

Towards an Agenda for Social Justice Philanthropy in Africa in a time of Global Restructuring

By Yao Graham

Introduction

“Social justice” and “structural change” which are central concerns for social justice philanthropy are contested concepts with multiple definitions and meanings¹. The result is that the range of issues which are be the object of social justice philanthropy is broad and the methods for attaining social justice through structural change are varied. The multiplicity of issues are linked to the different understandings of what constitutes structural change and therefore the issues that need to be addressed to bring this about and the variety of ways in which the issues could be tackled. The focus of my discussion about the challenges of social justice philanthropy in Africa is located around a notion of social justice and structural change in respect of the political economy of Africa in the context corporate led globalization and the nature of the continent’s subordinate location in the global order. In TWN-Africa we summarise our programme mission as: “working for social and economic equity in Africa and equity for Africa in the global order”. “Structural transformation” is one of our central concept but in respect of the continent’s raw material commodity export dependence which we see as a key factor in many of the economic, social and political issues in which social injustice in Africa are rooted, even as we recognise that not all the issues of social injustice that we are concerned about derive from this.

Context

A decade ago, as more and more Africans began to believe that political liberalization and rights based constitutionalism was here to stay the *Economist*, that acerbic barometer of the mood of global capital, declared Africa a hopeless continent. Today as more and more Africans lament the limits of the continent’s choiceless electoral democracies, which facilitate intra-elite

¹ Ruesga and Putntenny (2010) on the basis of interviews with 80 US grant makers, recognized for their support for social justice work listed eight traditions of social justice more than one of which tended to be present in how these social justice philanthropy organisations frame their work. These traditions yield the following guiding principles: addressing the root causes of inequality; security and dignity; equaity of outcomes; equality before the law; equal access to systems of power; agreement; equal recognition and profit out of good.

For the NCRP (2003) “Social justice philanthropy is the practice of making contributions to nonprofit organizations that work for structural change and increase the opportunity of those who are less well off politically, economically and socially”.

Mohammed (2008) describes “social justice” as “an overarching framework for development wherein the existence of equal rights and equitable opportunities to access those rights result in the realization of just outcomes for those who bear the brunt of poverty, inequality, marginalisation, vulnerability, oppression, and discrimination”, with “social justice philanthropy” a “strategy” for addressing social injustice.

alternation in political office whilst legitimizing economic policies that are worsening economic and social inequalities, the *Economist* celebrates the rise of Africa. The unity of celebration and frustration in the current African situation is not so much a paradox as the main intertwined strands of the continent's political economy and key characteristics which define the context social justice philanthropy in Africa. The defining global context is of course the unfolding shift of power from the North Atlantic to Asia and the associated new scramble for Africa.

Between 2000 and the onset of the global financial and economic crisis Africa experienced its best period of economic growth in more than 30 years, averaging almost 5% per annum. This is in sharp contrast with the preceding two decades, the period before and during the high noon of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). The current high growth is the product of a number of external and internal factors. These include high demand for and increases in prices of Africa's export commodities, especially minerals and metals; the inflow of foreign aid and investment, mainly into the extractive sectors; migrant remittances; the reform of state institutions towards a focus on supporting private capital, the commercializing of public goods and the institutionalization of economic liberalization; the end of conflict and more generalised political stability, in many cases anchored in political liberalization and electoral politics.

While African financial assets, public and private, offer good returns to foreign investors and foreign mining companies are the main beneficiaries of the boom in global demand, there is a visible and growing stratum of very rich African entrepreneurs, well connected within global networks of capital and power. In many countries the steady economic growth has spawned a real estate boom and elite participation in global consumerism. Forbes magazine has launched an Africa edition. In Accra few remember the official name of "Oxford Street" the avenue overburdened with shops selling top end consumer goods. Alongside this is the increased availability of cheap manufactures from Asia as well as second hand goods for the mass of the population. This is the Africa of the increasingly confident middle class, dynamic consumer markets and investment opportunities celebrated by a growing band of Afro-optimists.

The ongoing growth hides a multitude of enduring challenges and new problems. Africa's economic growth is not effecting structural transformation. It is fragile because it is dependent on intensification of raw material commodity exports within a subordinate role for the continent in the world economy. Raw material export dependent growth is taking place alongside deindustrialization and a growing crisis of local food production and declining or stagnating agricultural productivity. The growth is not creating enough meaningful and sustainable jobs and the majority and a growing number of Africans are working in the informal economy. Urbanization is growing without industrialisation, rather it is accompanied by an increase in low productivity service sector activities and petty commodity production. In the words of Mike Davis not only has urbanization been "radically decoupled from industrialisation

but from development *per se*". The nature of the growth is also intensifying inequalities. Whilst the percentage of Africans living in poverty has declined over the past decade the numbers have increased.

"Poverty in Africa is substantially higher than in other developing regions. More enigmatic is that poverty in Africa is chronic and rising... despite significant improvements in the growth of African GDP in recent years. The implication: poverty has been unresponsive to economic growth. Underlying this trend is the fact that the majority of people have no jobs or secure sources of income.

Various reasons have been given for Africa's lack of response of poverty to economic growth. First is the inadequacy of the growth rate. Second is the low labour absorption in the growth sectors. Growth has been concentrated in the traditionally capital-intensive extractive sector. Agriculture, which employs most people in most African countries, is characterized by low productivity growth, and thus has not provided enough real employment and income security to the population, particularly in rural areas. Third is inequality in the distribution of opportunities created by economic growth. Poor people lack the capacity to meaningfully participate in the economy, either as producers of goods and services or as suppliers of labour. (UNECA: Economic Report on Africa, 2005)

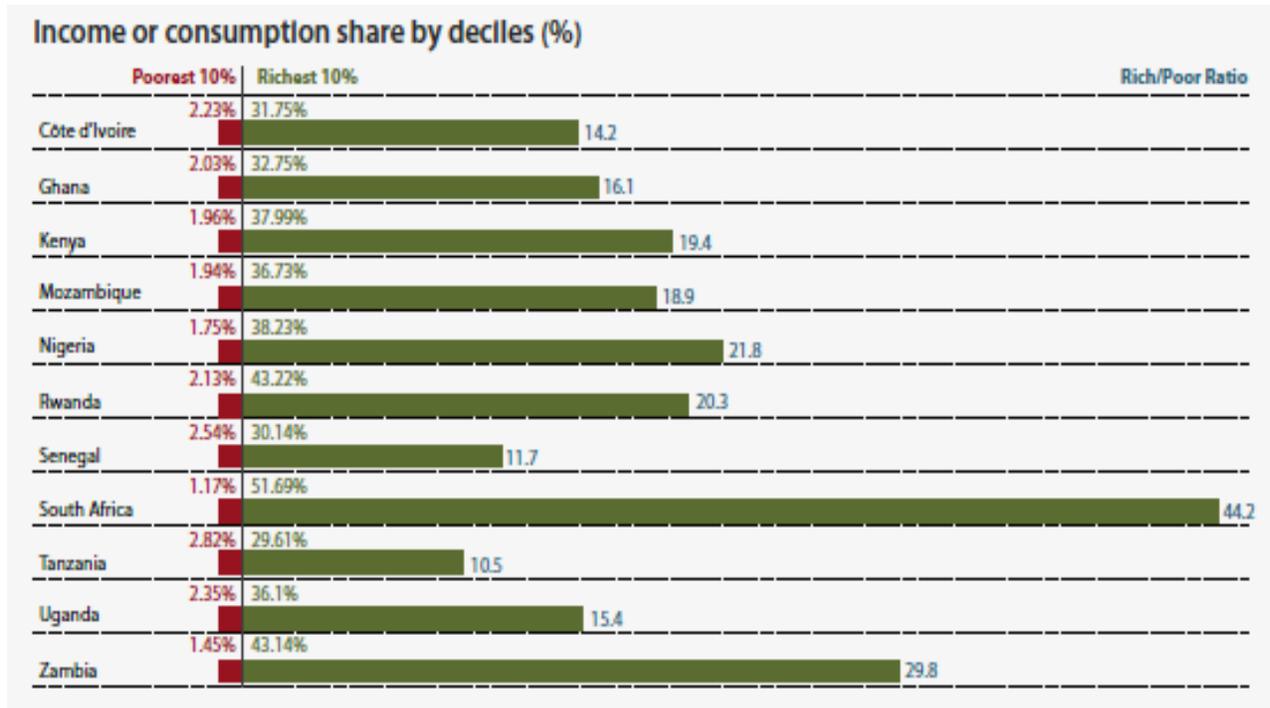
"By the end of the 1990s, the production structure of the [Africa] subregion was reminiscent of the colonial period, consisting overwhelmingly of agriculture and mining. The extent of the impact on employment was not fully reflected in official figures on open unemployment but it was evident in the 20 per cent drop in labour productivity". (UNCTAD, Trade and Development Report, 2010)

A third feature of Africa's current pattern of growth is that it has been accompanied by deindustrialization, as evidenced by the fact that the share of manufacturing in Africa's gross domestic product (GDP) fell from 15 per cent in 1990 to 10 per cent in 2008. The most significant decline was observed in Western Africa, where it fell from 13 per cent to 5 per cent over the same period. Nevertheless, there has also been substantial deindustrialisation in the other sub-regions of Africa. For example, in Eastern Africa the share of manufacturing in output fell from 13 per cent in 1990 to about 10 per cent in 2008 and in Central Africa it fell from 11 to 6 per cent over the same period. Furthermore, in Northern Africa it fell from about 13 to 11 per cent and in Southern Africa it fell from 23 to 18 per cent. The declining share of manufacturing in Africa's output is of concern because historically manufacturing has been the main engine of high, rapid and sustained economic growth". (UNCTAD: Economic Development in Africa 2012).

Africa's wealth disparities are among the biggest in the world. One widely used measure of inequality, the Gini index, captures the concentration of household income or expenditure (the higher the index, the greater the inequality). In China, where political leaders have identified rising inequality as a threat to social stability and future growth, the Gini index is 42. There are 24 countries in Africa with higher inequality scores than China. In Mozambique, Kenya and Zambia, the Gini index is between 45 and 55, while in Botswana and South Africa it is over 60. The poorest 20 per cent in Sub-Saharan Africa typically receive 6 per cent or less of national

income; and the poorest 40 per cent in most cases receive less than 15 per cent (Figure 6). In many countries, the pattern of economic growth is reinforcing these inequalities. (Africa Progress Report 2012)

Income Inequality (Africa Progress Report 2012)



In addition to income disparities the inequalities express themselves in a number of ways. In the productive sphere there is the policy and incentives discrimination in favour of foreign over local investors. Producers for export have better supporting institutions and policies than those producing for the home market. Commercialization and insufficient public investment has created stratified markets in education, health and sanitation with an increasing resort to private facilities by the elite while the poor crowd into overstretched and understaffed public facilities. The role that education served in equalizing opportunities in the pre-SAP era has been extensively eroded. The building boom in expensive real estate and the development of gated communities sit side by side with the expansion of urban slums with no or poorly development infrastructure and utilities. In the countryside land grabs involving the state, local elites and foreign capital are driving smallholders off the land. Enclaves of profitable formal banks service a minority of formal sector businesses while smallholder farmers and the operators in the informal economy make do with little or very expensive credit. Gender inequality and inequity is a cross cutting aspect in all these cases. The *Africa Progress Report 2012* identifies Jobs, Justice and Equity as the main challenges facing Africa in a period of steady growth.

Some of these inequities and inequalities are partly a function of the effects of neo-liberal globalization and Africa's subordinate place in the global order and therefore addressing and correcting these require an engagement with the driving agencies of globalization and the imbalances and inequities in global governance. The role of the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the power of transnational companies stand out in this regard. The BWIs have had an overall negative defining influence on African economic policies since the 1980s. The liberalization agenda of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) has

had and will continue to have far reaching effects on Africa's economies unless African and other developing countries succeed in protecting their remaining policy spaces and also reversing some of the most imbalanced agreements. The 2008 financial crisis exposed the pernicious effects on all countries of financial speculation. In the African case there is a particular interest in the effect of speculative activities on the levels and volatility of some commodity prices. The fiscal crisis of many governments in the global North as a result of the Crisis has narrowed the gap among countries about the need to curb the tax avoidance and evasion practices of transnational companies and their overall power. The declining influence of the UN and other multilateral bodies is being replaced by self constituted and unaccountable fora such as the G20 and G8 in which Africa has little influence. Framing all these global challenges are the effects of climate change due to the enormous carbon footprints of Western industrial economies and the consumption patterns of their citizens which threaten the very survival of life on the planet with Africa being especially at risk whilst being the most poorly placed to bear the cost of adaptation.

A leading African intellectual has noted that during the first post colonial decades African governments justified authoritarianism and repression in the name of development – “silence development in progress”. The popular uprisings in North Africa that have challenged and overthrown some of the last of the old style authoritarian regimes on the continent can be considered the last stages of the wave of political liberalisation which swept across the continent in the 1990s. These left an uneven and fragile legacy of a more liberal political environment within which a weak culture of citizenship confronts deep seated traditions of state and elite arbitrariness and impunity. The uneven evolution and in some cases illiberal turns of the new political situation in North are not dissimilar to what has been unfolding across the rest of the continent since the 1990s. Across the continent, including countries such as Ghana, Botswana and Benin which are hailed as yardsticks for the rest of the continent, the scope and depth of constitutionally mandated citizens' rights and limits of state power are the subject of ongoing contestation with the rights to free expression, access to information and accountability of office holders being among the key battle grounds.

In a growing number of African countries governments are seeking to limit the space for the organisation and operation of civil society organisations, while in some independent mass media face a precarious existence. The persistence of abuse of power, repression of dissent and free expression combined with the failure of periodic elections to effect beneficial changes in economic policies, even where there is an actual change of ruling party, is eroding faith in constitutionalism and electoral politics. The extension of corruption and patronage and the abuse and manipulation of affective and other social bonds, especially of ethnicity, by politicians are further weakening the faith of citizens in the liberalized political system. Furthermore the lopsided concern of states and external donors with the creation and measuring of enabling regulations and institutions for “supply side actors” (owners of capital) to the relative neglect of the interests of the citizen as consumer or worker is contributing to disenchantment with the claims of liberal democracy especially about equality, rule of law and the protection of rights.

Civil Society activism for amelioration and structural change

This is not the place to enter the debate about the definition of civil society suffice to indicate a preference for the Gramscian conception which sees civil society not only as the space where non-state and non-market institutions operate but also the realm where dialectically the existing hegemonic social order is maintained as well as the realm of social creativity, where new ideas and formations for a new social order can emerge. This conception allows us to reposition the debate about what forms of CS intervention are simply ameliorative of the effects of social injustice and which ones support structural change. Not only are there different scales of structural change but in truth working for “macro” structural change within a socio-political system as opposed to rejecting and challenging it from outside cannot but combine seeking immediate benefits of an ameliorative type with long term structural change outcomes which can be both cumulative results of amelioration or single instance outcomes. Importantly the accumulation of social forces and building organizational momentum and confidence of those acting for change usually benefits from the energizing and affirmation provided by the landmarks of small victories before the big bang victories.

Edwards (2009) expresses optimism about civil society as having the “transformative potential to hold public and private power accountable for its actions, generate alternative ideas and policy positions, push for fundamental changes in the structures of power, and organize collective action on a scale large enough to force through long-term shifts in politics, economics and social relations”. The Considering the range of issues and problems set out in the preceding summary of the African development challenge it is no surprise that they have generated considerable activity from CSOs.

The agenda set out by Edwards requires not only a strong practice of active citizenship but types of CSOs ready to act together to build social movements for change in a manner which cannot be contained within the boundaries of official doctrines and processes of “consultation and participation”. Despite the easy use of the term ‘social movements’ by NGO activists the relative absence and weakness of secular social movements, outside work based unions and associations (of farmers, workers) is one of the defining features of the African civil society scene. South Africa with its id relatively fresh heritage of a mass based anti-colonial/apartheid movement which has offered lessons and cadres for post apartheid struggles is a notable exception as are the North African countries in the throes of social uprisings. The development of the women’s movement in various African countries is noteworthy in this regard as is the rights and environmental rights movement in a number of countries, notably Nigeria. It is however fair to acknowledge the rise and presence of “communities” on a range of issues – human rights, land, mining, free trade, right to information; mineral revenue transparency, public services, housing rights, etc.

These engagements have however been predominantly responses to the effects rather than tackling underlying causes and therefore aiming at structural change. It is important to situate these responses. A key factor is the types of CSOs and their modus operandi. Conceding the dangers of generalization and recognizing that African CSOs fall across a spectrum of types we

can still schematically divide them into two broad groups: a set of “popular” self financing CSOs and the more formally institutionalized NGOs dependent on donor funding.

The overwhelming numbers of African CSOs are self financing voluntary associations rooted in a variety of communities – home town, ethnicity, faith and occupations who consciously see their project in fairly modest terms even if they occasionally serve as vehicles for protests in respect of structural issues. Most of these associations draw their membership from those working in the informal economy and service their needs. The break up, as a result of repression and co-optation, of the various mass based components of the anti-colonial movement including the trade unions during the ascendancy of authoritarian politics across Africa deepened the retreat into CSOs concerned with dealing with the effects of social injustice rather than challenging their causes. The SAP years worsened this phenomenon. As the African state retreated from its patchy fulfillment of the social compact to provide public goods and increasingly called on citizens to make up the shortfall, CSOs rooted in ethnic, affective and faith based ties became more and more important. The corollary of a paring down of the locus of the central state as a common reference point and guarantor for development was the accentuation of particularistic identities and ties as well as strengthening of narrow horizons. Groups based in urban areas including in the international diaspora funneling resources to rural areas of origin are an important part of this map. The preference of many of these popular CSOs is for utilizing links to members of the elite who form part of their community or group to facilitate solutions on the basis of patronage rather than mobilization for engagement or confrontation with power for policy change. At the same time however the most significant acts of protest and resistance against policies and practices of the state and private firms have been organized and led by these types of organisations. Examples of protests against extractive sector policies and companies, land dispossession, harassment of operators in the informal economy especially urban petty traders, police brutalities, etc. readily come to mind².

The donor funded “formal sector” CSOs with proclaimed interest in social justice, both amelioration of effects and structural change, are very much a minority which sit alongside, cooperate with and in some cases isolation from the “popular”, “informal” category of CSOs. They are very much the organisations that are the focus of government engagement, donor engineering projects to create watchdogs from society against excesses of the state and market and interlocutors for citizens’ participation in decision making. These are the organisations of civil society which tend to have wider supranational links of solidarity and partnership as part of global civil society. This category of CSOs are also that which tends to be targeted by overtly political repression of free expression and constraining legislation unlike the “informal” CSOs who tend to be the victims of routine police and official arbitrariness which does not usually attract international headlines and threats of sanctions unless they are connected with the issues which are in the global domain such as natural resources exploitation.

² Mike Davis (2004) has asked the graphic question “To what extent does an informal proletariat possess that most potent of Marxist talismans: ‘historical agency’? Can disincorporated labour be reincorporated in a global emancipatory project? Or is the sociology of protest in the immiserated megacity a regression to the pre-industrial urban mob, episodically explosive during consumption crises, but otherwise easily managed by clientelism, populist spectacle and appeals to ethnic unity?”

The issues that these organisations focus on, the outcomes they seek and the ways in which they work span a broad spectrum but are crucially influenced by the availability of donor funding and the conditions attached to these. Many of these organisations will associate with their work being described as having social justice objectives but not many will use the term “structural change” to describe the outcomes they seek. A range of issues with structural change implications have been constants on the agenda of donor supported CSOs. There is a thread on economic policy running back to the 1990s when there was a strong cross society movement of CSOs and diverse social movements against SAPs and the influence of the World Bank and the IMF and donor conditionality in general. The successes of these protests resulted in some minimal shifts in the substantive positions of the IMF and World Bank accompanied by the rolling out of an array of processes for dialogue and engagement with the protest movement.

It is fair to say that one result has been the fragmentation of hitherto cooperating CSOs and movements within a global process with a strong African element into a number of blocs buried in different processes – Aid (now development) effectiveness around the Paris Declaration; participation in PRSPs; poverty reduction; an increasingly technicist Budget movement focuses on the interests of different social categories with little roots within or links with these groups, except perhaps groups working on gender budgeting who are situated within the women’s movement. Work around the WTO and other free trade issues have attracted some of the most radical positions against globalization. Economic policy issues have reduced in importance among groups working on women’s issues in Africa. The areas connected with the Aid regime and NGOs working in it has grown significantly in Africa in recent years. An important consequence is that interest in economic policy, broadly defined, has declined among CSOs and by and large the neo-liberal economic framework is taken as given. This is a major gap especially considering the battering that the global financial and economic crisis has delivered to neo-liberal economic policies.

There is also a large bloc of well staffed and funded organisations working on “good governance issues”, ranging from political governance issues such as elections, increasing participation of women candidates in elections, anti-corruption and transparency issues across a range of areas (public accounts, extractive sector revenues), participation in the PRSP processes, various aspects of human rights. These are areas that most mainstream funders, private and official are happy to fund and around which INGOs are active.

The slant towards influencing policy means that lobby and policy dialogue backed by research figure very heavily in the methods of most of these CSOs. Research funding remains a major challenge and good research is a sine qua non for sound alternative policies. Short term capacity building on issues of focus is an important element of the outreach many organisations undertake but these have not been of the sustained nature or type to contribute to building movement in most cases. In many cases network building beyond the national level tends to be connected with relations beyond Africa and centred around relations with INGOs. An area of major importance and political potential is building pan-African networks which could

strengthen sharing among groups across Africa, generate political solidarity as well as strengthening African voice and presence in international spaces, and reducing INGOs speaking for Africans, does not receive enough attention. Such pan-African networking was important for what CSOs, led by women's groups achieved in the adoption of the AU Gender Protocol. The regional and continental are becoming increasingly important sites of decision making and it that groups working for social justice and structural change pay more attention to these sites and their processes, something which will be enhanced by increased networking and cooperation across national boundaries.

The increasing application of market principles such as Results based management principles have strengthened the alignment of local CSO programmes with donor orientation. Whilst many CSOs exhibit creativity in how they raise funds so as to leave enough space for the pursuit of agenda that go beyond the overt parameters of obligations to donors it is difficult to maintain this for the long term especially where funding of a project time which is short term and tends to have narrow objectives and little room for manoeuvre. In recent years a number of bilateral donors have created local funding windows which are explicitly linked to the outcomes of their aid programmes in the countries where the funds are set up. Since 2004 Ghana has had one of these, initially set up as the Ghana Research and Advocacy Project (G-RAP) by DFID, DANIDA, CIDA and the Dutch Aid Agency to support the biggest policy NGOs. While it gave substantial funding to its beneficiaries there was always a tension between donor goals and CSO expectations – was the funding for CSOs to define and work for a Ghana change agenda or for them to implement the funders change agenda. Women's Groups working on women's rights and gender equality were initially unhappy with its funding principles which because of the level of institutionalization and size required of applying CSOs discriminated against them. G-RAP's successor, STAR-Ghana, has a much clearer focus and alignment with donor objectives in Ghana.

TWN-Africa's experience reflects the effects of shifts in and influence of donor patterns on objectives and outcomes. From the very beginning the organisation defined a pan-African remit for itself as well as seeking to strengthen African voice and presence in international arena around the issues on which it worked. The building of networks and public mobilization (alongside were recognised to be an important requirement for success, alongside lobbying, communication, research and capacity building. The networks have sought to reach beyond NGOs and include mass based organisations, especially the trade unions. Unfortunately the unions have been marginalized by most African NGOs, reflecting the dominant discourse from the SAP days when they bore the brunt of attack for their opposition to SAP policies and donors promoted NGOs are the preferred type of CSO. The flexibilities and long term possibilities of multi-year core funding enabled the organisation to keep working on the same issues, in some cases for more than ten years without having to change tack in keeping with donor whims and also invest in the building of various networks. Two of these are pan-African – AIMES, bringing together groups working on mining in more than 15 countries and operating since 1999, the Africa Trade Network (ATN) created in 1998. The other two the Ghana National Coalition (NCOM) created in 2001 and NETRight, a national gender and economic justice network are focused inside Ghana.

All of these have developed into important organizational and campaigning vehicles. The NCOM has grown to include a number of community groups from mining areas, and NGOs with various entry points on mining issues – revenue transparency, human rights, community impacts, legal aid, taxation, and TWN-Africa’s own mining and development angle. Today the NCOM is the leading grouping of Ghanaian organisations working on mining issues and TWN-Africa’s contribution ranged from funding a partner legal aid organisation to support litigation by mining communities against firms and the Ghanaian state, primary research in mining areas, direct support for the development of CBOs in mining areas, TWN-Africa using its influence to facilitate access of community leaders to public officials, providing communication support for mining community groups. The NCOM can point to a number of victories on structural change. The ATN with membership in more than 25 countries has been an important voice in African continental and regional trade processes and a key rallying point for the self expression of African CSOs in the international arena. AIMES, after a decade of being an isolated voice rising a broad range of issues on the political economy of mining in Africa’s development, when most groups were focused on single issues such as conflicts, impacts and revenue transparency, has seen 2008 become the rallying point for pan-African CSOs involvement in the pan-African mining reform agenda centred around the Africa Mining Vision. In recent times AIMES has been the route for workers in the mining sector beginning to work with NGOs working on mining issues.

Esteves, Motta and Cox (2009) correctly warn against “generalizing analyses of NGO intervention in the Global South which could result in the complexities and nuances” of that could be found through concretely situated analysis of the practices of donor funded NGOs is valid in respect of funded NGOs in Africa as is their observation that “although the majority of NGOs have been co-opted to serve hegemonic development agendas, they however present a fluid, contradictory web of relations, within which a significant minority seeks to make spaces of resistance”. In the African context the widening and strengthening of the spaces of resistance to social injustice as well as structural change alternatives requires a much more concerted and strategic effort by funded CSOs to deepen and extend collaborative engagement among themselves as well as with mass membership organisations and popular CSOs. Instances of such collaboration exist around issues where popular organisations for resistance against policies and practices have joined common causes with advocacy NGOs such as around natural resources extraction.

Beyond being of direct benefit for whatever issue funded NGOs may be working on these links also provide a rooting in society and the beginnings of being part of building the “social movements” that so many of us recognise as important for structural change. Capacity building initiatives can then become of a qualitatively different nature – interested in both policy substance as well as various aspects of organisation and movement building and consciousness raising for active citizenship. The “transformative potential” Edwards talks about requires that breadth of mobilization Without that reaching out there is the real danger that even the most radical NGOs could be stranded within intra-elite dialogues on behalf of society. While these could improve the types of policies adopted they stunt the development of a constituency to

ensure implementation and enforcement. Such engagement will also have the important effect of stretching the boundaries and content of politics as currently policed by the African establishment. From a self serving point the current isolation that most NGOs face when attacked by the state would be reduced by stronger links with rooted and mass based organisations. There is the challenge for NGO based intellectuals working for structural change to become organic intellectuals of the social constituencies they are working for. It is arguable that today in most African countries the most influential “organic intellectuals” are religious figures offering messages of how to cope with adversity alongside the promise of spiritual bliss after temporal hardships.

Building links across the spectrum of CSOs (organizational types as well areas of focus) and contributing to the development of social movements is a long term undertaking which requires a range of resources, including finances. This will also involve social justice grant makers to look beyond their comfort zones to see what they can contribute to the collective development and work of an assortment of CSOs even where not all of them can meet the institutional thresholds for being directly funded. At the best of times most funders are loath to make long term engagements and take risks with accounting a even less so on issues which are seen are too remote from issues of immediate or at most medium term concern and which are ‘safe’ in relation to their strategic objectives in a country. Since the global crisis not only has funding shrunk in most areas but the qualitative range and terms of accounting are narrowing. As the West inevitably loses more ground to China and other emerging powers for influence in Africa we are likely to see an even closer drawing of the aid agenda to the strategic interests of these countries. It is already happening with Canada, where the right wing government has torn up the decades old compact international development cooperation and unveiled an aggressive programme of using aid to support Canadian corporate interests and in the process cutting government support to Canadian CSOs whose positions and views are seen as divergent from this agenda. Even as China and other emerging powers are becoming increasingly influential in Africa including in the area of aid we are unlikely to see the development of significant funding to CSOs. It does not fit the Chinese model. The one area where there are indications of their engaging with civil society is in the area of research as we see growing research cooperation involving bodies like CODESRIA with institutes from China, Brazil, etc.

In the near term the funding pressures facing African CSOs will result in even greater alignment to Northern funders – public, private and INGOs because where institutional survival is threatened few are unlikely to choose shutting down over adapting to the demands of the changing landscape. The most complicated of these funding relationships are those involving INGOs where funding dependence is part of a multi layered relationship of programmatic cooperation and mutually beneficial legitimation – the INGO pointing to its partnerships with local groups and the local group enjoying the political support of more powerful “partner” through who can also facilitate access to international spaces. Can African social justice philanthropy ease this pressure? Not by much in quantitative terms but more significantly in qualitative terms. Moments of crisis tend to be moments of inspiration and innovation.