Celebrating old ways and the path to the future we want: People-driven development
Qogelela / Community Philanthropy Movement

For so long, the rural communities of Bulilima and Mangwe have been confronted with periods of dormancy characterised by slow growth, increasing underdevelopment and poor investments.

Since these communities did not know that they have the power to develop themselves, they were, for a long period of time, largely dependent upon donors for support. This is the reason why most of the infrastructure found within these communities today is still the very same that was put in place either during the colonial era or soon after independence with donor funding.

Today, as a result of their dependence on those with financial muscle, these communities have no say as to what is priority to them, but are forced to accept whatever is handed down to them.

Upon realising this gap, the Community Foundation for the Western Region of Zimbabwe (CFWRZ) works with communities in both Bulilima and Mangwe to raise awareness about the potential of utilising Qogelela (a community philanthropy development concept) to build social capital for local development financing.

With this knowledge, communities are now able to look inward and think of ways of extricating themselves out of the underdevelopment they are going through by coming up with their own ways of building and using social capital for their own development needs.

Qogelela in Isindebele means “collect little by little with aim of saving for future use”. This phenomenon is not foreign to the people of this region but has been their culture since time immemorial. The local tradition is founded on the spirit of altruism where local giving, now called Community Philanthropy, was always used to build safety nets to address social needs.

This is the very same old way of living that has been refurbished and embraced by communities in a more commercial way. They are now making contributions, according to their abilities, to create assets that will be used to redress identified social needs.

The Qogelela / Community Philanthropy movement is therefore a shift from the conventional way of development. It involves community members working together and leveraging their own resources to better address challenges within their communities. This method of development puts much emphasis on building assets, capacities and trust.

The participating communities have established Local Community Endowment Funds, based on this concept. These funds provide a permanent source of revenue for development initiatives which will positively affect the participating communities year after year. The positive impact is, for example, reflected in flourishing social enterprises as well as collective water security projects and other initiatives to improve lives.

Apart from the Local Funds, an overarching Community Endowment Fund has been established, which will address larger community needs in the future. CFWRZ administers this fund on behalf of the local communities.

The communities participating so far include Thekwane, Ndiweni, Ngwanyana, Nyele, Embakwe, Silima, Tshitshi, Gwambe, Macingwana, Sikhulu and Empandeni. These communities plan to raise USD10 million by the year 2026.
Qogelela Expo injects fresh momentum into community development

THE people of Bulilima and Mangwe Districts have been celebrating the introduction of the Qogelela / Community Philanthropy concept in their area, highlighting that the movement has brought about noticeable positive change within their communities.

More than 200 women and men from the two districts attended the Qogelela Expo that was hosted at Plumtree on 5 October 2019 to showcase their achievements through the concept.

“Khathesi sesinenelisa ukuncedisa abantwana abaswelayo ezikolweni ikakhulu izintandane. Siyenelisa ukuthenga amabhuku siwase ezikolweni” said Lilian Macebo from Embakwe Community Philanthropy Institution.

Over the years, these communities have suffered underdevelopment and had not found a permanent solution to their development challenges. Through the Qogelela / Community Philanthropy concept, these communities are now able to break the barricades of underdevelopment.

Mrs. Macebo said that although they started by saving money only as little as 25c, their local funds now enable them to take loans and start their own businesses.

“This Expo is an eye opener to all of us including Government. We have realised an opportunity to further assist,” said Dingumuzi Phuthi, Bulilima West Member of Parliament, as he marveled at the work done by rural communities in emancipating themselves.

He further emphasised that individualism is a cancer that has led to the downfall of many communities. Instead, he encouraged young people to copy what their elders had done and also form their own self-help groups.

The Honourable Minister of Women Affairs, Mrs. S.G. Nyoni, who is also a CFWRZ founder member, congratulated the people of Bulilima and Mangwe for being able to shun the mentality of dependency and work towards their own development. As the official speaker at the ceremony, she encouraged them to work even harder.

“Ngemva koku Qogelela Qhubeka. Ungaqhubeka ke ube usu Khula” she said as she told them to grow and not remain stagnant.

The Qogelela Expo was branded with song and dance as well as exhibitions from community philanthropy institutions, other NGOs and Government departments.
Qoqelela Expo 2019 – Gallery

5 October 2019
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CFWRZ BACKGROUND

The Community Foundation for the Western Region of Zimbabwe (CFWRZ) is an independent non-profit, philanthropic organisation working in a specific geographical area which, over time, has built a collection of endowment funds from many donors in the community.

It aims at improving the quality of life in economically disadvantaged areas. To this end, CFWRZ realises the importance of building bridges between communities and donors. At the same time, it is mandated to enable disadvantaged communities to better themselves by directly addressing the social and economic challenges facing people in the Western Region of Zimbabwe.

CFWRZ operates in three of the country’s least developed provinces, that is, Matabeleland North and South and the Midlands.

CFWRZ is a grant maker, broker, catalyst and facilitator for community resource mobilisation and the promotion of sustainable socio-economic development of communities. Since its inception in 1998, the Foundation has assisted in addressing social and economic challenges facing people in the Western Region through five intervention areas:

- Women’s Economic Empowerment
- Youth Development
- Education Development
- HIV & AIDS Development
- Water and Agriculture

Mission

CFWRZ seeks to mobilise resources and support development initiatives that provide for the welfare of the economically disadvantaged communities in the Western Region of Zimbabwe.

Vision

To create a region where communities have a strong and sustainable base that supplements their resources and traditional knowledge to improve their quality of life.
Special Thanks To Our Partners

As the Community Foundation for the Western Region of Zimbabwe, we would like to thank our Partners who through their generous support have made it possible for us to continue to impact the lives of communities. Through your contribution we can empower communities and help them reach their development goals.