

## Africans devising solutions for Africa

**TrustAfrica, a new foundation promising African solutions to African problems, is getting ready for launch. It has recently developed a bilingual website, begun recruiting staff, and leased office space for its headquarters in Dakar, Senegal. An official launch on 6 June will be followed by workshops on sustainable peace and religious pluralism this autumn.**

**T**rustAfrica marks a new approach to philanthropy and development in Africa,' said executive director Akwasi Aidoo. 'Rather than take our cues from Western donors, we help African institutions work together to set our own priorities and chart our own course for the future.'

Governed solely by Africans, TrustAfrica helps organizations

throughout the continent team up to create lasting solutions to the challenges of violence, discrimination and economic isolation. With an annual budget of \$4 million, it hosts agenda-setting workshops, makes grants for collaborative projects, and provides technical assistance to strengthen African institutions.

TrustAfrica began in 2001 at the Ford Foundation. Its premise was that Africans need a greater voice among international donors as well as philanthropic resources that they control. During its pilot phase, TrustAfrica held a series of workshops that drew 160 leading figures from across the continent to set priorities and map out strategies for funding. It also made \$7 million worth of grants for 24 projects that advance these

aims, including a \$200,000 grant to Urgent Action Fund – Africa for its efforts to safeguard human rights.

It has pledged to hold its grantees – and itself – to the highest ethical standards. It promotes sound management, transparent governance, effective communication and sustainable results by making small grants for technical assistance. With the opening of its headquarters in Dakar, it has become a fully independent, and truly African, foundation.

### For more information

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## New fund aims to stimulate social justice philanthropy in Brazil

**December 2005 saw the legal establishment of the Brazil Human Rights Fund to support small NGOs and people working in human rights protection and promotion in Brazil. The Fund is an initiative created by four leaders of Brazil's social sector: Abdias do Nascimento, Rose Marie Muraro, Dom Pedro Casaldáglia and Margarida Genevois. Initial funding has been provided by the Ford Foundation, to the tune of US\$3 million, and the four founders.**

**O**ther potential Brazilian donors are being consulted with a view to providing matching funds. The Natura Foundation is supporting a pro bono consultancy on investment plans. The Fund's aim is to reach

an initial endowment of US\$5 million, and up to US\$20 million in the next decade.

In this first decade, the Fund has the specific objectives of stimulating social justice philanthropy – through endowment-building, donor services and a philanthropic campaign – and building a grantmaking track record in the human rights field. It will provide institutional grants for small, innovative human rights organizations and leadership development grants for human rights activists.

Why is the Fund needed? Though small NGOs are at the forefront of human rights work in Brazil – monitoring and reporting abuses; assisting in reform and improvement of security and

policing policies; providing direct services to vulnerable sectors of their communities; and promoting citizen education in human rights – support for them is scarce and most of it comes from overseas. Indigenous social investment tends to be directed solely at charitable causes such as children's assistance programmes, education and sports. There is a need to create an identity for social justice philanthropy which will enable development of a rights-based approach, and the new Fund can play a pioneering role in doing this.

### For more information

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