IMPACT MEASUREMENT: ITHUBA TRUST GRANTMAKING STRATEGY TOWARDS POVERTY ERADICATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

By

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"IF THE SYSTEM DOES NOT WORK FOR THE POOR, IT WON'T WORK FOR ANYONE."

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka
Minister of Minerals and Energy Affairs
(Cited by De Ionno, *Reaching Out*, 2002:80)

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"For nothing is impossible with God."

Luke 1:37

To my father, my greatest educator, and my mother, my greatest integrator.

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DEDICATED TO MY HUSBAND, TINO, WITH LOVE AND RESPECT

ABSTRACT

Social work as a science and profession, particularly through its social work research, has always concerned itself with the verification of the impact of its interventions. However, in practice, formal systematic impact studies have lagged behind. Grantmaking, which is fast becoming a career, is also under scrutiny regarding the measurement of its funding impact.

The aim of the study was to measure the impact of Ithuba Trust's financing policy and operations for access to its funds. Data was collected by means of a literature review on poverty and inequality and an empirical study. The empirical study was conducted in two stages. During the first qualitative study, data was collected by means of a series of focus group interviews. Mailed questionnaires and document analysis of the sample files kept at Ithuba Trust offices were used to collect data in the second quantitative phase.

The research findings revealed that Ithuba Trust funding policy and operations facilitated access to its funding as a contribution towards poverty eradication. Notwithstanding, the organization was found lacking in narrowing the gap between developed and under-developed communities. This discrepancy was ascribed to Ithuba Trust's adherence to the past apartheid laws which were in force at the time and favoured developed communities. Poverty eradication is about partnerships. This study concluded that the uneven distribution of Ithuba Trust's funding is a microcosm of the uneven trade relations in the global poverty eradication initiatives, which involve partnerships between the poor and the rich. Due to barriers such as digital divide, globalization and access to markets, which favour the rich and powerful, poor people become marginalized from such skewed partnerships, reinforcing the increasing levels of poverty as resources get misplaced.

The contribution of the study lies in sensitizing development practitioners on the significance of impact studies in intervention programmes in order to ensure that the poor people's interests are defended and protected for their ultimate development.

The outcome of the study was a Community Ownership Market Development Strategy to be presented to the Ithuba Trust Board of Trustees as a recommendation for consideration regarding their intended amendments to the existing funding policy and procedures.

KEY TERMS

Empowerment

Globalization

Grantmaker

Human development

Impact measurement

Non-government organizations

Partnerships

Poverty

Social work

Strategy

Sustainable development

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