

"A guiding principle provides a way to track and monitor if you are actually fulfilling your guiding way of working. The starting point is that you need some kind of guiding principle."

- A core value guiding WCN's Partner Network is that "conservation is most impactful when it is led at the local level," and commitment to this principle helps the organization find alignment and continually reflect on its purpose and approaches.

Establishing an equitable and trust-based approach to doing business



1. Framing funding support within equitable, aligned partnerships

Funding is more than a transactional relationship. It is rooted in partnership and trust. This perspective recognizes local organizations as autonomous drivers of change rather than implementers of external agendas, where funders are supporters. This flattens power dynamics and emphasizes a focus on catalysing local goals and strategies.

- ➔ LGT VP is evolving an “engaged, and trust-based philanthropy” approach, recognizing local organizations as the best-placed to provide impactful solutions and designed around understanding local organizational strategies and needs.
- ➔ The Earth Fund’s restoration efforts recognize and get behind the autonomy of local organizations, focusing on catalysing networks that can then grow into a life of their own, attract other funders and partners, and provide sustained support across their networks.

“This flips the model of engaging local groups as ‘hired guns’ to implement others’ visions and priorities. We try to design coalitions that put local groups at the center and then bring others in.”

- ➔ Cartier for Nature’s support is the outcome of deep conversations to understand what local partners are trying to do, what impact they are having, their strategy to scale their efforts going forward, what they need to get there including financial projections, and how they will measure success. The funder is intentional about managing expectations and seeking alignment on strategy and objectives.

“We want to understand what they do, why they do it, what indicators of progress and impact they will use, and if this is something that speaks to us and we align on objectives then it is easy to get behind them. They are the experts after all, and the idea is not to impose anything on anyone.”

- ➔ For The Christensen Fund, establishing trust and equitable relationships is a key step in embodying approaches that support self-determination and get behind local organizations, such as unrestricted support, a long-term commitment, and staying flexible to what their partners need amidst the changing local contexts they work within.

“When we are supporting movements, particularly Indigenous People who are some of the most marginalized on the planet facing the most pressing issues, we have to maintain trust and flexibility. Especially when other donors do not. We have to be hand in hand with them, keep things easy and flexible.”

2. Viewing local organizational capacity as a conservation outcome

For many conservation funders, building local organizations is not their core objective, but rather climate change and conservation outcomes. When the vital role of local organizations is recognized, however, it opens the door to a whole-organization approach to impact. This includes reflection on:

- ➔ What makes for a strong and effective local organization
- ➔ The stage and capacity level that funders want to engage with
- ➔ That capacity support (core, unrestricted, long-term) is entwined with conservation outcomes

Key barrier

Many local organizations may not meet the criteria that funders look for in terms of organizational capacity, effective systems, and scalable models. This can leave many important local organizations behind, particularly younger organizations, those still putting effective systems in place, or those with a strong focal area or issue that is not appropriate for scale.

Key barrier

An emphasis on projects and implementation leaves funding gaps in the core capacity support that local organizations need to sustain their people and systems that drive action on the ground.

By recognizing the importance of local capacity and committing to supporting it, funders can better achieve conservation outcomes and have transformational impact:

- LGT VP has always believed that local teams are best suited to provide local support and add value. LGT VP focuses on the organization's needs and directs its support to strengthen organizational systems and strategies, grow capacity and leadership, and help address knowledge and talent gaps through its fellowship program. By taking this capacity-centred approach, LGT VP is supporting local organizations to get the organizational structures, teams, and systems in place that then help to "crowd other funders in."
- The Christensen Fund is willing to take risks on early-stage, potentially catalytic opportunities that other funders might not engage with since there is not a proven model. In the Congo Basin, for example, the Christensen Fund helped catalyse the early work of the REPALEAC (Network of Indigenous and Local Populations for the Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa), working to secure forest tenure rights across eight countries in central Africa, supporting them to get capacity systems in place such as 501c3 US tax exempt status that then enabled them to attract significantly more funding.
- WCN has evolved its Partnership Network to intentionally strengthen local organizations, providing funding support, leadership development, and additional tools and resources. Positioned as a re-granter, WCN elevates local organizations and provides a way for diverse donors to invest. The funding can be used at the discretion of the local partner, providing important core and capacity support.
- As LCAOF has evolved to support more local organizations, it has recognized the need for a wider, whole-organization capacity support approach to ensure the systems are in place for effective impact on the ground.

“LCAOF has long provided core operational funding to many of its long-time grantees and made a concerted effort to continue this practice as much as possible. For grantees outside the US, we also started making specific capacity building grants a few years ago over and above core and/or project-based funding to support capacity needs (e.g., fundraising, travel to conferences, exchanges, strategic planning, etc.). These capacity grants started as ad-hoc staff discretionary grants, but have evolved into a formal Capacity and Organizational Strengthening (COS) Program that we are piloting this year for the first time. The COS Pilot has a separate, more pared-down application procedure compared to normal grants processes, as part of the aim is to be able to deploy funding quickly for time limited, strategic opportunities as identified by our grantees.”

3. Shifting power through unrestricted, flexible funding

92% of local African conservation organizations identify the lack of core and unrestricted funding as a major barrier.¹⁹ Funding is more meaningful to local organizations when it shifts from project-focused and activity-based support to being an investment into their energy and commitment.

Key barrier

Committing to and trusting local partners through unrestricted, flexible support is a challenge for many funders. Many funders feel like they need more control and direction to ensure accountability and track their funding impact. This does not support the organization as a whole, nor many of their core needs.

- ➔ For The Christensen Fund, providing flexible and unrestricted support is one of the most powerful ways it can actualize its organizational commitment to self-determination.

“Some partners would say that philanthropy can at times be a new form of colonialism and a way of controlling organizations and communities and movements. That is where the unrestricted funding comes into play. It is not ethical for local organizations to be working in service of funders.”

- ➔ After partnering with a local organization, LGT VP works with this partner to develop and outline a ‘funding envelope’ focused mainly on tailored core funding that aligns with the partner’s strategy and scaling plans and guides the use of those resources in ways that best work for the local organization. This places the decision-making with the local organization while still giving the funder a framework for understanding how the resources will be used.
- ➔ For Cartier for Nature, providing flexible funding is an investment and statement of trust in a local organization’s strategy and expertise. The funder focuses on local organizations that apply scientific standards and have proven impact models so that the funding supports the scaling of interventions that are effective. This is reflected in its support to Honeyguide in Tanzania, for example, which helped Honeyguide scale its proven support model to promote better management of 11 community Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). Cartier for Nature achieved conservation impact by investing in a locally-led strategy, and anchored the relationship within Honeyguide’s own evaluation and learning framework, not only as a way to assess the impact of the work but by extension the impact of the funding.

“Building trust means rebalancing the power relationship between funders and grantees, and offering more flexibility is a part of that. This happens easily when expectations on both sides are clear and all channels of communication are open to create a safe space for conversation.”

- When WCN takes on and supports a local organization through its Partner Network, it is recognizing the importance of supporting the whole organization. The local organization decides how the funds are used.

“When we fiscally sponsor an organization in our Partner Network, we don’t force them to restrict the donations they receive in a particular way because we trust them to respond to the shifting needs on the ground. We would encourage other funders to reduce the time and effort burden by providing more long-term, flexible funding. However, for compliance purposes, we still require grantees to share their overall organizational budget and expenses to ensure it’s for legitimate charitable conservation purposes. But if a funder truly believes that an investment in this organization is a strong investment for conservation, then the funder invests in the overall organization, not having to restrict to a specific short-term project or timeline.”

4. Committing to long-term relationships

Developing long-term relationships is an important step. This moves a relationship from being a transaction to a deeper partnership shaped around commitment, building confidence and trust.

Key barrier

A desire for longer-term relationships is still constrained by the shorter-term duration of grants.

There is still a mismatch across many funders regarding their long-term intentions and the practicalities of grant timeframes. The important point here, however, is awareness of this challenge and thinking through potential solutions going forward:

- For Good Energies, most of its grants are between 1-3 years, but the funder is interested in moving beyond that. But even where grants are shorter term, the idea is that Good Energies would renew the grants going forward and the relationship is longer term and built around growth.

- ➔ Cartier for Nature engages with partners with the intention of building long-term relationships because improvements in conservation take time. It sometimes starts with a smaller, shorter-term (1-2 year) grant to allow both parties to get to know each other. If the collaboration is successful, then the goal is to develop long-term support. The contract may be short-term but the ambition is to have longer-term relationships.
- ➔ For the Christensen Fund, the intention is to nurture long-term relationships, and it has supported some partners for over 15 years. Grant cycles, however, are still two years long and the funder is actively trying to think through how to adjust this.
- ➔ LGT Venture Philanthropy (LGT VP) offers long-term patient capital along with extended non-financial support. The funder begins with an initial one-year grant of approximately \$250,000. If the first year is successful, the grant is extended into a three-year follow-on grant, providing up to \$500,000 per year, with specific milestones. This grant can be renewed for an additional three years on a rolling basis if needed.

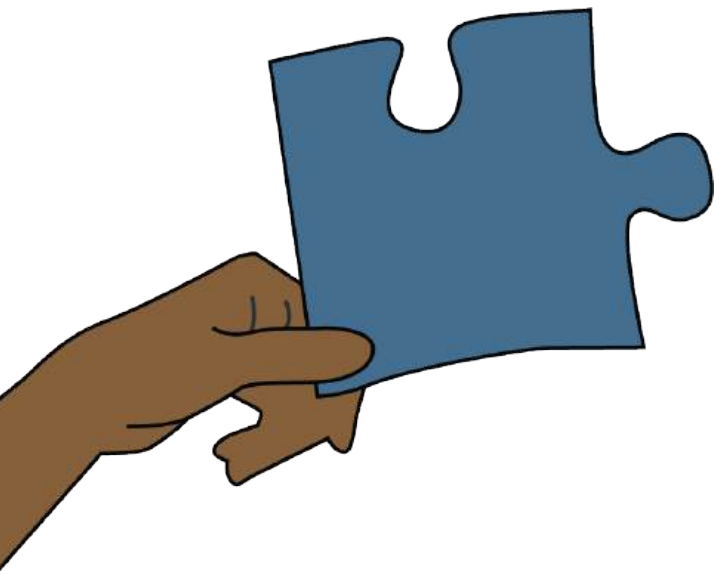
Finding local partners is a wider systems issue of equity

Most funders identify and develop relationships with local partners through networks and recommendations, yet the ability to access these networks is a significant barrier for local organizations, leaving some behind. Furthermore, local organizations are often at a disadvantage when they compete with more established NGOs for the same funding pools.

To address this issue of funding equity and access, WCN has gradually refined its criteria for who is eligible to qualify for support through its Partner Network, making it more targeted at local organizations. Some of the things WCN looks for include clear conservation impact, a commitment to community-led conservation, 80% of their budget being spent in the target region, the leadership being native to the region or there being a succession plan in place to make this happen, and a commitment to hire staff from local activity areas and communities. Refining these criteria has also helped spark reflection within grantees, and has “definitely encouraged organizations that we have brought on to try to be more integrated into the community they are trying to support.”

Bias is also inherent in funding decisions, and having a clear vision of what they look for in local partners helps funders reduce this and promote transparency. Cartier for Nature, for example, has articulated clear criteria for local organizations that might be the right fit for its funding. This includes having a very clear understanding of the problem they are trying to solve, a solution they have iterated on and thoroughly tested, clear evidence of impact, and the ambition to replicate and scale the solution.

Some funders are also recognizing the limitations in the common philanthropic approach where funders approach potential partners. The Earth Fund, for example, has a clear vision on what they look for in local partners, including a certain level of technical ability to manage and monitor restoration impact, clarity that investment in a particular partner would catalyze further impact, that they are willing to collaborate with others, and that there is alignment in mission and goals. If finding partners that fit this vision relies on recommendations through a ‘friends and family network,’ this risks that some strong potential partners could be left out. To address this, they are thinking through processes that enable local organizations to approach them, including open calls for proposals administered either by the Earth Fund or intermediary partners.



Operationalizing locally-centered practices

1. Commitment to and establishing structures for meaningful engagement

People are key, and organizational growth often depends on champions and leadership within funding organizations to make it a priority. Where funders intentionally maintain small teams in order to get the majority of their resources to the ground, creative solutions are needed to create structures of engagement and build effective relationships.

Key barrier

Funders usually have lean teams and do not have a ground presence alongside local organizations, yet they need to find ways for direct engagement, ongoing communication, and trust building.

- Good Energies establishes a local presence through its regional offices, ensuring that local staff leads on both strategy development and implementation.
- With its small team, The Christensen Fund's commitment to flexibility and being open to different approaches with its diverse partners depends heavily on the passion and commitment of the people involved.
- The Earth Fund establishes a local presence through portfolio managers that reside within its target regions and understand local context.
- Cartier for Nature aligns its own capacity needs with the support it wants to provide. Focusing on organizations with a proven model and certain level of capacity enables it to provide fewer but larger grants and maintain a lean and effective team.
- As LCAOF has evolved to provide more support to local organizations, it has increased its staff and program officers responsible for different regions to better build and maintain trusting relationships.

2. Go direct or through intermediaries

The limited capacity funders have for direct on-the-ground engagement with local partners means that they often provide support through intermediaries, including those that act as re-granters or those that have their own activities on the ground.

Key barrier

Where funders need to use intermediaries to support local organizations, ensuring intermediaries embody their same values is an important consideration, particularly around themes of trust, equity, flexibility, long-term support, and proportions of fund allocation.

- ➔ For Good Energies, intermediaries have been justified due to barriers in giving small grants to local organizations. The funder is interested, however, in intermediaries that help to shift power, participation, and ownership.

“We are starting to think more and more about what kind of mechanisms there are to give marginalized people more power so they can have more decisions over the resources flowing into a country to support their goals. Direct funding intermediaries are one of those ideas.”

- ➔ The Earth Fund engages with these themes by catalyzing and supporting intermediary networks that engage with frontline groups more effectively than it could. Through TerraFund, for example, the Earth Fund has supported over 150 groups with 5-10 financial disbursements throughout the year, something the funder could not do directly on its own.
- ➔ LCAOF relies on intermediaries in some contexts and landscapes, yet emphasizes the importance of who they are and how they work. In some contexts, for example, INGOs are not always the best placed because they have their own programmatic goals, and this can create a tension between the larger NGOs and the local organizations LCAOF is intending to support.

“We look for intermediaries that have a strong understanding of and can effectively navigate their role in educating and supporting both the grantees and the funders throughout the grantmaking process. They are skilled communicators and translators of programmatic needs up and down the chain, and create efficiencies for funders while also supporting the capacity needs of grantee organizations. In recent years, we have tended to work with intermediaries that focus primarily on capacity and funding delivery to grassroots and Indigenous-led organizations and less so with groups that run their own activities on the ground that might sub-grant or sub-contract with smaller organizations. However, in some countries there are very few local organizations that meet our minimum requirements; in those places INGOs are still the essential actors, on their own or as intermediaries to help grow local capacity.”

3. Simplifying administration and reporting

Adapting the administrative side of funding to local organizational contexts and systems is a key step being taken by funders to build trust-based relationships and minimize additional work by local organizations, enabling them to remain effective on the ground.

Key barrier

It takes a lot of time and effort to build trust-based relationships and adapt processes to the context of each local organization that is being funded.

- ➔ The Christensen Fund works with its grantees to outline the application and reporting structures that work best for the local organization. Applications can take many forms, including a written proposal, a video, sharing their strategic plan and highlighting the areas where they want and

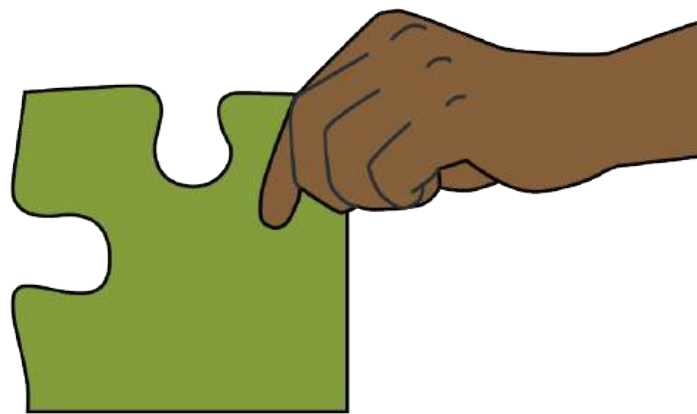
need additional support, or even through a back-and-forth conversation over messaging tools like WhatsApp. Reporting, similarly, can take many forms, and is ideally integrated into products they already have and that strengthen them as organizations (such as an annual reports). For ongoing communication, they find that the best relationships develop through both written and verbal communications, such as phone calls or through messaging platforms, as opposed to a very structured communication process.

“We want to make this as easy for you as possible. So here are some options, and if you have another idea, you can propose it and we can make it work”.

- ➔ For both Cartier for Nature and LGT VP, the unrestricted and long-term commitment approach is accompanied by flexible practices that build on what local organizations have already developed for other funders to avoid adding additional burden or work.
- ➔ Good Energies works with its grantees to outline how they will document and report on their impacts. This is structured around ‘learning questions’ that they want to answer and that replace formal reporting, informing the growth of the local partner while also providing insights on Good Energies’ own approach and impact.
- ➔ WCN, through its Partner Network, integrates the administrative side of funding into practices a local partner is already doing or seeking to develop and strengthen.

“On an annual basis we require a certain amount of reporting from our partners, but it’s mostly in the form of things that every organization would already be doing and not anything beyond that—For example, their annual income and balance sheets, if they have a budget for the year, or an annual report. When funding local organizations, we would encourage best practice of reporting annually but not adding additional burdens. More frequent check-ins or progress reports can be done in a two-way collaborative format, such as a meeting between the grantee and funder, rather than a one-way report.”

Creating a culture of learning, reflection and change



1. Creating structures of inclusion and participation

Some funders are shifting their structures or establishing processes to get more input and ownership by the local organizations they support, ensuring their decision-making and growth is informed by the direct inclusion of local perspectives.

Key barrier

Internal structures and processes within funder organizations do not always create space for the views and perspectives of the local organizations and leaders they intend to support.

- The Christensen Fund has brought Indigenous Peoples' representatives from its grantee partners onto its board, integrating local perspectives into the highest level of decision-making in the organization.

“When you talk about really putting grantees and Indigenous representatives at the highest level of decision-making, I don’t think there is really much else you can do. That was a really historic moment.”

- The Earth Fund leans heavily on a network of locally-based advisors, and grantee recipients become thought partners in evolving the Earth Fund’s strategy and focus.
- LGT VP believes in the power of local investment teams, ensuring decisions are based on embedded experience in close proximity to the organizations they support. This underscores its commitment to working closely with local partners.

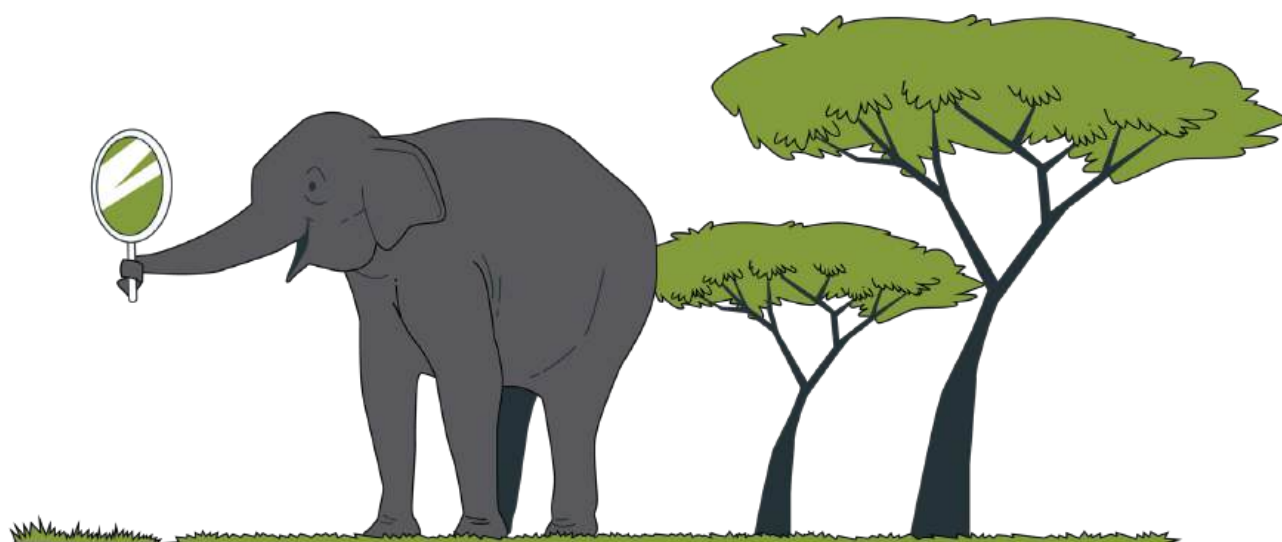
2. Intentional awareness and self-reflection

An intentional approach to learning and growth, shaped by the perspectives and input of local partners and by learning from other funders who are also making an effort, is an important characteristic of funders trying to provide more meaningful support to local organizations.

Key barrier

Funders do not necessarily need to change. They are in a power position, holding the funding that local organizations need. Growing and evolving takes a willingness for self-reflection and being open to change.

- To socialize new ideas within the organization and shape their own growth going forward, Good Energies holds regular 'learning calls,' where local partners engage with and share ideas with staff and trustees on particular interest topics.
- To identify potential areas of growth and change, The Christensen Fund does 'reflections' every two years, having a third party engage with their local partners to highlight emerging issues and challenges and to get feedback on The Christensen Fund's own approaches.





Outstanding Questions and Learning Opportunities

While change is possible and the principles and practices highlighted in this report may help guide the growth of more meaningful funding practices, key challenges and opportunities will need continued reflection:

- 1. Committing to local organizational strategies as best-placed to deliver conservation outcomes:** Recognizing that local organizational strategies and solutions are contextual and based on need positions local organizations as the most effective leaders of impact on the ground. This framing is the first step in providing flexible and adaptive funding, and situates impact within the outcomes these leaders seek to achieve.
- 2. Becoming high-capacity is not the responsibility of local organizations on their own:** The burden is still largely on local organizations to develop the capacity levels and proven impact models that funders seek and feel comfortable with. Yet many organizations need support to get there in the first place. Taking a capacity-centric view to conservation impact can re-frame funding, emphasizing capacity strengthening and leadership as integral to long-term outcomes. This does not mean funders need to do it themselves, but they might explore ways to integrate it alongside their funding support. This also allows more risk taking on early-stage organizations or experimental approaches.
- 3. Desire for conservation impact needs to be integrated with a commitment to equity:** Supporting local organizations is an issue of equity in addition to impact. When funders commit to this it elevates local agency within both the funding ecosystem and the conservation space.
- 4. Creating more access:** Finding ways to broaden access and promote more equity in funding opportunities is a critical need.
- 5. Long-term funding:** Aspirations toward long-term relationships needs to be accompanied by long-term funding commitments. This builds confidence, trust, and accountability.
- 6. Inclusive governance:** Exploring ways to ensure the voices and perspectives of local organizations and the communities they support shape the evolution of conservation funding is critical. This relates to things like how intermediaries are structured, how funders adapt and grow their own internal processes and structures, expectations around levels of transparency and accountability, and the kinds of ongoing learning spaces that are needed for funders to learn from each other as well as the local organizations they support.

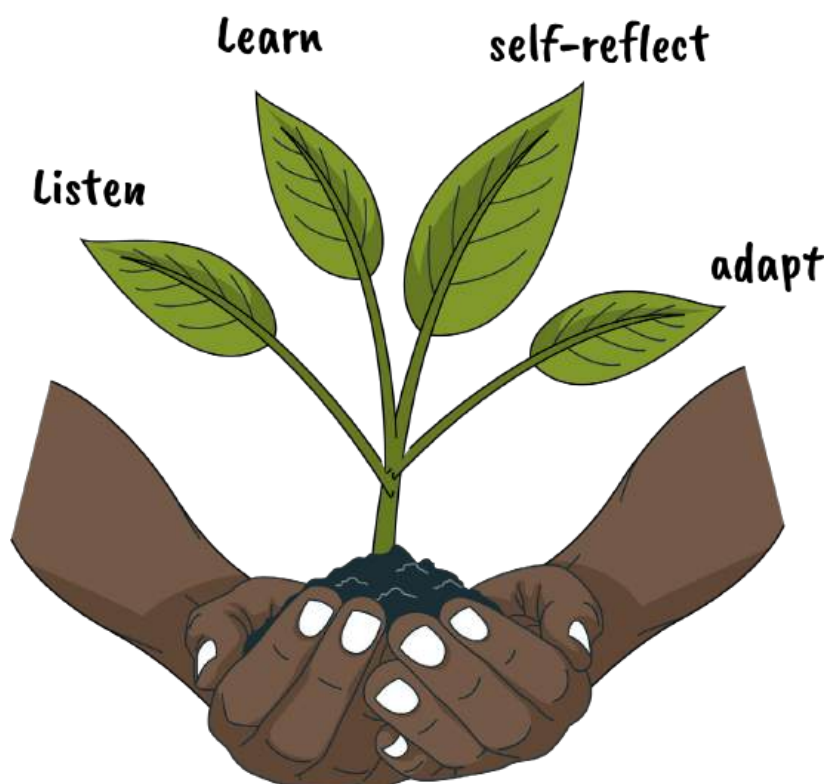


Conclusion

When we started this analysis and began engaging with funders making a more intentional effort to support community-led conservation in Africa by supporting local organizations, we thought it might point toward specific internal levers that can trigger a shift towards more meaningful approaches. Rather what we found is that developing these approaches is a learning journey and that **the major lever of change is having a willingness to listen, learn, self-reflect, and adapt.** The ‘early mover’ funders who are doing this and setting examples should be celebrated.

This evolution can continue to be guided and expanded across the funding ecosystem by the principles and practices we have highlighted in this report, including: defining foundational values and articulating a guiding strategy, thinking carefully about partnerships and establishing an equitable and trust-based approach to doing business, finding ways to operationalize an approach that targets whole organizations through capacity-focused and flexible funding, and creating a culture of learning, reflection, and change, including creating ways for local input into decision-making and design.

How this materializes will vary across funders and the contexts they operate in. The approaches that we draw from in this report provide examples that may help others, and by analysing and compiling these experiences into core principles and more detailed practices, we hope to provide a helpful guiding framework. While our emphasis here has been in Africa, the learnings from this report are applicable globally. Whatever the geography, the first step to evolving funding practices is a willingness to reflect, learn, and be open to change, and with that spirit conservation philanthropy can become a transformative ally to the local organizations that are creating a new paradigm in community-led conservation.



References

- 1** Buzzard, B. 2024. “Seeding Solutions: Why Community-led Conservation is Critical for People, Biodiversity, and Climate Change in Africa.” Maliasili.
- 2** Paul, R., et al. 2022. “Greening the Grassroots: Rethinking African Conservation Funding.” Maliasili & Synchronicity Earth. <https://www.maliasili.org/greeningthegrassroots>
- 3** Convention on Biological Diversity. Introduction to the Global Biodiversity Framework. <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/introduction>
- 4** Maliasili. 2022. Greening the Grassroots: Rethinking African Conservation Funding. <https://www.maliasili.org/greeningthegrassroots>; 2023. Rooting For Change: Strengthening Local – Global Partnerships In African Conservation. <https://www.maliasili.org/rootingforchange>
- 5** WWF, et al. 2021. “The State of Indigenous Peoples’ and Local Communities’ Lands and Territories.” Gland, Switzerland.
- 6** Fa, J., et al. 2020. “Importance of Indigenous Peoples’ Lands for the Conservation of Intact Forest Landscapes.” *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 18 (3): 135–40.
- 7** Rights and Resources Initiative. 2018. A Global Baseline of Carbon Storage in Collective Lands: Indigenous and Local Community Contributions to Climate Change Mitigation.
- 8** O’Bryan, C., et al. 2021. “The Importance of Indigenous Peoples’ Lands for the Conservation of Terrestrial Mammals.” *Conservation Biology* 35 (3): 1002–8.
- 9** Fischer, H. et al. 2023. “Community Forest Governance and Synergies among Carbon, Biodiversity and Livelihoods.” *Nature Climate Change* 13 (12): 1340–47.
- 10** The Convention on Biological Diversity. 2022. “15/4. Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.”
- 11** Rainforest Foundation Norway. Falling Short: Donor Funding for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities to Secure Tenure Rights and Manage Forests in Tropical Countries (2011–2020). <https://www.regnskog.no/en/news/falling-short>
- 12** Rights and Resources Initiative and Rainforest Foundation Norway. 2024. State of Funding for Tenure Rights and Forest Guardianship. 2011–2023. <https://rightsandresources.org/publication/state-of-funding-for-tenure-rights-and-forest-guardianship/>
- 13** Forest Tenure Funders Group. 2022–2023 Annual Report. <https://landportal.org/sites/default/files/library/resources/FTFG-Annual-Report-2022-23-final.pdf>
- 14** Rights and Resources Initiative & Rainforest Foundation Norway. 2022. Funding with Purpose: A Study to Inform Donor Support for Indigenous and Local Community Rights, Climate, and Conservation. <https://rightsandresources.org/publication/funding-with-purpose/>
- 15** The State of Global Giving by US Foundations: 2022 Edition. <https://cof.org/content/state-global-giving-us-foundations-2022-edition>
- 16** Paul, R., et al. 2022. “Greening the Grassroots: Rethinking African Conservation Funding.” Maliasili & Synchronicity Earth. <https://www.maliasili.org/greeningthegrassroots>
- 17** For more on these perspectives around partnerships, see Maliasili. 2023. Rooting for Change: Strengthening Local – Global Partnerships In African Conservation. <https://www.maliasili.org/rootingforchange>
- 18** See Good Energies’s Living Forests priority, including the guiding strategy: <https://prd-control-multisite.maneraconsult.com/media/Oxwdxapf/toc-living-forests.pdf>
- 19** Paul, R., et al. 2022. “Greening the Grassroots: Rethinking African Conservation Funding.” Maliasili & Synchronicity Earth. <https://www.maliasili.org/greeningthegrassroots>

