

philanthropy 
FOR **development**

The Shadow Side of Philanthropy

Vol 5
'Sense-Making Policy Paper Series'
December 2021

**Giving
For Change
Alliance**



The Shadow Side of Philanthropy
Vol 5 'Sense-Making' Policy Paper Series' 2021
CBR Occasional Working Paper No. 05/2022

Published by the Uganda National NGO Forum and the Centre for Basic Research

Recommended Citation: Ssewakiryanga Richard (2022), **The Shadow Side of Philanthropy**, Occasional Working Paper No. 05/2022, Uganda National NGO Forum and Centre for Basic Research, Kampala

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ISBN: 9970-516-50-6

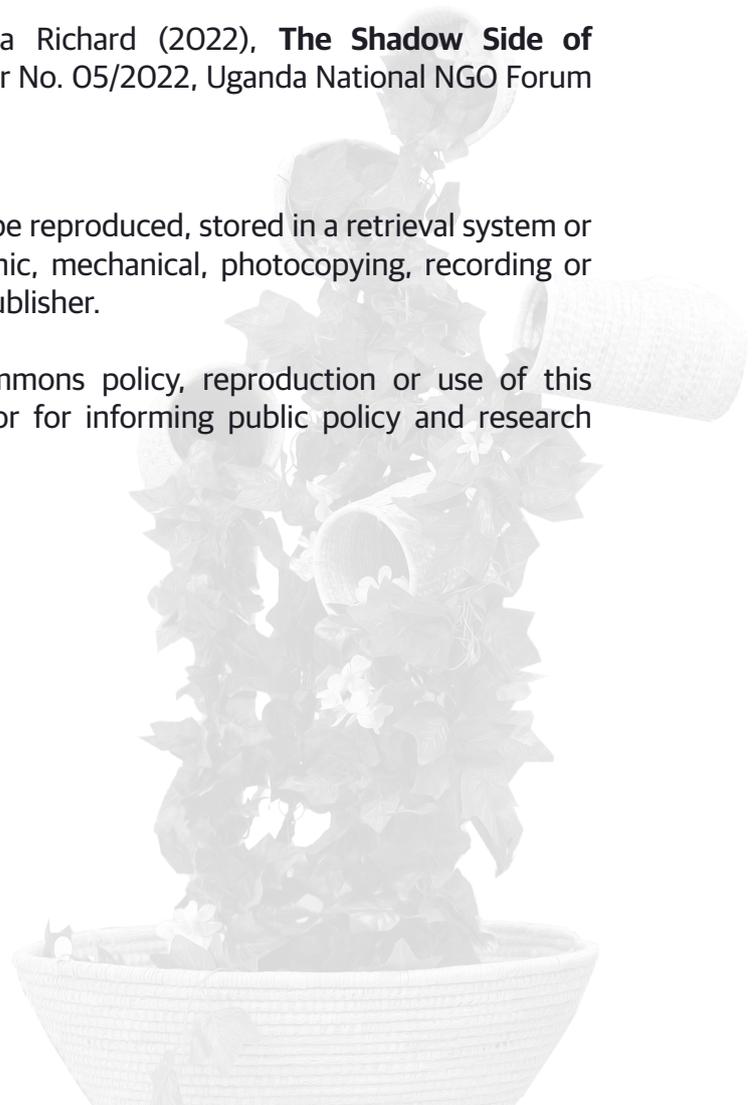


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01 Introduction

This is the last paper in a series on the question of philanthropy and development in Uganda and beyond. This paper focuses on the shadow side of philanthropy. The paper analyses some of the areas practitioners in the philanthropy sector should apply their minds to and avoid in the journey of building a progressive philanthropy ecosystem that works to serve the aspirations of those who give with good-will and those who receive the good-will gestures.

In the analysis on the dimensions that sometimes cast a shadow on giving, the paper shows that this produces mistrust, frustration, exploitation, abuse and misfortune among several other negative ramifications. In this paper we shall point out areas where challenges and excesses exist for purposes of supporting boundary-setting actions in the practice of philanthropy.

The paper is divided in three parts. The first section sets out the context in which philanthropy happens in Africa - locating it in the state-society relations within the colonial and post-colonial context. The second part looks at some selected pitfalls in philanthropic practice and the last part offers some forward-looking recommendations and conclusion.



02 *Africa and the Philanthropy Experience*



Africa arrived in the world of philanthropy in various ways. The African cultural forms and practices of giving which have existed for centuries and shaped African societies are just getting some recognition in philanthropy literature in the last three decades or so! For long, the African philanthropy experience was dismissed and marked as backward Africa, anti-modern and other attendant relegations of the African traditional experiences.

With this backfoot experience, traditional forms of giving and generosity continue to struggle as authentic expressions of philanthropy. On its part, contemporary philanthropy discourse proceeds with a western hegemonic identity that is rooted in white world views, privileging capitalist modes of giving. These renderings continue to expand both in discourse and deployment of philanthropy.

The ongoing tensions and fight for space for African philanthropy as opposed to philanthropy in Africa is now both an intellectual exercise as well as a political exercise.² Scholars and researchers are even rejecting some concepts like – philanthropy and giving arguing that the true ethos of philanthropy in Africa is not about giving but about gifting.³ This idea is being propagated as an intellectual and epistemological standpoint to baptize

African philanthropy appropriately and sanitize its boundaries. The reality of African philanthropy existing in the shadows of western philanthropy have also meant that the shadow side of philanthropy gets deployed quite conveniently within and on Africa.

The discussion of the dark side of philanthropy, this paper will therefore focus on the dark side as manifested in an African and Uganda experience but also make references to the global linkages where they exist.

As a sense-making enterprise, this paper will therefore proceed by first interrogating the historical state-society relations in Uganda and by implication in Africa and the associated linkages of the shadow side of giving. The reason why the state in Africa is an important enterprise to interrogate emanates from preposition that the influence of the state and its associated governance embellishments have shaped the character of African societies and the character for pro-social behaviors including giving, gifting and generosity. This is a matter that will be illustrated variously through an analysis of some of the authoritative African scholars on the state in Africa but all the time illustrating the linkages of these scholars to the philanthropy shadow sides. We start with a glimpse into the colonial Ugandan state.





03 *Colonial State of Uganda and Gifting Practices*

This paper is acutely aware of the limitations of preceding any analysis on Africa with colonialism. Sometimes it is seen as an exercise in scapegoating the colonial encounter or in explaining away Africa's weaknesses. However, it is important to note that far from it, the colonial experience was also very much a societal transformation exercise with the clash of values and social systems in everyday life being a reality.

Be that as it may, Uganda, like many of the countries in Africa was colonized. Colonialism disrupted lives in many ways but also reconstructed lives variously. The disruptions were resisted, and the colonial period was characterized by the rise in associational life and citizen and their organizations organized to resist the excesses of colonialism. There were the elite civil society groups that invested in fighting the colonial governance system and working to replace it with African self-determination and African rule. These used civil and elite methods like petitions to the colonial masters to try and point out injustices of the colonialist.⁴ These elite groups of the time did not pose any significant threat to colonial rule as they were using civil means that did not destabilize the colonial power base.

On the other hand, the militant groups often comprising the trade union and farmers' association leaders with their political base in the peasantry and unionized workers focused on changing the status quo through organizing protests and strikes. These groups focused on demanding for higher commodity prices, better conditions of work and eventually political independence. On its part the colonial state "sought to control the evolution, content and impact of associational life in Uganda... in order to prevent drastic challenges to the hegemony of the colonial state."⁵

An important and sometimes ignored practice of these early citizen organizations was how they were sustained by giving by their own members. To sustain these local struggles against colonialism local people came together and practiced philanthropy in different forms. For example, the civil society formation - The Young Buganda Society which included many of the best-known men in Buganda's office-holding elite in the 1940s, as well as men well placed within the protectorate's administration were also involved in several prosocial behaviors. As Summers Carol (2005) writes:

Members met occasionally, listened to speakers, wrote letters to the newspapers and government officials, and supported initiatives they considered progressive, such as syphilis treatment and school funding. (emphasis mine in bold)

The support to syphilis treatment and social funding was undertaken as philanthropic projects of the elite - giving back to society. But while for some of the elite this was seen as a good gesture, other parts of society viewed these practices as servicing the colonial project by not resisting colonialism but by existing within it and politically massaging the social ills of the colonial project through the mentioned philanthropic gestures. It is this kind of critique of the African elite in the colonial administration that led to the rise of leaders like Ignatius Musaazi.

I. K. Musaazi is remembered to have formed the Federation of Partnerships of Uganda African Farmers (FPUAF) union following the banning of the Uganda African Farmers Union. He gave up his job as a teacher at Makerere University College, in order to help African farmers to oppose the prevailing unfairness in trade, especially for cotton. Cooperatives are fondly remembered in the colonial history of Uganda for having pooled resources through collective generosity and sent Ignatius Musaazi to London in 1950 to lobby the British Parliament for support of FPUAF aspirations.

For the elite that refused to be part of the colonial establishment like Musaazi, what sustained their struggles was giving of the members who believed in the independence of Uganda and the need for fair prices as well as fair trade for African farmers. The giving of farmers to the leaders of the resistance to colonialism was at the time viewed as financing subversive activities. Clearly civic organizing was challenging in the colonial times, but it was also alive on the margins of society and in many ways was sustained by philanthropic efforts of members who participated variously.

Another key feature that accompanied the colonial project was the institutionalization of exploitative giving. Institutional giving was part of the mechanisms that were used variously in the colonial times. In societies where there was indirect rule, the Chiefs who had hitherto been part of the gifting life cycle, the Chiefs became collectors of tax on behalf of the colonial government and extractors of treasure from communities completely negating the gifting ethos in their new configurations as accomplices in the colonial project.⁶ These instances created a new dynamic with gifting rapidly being reconfigured into other types of giving that included taxation and other exploitative and oppressive dues that were given to the state.

Another key feature of the colonial times was the encounter and gifting between Ugandans and Europeans in the late-nineteenth century and even beyond. It was performed as part of diplomatic encounters and political settlements.⁷ The Monarchs in Uganda were known to have been very generous when they gave gifts to colonial agents as a means of negotiating their monarchy's diplomatic relations with the colonialist. In the literature the gifts are presented as a tool for negotiating and seeking favors or bordering on bribing the colonial agents. For example, Bennett (2018) writes about the gifts acquired by Frederick Jackson a colonial agent in East Africa thus:

Jackson ranked the gifts that he received. The gifts of Mbaguta, the Katikkiro of Ankole, featured particularly highly in his assessment. Like Kaggwa, Mbaguta carved a strong diplomatic reputation for himself in the 1901 Ankole Agreement which Jackson administered in his role as Acting Commissioner. Jackson described with pleasure how Mbaguta had loaded up his caravan with “curios of the finest workmanship” during a visit.⁸

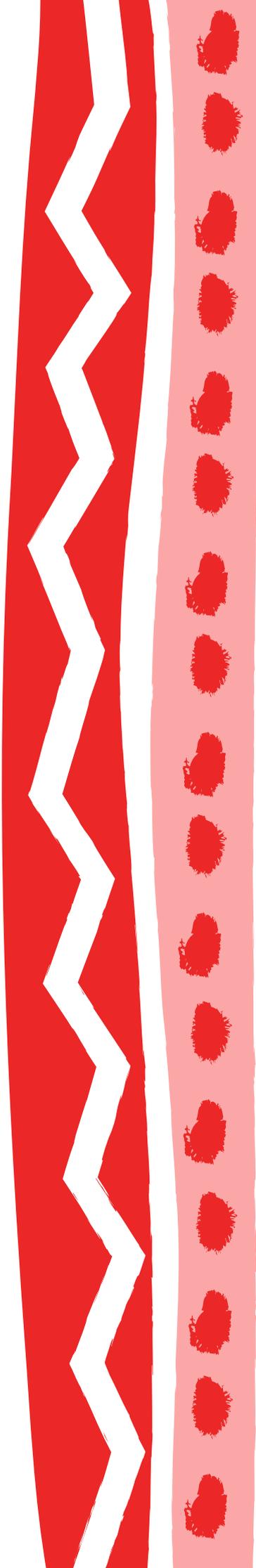
It therefore follows that the attendant discourses around gift-giving and other prosocial behaviors are important in understanding the economy of affection in the colonial period and beyond.

The arrival of Christianity and Islam also reframed the narratives of giving with new forms of giving that included giving to the church for Christians and giving Zakat for the Moslems. As mentioned earlier, traditional gifting was sometimes demonized as part of the uncivilized customs of the natives. Giving to the various deities and gods of war, gods and famine, and gods harvest and giving to ancestors – which were very much part of the gifting economy were rejected as non-Christian, non-Moslem and anti-modernity. The exchange of gifts in marriage ceremonies was sometimes then constructed as buying of brides which further complicated the notion of familial-affectionate exchange during the marriage ceremonies.⁹ A study by MIFUMI (2009) noted that bride-price had cemented families together in the pre-colonial period and had not been regarded in acquisitive terms as a 'price', but as a custom to build and strengthen communities and families.¹⁰

In another context in traditional Buganda, girls could also be sent to the King's court as potential wives, or at least as servants to court women. This process transferred the child to the court either through a process of kusenga or kisiga. The child transferred through kusenga was different from kusiga because kusenga was voluntary, and the child could leave the patron if s/he wanted to. However, people were afraid of kusiga because of the danger of being killed by the King. A story is told how some families tended to give slaves instead of their own sons to the court – just in case they were killed and this went on until Kabaka Mutesa turned the tables on them by making a slave the heir of the man who had sent him to court as a page. He said 'You told me he was your son. Well then he can be your heir.'¹¹

The gifting that happened during the rites of passage as young boys were becoming men and young girls becoming women were also negated to the realm of fetish-performances and imbued with devilish innuendoes that had to be firmly rejected by the modern African.¹² In this case the 'native' who was being modernized was encouraged to give in other forms – either through the church or the mosque. Gifting and giving - while they were pro-social behaviors were also imbued with all kinds of subtexts in the pre-colonial and colonial times as has been illustrated thus far.

The point is this extended rendition, is to illustrate the complexity of the pro-social practices of giving, gifting and generosity in the colonial and post-colonial era. This makes it possible to appreciate the contemporary dark side practices and also acknowledge that some of them are not only a current phenomenon but one that is rooted in history. The fact that these phenomena are rooted in history therefore suggests that any prepositions of how to deal with them requires a more nuanced and informed discussion at both policy and practice level.



In the next section we focus on how philanthropy was shaped by the nature of the state in Africa. To discuss this dimension, we refer to the writing of two influential African authors who discuss a particular framing that is alive in the political history of giving and gifting and that is; the 'two publics' in Africa, as Peter Ekeh called it or the 'bifurcated state' as Mahmood Mamdani calls it.





04 *The Two Publics and Economy of Giving*

Several authors on Africa have documented the various ways in which African communalism and giving has been exploited. Peter Ekeh's seminal work of 1976 is instructive here. In his thesis of 'two publics in Africa',¹³ he argues that colonialism in Africa left two kinds of publics - a civic public and a primordial public. He submits that while individuals pretend to uphold the virtues of the civic public (brought by colonialism) they also remain loyal to their primordial public (rooted in tradition).

This clash of norms and interests according to Ekeh generate tendencies that have come to be known as tribalism and corruption with public officials stealing and looting and giving as philanthropic individuals to their clans and villages. According to Ekeh, morality is the foundation of both the private and public realm. The two publics in Ekeh's work have different standards of morality yet linked to each other. Ekeh classified primordial as private and associated civic with colonial administration which is not private. Even though these two are different, politicians operate both in primordial and civic publics.

In building his argument, Ekeh took us back to how the war of independence in Africa has little to do with the needs and rights of the common people. It is a struggle for power between the African bourgeoisie and the European bourgeoisie. They used the fact that they acquired western education as a basis for being the legitimate replacement of the colonizers. After independence Europe continued to remind Africans of their presence by making African leaders look like them. It is this ability to speak and act like the colonizer that African bourgeoisie used to mobilize the common people to fight. Ekeh called it "ideologies of legitimation".

The use of negative ideologies by colonial administrators against Africans later affected African politicians. According to Ekeh, the primordial public has no economic reward. It is only used to gain respect and security while the civic public is for economic gain, and one is not obligated to give back. As such morality is not highly regarded in the civic public.

According to Ekeh, Africans are members of the two publics. His argument is that educated Africans use civic public to gain financially so that they give through philanthropic gestures to their communities. This activity helps them promote and sustain their primordial public. As such, it is legitimate to be corrupt in order for one to strengthen the primordial public. They work hard to promote their primordial public and less on their civic public. This loyalty to primordial public is crippling African politics, he argues. Accordingly, the civic public is starved of morality and politics without morality is destructive.

Another influential scholar focusing on the African postcolonial experience is Professor Mahmood Mamdani. In his award-winning book *Citizen and Subject*, Professor Mahmood Mamdani argued that the bifurcation of power in Africa results from the continent's distinctive colonial experience. The configuration of colonial rule in Africa led first to the institutionalization of two systems of power under a single authority: one urban, based on civil power and rights, excluding the colonized on the basis of race, the other rural, where tradition and culture incorporated the colonized into the rule of custom.

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Second, colonial rule in Africa led to the privileging of state-ordained and state-enforced traditions that had least historical depth and were monarchical, authoritarian, and patriarchal, so that customary power and law became an integral part of a decentralized despotism. Finally, with custom becoming the language of force, colonial rule led to rationalizing the appropriation and management of land and the mobilization of labor under the colonial rubric.¹⁵

This bifurcated state power, civil and customary, crystallized as "indirect rule" in British colonies including South Africa, where apartheid represented the last attempt at reorganizing the state structure to incorporate the "native" population in a world of enforced tradition. The bifurcated power according to Mamdani mediated racial domination through tribally organized local authorities, reproducing racial identity in citizens and ethnic identity in subjects. The challenges confronting African countries in the struggles for independence and after were to democratize the state and particularly customary power, deracialize civil society, and restructure unequal external relations of dependency.

These two authors point to an important idea of how colonially instituted governance systems were instrumental in shaping both social and public life in Africa. A pro-social behavior of giving became firmly ingrained in the post-colonial ethos as it structured issues of morality in the publics in Africa. We see this continuing when corrupt persons in public office are also known as the best philanthropist in their communities. Giving has therefore been turned into a tool for patronage. In the section that follows, we look at the different ways the shadow-sides of giving manifest themselves in contemporary Africa.





05 *Dominant Shadow-sides of Philanthropy*

a. Commercialization of Life and the Practice of Philanthropy

Commercialization of life in Uganda is a big issue. Everything has a price. The implication of this is a significant challenge for philanthropy as a practice. But where did this commercialization come from and what are its ramifications. Commercialization of life is a phenomenon that has its roots in years of deceptive government investments. The colonialist worried more about investing for extraction from the colony and not for development of Uganda, the post-colonial government spent all the time fighting to maintain their grip on power and not caring about the citizen and service delivery.

Today what Uganda has reaped is a total collapse of public services that even the post-1986 government has failed to fix. Children continue to go to school and learn very little and many drop out along the learning journey. For instance, Uganda enrolls one million and five hundred children every year and graduates five hundred thousand in

At parliamentary level, the study found that candidates from the mainstream constituencies spent UGX 458.2 million while female counterparts running for affirmative action, district women's seats spent UGX 496.4 million over in both primary and general elections. The factors driving the amounts of political gifts and handouts include; challenges of public service delivery at the local level, weak enforcement of campaign rules, lack of civic consciousness among the electorate, parliamentary emoluments and privileges acting as an incentive and the way that patronage politics continues to characterize the multiparty dispensation³⁰ This study echoes the similar sentiments from other studies that cite huge expenditures during the electoral process.³¹

Generosity is sometimes infused in patronage politics and this clouds and creates a challenge for genuine philanthropist who are viewed with a dose of skepticism. The politicians may think of philanthropists as competitors wanting to unseat the politician from their political seat. At the same time community members may interpret all acts of generosity as transactional. They wonder; if the politician wants votes what does the philanthropist want? Patronage politics is therefore a shadow-side of philanthropy that should be watched carefully in a country where patronage is still very dominant in the social psyche of the country.



primary seven after seven years. Official statistics indicate that the national average for the transition from primary level to secondary level of education stood at 58.95% as of 2016.¹⁶ One million children fail to make it through seven years of school. In the area of learning, research by a citizen-led assessment of learning code-named 'Uwezo' - for the last 10 years of doing annual assessments found that across the country eight out of ten children in primary three cannot do primary two work - meaning that they are below their levels of capacity.¹⁷

In the health sector, mothers continue to die on hospital floors, with fifteen mothers dying every day from preventable complications!¹⁸ The poor roads continue to claim the lives of numerous Ugandans as the statistics of carnage on roads is one of the highest in Africa and 15th globally.¹⁹ This breakdown in public service delivery has meant that most services are now privatized - and citizens have to get them for a fee. Parents struggle to pay for good education in private schools, citizens pay for all kinds of health care services, water is paid for, those who can afford have to find a generator to substitute for electricity from the national grid or install solar panels. Everywhere one turns, public services are under stress and for a price. This has left citizens that cannot afford in even more worse conditions.

The commercialization of life has produced the attendant growth in transactional lifestyles. Everything is for sale - from justice to education to health and to a host of other services. Those who do not have find themselves having to ask from those who have and those who have what to give will then give it in return for a benefit or a service.

The politician gives to get votes, the nurse gives health services in exchange for a fee to meet their own access to other public services and the traffic police officer may ask for a bribe to get his children to a good school. This crisis eventually leads to complications in the practice of philanthropy, as all giving gestures and related pro-social behaviors must negotiate this maze of transactional relationships.

Yet, as Uganda did all this, very few economists thought about the need to understand how business relations actually play out in a liberalized market economy. There was an assumption that the market will fix itself when it got challenges, that indeed the basic economics of demand and supply will lead to healthy economic activity and healthy business relations, high revenue and reduction in poverty levels.

What seems to have emerged over time is the birth of brutal business relations laced with violence, corruption and destruction. While at the global level, neoliberal economics has been put to death by the credit crunch and questions on business morality were being asked about leaders who actually earn bonuses when their companies are making losses, these stories were deemed distant. But these economic episodes have since led to the question of moral principles in economic life and if indeed government and citizens as economic actors should have some norms, rules and values that shape economic cultures.

Research on business relations has given some clues of the challenges that lay ahead. In Uganda, the poverty studies back in early 2000s had come up with disturbing evidence when it pointed to the horrendous relations between business actors and local traders. Some classical examples included an example in a poverty study by Ministry of Finance in a market in Jinja where a private tender-holder had introduced market dues which included: a fine for 'quarrelling' in the market, a fine for 'cooking' in the market, a fine for wearing slippers in the market, a monthly 'mabugo' by all traders and a host of other dues.²³ While these dues were patriarchal in nature – targeting mostly market women, they were also deeply immoral.

In another study in a tea factory, tea-pickers reported how they were not allowed to shout when they saw a snake lest the other tea-pickers runaway and the private enterprise loses a day's income. In a sugar factory in Eastern Uganda, there were stories of how sugarcane cutters from West Nile would drink themselves to death after realizing that they will never be able to make enough money to go back home.²⁴ These stories seemed distant at the time, but they spoke volumes about a neoliberal economy that had ran amok with immorality. The neoliberal economy had created a certain type of moral economy that totally disregarded human relational values in the hot pursuit of private gain and primitive accumulation was the order of the day.

In a book on entitled Neoliberal Moral Economy, Jörg Wiegratz²⁵ researches this practice and puts neoliberalism in Uganda on trial. Like other authors before him, he argues that the destructive nature of neoliberalism in Uganda instead of delivering growth, has increased inequality and fraud. Wiegratz suggests that 'fraud [or trickery] is in various ways a manifestation of the new 'neoliberal moral order' and embarks on exploring its effects on Uganda's economic sectors. He explains how the adaptation of this new thinking and practice in Uganda since 1986, the year that the National Resistance Movement under Museveni assumed leadership, has brought about a moral restructuring that undermined old norms, values, orientations and practices. He asserts that the new neoliberal moral order has given rise to an unscrupulous practice down the chain of economic interaction affecting how profitability is orchestrated.

The implications of this neoliberal moral economy is an acute sense of acting out of self-interest with an aversion to collective action. This has squeezed Uganda's farmers, with ever lower profit margins eaten up by a variety of unscrupulous middlemen, all looking to maximize their individual benefits. The ruling NRM party's self-enrichment (dubbed the 'National Robbers' Movement' by many Ugandans) has entrenched a system of rapacious capitalism, promoting short-termism, opportunism and low regard for others and displacing 'older values of honesty, trust, hard work and respect'²⁶.

Such popular complaints about a shift in values and the self-enrichment of a political-military elite (the 'fish rotting from the head') can also be observed in many other African countries, including those that have not explicitly embraced a neoliberal restructuring of the economy. However, with one of the highest per-capita levels of Western development intervention in the 1990s and 2000s, it is the NRM's alliance with the World Bank and IMF that has made this change so toxic and pervasive in Uganda, Wiegratz argues.

A neoliberal market logic has, regardless of its economic outcomes, promoted profound changes to norms, values, orientations and practices that promote rather than curtail fraudulent practices. This book is eminent because it expands the debate on neoliberalism beyond the standard political-economic perspective on the study of capitalism to include the role of socio-cultural and moral views. This book is instructive for philanthropy practice since what it describes as shadow sides of neoliberalism – are the same shadow sides that philanthropy has to deal with.

c. Politics of Patronage and Giving

When the Covid 19 lockdown in Uganda was announced a number of events were set in motion. People were required to stay home as part of the Covid 19 mitigation measures. Most urban dwellers in Uganda complained about the fact that they had nothing to feed their families on since they were away from work. Some of the first people to respond to the effects of the lockdown were politicians.

In many parts of the country politicians handed out as gifts, small packages of maize flour which they distributed to their constituencies. Some marked the packets with their names and others invited journalists to witness their acts of compassion. The President responded to this giving gesture by accusing the politicians of 'spreading' Covid 19 and being insensitive to the community members as they encouraged them to gather to receive their food relief instead of staying home. In fact, one Member of Parliament was arrested and badly beaten.

These incidents sparked debate in the public arena. One of the issues raised by various commentators was the fact that some of the politicians were exploiting the tragedy to gain political capital since this was the year preceding a general election and many of them saw it as an opportunity to increase their public popularity. On the other hand this same period of the Covid 19 lockdown is famed as one of the memorable moments when Ugandans exhibited the greatest forms of generosity.²⁸ Ugandans gave variously in ways not seen before. But unfortunately, political giving while it was prevalent, in some circles it acquired an aura of skepticism around it as - giving that is exploitative and selfish.

This skepticism to political giving was associated with the role of gifts and handouts in politics and elections in Uganda. Studies on politics in Uganda report that a significant amount of money is spent in politics as gifts and handouts.²⁹ One study estimates that in 2016, politicians in Uganda - through political gifts and handouts spent on average 465 million Ugandan shillings (UGX) or 136,084 US dollars (USD) for parliamentary candidates, and UGX 237.5 million (USD 69,505) for Local Council V (LCV) chairpersons.

b. Neoliberal Moral Economy and Crisis of Generosity

There are several researchers on the economic history of Uganda that offer insights to these challenges. For example, in 2001, two renowned World Bank Economist, Ritva Reinikka and Paul Collier edited a book on Uganda entitled; *Uganda's Recovery: The Role of Farms, Firms and Government*.²⁰ In this book they praised Uganda's economic recovery as a major turnaround for Africa.

The fact that Uganda had sailed through years of political tyranny to times that many considered political freedom and economic liberalization was seen as one of the best experiments in post conflict economic recovery in Africa. At the time any questioning of Uganda's policy choice of economic liberalization as a macro policy was akin to questioning the recovery of Uganda from political tyranny. Indeed, Ugandans all kept quiet and let things go by as the country implemented some of the boldest economic liberalization reform policies. The net-effect since then included positive aspects like arresting capital flight which stood at over 60% in 1986 to a situation where remittances from Ugandans abroad were a substantial part of the economy.

Recent data shows that remittance flows to Uganda declined by 26 per cent, from US\$1.4 billion in 2019 to US\$1.1 billion in 2020. Yet despite the decline, Uganda was ranked among the top ten recipient countries in sub-Saharan Africa.²¹ Trade liberalization also led to the eradication of export taxation, coffee liberalization, privatization of public enterprises, introduction of an investment code to attract foreign direct investment and of course a generous foreign aid regime. The basic argument at the time was that a private sector led economy was good for development and government should roll back its participation in business since government was a 'bad businessman'. The country was awash with examples of serious economic defects in government business enterprises; from a defunct Uganda Airlines at the time, to a collapsing Coffee Marketing Board and several other defunct government parastatal enterprises.

d. The Global Growth of Philanthrocapitalism and its Shadow Side

As discussed in earlier Sense making Papers³², a new form of philanthropy has closely followed in the heels of the 'gospel of wealth' idea and that is – philanthrocapitalism.³³ The key features of this type of philanthropy is that it is associated with donors who made their fortune at a relatively young age, mostly through the IT and finance industries. These Philanthrocapitalist have started foundations which they manage and direct into the future. These include famous personalities like Bill Gates and Mark Elliot Zuckerberg. Bill Gates is the owner of one of the biggest tech companies (Microsoft) and Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook).

The modern philanthrocapitalist are considered quite influential globally and are successful capitalists. This is what Edwards (2016) refers to as the 'Silicon Valley Consensus' – related to the use of technology and markets for solving social problems. He goes on to argue that:

This approach is quite explicit about the use of market mechanisms, technology and 'big data' to guide decisions, like rates-of-return on investment, enforced competition to weed out the weak, close supervision over the organisations you support, and standardized outputs as indicators of success – an entrepreneurial results-oriented framework that emphasises leverage, personal engagement and impatience.³⁴

We have also witnessed other initiatives by these philanthropists. One influential one is the new umbrella - Giving Pledge - championed by personalities Warren Buffet and Bill Gates to build a movement of philanthropists who commit to giving the majority of their wealth to philanthropy or charitable causes, either during their lifetimes or in their wills.³⁵ The success of these philanthrocapitalist has even led to the thinking that they are better placed to tackle and solve the world problems - than governments and NGOs.

Today we see their influence the United Nations community and even in the tackling of the global pandemic – Covid 19. They are at the forefront, giving lots of money and providing institutional leadership to the Covid 19 vaccination campaign and associated relief packages to their countries and around the world. Another important feature is the valorization of the philanthrocapitalist's business acumen as personalities that have the aptitude, skills, contacts, drive, and other features which made them successful in business, and that they can apply these same strengths to philanthropy. Some enthusiasts refer to these philanthrocapitalist as:

hyper-agents: individuals who have the abilities, persona or contacts to leverage large amounts of political or financial support for a cause, 'individuals who can do what it would otherwise take a social movement to do'.³⁶

While there is a broad consensus that philanthrocapitalism has done some good, there is also a lot to ask about its limits. Many wonder, if the global problems like global poverty and climate change, which may require institutional change, should be solved by billionaires who are often the source of these very issues.

While the philanthrocapitalist may not want to admit it or own the problems created around the world, the footprint of their capital both in creation of global inequality, polluting the world or even causing serious online suffering for young people are all gaping at us like, fresh wounds. Yet it is the same personalities that are at the forefront of solving or appearing to solve these problems. When government give front seats to renown philanthrocapitalists both at the national and global level this creates a deep sense of privilege for those who have. As Edwards (2015) says;

In Silicon Valley culture everything is solvable, so all problems can be fixed through markets, technology and the drive of the entrepreneur – without recourse to the messy realities of collective action, democracy and struggle and avoiding the unforeseen effects of any human intervention.³⁷

An interesting insight is that, the signatories of the Giving Pledge³⁸ include Joseph Craft, Vladimir Potanin, and Mark Zuckerberg. These three men are CEO of; large American coal company, another is a founder of the controversial loans-through-shares program as well as responsible for severe environmental pollution in the Arctic, and another the overseer of a major global data leak.

Countless of the Giving Pledge donors invest and run companies and conglomerates that contribute to excesses like worker exploitation, environmental degradation, and wealth inequality. It is worth considering whether instead of giving back some of their wealth through their investment in their own foundations, the ultra-wealthy should rather pay their fair share. Edwards creates a compelling conclusion when he suggests that:

Money lies at the heart of inequality in market-based societies because it is used as an instrument to concentrate wealth, centralise power and subvert democratic choices, as well as to fight against these things by funding work for social change. That is why the debate over the future of philanthropy is so important. Who owns and controls philanthropy, and how other forms of influence become attached to it, are questions that lie at the heart of any transformational agenda. Recognising and acting on this fact is vital, rather than pretending that money is somehow neutral or separated from the broader processes in which it is accumulated, expended and exchanged.³⁹

From the discussion it is clear that the concept of philanthropy continues on a long and audacious journey negotiating its attachment to capital, to politics and to neoliberalism. However, authors have also argued that presenting and positing philanthropy as the approach that will solve humanity's problems is deceptive since philanthropy has existed for over two centuries and yet the world's problems have continued to also exist. Philanthrocapitalism contributes a lot of good to society but needs to pay attention to the dimensions of its shadow-side as articulated above.

e. Gender and the Philanthropy Shadow Side

Traditional philanthropy (here understood as funding agencies of philanthropists) at its core is hierarchical in nature. There are distinct relational divisions between the funder and grantee. The funder usually has more power than the grantee. This power is mostly rooted in the fact that funders have resources to finance ideas of grantees and grantees need resources to finance their ideas. This dialectic power relationship sometimes produces power imbalances, with funders having significant influence over the direction of the projects they fund and for how long the projects will be.

This power dynamic is acutely explicit when it comes to issues of gender and philanthropy. In the first instance, patriarchy as a system of control and male privilege, is very present in philanthropy. Most of the influential philanthropy foundations in Uganda were historically associated to male owners – this includes all the big US based philanthropy foundations operational in the country.

The implication of this ownership structure is that sometimes funding is not rooted in feminist ideals or women's interest. While some of these funders may finance women's projects, the way these projects are financed is not to challenge the status quo but to continue integrating women's concerns into the status quo. The implication of this integration of women concerns into the status quo is that this may lead to more subjugation of women who are marginalized than empowerment of the marginalized.⁴⁰

When short term grants for example are made to issues like teenage pregnancy and domestic violence without questioning the origins of teenage pregnancy – this is problematic. This is because, a lot of investment may be spent on dealing with the abused while the abuser continues scot-free with their crimes against women and girls.

In several instances funding for some of these programs is also not supporting the building of feminist movements that should break the patriarchal structure that allows men to control and abuse women's sexuality – this will limit the attainment of gender equality through philanthropy. It is therefore imperative that philanthropy looks at this shadow side so that philanthropy does not end servicing oppression through piece-meal emancipation.

On the other side, philanthropy funding sometimes focuses on individual empowerment models rather than movement building. For example, there are several instances where funders have invested in projects like giving a cow to a woman in a household at community level or microloans for women or support to women's agriculture and several other such individual projects.

Some of these individual projects face challenges that are rooted in the unequal access to land for women or unequal decision making and power relations at community level that allow men to become disruptive if they see these projects benefiting and empowering women. It therefore seems that the need to build movements that disrupt patriarchy and empower women simultaneously is critical. This is because to end oppression and build empowerment models requires working at the intersections of individual life as well as recognizing that the 'personal is political'.

There is also a significant challenge that needs to be negotiated in the area of gender and generosity practices. In a research paper by Mills and Ssewakiryanga (2002) the authors argued that the types of gender awareness promoted by academics, the UN, the state and non-governmental agencies have visibly politicised (and sometimes polarised) female-male relations in Uganda. This process has been accelerated by the popular media. Words and phrases like 'feminism', 'gender equality', 'affirmative action' and 'women's emancipation' have irreversibly entered every aspect of 'Kampalan' public culture and debate.

This research showed how influential individuals were attempting, from the viewpoint of an elite university culture, to insist on an 'African' understanding of gender in relation to this circulation of ideas. The authors concluded that;

Whilst not suggesting that such negotiations over the values and appropriate behaviour of a 'proper' man or woman are new, we see the importance of attending closely to the particular sites and discourses within which debates occur at any particular moment. Both men and women were of the view that 'Western' models of change were inappropriate in a Ugandan context. Rejecting what they perceived as the conflictual aspects of feminism, nearly all saw consensus between genders as 'Ugandan' and therefore desirable.⁴¹

Giving, gifting and generosity are intertwined with the practice of relationship building between women and men and negotiations of what it means to be a woman or man in Uganda. Women in many parts of Uganda are sometimes deceptively presented as recipients of men's benevolence. Bride price as a culture has been twisted from being a gesture of cultural gifting and gratitude between families to a commercial enterprise relating to the transacting of women in marriage relationships.

There are also several other gestures of giving that are presented as transactional relationships that present women in a dangerous life as exploitative recipients of men's benevolence. These practices that posit giving in this manner create wrong and risky impressions that expand those transactional relationships between women and men and therefore smear those pro-social behaviors of gifting.

There are other shadow sides of philanthropy that could be discussed in this paper, but the above 'big five' present significant challenges for the practice of philanthropy. They do have far researching implications for the funders as well as the recipients of philanthropy. It is therefore of significant importance that awareness is built around these shadow sides as a way of ensuring that progressive and responsive approaches to philanthropy are built.





06 Recommendations

There also several important steps that can be undertaken to negotiate these shadow sides. The following ideas could be explored.

1. Pay Attention to Power Dynamics:

Giving and pro-social behaviors associated with philanthropy have emerged as very powerful practices. As have been discussed in this paper - for Africa and Uganda in this case, the colonial and post-colonial experience did restructure how philanthropy looks like as a social practice as well as an individual act. When traditional pro-social behaviors were rejected by colonialism - these were practices of power to rename what constitutes good and bad practices of gifting and generosity. When the colonial system created the two publics - it was very much a consequence of the clash of moral practices.

It will therefore be important that practitioners in the philanthropy eco-system understand and appreciate these nuances as a way of practicing better forms of philanthropy. Acknowledging that the power imbedded in philanthropic practices is a pathway out of the shadow side of philanthropy.

2. Promoting the idea of – 'from generosity to justice':

Two books by Rob Reich and Darren Walker have focused on the idea of promoting a 'justice' outcome for philanthropy. In his book, *From Generosity to Justice*, Darren Walker articulates a bold vision for philanthropy to ask and offer answers to a vital question: If there's a continuum between generosity and justice, how do we push our work closer to the latter? The book reinforces the point made by Rob Reich in his book *Just Giving* where he argues that charity and justice are conceptually distinct. Justice represents the effort to provide a set of institutional arrangements to meet the basic needs of people, to ensure that people receive that to which they are entitled, and charity represents the effort to try and provide direct services to people. Reich argues that in that respect, charity is a good thing – it provides people things that they might deserve or need. But it doesn't get to the root source of the problem.

Both authors point to the need to work towards self-liquidation of philanthropy by working to ensure that we eliminate the social conditions that render philanthropy necessary. This is a pathway that will allow for a more progressive philanthropy that is not crowded by issues of commercialization of life or the immorality of neoliberalism.

3. Need for Public Policy on Philanthropy:

The French physiocrat, Anne Robert Jacques Turgot was the founder of the ideology of progress, the idea that basing political authority, social organization, and public policy on reason would bring about constant improvement, that humans and civilization were capable of steady betterment.⁴² This idea is at the root of social policy. Philanthropy today is a ubiquitous and universal phenomenon, it is shaped and structured by social norms and public policy. The design of institutions, formal and informal, matters a great deal for what counts as philanthropy, how philanthropy is practiced, who its beneficiaries are, and how it relates to the state.

Uganda has no policy instruments designed to structure philanthropy. It is important that policy discussions of these shadow sides become part of the philanthropy policy development process as a means of ensuring that an egalitarian policy that amplifies the voice and preferences of citizens and not the wealthy is in place.

4. Promote a Growth Mindset of Philanthropy:

Philanthropy is a growing field. In Uganda it is unregulated, but it happens in all kinds of places. At community level, through traditional practices and within the civil society and private sector. Giving is happening to ameliorate the diversity of challenges that Ugandans are faced with. However, for philanthropy to thrive and grow, especially at a community level, requires a deeply transformative approach rooted in a growth mindset and not a fixed mindset. As society changes so do the pro-social approaches to giving.

This paper has shown that with that growth also comes several shadow sides. For example, to engage with the question of commercialization of public life, philanthropy will require a change of attitude at community level and a deep awareness about what constitutes philanthropy and how communities should approach the diversity of approaches to philanthropy. In a country with a plethora of deficits in public service delivery, there will be significant challenges but these will be overcome by the type of mindset that is developed within society.

5. Deal decisively with gender dimensions of philanthropy:

It is important that the number of women funds and foundations built on feminist principles are expanded. A progressive and egalitarian society should be one where power relations that produce inequality are resisted in all its forms. For Uganda, it is important that we strive to build a strong portfolio of organizations that finance the women's movement and gender equality over the long term and not in piece-meal episodes of short-term projects. This will promote significant growth in the number of gender sensitive philanthropy groups and also lead to better ways in which societal excesses of patriarchy are fought.



07 *Conclusion*

This paper has covered several epochs in Uganda's history that have sharpened the diversity of generosity gestures. The paper has put the shadow sides of philanthropy in context - exploring the historical challenges as well as the contemporary shadow sides. Recommendations on what needs to be done have been shared. What this paper has attempted to achieve is clarity in understanding that while philanthropy at its core is about doing good in society, it is also laced with elements that can create a dark side. This paper is therefore an attempt at surfacing these dark sides, not so much as a judgmental exercise but rather an awareness creation endeavor.

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This series of 'Sense-making' Occasional Working Paper were produced as part of the policy knowledge products for the Giving for Change Alliance Programme (in Uganda Philanthropy for Development). Giving for Change Alliance Programme is a Multi-Annual Program for the period 2021-2025. The papers are produced by the Uganda National NGO Forum which is the National Anchor Institution for the Giving for Change Alliance Programme. The Uganda National NGO Forum (UNNGOF) was formed in 1997 and its vision is a coherent, respected and well-informed NGO sector in Uganda, actively contributing to citizens' wellbeing and safeguarding their rights.

The Centre for Basic Research (CBR) is publishing this series of papers as part of its Philanthropy in Uganda Research Program. CBR is an academic Non-Governmental Organization with a mission to spearhead the generation and dissemination of knowledge by conducting research of social, economic and political significance to Africa in general, so as to influence policy, raise consciousness and improve the quality of life. CBR was one of the pioneer organizations in articulating the need for Ugandans and African intellectuals to define a national agenda through creation and use of locally generated knowledge through 'basic research'. Over the years CBR's research agenda has included democracy, governance and constitutionalism, gender studies, decentralization, land tenure and land use, social movements, labour studies and cultural studies, among others.



