



Karibu Foundation

RESISTING AND REBUILDING



“NEW REALITIES GRANT” PROCESS

Background Note v.4

October 2021

BUILDING FOR A POST COVID-19

FUTURE

Over the course of 2021-2024, Karibu will instigate a pilot project related to a new grantmaking program, currently referred to as the "Karibu New Realities Grant".

The pilot aims to support bold, innovative, forward thinking, "constructive troublemaking", and imaginative initiatives in **Sub-Saharan Africa** that add new dimensions and makes stronger the collective struggle for systemic justice. Grants that eventually provided in this pilot will support creative, strategic, agenda-setting, and network-building groups in Sub-Saharan Africa that are able to connect the local / national struggle with regional / global realities.

The project will take a **participatory grant-making approach**, where Karibu's grantees themselves will define a majority of the criteria, reporting requirements, and not least the decisions of what initiatives receive grants within the bounds of this pilot project. There will be two cycles of decision-making groups (made up of activists from Sub-Saharan Africa) who will make these decisions. All grants that are eventually awarded from this pilot project will be in line with overall vision, aims and objectives of the Karibu Foundation.

This background note gives more information on the process leading up to the Karibu Board's decision to implement the pilot, as well as some basic structures. This background note can be understood as a compendium to the "**Karibu New Realities Grant - Framework Document (July 2021)**" that details the structures and details of the pilot itself.

We in the Karibu staff very much look forward to starting the process with this exciting pilot!

Tyler and Eilert



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1 | BACKGROUND

To understand better how Karibu have come to the point of approving this **grantmaking pilot**, it is relevant to mention some of the factors that have inspired this process and given direction up until this point. These factors have contributed to Karibu eagerly being ready to initiate a process for reorienting and re-energising transformative activism and our grant programs.

Karibu's profile and a redistribution of resources

Karibu has emphasised over many years the importance of anchoring its profile and priorities in the reality for the global South. The fundamental vision for the foundation has been to provide resources for 'the alternative voices of the global South to be heard'.

For Karibu, the understanding of grant making (donor activity, philanthropy, project funding) has fundamentally been as a 'redistribution of funds'. This relates to a basic understanding that the accumulation of wealth and financial resources in the global North is actually the clear expression of global injustice, and thus the mere existence of affluent foundations and donors in the global North is part of the systemic injustice that must be changed.

Grantmaking in Karibu is therefore not understood as charity/well doing/

philanthropy, but actually a redistribution of financial resources which already are mal-placed and need to be redistributed. Karibu has also made efforts in its relation to global South partners to build mutuality, trust, transparency, respect for the priorities of the global South even when it doesn't align with views held by Karibu, reduce amount of control systems that confirm and sustain donor-recipient cultures, and other practices in partner cooperation that express the will to accompaniment, and sharing in the struggle for justice and systemic change.

This pilot aims to continue to align Karibu's grantmaking programs with these values.

Karibu 2025

For some years, Karibu has kept strategy discussions going in its Board and secretariat ("Karibu 2025 process"). The aim has been to do more and do better of the many transformative involvements

through Karibu grantees/partners, and to increase the impact or effect of Karibu resource redistribution.

The aim has therefore been to reach the following goals by the year 2025:

- ▶ Karibu is involved with a networks to work with outstanding “change actors” (from both within and outside of the existing partner network)
- ▶ Karibu is in the frontline of activism with a “new generation” of activist social movements
- ▶ Karibu presents actions and movements that testifies to and are signs of actual systemic change to happen (stopping the bad / building the new). Transformation indicators.
- ▶ Karibu attracts other transformative activists and grant makers for joining the efforts for systemic change

These points have also inspired the steps towards this pilot.

A global crisis

The COVID19 pandemic has impacted in various ways the planning and operations of social movements. The most immediate arena for people’s mobilisation and activism, the streets and squares, have been almost totally inaccessible during long lock-downs.

Activism space has also been limited with increased and clearly politically motivated security measures. Travels and mobility for events has been stopped. A lot of

uncertainty for what the future ‘new normal’ will look like has put concrete planning on a halt.

In addition to this, a growing digital and COVID19 ‘fatigue’ represents an obstacle for creative and innovating reorganising of activism and resistance.

The global challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic has demanded new solutions, new ways of thinking, and new catalysts for change in all sectors.

Changes in applications to Karibu

From the position of a grantmaker, Karibu has seen a clear change in the profile of submitted proposals. Over the past three years in particular, we have received huge numbers of proposals from around the world with a very local or solely national focus, often on specific target groups and with a view on capacity building with a very thematic orientation.

In addition, we have seen a reduction of proposals coming from long time partners, regional and global networks, social movements with focus on organising events and direct advocacy into various international (UN) platforms and annual conference processes.

The changes in applications (from both current partners and new applicants) has led us to wonder whether there are large changes in how we collectively approach systemic change.

Perspectives on grantmaking from the South

Karibu is member of EDGE Funders Alliance, a progressive network of primarily North-based grant-makers/foundations committed to contribute to systemic change. In this forum, a discussion has been developed over years about the role of grant makers /foundations in global change.

The platform continues to raise important and very critical questions and challenges related to system change grantmaking, yet the platform has not been able to necessarily prioritize the analysis and priorities specifically of the global South given the breadth of members funding areas (and given that most of the donors involved are primarily relating to movements in the global North).

In this sense, and in line of the vision of Karibu, there is a fundamental need to have conversations about relevance, transformative impact, political agenda setting, and strategy development with movements in the global South. This pilot aims to touch on this.

Participatory Grantmaking

Karibu secretariat has also participated actively in a number of sessions by the “Participatory Grantmaking Community of Practice”. The group (which is primarily North-based) is very focused on developing new approaches and methodologies in the grantmaking

community based on the fundamental acknowledgement of the notion “nothing about us without us” - that grantees need to stand at the forefront of making the rules of grantmaking.

This community actively present a broad variety of models to how traditional ‘beneficiary communities’ become participants and decision makers in matters related to priorities in grant making.

This community has offered an opportunity for other global North grant makers to learn from actual models that are tested out and in use within philanthropy. Most of the tested models are operating in marginalised and oppressed communities of the global North, but there are also emerging examples of rethinking grantmaking with movements in the South.

Strengthening internal competencies

Karibu staff (Tyler Dale Hauger) has attended a post-graduate course at Norwegian University of Science and Technology with a special focus on innovation theory and practice.

His thesis on “Nothing About Us Without Us: Innovating Grant-Making Processes with Participatory Methodology” has served as a huge theoretical resource material for exploring opportunities for alternative models of grant making within Karibu.

Karibu is also working to identify connections to academic institutions to ensure a research component of the pilot.

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VISION FOR THE PILOT

Karibu's "New Realities Grant" pilot project is anchored firmly in Karibu's vision: to contribute to a process whereby alternative voices from the global South, connected to questions on global justice, come forward and be heard.

This pilot project aims at exploring new areas of work within the scope of Karibu's vision. The new methodologies described in the project will have a solid basis in Karibu's already existing values (transparency, mutuality, complementarity, flexibility), but emphasize more concretely:



NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

To express, also in the Karibu grant-making, the practical consequence of systemic change, of re-organising of power, of concrete expression of the values of 'nothing about us without us'.



NEW MODELS OF ACTIVISM

To identify and provide resources for next-generation / new models of activism, popular mobilisation and resistance, innovation and alternatives with the view of contributing to systemic and system change (stopping the bad & building the new)



PARTICIPATION

To test out contemporary ideas / models of Participatory Grant Making (PGM) as a pilot, across themes and national boundaries.

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PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING

...AN APPROACH FOR THE PILOT

WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT WHEN WE SAY "PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING"

There is no formal definition of participatory grantmaking, but many agree that it:

- Emphasizes “nothing about us without us.”
- Shifts power about grantmaking decisions by involving—or giving all power to—the people most affected by the issues or problems.
- Empowers and gives agency to people who benefit from funding to determine the priorities of their lives.



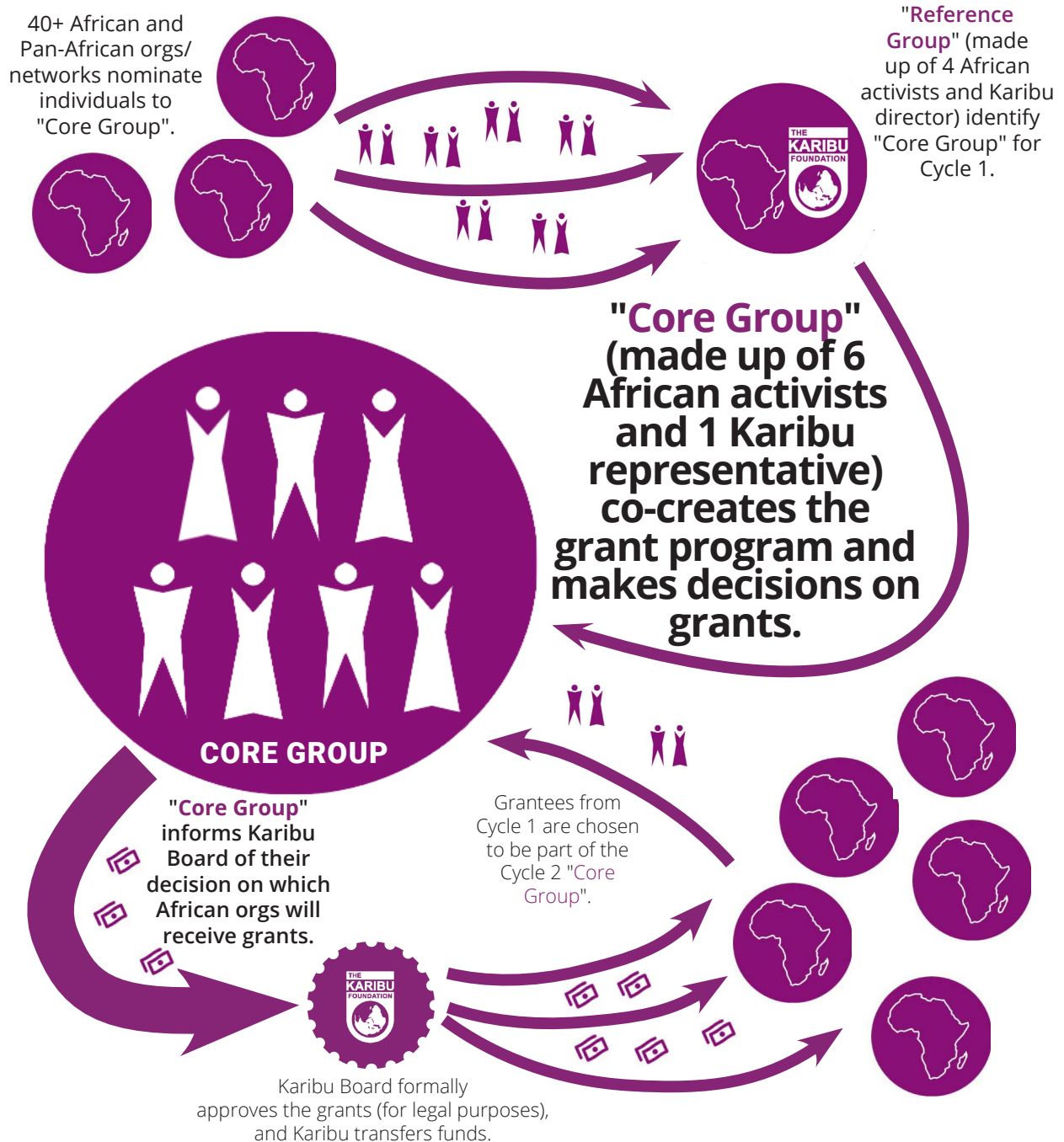
Participatory grantmaking therefore is about ceding decision-making power about funding decisions—including the strategy and criteria behind those decisions— to the very communities that a foundation (such as Karibu) aims to serve.

Source: "Deciding together: Shifting power and resources through participatory grantmaking", Cynthia Gibson (2018)

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STRUCTURE

THE MECHANICS OF MOVING POWER AND RESOURCES IN THE PILOT



5

TIMELINE

**TENTATIVE TIMELINE FOR CYCLE 1 AND 2
(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

