

Synergos in Africa



With a regional office in Cape Town and a project office in Windhoek, Namibia, Synergos is growing its networks and activities to engage across diverse regions of Africa. Registered as a non-profit company in South Africa, Synergos Southern Africa is an intrinsic part of global Synergos which is coordinated by our office in New York City.

About Synergos

The name 'Synergos' comes from the Greek root meaning 'working together.' We work for sustainable systems change to decrease poverty and advance social justice. We believe that systemic change can occur when diverse stakeholders and sectors – government, civil society, business and communities – work *together* for common purpose. Synergos works to cultivate leadership, networks and communities of practice for collaborative change; takes leadership in selected *inclusive* partnerships; inspires and supports other collaborations through service provision and knowledge sharing. Over the past 23 years, Synergos has supported innovative partnerships in more than 30 countries.

Synergos is building on Africa's deeply rooted traditions of 'ubuntu' ('a person is a person through other persons') and 'harambee' ('all pulling together'), as well as African aspirations for broad-based community empowerment, to meet the challenges of poverty and social injustice.

Synergos works for systemic change in Africa by strengthening collaborative leadership and supporting partnerships that promote equitable access to basic human rights and services – with particular emphasis on health and nutrition, the wellbeing of children and women, and education.

Key Partnerships and Programmes

African Public Health Leadership and Systems Innovation Initiative

Working closely with the Namibian Ministry of Health and Social Services, the African Public Health Leadership and Systems Innovation Initiative, launched in Namibia in 2007, is developing and testing a model for improving public health systems and leadership in Africa.

Supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Initiative works to increase health leader effectiveness by cultivating collaborative leadership and innovation. The Initiative has completed a thorough health systems review; facilitates a Leadership Development Forum for the top managers in the public health system; convenes a multi-sector innovation team (the Maternal Health Initiative) to improve performance in the vital Millennium Development Goal area of maternal health; and supports practical systems innovation projects to transform health results for the benefit of all Namibians. By documenting and disseminating both learning and results, the Initiative aims to advance health systems change not only in Namibia but also in other African countries. Synergos leads the implementation team for the Initiative in partnership with McKinsey & Company and the Presencing Institute.

National Alliance for Improved Nutrition - Namibia (NAFIN)

Synergos is a founding member and the coordinating agency for a new partnership in Namibia to reduce chronic under-nutrition among Namibian children called the National Alliance for Improved



Homecare project for children affected by the HIV/AIDS crisis.

Key Partner Organizations and Donors

- The ABSA Foundation
- Ray & Wendy Ackerman and family
- Hylton and Wendy Appelbaum
- The Atlantic Philanthropies
- The Gates Foundation
- GAIN (Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition)
- The C.S. Mott Foundation
- Capricorn Ventures International
- The Donald Gordon Foundation
- Department of Social Development (South Africa)
- Foundation for Community Development (Mozambique)
- Hivos (South Africa)
- The Kagiso Trust
- Kim Samuel Johnson
- The W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- The LGBT Joint Working Group
- Maria de Lurdes Mutola Foundation (Mozambique)
- McKinsey & Co.
- Ministry of Health and Social Services (Namibia)
- Patrice and Precious Motsepe
- The Mvelaphanda Group
- Nelson Mandela Children's Fund
- The Open Society Foundation for South Africa
- The Presencing Institute
- The Prime Minister's Office, Namibia
- Tokyo and Judy Sexwale
- Social Change Assistance Trust
- The Southern Africa Community Grantmakers Leadership Cooperative
- The Southern Africa Trust

Nutrition (NAFIN). NAFIN is a trust chaired by the Prime Minister of Namibia and includes key cabinet ministers, their departments, leading international agencies and domestic stakeholders. The alliance convenes key stakeholders in an action-oriented forum that provides the platform for seeding and advancing strategic, scalable interventions to improve health and nutrition, especially for poor households, youth, young children and infants. This project is funded in part by GAIN (the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition).

Leadership and Innovation Network for Collaboration in the Children's Sector (LINC)

Launched in 2006, the Leadership and Innovation Network for Collaboration in the Children's Sector (LINC) is a partnership between Convene Venture Philanthropy, Synergos and the South African Department of Social Development. Building on ground-breaking research and consultations undertaken in its preparatory phase, LINC has created a Fellowship which currently consists of 70 strategic leaders in the children's sector - from government, business, civil society and donor agencies. LINC's objective is to transform the quality and quantity of care for millions of South African children living in distress due to the multiple crises of HIV/AIDS, poverty and social exclusion. Participants are engaged in a multi-faceted programme of leadership development, coaching, peer learning, action-learning events, social networking, and practical innovation projects. Key innovation areas include: building community capacity for children's services; enhanced coordination of the children's sector; empowering local government to serve children; building an effective multi-sector donor network; and developing linked-up, reliable and accessible information systems.

Recently, Synergos and Convene have embarked with the national Department of Social Development (DSD) on the design and implementation of a Bridging Leadership and Team Building Initiative for the senior leadership of DSD.

The Imbeleko Partnership (Southern African Regional Orphans and Vulnerable Children Initiative)

In February 2008, the Foundation for Community Development (FDC) in Mozambique, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (NMCF) in South Africa, Synergos and Kim Samuel Johnson (international partner and Synergos global Board member) formed a partnership with the purpose of cooperating in a cross-border project that strengthens the ways communities in the region address the needs of orphans and vulnerable children – and in particular the ways in which communities reduce the isolation of children in distress, reduce their vulnerability, and maximize the social inclusion of children and caregivers. Through support to on-the-ground community-based services in rural communities, cross-border



Synergos African Senior Fellows Meeting, August 2008.

About Synergos Southern Africa

Synergos has had a strong presence in Southern Africa since 1990. In 2007, The Synergos Institute (Southern Africa) officially registered as a non-profit Section 21 company in South Africa.

The Synergos Southern Africa Board consists of African members of the Synergos Global Philanthropists Circle and the Senior Fellows Network, prominent development and community activists in the region, and representatives of the global Synergos Board.

learning exchanges, applied research and documentation, the Imbeleko Partnership is striving to elaborate and advance a sustainable, Afro-centric model of care that builds on community assets, culture, traditions and patterns of mutual help.

Southern Africa Community Grantmakers Leadership Cooperative

The Cooperative is a unique, vibrant partnership that harnesses the collective capacity of 23 independent development trusts and community grantmakers. The Cooperative was launched in 2005 to advance, build and strengthen sustainable community-based development in Southern Africa. With a growing membership of 35 grantmaker leaders from across the region, the Cooperative is a leadership and learning network committed to social justice grantmaking as a powerful vehicle for change. Synergos provides convening, secretariat services, financial and other support.

Synergos Senior Fellows Programme

The Synergos Senior Fellows Network is comprised of distinguished international civil society leaders committed to collaborative efforts that address the underlying causes of poverty and inequity. Launched in 1999, the Senior Fellows programme links extraordinary civil society leaders in a worldwide learning, service and action network. The network aims to strengthen the capacity and opportunities for these leaders to be catalysts of, and play a major role in, partnerships that address the systemic causes of poverty and promote sustainable social change. The Senior Fellows network contributes to leadership skills development through peer-to-peer learning and service, global and regional networking, convening and collaboration, and knowledge creation and dissemination. Synergos convenes and supports a high-powered, growing group of 29 African Senior Fellows from Southern, East, West and North Africa.

Global Philanthropists Circle

The Global Philanthropists Circle (GPC) is a dynamic network of leading philanthropic families and individuals from across the world committed to fighting global poverty and social injustice. Founded in 2001 by Peggy Dulany, Synergos' Global Chair, and her father, David Rockefeller, the GPC increases the impact of members' philanthropy and allows them to become more effective social investors by offering opportunities for learning and collaboration. The Circle includes a growing contingent of members in Southern Africa that, with Synergos, endeavours to strengthen collaboration, the culture of giving and social change philanthropy.

Arab World Social Innovators

Including civil society activists and social entrepreneurs from North Africa, the Arab World Social Innovators programme is made up of

Synergos Southern Africa Board Members

Mr. Patrick Parring (Chair)
Ms. Kathy Ackerman-Robins
Ms. Wendy Appelbaum
Mr. Robert H. Dunn (Global CEO)
Ms. Peggy Dulany (Global Chair)
Ms. Anne Emmett
Ms. Bience Gawanas
Dr. Precious Moloi-Motsepe
Mr. Tawanda Mutasah
Mr. Abdul Magid Osman
Mr. Barry Smith (Board Secretary)

African Members of the Synergos Global Board

Mr. Hylton Appelbaum
Mr. Tokyo Sexwale

22 exceptional Social Innovators who are each transforming a powerful idea into a growing social venture - in fields such as education, microenterprise, youth employment, arts and culture, environmental protection, civic engagement, and peace building. They come from Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine and collectively represent the vast pool of entrepreneurial energy and talent in the Arab World. Synergos offers each Innovator a financial award and leadership development, as well as capacity-building services, media exposure, and strategic connections to leaders in philanthropy, business, and civil society. Our aim is to increase the capacity of the innovators and their ventures to address issues of poverty and inequity. Our programme is part of our broader, long-term effort to empower leaders and organizations in the Arab World to strengthen the capacity of civil society to help meet the needs of those who are poor and marginalized.

Synergos Services

Driven by its mission and vision for more effective multi-stakeholder engagement in social change, Synergos serves as a strategic advisor to global corporations seeking to invest in sustainable development and operate in the emerging markets of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. Synergos provides a range of service offerings including stakeholder mapping and situation research, corporate team field learning visits, strategy development for social engagement, partnership design and management, and programme implementation. In Africa, Synergos is working with a global food and beverage company to develop innovative nutritional products to improve young women and children in Southern and West Africa.

For More Information

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