

Unequal Partners: American Foundations and Higher Education Development in Africa

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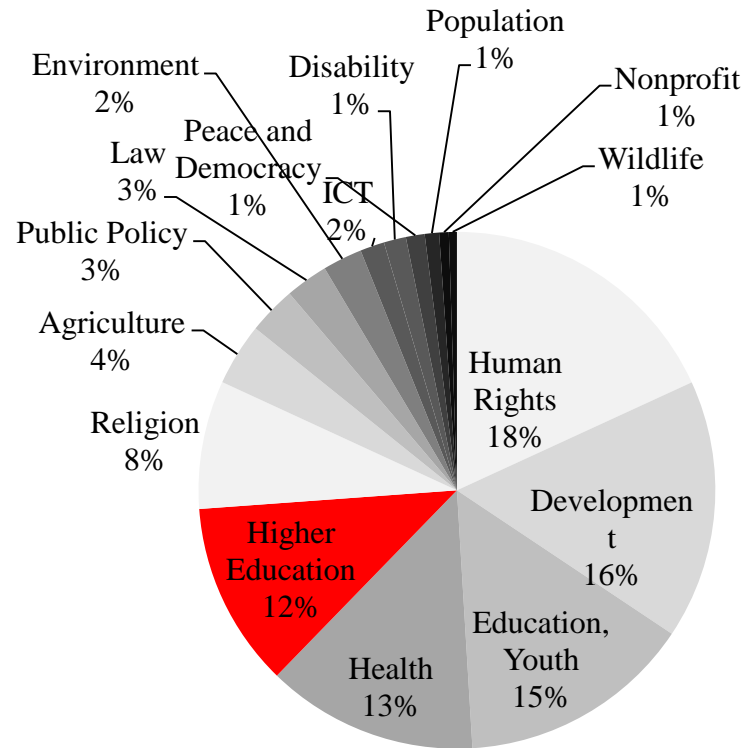
MEXICO CITY

Research questions:

- Can U.S. foundations embrace Africa's development on Africa's terms?
- Do African universities have ownership over their participation in U.S. foundations' strategies for Africa?
- What legitimizes the role of U.S. foundations in African higher education?

DATA

- American philanthropies made 13,565 grants to Africa between 2003 and 2013
- 330 US private foundations made grants totaling \$3.9 billion in support of African initiatives
- Grants focused on agriculture, health, higher education and research.



GEOPOLITICAL STRATEGIES OF U.S. FOUNDATIONS

between 2003 and 2013

97 U.S. foundations invested \$573.5 million in institutions of higher education in Africa.

1,471 grants were made to 439 higher education institutions in 29 countries.

68% of all funding went to 3 countries (South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria)

Past colonial lines emerge as demarcations between Africa's new knowledge societies

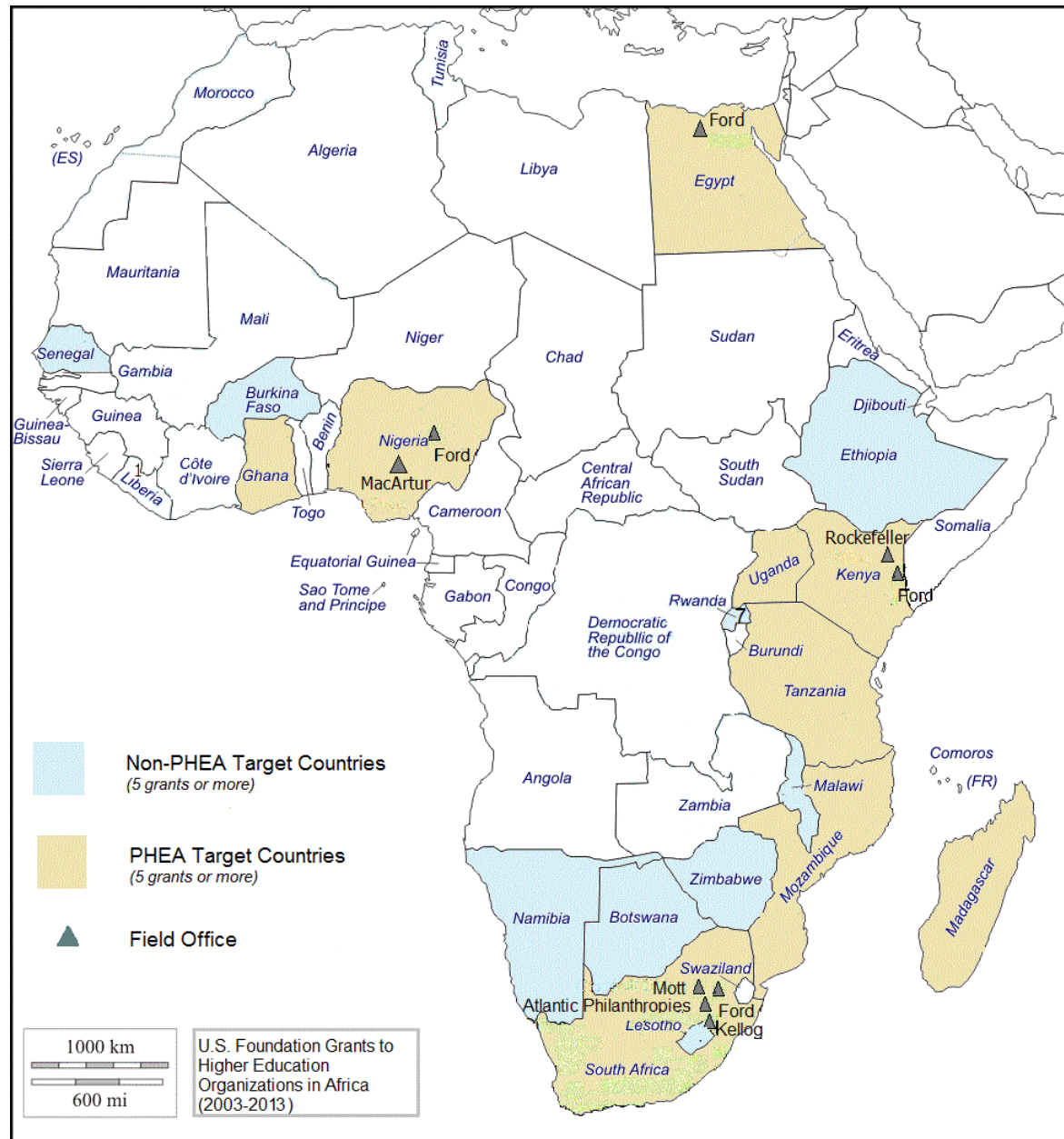


Table 2: Top U.S. Grantmakers to African Higher Education Organizations (2003-2013)

Foundations	State	Number of grants	Total Grants Amount	Grant Average	PHEA
Ford Foundation	NY	421	\$78,826,023	\$187,235	✓
Rockefeller Foundation	NY	186	\$54,522,589	\$293,132	✓
Andrew W. Mellon Foundation	NY	180	\$59,791,320	\$332,174	✓
Carnegie Corporation of New York	NY	140	\$105,278,596	\$751,990	✓
John & Catherine MacArthur	IL	78	\$43,987,054	\$563,937	✓
W. K. Kellogg Foundation	MI	58	\$42,430,576	\$731,562	
Kresge Foundation	MI	49	\$21,902,283	\$446,985	✓
Atlantic Philanthropies	NY	45	\$58,826,876	\$1,307,264	
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation	MI	41	\$3,751,800	\$91,507	
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	WA	40	\$73,690,156	\$1,842,254	
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation	CA	30	\$9,433,500	\$314,450	✓
Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Inc.	NY	26	\$2,016,500	\$77,558	
McKnight Foundation	MN	18	\$3,223,000	\$179,056	
Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation, Inc.	NY	15	\$1,432,002	\$95,467	
Citi Foundation	NY	9	\$556,100	\$61,789	
Spencer Foundation	IL	7	\$795,000	\$113,571	
Christensen Fund	CA	6	\$427,132	\$71,189	
Motorola Solutions Foundation	IL	6	\$261,000	\$43,500	
J. Paul Getty Trust	CA	5	\$568,800	\$113,760	
Goldman Sachs Foundation	NY	4	\$1,550,041	\$387,510	
David and Lucile Packard Foundation	CA	4	\$599,785	\$149,946	
Marin Community Foundation	CA	4	\$195,560	\$48,890	
Flora Family Foundation	CA	4	\$180,000	\$45,000	
Western Union Foundation	CO	4	\$140,000	\$35,000	
Starr Foundation	NY	4	\$100,000	\$25,000	
Oprah Winfrey Foundation	IL	3	\$1,300,000	\$433,333	
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation	NY	3	\$570,500	\$190,167	
JPMorgan Chase Foundation	NY	3	\$216,000	\$72,000	
Alfred P. Sloan Foundation	NY	3	\$128,000	\$42,667	
Google.org	CA	2	\$1,250,000	\$625,000	
Charles A. Dana Foundation, Inc.	NY	2	\$557,002	\$278,501	
GE Foundation	CT	2	\$200,000	\$100,000	
Silicon Valley Community Foundation	CA	2	\$200,000	\$100,000	
Levi Strauss Foundation	CA	2	\$129,000	\$64,500	
Michael and Susan Dell Foundation	TX	2	\$122,132	\$61,066	

Table 1: Top U.S. Foundation Beneficiaries in Higher Education in Africa (2003-2013)

Top University Recipients	Country	Grant Total	Main Donor(s)
University of Cape Town	South Africa	\$80,902,000	Gates, Carnegie, Atlantic, Mellon
University of the Witwatersrand	South Africa	\$49,295,000	Gates, CCNY, Mellon
University of the Western Cape	South Africa	\$47,352,000	Kresge, Atlantic, Mellon, Ford
Makerere University	Uganda	\$42,512,000	Rockefeller , Carnegie
University of Kwazulu-Natal	South Africa	\$28,742,000	Carnegie, Mellon, Rockefeller
University of Ghana	Ghana	\$19,992,000	Gates, Carnegie, Hewlett, Ford
University of Pretoria	South Africa	\$19,890,000	Gates, Kellogg, Carnegie, Mellon
University of Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	\$17,154,000	Rockefeller, Kellogg
University of Ibadan	Nigeria	\$14,162,000	MacArthur, Ford
University of Dar es Salaam	Tanzania	\$12,055,000	Carnegie, Ford, Rockefeller
Rhodes University	South Africa	\$10,867,000	Mellon, Atlantic, Kresge, Ford
University of Stellenbosch	South Africa	\$10,123,000	Gates, Mellon, Carnegie
Ahmadu Bello University	Nigeria	\$8,563,000	MacArthur, Carnegie
American University in Cairo	Egypt	\$8,036,000	Ford, Gates, Hewlett
African Virtual University	Kenya	\$7,881,000	Ford, MacArthur, Carnegie Rockefeller, Hewlett
Bayero University	Nigeria	\$7,158,000	MacArthur
Obafemi Awolowo University	Nigeria	\$7,000,000	Carnegie
Cheikh Anta Diop University	Senegal	\$6,780,000	Gates
Cairo University	Egypt	\$6,614,000	Ford, Mellon
University of Jos	Nigeria	\$6,300,000	Carnegie



PHEA

In 2000 the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa was launched as a joint effort between the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Kresge Foundation

Together they contributed almost \$440 Million in ten years to build capacity and support special initiatives

to advocate for the “indispensable contribution of higher education to social and economic development”

accelerate the “processes of comprehensive modernization and strengthening of universities in selected countries.”

The Leadership Role of Foundations

Foundations have helped develop:

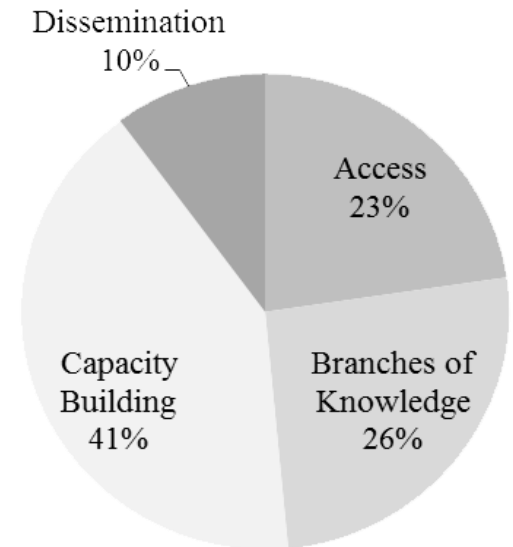
- Financial aid
- Libraries
- Adult education
- Opportunities for minorities
- New standards for courses and credits
- New disciplines
- Improvements in faculty compensation
- Made research possible for non-wealthy faculty



Different Approaches

- The areas of interest of these foundations for the higher education sector in Africa are varied. For example, Ford has sought to improve access to higher education while Rockefeller has focused on climate and the environment, Carnegie on libraries, MacArthur on human rights, and Mellon on the humanities.
- interest in institutional development through infrastructure development, organization strengthening, research capacity expansion, revitalization, sustainable development, advancement, fundraising, or strategic planning.
- Some foundations lean towards research for producing new knowledge; others are more interested in the conversion of that knowledge into something more practical and operational.
- Elements of capacity building, whether in fellowships or in developing institutions, are very prominent in all Partnership endeavors.

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Power Asymmetry

“Is it a partnership of foundations or is it a partnership between foundations and African universities? How are we involved in defining the agenda and so forth?”

Vice-Chancellor of an African university

(incidentally he was the vice chancellor of one of the universities that were benefiting financially and otherwise from the Partnership)

Unequal Partners

- The unequal nature of the Partnership was a concern for grantees who always questioned their role and share of participation.
- Partnership remained a partnership of foundations, as several interviewees indicated.
- Thus, running the risk of being perceived as dominating the agenda or imposing an American worldview on African universities was always a consideration.

Undesired Consequences

- Universities continue to be dependent on donor funding, which perpetuates unequal partnerships between them and US foundations
- This difference of status had a bearing on how the agenda was defined.
- This resulted in African research agendas being modified to match available funds, and creates competition between institutions
- Establishes a competitive field which puts pressure on weaker institutions.

Engaging Africans

- Hiring Africans into leadership roles within the foundations did help, and succeeded in “infusing the Partnership with an African perspective”
- Experts and locals were involved in creating agendas that fit both parties
- Narciso Matos, an African program director, was very influential throughout the Partnership in creating respect for African perspectives
- Key Partnership foundations’ principle: to respond to priorities identified by African higher education leaders.

Recommendations

- Foundations need to integrate the concept of equal participation into their own grant-making activities.
- The lessons learned may suggest alternative ways that can foster a more equal relationship between donors and recipients
 - Through collaborative projects geared towards a common goal.
 - Through regional cooperation as a more effective framework a
 - Through inter-institutional partnerships.
 - By helping grantmakers become more efficient while refocusing the core definition of philanthropy, which in essence promotes giving and not expecting something in return
 - By empowering the grant recipient in the Global South towards a more meaningful relationship.

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