

NEWS

LETTER

SPRING 2021



Impact investing
Beyond grants



[Luc Tayart de Borms](#)
Managing Director

EDITORIAL

Dear reader,

Impact. It may have become a buzzword, but it has always been our main mission to have a positive impact in society. To work towards this goal, the toolbox of philanthropy is varied and still extending.

In recent years, impact investing has been a growing sector. Investing with impact means not only considering the financial return, but also the impact on society of the business or organisation in which the investment is made. Impact investing can be achieved through multiple financial instruments, including loans and equity investments.

As an independent actor, the Foundation has always been a pioneer in testing innovative philanthropic solutions. Convinced of the potential of impact investing and its leverage effects, the Foundation plays its part in the Belgian impact investment sector. In this issue we present an overview of these activities both in Belgium and Africa. It is important to stress that in our view, impact investing should be used judiciously and in combination with other tools and methods, including grants, coaching, training and advocacy.

Inevitably, there will be an impact of the COVID-19 health crisis on these investment projects. Nobody is immune to the effects of the pandemic and the measures taken. It has exacerbated several challenges in our society and highlighted some trends that will accelerate in the future, such as digitalisation and artificial intelligence, bringing them to the top of the agenda of philanthropy. You will read more on our initiatives in these fields in this issue.

It is our conviction that a Foundation such as KBF must be counter-cyclical and play its part in society in difficult times. This conviction is deeply enshrined in our mission and strategy. I am pleased that we can really live up to this when the needs are high – both in our 'normal' work and response initiatives – as you can also see from the figures on the back page.

This is only possible thanks to the support from so many partners and donors, for which we remain grateful.

I wish you a nice and enjoyable summer.

The King Baudouin Foundation is an independent, pluralistic foundation working in Belgium and at European and international level. We are seeking to change society for the better, so we invest in inspiring projects and individuals. The Foundation was set up in 1976, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of King Baudouin's reign.

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IMPACT INVESTING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Impact investing is an internationally growing business, driven by investors who are not (solely) concerned about the financial return on their capital but wish to have an impact on society as well.

The King Baudouin Foundation carries out mapping exercises on Belgian impact investors in developing countries. A new survey, with figures for the 2018 and 2019 fiscal years, has recently been published. The study outlines the characteristics, trends and challenges facing this sector.

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Based on a prior selection of 25 players, 13 Belgian investors fit the criteria for this research and agreed to participate: Alterfin, Belgian Investment Company for Developing countries (BIO), BRS Microfinance Coop, Close the Gap, Chroma, Durabilis, Incofin, Inpulse, Kampani, King Baudouin Foundation, KOIS, LadyAgri Impact Investments Hub and Oikocredit Belgium.

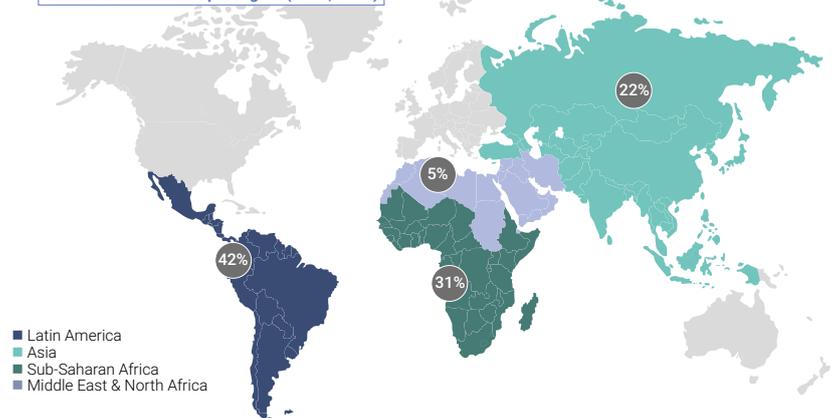
Trends to highlight

- **Local embeddedness:** travel has decreased and is substituted by engaging local actors or having staff on the ground (even before the COVID 19 pandemic).
- **New focus areas** are becoming apparent often driven by technology, a trend that's here to stay. Most notable are digital technologies and green energy.
- Direct investments to local businesses remain dominant, but we noticed a relative **increase in indirect investments** via funds and hybrid instruments.
- The consequences of the **pandemic** are mixed, with some investees in the health sector seeing greater demand, whereas many investees struggle with decreased revenues, lower demand and logistical difficulties. Consequently, investors expect a higher default rate and/or have extended credit lines where possible. Most investors expect reduced or no growth with no new deals in the immediate future.

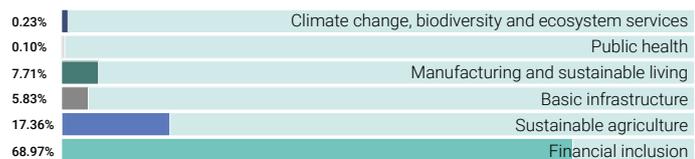
666 million euros

Stabilisation of the portfolios over the last four years, with a total of 666 million euros invested in 2019 for the 10 responding investors.

Volume of investment per region (2019, n=10)



Volume of investment per sector (2019, n=13)



The most popular sector for these investments is 'financial inclusion', which includes microcredit and microfinance. This sector, however, serves a very diverse range of end-users. Microcredit can be used by farmers, small shopkeepers and tech start-ups.

A certain richness in a small Belgian landscape

No two investors are alike (focus, ownership, ticket sizes...). And there is a lot of collaboration between investors. Connections come in many different forms: co-investing, offering technical/financial advice of fund management services, investing in one another and being shareholder or part of the investment committee. Informal personal interactions are common and strengthen the capacity of each other's actions.

The full report "Study on Belgian impact investment for development" or the summarizing ZOOM can be downloaded from www.kbs-frb.be

TESTING INNOVATIONS BEYOND ONE-WAY GRANTS



Cupping coffee at COCOCA's office (Burundi)

Some examples will give you a clearer view on what the KBF and its partners undertake in this field.

Coffee in Burundi

Some 600,000 families in Burundi try to make a living from coffee, some joining forces in cooperatives. The KBF has been supporting the COCOCA union of coffee producers' cooperatives with grants and networking for many years and has been guaranteeing the pre-financing of each annual coffee campaign since 2014 for an amount of 500,000 USD, using the Carlier Fund's capital.

The King Baudouin Foundation plays its part in the network of Belgian investors for impact. Meet some of the players with whom KBF works to join forces for impact investment, and the social businesses they have invested in.

Impact investing means not only considering the financial return, but also the impact on society of the business or organisation in which the investment is made. This is a growing sector, which involves offering bank guarantees, making loans and investing in the capital of the organisation in question.

As an independent and philanthropic actor, the King Baudouin Foundation can pioneer in Belgium in testing innovative models in order to create and/or increase a social impact. Partly following international examples that are working well, it has become convinced of the potential of impact investing and the leverage effects that it offers.

Loans, guarantees and capital investments are often supplementary with or follow-ups on grants that have covered research and very early stage costs. Still, even when a concept had passed the test of a basic implementation and the viability of the business model is probable, impact investment is often high-risk. Instruments of impact investment are therefore tools foundations and other social-profit players should take up. Such is the conviction of the KBF. An important criterion is that impact investments should stay within the logic of the local economies and investors must be alert as to how they may disrupt the local ecosystem.

The Foundation alerted Kampani, a Belgian investor ([see also p.3](#)) to an investment in a coffee processing plant that would give the peasants of the cooperative more control of and income from an extra link in the value chain. About five years ago, this led to the inauguration of the Horamama Coffee Dry Mill. Kampani, which was launched by a consortium of organisations including the KBF, provided about 2/3 of the funding in subordinated debt. The KBF also bears the cost of the insurance premium for the political risk cover for the duration of the loan.

There is a gap in financing available to the agro-food sector in developing countries, explains Wouter Vandersypen, CEO of Kampani. "Many grower cooperatives are too small for the big players and too large for micro-financing. As a result they do not have sufficient access to patient investment capital."

Five years into its functioning, COCOCA remains the only cooperative player on the Burundi market to own its own dry mill. By removing previous bottlenecks, COCOCA now represents 15% of national production, and its membership went up from 32 cooperatives to 40, representing over 27,000 farmers. Wouter Vandersypen said: “Horamama is now the largest huller (hulling is the step between drying and roasting) plant for this process in Burundi in terms of volume, so business is going well. But perhaps more important is the pride of the thousands of farmers who indirectly own the company. You can feel that pride at every visit. It is very satisfying.”

Digital banking in Uganda

Also very hands-on is an investment by the OVO Acceleration Fund, set up by Entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs (OVO-Ondernemers voor ondernemers) and managed by the KBF, in the start-up Akaboxi in rural Uganda. The idea of Akaboxi came out of a decade spent at a commercial bank in Uganda where Sarah Atuhaire was in charge of extending credit and loan facilities to clients and discovered that the majority of small holder farmers,

95% being women, were not being served. They had no savings history, no minimum balances to open accounts, no documentation for their businesses, and no collateral to secure loans. Sarah started savings with women groups and later added technology to digitalise the savings groups to ensure security for their hard-earned money.

Akaboxi also offers management support to organisations. It helps to improve the daily lives of more than 500 farming families. OVO Acceleration Fund decided to invest financially with loans and offer expert coaching to aid Sarah and her team so Akaboxi can become sustainable in the medium term. Another member of the small Belgian landscape of investors for impact, the newcomer Close the Gap ([see also p.3](#)), invested also in Akaboxi.

Medicines in DR Congo

In DR Congo, the Fonds Spécifique Médicaments was set up by BAC, an organisation officially recognised both in Belgium and Congo. Its goal is to provide a better access to good quality medicines and improve the services through mutual health insurance facilities.

Following grants by several KBF-managed philanthropic funds for the early stage phase of this high-risk business initiative, the foundation provided a loan for the purchase of the office and warehouse building for a better stocking of medicines in the city of Matadi.

SPECIALISED FUNDS

- The KBF invested in the new SDG Frontier Fund, together with eight Belgian private investors and BIO, the Belgian Investment Company for Developing Countries ([see also p.3](#)). The SDG Frontier Fund seeks to participate in five to 12 funds, which in turn will each invest in 10 to 15 local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Africa and Asia. The ambition is to combine a high development impact with a financial return.
- The Carlier Fund and the Manikam Fund, both managed by KBF, participate in the impact investors Kampani and Alterfin, and Incofin's Health Fund for India respectively ([see also p.3](#)).
- The KBF recently welcomed the approach of two new Funds it manages, that will focus on social loans: the Hestia Fund and the BOC Start-up Fund.



Akaboxi's rural clients (Uganda)



GREEN.ER FUND BROADENS ITS IMPACT: FROM GRANTS AND LOANS TO INVESTMENT

Rubber is a valuable raw material that we'd rather not see go to waste. The GREEN.er Fund, set up by Recytyre asbl and managed by the King Baudouin Foundation, supports the search for sensible, safe and sustainable solutions for the recycling of car tyres. The Fund deploys a wide range of tools, from grants to impact investments.

Eighty thousand tonnes: that is how many rubber tyres end up on the rubbish heap in Belgium every year. The management body Recytyre was set up to coordinate collection and processing of these. Chris Lorquet, CEO of Recytyre, explains why the organisation started the GREEN.er Fund. "In order to achieve the processing objectives, there is a need for innovation. We have to look for additional sales opportunities. We felt that as a managing body it was our role to stimulate innovation in

the sector." Recytyre knocked on the Foundation's door and decided to set up the GREEN.er Fund in 2017. The Fund was given a budget of EUR 4.5 million.

From the beginning, it was envisaged that the Fund could go broadly: from academic research to operational applications, and from non-repayable support over loans to investments (participation in the capital). "In three years, we have already achieved the wide variety we had hoped for,"

says Mr. Lorquet. Support went to university research to further optimise the properties of the recycled material, but also, for example, to concrete applications of 3D printing with recycled rubber.

Investment

At the start of this year, the Fund took a new step by taking a capital stake in the company RubberGreen in Frameries (near Mons). RubberGreen is an innovative specialist of composite rubber and is active in the design and manufacture



Chris Lorquet says: "With the GREEN.er Fund, we first gave RubberGreen a grant for research, and in the next phase a loan. Recently, we decided to invest in the company, so that it can start producing the developed products on a large scale. For RubberGreen, this is the culmination of a quest they have been pursuing for ten years."

Circular solution

This investment is part of a 2.6 million euros funding round to bolster operations, invest in technology and product development and accelerate growth. The GREEN.er fund invests side by side with Trei's, a UK investment fund with a focus on sustainability, and local financing investment company IMBC that supports the socio-economic development of the region.

RubberGreen's CEO Olivier Prud'homme says: "Our specialised products are now produced at scale to satisfy highly demanding industrial customers. Our approach focused on recycle and reuse for demanding applications brings a truly circular economy solution. Our products are infinitely recyclable, and the recycling process consumes little energy and causes no air or water pollution."

The proceeds from the Fund's investment will flow back to the Fund. Chris Lorquet says: "We want to pursue this way of working more and more. The Fund's initial capital was drawn from the environmental contributions that have to be paid on each tyre, but in time we want to make the switch to investments in companies that are starting to use recycled rubber in all kinds of applications. There has to be an innovative aspect: a new process, better recyclability, more recycled raw materials in the mix etcetera. At the same time, we encourage the creation of a whole network of players in the field of research and development of recycled rubber."

of high value-added solutions based on recycled rubber. "We separate rubber from other materials with a process we developed ourselves," says Olivier Prud'homme founder of RubberGreen and CEO. "We then grind the rubber residue into small granules, which we can use as a raw material."

RubberGreen processes around 3,000 tonnes of rubber waste each year and uses it to make new elastic products, including vibration-damping mats for railway foundations, protective film against weeds in green parks, sound insulation panels for buildings, rubber supports and fixing materials for solar panels and bumpers for loading docks and platforms. It wants to grow to 20,000 to 25,000 tonnes.

HOUSING FOR VULNERABLE PEOPLE

The KBF has set itself the goal of contributing to better access to quality and affordable housing for vulnerable target groups ([see also p. 22-23](#)). According to our Strategic Plan, this can also be done by investing in the development of housing in a well-considered way, using financial tools such as loans, acquisition of shares, guarantees, etc.

The financial resources for this come partly from the Foundation itself, and partly from the main funds active in the field of housing and poverty, such as the Fund Van Oldeneel tot Oldenzeel and Fund Celina Ramos.

In recent years, loans have already been granted to a number of organisations developing housing for vulnerable target groups in Brussels.

The '400 toits' campaign ('400 roofs') in Brussels is supported by a credit line of 600,000 euros to Habitat & Humanisme so that they can purchase land or premises more quickly.

Community Land Trust Brussels works with a cooperative model. Various loans have been granted to CLTB for a total of 575,000 euros in the context of its Calico project and participation in Fair Grounds Brussels.

Livingstones is another growing housing cooperative in Brussels that focuses on vulnerable residents. Loans totalling 258,000 euros were granted to this organisation.

In addition, by means of a capital investment, the Generet Fund is a co-owner of the Vivages project in Liège, an intergenerational co-housing project. The first residents recently moved in.

DOMINIQUE ALLARD PASSES ON THE TORCH

After more than 40 years, the King Baudouin Foundation is saying goodbye to its director, Dominique Allard. The entire team is grateful to him for all these years of devoted service. During more than 30 years, Dominique stood at the helm of the [Centre for Philanthropy](#) and the Heritage Fund. Under his management, the former developed into a centre of reference at the service of philanthropists both in Belgium and beyond the Belgian borders. Meanwhile, the [Heritage Fund's collection](#) has grown to include almost 30,000 works, often donated or bequeathed, which have been redistributed to some 40 museums across Belgium.

Dominique is now confidently handing over the torch to Jérémie Leroy, who has recently been appointed Director of the King Baudouin Foundation.



OPEN EUROPEAN DIALOGUE: NEW NAME, SAME DRIVE



The Open European Dialogue: to better reflect its mission and the expanded scope of its work, a new name was chosen for what was formerly called the Mercator European Dialogue. This politically neutral international platform connects European policymakers across parties and nations, providing a unique space for dialogue and promoting innovative political conversations, and supporting policymakers in better understanding challenges and perspectives from across Europe.

By facilitating regular dialogues, workshops, field trips (when possible), and informal meetings in different countries, the platform provides the space for policymakers to connect across borders and party lines to share perspectives and co-develop initiatives.

The project is supported by several think tanks and foundations, including the King Baudouin Foundation. Only parliamentarians (regional, national or at European level) can be members, but insights and take-aways are shared online.

openeuropeandialogue.org

MORE THAN 6.6 MILLION EUROS OF SUPPORT FOR HEALTH RESEARCH

In 2020, 47 Funds managed by the King Baudouin Foundation and dedicated to research in health together allocated more than 6.6 million euros to 64 health research projects in fields as varied as cancer, Alzheimer's disease, rare diseases, ophthalmology, rheumatology, cardiology and psychiatry.

The brochure with details on all the research projects can be downloaded free of charge on www.kbs-frb.be.

HISTORICAL DOSSIER ON BELGIAN COLONISATION

Colonial history is not always sufficiently taught in Belgian schools. Teachers often feel too insecure to deal with the subject. To remedy this, the BELvue museum developed the historical dossier "Belgian colonisation in Central Africa". This file was compiled in consultation with the museum's scientific committee and approaches history chronologically and thematically in order to follow political, economic, social and cultural events by date or by topic. It was also essential to take into account both the Western and African perspectives. Actions, dates, events and persons of importance to the Congolese, Rwandan and Burundian population are therefore included in the dossier. The information is also accompanied by a pedagogical dossier with didactic tips for teachers who want to deal with colonisation in the classroom.

The dossiers, in French or Dutch, can be downloaded free of charge on www.belvue.be.

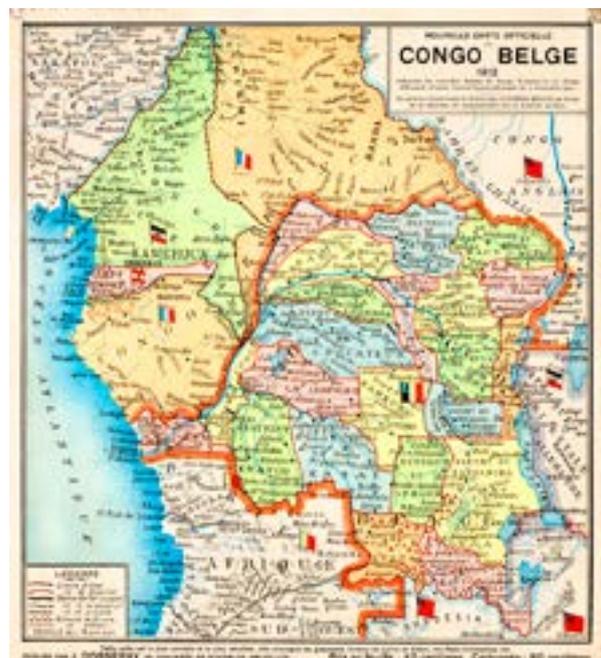


PHOTO CONTEST: NEW VOTING RECORD

KBF's yearly photo contest for grantees was welcomed enthusiastically by both contestants and supporters voting for their favourite photo. A new record of more than 16,000 votes was set. The winners of the Jury's choice, Public's choice and Social Media Favourite receive extra money for their projects. The photo by care home t'Ponton of a volunteer cheering up one of its residents was one of the Public's favourites.



TOWARDS A HIGH-PERFORMANCE ONCOLOGY RESEARCH SYSTEM

A coalition of cancer research stakeholders created a shared vision on how to optimize cancer research and to create more value for patients.

The starting point for the strategic reflection was as follows: 'How can we ensure that cancer patients have rapid and affordable access to the results of evidence-based, publicly and philanthropically funded studies, to improve their life expectancy and quality of life?'

Recommendations addressing several challenges have been set up. This is a first step towards a future in which patients, stakeholders and our whole society will benefit more from the enormous resources that are mobilised to combat cancer.

The KBF has the intention to continue to take on the role of trusted convenor and agent of change in this process in concert with key stakeholders in the Belgian and European oncology research system and, considering existing initiatives, to move forward to concrete actions.

The report of this multi-stakeholder process is available on www.kbs-frb.be.

NEW ACQUISITIONS FOR BRUSSELS DESIGN MUSEUM

Several pieces of design and furniture recently acquired by the King Baudouin Foundation thanks to the Marie-Jeanne Dauchy Fund, are included in the new presentation of the "BELGIAN DESIGN BELGE" exhibition at the Brussels Design Museum. One of them is the Sabena lounge chair S3 by Alfred Hendrickx, one of Belgium's most important post-war designers; a chair linked to Belgian history and to Expo 58 in particular. The pieces are joining other examples of Belgian design furniture that the Foundation acquired previously and that are on display at the Brussels Design Museum.

www.heritage-kbf.be
www.designmuseum.brussels



FIVE MORE ENTERPRISE PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY BPF

Five more enterprise projects in developing countries that are contributing towards the Sustainable Development Goals were selected for the Business Partnership Facility support programme run by the Belgian Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and the King Baudouin Foundation. Grants totalling more than 908,000 euros were awarded in this selection round to enterprise projects in Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya, Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire. A total of 29 enterprise projects have so far been supported through the Business Partnership Facility, for a total of 4.8 million euros.

The sixth BPF call for projects is open for applications until 7 September 2021. More info on <https://businesspartnershipfacility.be/>

STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY'S VOICE IN THE DEBATE ON AI

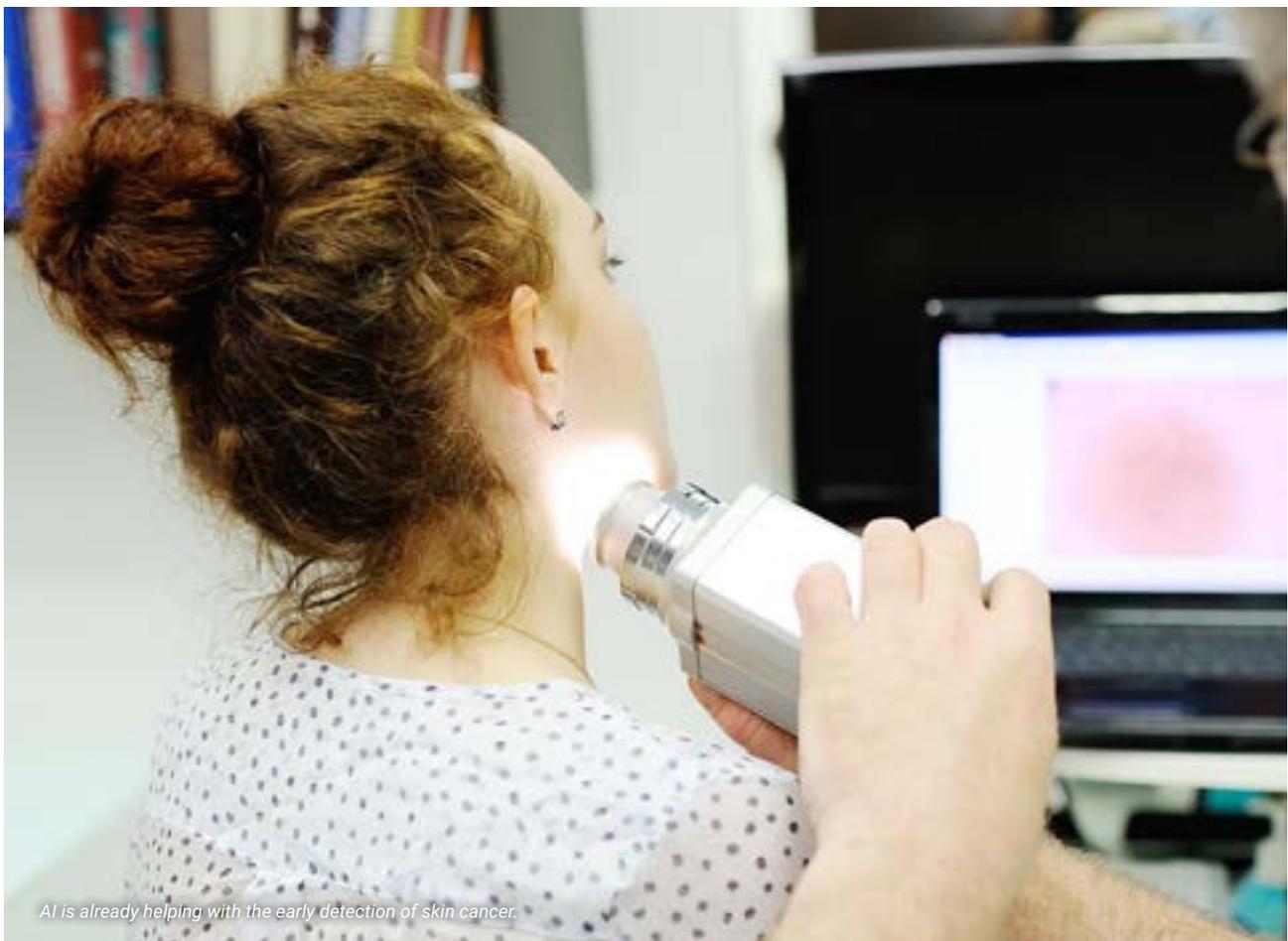
Strengthening civil society's voice in the debate over how artificial intelligence affects European citizens' lives and human rights - this is the aim of the [EU AI Fund](#), in which KBF has joined forces with fellow foundations. With its first call for projects, the Fund has recently awarded 1.55 million euros in grants to 16 organisations.

Civil society in Europe needs to have a bigger say in the development, use and regulation of artificial intelligence (AI), which is already a part of citizens' lives and is set to advance at a rapid pace in the coming years.

To further that aim, the King Baudouin Foundation has joined with a consortium of foundations to establish the European AI Fund, with the goal of strengthening and broadening civil society's voice in public and policy debates on Europe's digital future and ensuring public interest remains at its core.

Game-changing technological developments such as AI and Automated Decision-Making (ADM) can bring benefits, along with potentially huge risks, to society. They are also mired in ethical and moral questions, including issues around privacy, human rights, dignity, bias, democracy and human relationships.

AI and ADM affect a wide spectrum of areas of public life, from healthcare to education, advertising to financial services, recruitment to customer services, and from agriculture to manufacturing and supply chain logistics.



AI is already helping with the early detection of skin cancer.



In order to bring a variety of voices to the debate and to strengthen their advocacy capacity, a call for bids from the AI Fund resulted in 1.55 million euros in grants being awarded to 16 organisations, representing a broad range of expertise and experience.

Myth-busting

Among the grants was 100,000 euros for Access Now, which campaigns on the digital rights of users. Their plans for the funds include amplifying the work they have done on AI ‘myth-busting’ (set up to debunk what they say are over-simplified or misconceived ideas) and using it to influence policy, and commissioning a report on human rights impact assessments.

Access Now’s Europe policy analyst, Daniel Leufer, created their AI Myths website and represents the group on the Council of Europe’s Ad Hoc Committee on AI, which is examining a potential legal instrument. “I have used the material from the myths research non-stop in different forums.

For example, when people say things like ‘we need 100% unbiased datasets’, I have to explain that’s not possible.”

He said they were also using it to inform their analysis of the European Commission’s proposal for a new Regulation on AI, with Access Now calling 2021 a “watershed year for reorienting AI development in a human rights-friendly direction”.

Too many loopholes

The campaign has pushed strongly for some AI applications to be deemed “incompatible” with fundamental rights and for red lines to be drawn. In response to the proposed regulation, published in April,

Leufer said while he acknowledged the need for prohibitions on certain applications, the language is “too vague, contains too many loopholes, and omits several important red lines outlined by civil society”, including biometric mass surveillance or the use of systems that make inferences and predictions about characteristics, behaviours and thoughts.

For example, applications that try to determine sexual orientation or political persuasion from the structure of someone’s face is “really, really a problem”, he said.

“We can pursue applications that are beneficial and we can choose not to pursue applications that are not equitable. We’re countering this argument that all technological progress is equal to or compatible with social progress,” said Leufer.

Patients’ rights

He said the AI Fund had created a “great dynamic” between the grantees, who are collaborating to further their aims.

One such fellow recipient is the European Patients’ Forum (EPF), an umbrella group of 77 patient organisations that represents the voice of patients towards the EU institutions.

Their 90,000 euros grant is the “perfect opportunity” to build knowledge in an increasingly vital and complex area, and tailor it to what’s relevant for patients, said EPF policy advisor Michele Calabrò.

In 2020, EPF conducted an initial survey on AI to understand the views and needs of patients. They will now use some of the funds to issue the survey in more European languages. They will also build an online research platform collating information critical for healthcare, including research relevant to the patient perspective, details of policy developments, and video learning material. The money will also help fund the hosting of new

educational webinars in collaboration with AI experts, and patient-focused research to establish “where we stand” on AI and “where the opportunities and potential challenges or obstacles” lie, said Calabrò.

For example, AI is already helping with the early detection of diseases like skin cancer and can have a positive impact on prevention, self-care, or making sense of huge datasets. But attention needs to be paid to the particular ethical issues – such as data privacy or interfering with human autonomy – and to the quality of data, which can either “limit or enhance the potential of artificial intelligence”, he said.

“The patient community has to start having their say on the topic – it’s very high on the agenda, and it’s being shaped from a legislative and policy point, so we need to engage on it right now, to ensure a robust patient perspective,” he said.

The work will also feed into their virtual congress in October on the ‘digital transformation of healthcare’.

“We’re countering the argument that all technological progress is equal to or compatible with social progress..”

Daniel Leufer



More info on www.europeanaifund.org

LOOKING FOR ERRORS IN BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

Early this year Prof. Pierre Vanderhaeghen was awarded the [Generet Prize for Rare Diseases](#) for his research into the development of the human brain. This prestigious Prize, awarded by the Generet Fund which is managed by the Foundation, is linked to one million euros in funding.



The more we know about the way in which our brains develop, the better we understand when and why things sometimes go wrong, and how certain rare diseases occur. By awarding the Generet Prize, the international jury of experts has acknowledged the importance of the fundamental research carried out by neuroscientist Prof. Pierre Vanderhaeghen in this search.

Prof. Vanderhaeghen is head of the Laboratory for Stem Cell and Developmental Neurobiology (VIB-KU Leuven Center for Brain

and Disease Research) and also works at ULB, where he was previously a full-time professor for many years.

You are fascinated by the question of how our brains develop?

“Yes, curiosity is really what drives me. That is why I enjoy going to work every day: I want to know what happens, why it sometimes goes wrong and how we can solve it.”

“Our human brains are more complex than those of other animals. One major difference is that they

develop very slowly; it takes about twenty years for them to become fully functional. In a mouse that takes three weeks, and in monkeys it is a few months. This long period of development gives our brains more opportunities to learn. Of course you can still learn things when you are over 20 years old, but it is much easier when we are younger.”

What makes research in this area so difficult?

“We can only learn relatively little by working with cells in petri dishes in the laboratory. It is precisely the

complex interplay between the types of cells in the brain that determines how development takes place, and you need to be able to study that 'in vivo' in a living organism. This is much too invasive for patients, taking biopsies or putting in genetic material... you cannot do it."

"In our team we have found a solution. One important first step was that we discovered how to differentiate human stem cells into nerve cells. We then transplanted those human nerve cells into the brains of mice. These were already two breakthroughs, but the key insight is that we saw those human brain cells maintained their own unique pace of development; the timing mechanism is driven by the cell itself, not by the hormones from the mother or another external effect. They also become functionally integrated within the mouse brains. So they function, without becoming mouse cells."

What does this mean for the ongoing research?

"It means that we can carry out research 'in vivo' into how our brain cells develop, not only using scans but also at the cellular and molecular level."

Is this where the link with rare diseases comes in?

"That's right: many rare diseases are caused by genetic mutations that cause errors in brain development. That is expressed as a (serious) learning disability, epilepsy, symptoms of autism and the like. We suspect that in some of these disorders the error is in the pace of development: it is either too slow or too fast."

"We have reached the point now where we can use our animal model for research into rare diseases of this kind."



How should we picture this?

"We have already started our research into RETT syndrome and MECP2 duplication, a rare disease discovered by Prof. Hilde van Esch here at KU Leuven. In some children the MECP2 gene is duplicated; in RETT syndrome the gene is not there. Both situations result in severe disabilities."

"Let's take a patient with a MECP2 duplication: you take a cell from their body - usually a skin cell, which is easy to access. Every cell contains all the genetic information, so that skin cell also has a doubling of the MECP2 gene. First you make a stem cell from that cell, and you differentiate it into a nerve cell. It still has the MECP2 duplication. You implant that into the mouse and monitor how it develops. This allows you to go back in time and play the film of the disease once again. For example, you can try out a specific medicine to see whether it has an effect."

How long could it take before this leads to new treatments?

"That is the impossible question! Scientific progress takes many years. We are very happy to have the resources provided by the Generet Fund, because they give us the time and freedom to try things out. We now estimate that in the next two to four years we will be discovering a lot about what happens in nerve

cells, but from there to treatments? The timing is the biggest question mark of all."

"Still, that doesn't stop me. The first step is important in any case: you can only fix what you understand. The brain and its development are very mysterious, and I want to help to solve that mystery."

The Generet Fund aims to create a strong and internationally recognised research hub in relation to rare diseases in Belgium. It awards a Prize every year with a value of one million euros to a top researcher conducting research into rare diseases in Belgium.

The first Generet Prize was awarded in late 2018 to [Prof. Mikka Vakkula](#) (Institut de Duve – UCLouvain) for his research into the genetic cause of vascular anomalies. In early 2020 the second winner, neurologist [Dr. Steven Laureys](#) (Coma Science Group - University and UZ Liège), was awarded the Prize for his research into varieties of altered states of consciousness.

Videos about the Generet Fund and the winners can be seen on the [KBF's YouTube channel](#).



A SHOT IN THE ARM FOR THE CULTURAL SECTORS

The stages are empty, the theatres closed, and some festivals have already decided to skip another year. Many in the cultural sector don't know which way to turn. But the sector and the public are showing solidarity. Among other things, two solidarity funds, managed by the KBF, were set up.



In the spring of 2020, people and organisations from the music sector took initiatives to channel the solidarity that many wanted to show in a practical and concrete way. They approached the King Baudouin Foundation to help them with the management of these funds.

This is how the solidarity funds LIVE2020 Fund and Fund Belgian Music came into being. The former focuses primarily on live music, the latter on creation, production and promotion. "The cultural sector is in shock. Such a dynamic sector with an international reputation, artistically, organisationally and logistically, must be able to continue," says Jan Timmermans (Cultuurloket), chairman of the LIVE2020 Fund's executive committee. The Fund Belgian Music relies on the resources of the founding

organisations and donations from many sympathisers. For Fund LIVE2020, donations are also possible and, in addition, all sorts of actions have been set up, with special merchandising, an auction of memorabilia, a range of streaming sessions and so on.

Both funds have already supported a total of over 300 solo artists, professionals, groups and projects from a range of music sub-sectors, from classical and jazz to electro, alternative or ethnic.

"The impressive number of applications shows how troubled the state of our sector is. In order to meet the needs of a sector that otherwise risks going under, all support will be necessary," says Christian Martin (PlayRight), one of the founders of Fund Belgian Music.

FUNDS MAKING ADDITIONAL EFFORTS

The founders and/or management committees of several Funds managed by the King Baudouin Foundation took special, additional initiatives to support people working in the cultural sector. Together they have supported dozens of individual artists, technicians and organisations.

Thanks are due to the Norma Joossens Fund (for actors), the Strandschelp (beach shell) Fund (for young artists from West-Flanders), the Claire and Michel Lemay Fund (cultural and heritage organisations in the Tournai-Picardy region), the Henri and Ghislaine Fund (artists and technicians), the Schoonbroodt Fund (young organists) and to various organisations that took special initiatives through philanthropic tools such as 'Friends of' Funds or project accounts.

600 WORKS PRINTED BY CHRISTOPHE PLANTIN

Over 600 works printed in the 16th century by the famous Renaissance typographer Christophe Plantin were donated to KBF by Philippe de Dorlodot. This exceptional collection had recently been entrusted to the Moretus Plantin University Library in Namur, known for its expertise in the field.

Philippe de Dorlodot spent many years assembling the collection that today bears his name and which he has donated to the King Baudouin Foundation in memory of his father, Baron Charles de Dorlodot, who lectured in Roman law and encyclopaedia at Namur University's Faculty of Law. It was the donor's wish the collection should be entrusted for conservation, research and promotion to the Moretus Plantin University Library (BUMP).



Most of the more than 600 pieces share a common characteristic: all were printed by Christophe Plantin (1520-1589), the founder and director of what was, in its time, the greatest printing house in the world. With a few exceptions, all of the volumes came off the printing presses of the *Officina Plantiniana* during Plantin's lifetime.

One of the eye-catchers is a rare 1557 edition of *Amours* by Pierre de Ronsard, one of the poets of the *Pléiade*. A 1564 edition by the poet Lucan is worthy of mention for its binding, decorated with a golden compass and the motto *Labore et Constantia* – only ten other bookbindings bearing this hallmark of the Plantin printing house have survived up to the present time. Numerous works contain magnificent illustrations – an exquisite example

is the *Rariorum aliquot Stirpium* (1583) by the doctor and botanist Charles de l'Ecluse, with its 361 wood engravings of mountain flora, the only coloured example known to date. Another particularly precious piece is a signed, unpublished letter from Christophe Plantin to his son-in-law Jan Moretus, in which he gives his approval to the printing house being inherited by the next generation.

The entire collection will be catalogued in detail. Several works will be on show as part of an exhibition: *Un homme de caractère(s)* (A Man of Character(s)), organised by the BUMP for autumn 2021, will mark the 500th anniversary of the famous printer's birth.

www.heritage-kbf.be

WELCOME TO INSTITUTO TERRA

The name of Sebastião Salgado certainly rings a bell with all fans of photography. The Brazilian photographer has achieved worldwide fame with his documentary photography projects, for which he has travelled the world. He is known for his deep love and respect for nature while also sensitive to the socio-economic conditions that affect human beings; Salgado has published several photo books on these social problems. His latest exhibition "Amazonia" grasps the incredible natural diversity of the Brazilian Amazon rainforest and the ways of life of its peoples. It is now running in Paris (Cité de la Musique) and will then travel to Rome and London, among other places.

When he and his wife Lélia Wanick Salgado faced the environmental degradation at the former cattle farm acquired from their family, they decided to restore nature on this land. This was the starting point of their non-profit organisation Instituto Terra that focuses on environmental restoration and sustainable rural development in the Vale do Rio Doce (state of Minas Gerais in Brazil).

The first planting took place in November 1999. Up till now, more than 2,000 hectares have been replanted, and the Instituto has acquired essential knowledge in doing so as reforestation takes a lot more than just planting trees. To share this knowledge and inspire other organisations to similar projects of reforestation is an even more important part of the Instituto Terra's work.

It is an honour for us that Lélia and Sebastião Salgado came to KBF to facilitate the international fundraising and to guarantee the future of their initiative. We are putting the network and infrastructure of KBF, KBFUS, KBF Canada and Transnational Giving Europe (including the online donation platform) and the partnership with Give2Asia at the disposal of the Instituto Terra Fund's international donors.

www.institutoterra.org



KEEPING GRASSROOTS SPORTS ORGANISATIONS AFLOAT

As a response to the health crisis, the Nike COVID-19 Community Youth Sport Fund supported 41 grassroots sports organisations in Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Russia, South Africa, Turkey and the United Kingdom, via the KBF. Together, these organisations reach over 113,000 beneficiaries in their communities. The objective was to provide direct financial support to help them adapt to the situation. The grants amounted to 1.2 million US dollars between April and August 2020.

All the organisations had an opportunity to share their voice in an online survey, interviews and online workshops. The majority of them, all working with low income and vulnerable groups, thought it was critical that they remained open in some capacity, even if they were not operating at 100%. This implied covering staff salaries, rent and other costs for office and sports facilities. Many relied on the money from the Fund to avoid job losses. The support also helped community partners to be agile in switching to alternative activities by which they could reach their beneficiaries.

The full report can be read on www.kbs-frb.be.

UNLOCK YOUR ENERGY: MASSIVE RESPONSE FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

COVID-19 and all the measures taken to combat the virus have put our lives on hold, and that weighs heavily on young people too. The King Baudouin Foundation has launched a call for compelling projects that give young people a boost and is making 500,000 euros available for this purpose. Working together on a fun project - be it sporting, cultural, social or artistic - helps enormously to restore the spirit, the desire to commit to each other and to those in difficulty. With the project call "Unlock your energy", the Foundation appealed to young people (15-25 years old) and to all kinds of youth organisations working with and for young people: youth movement, socio-cultural organisation, sports club, school, youth centre, etc. And the call was heard – more than 400 applications were received. An independent jury took on the difficult task of selecting a few dozen of them. At the beginning of June, we will announce which projects will receive support of between 5,000 and 20,000 euros.

Grantees will be announced on our website kbs-frb.be.

THEY HAVE SAID



“AIDS sufferers are subjected to stigmatisation. They are rejected by their families, lose their jobs and are excluded from healthcare, or see their children excluded from school. Orphans of sick parents are often considered as child witches and find themselves on the streets. This fear of abandonment leads those who are ill to stay quiet for as long as possible: they only go to hospital when it’s too late.”

Dr Gisèle Mucinya, Medical Director of the MSF's project to fight HIV/AIDS in Kinshasa. For this project, MSF benefits from the joint support from 15 Funds managed by KBF.

Read the full story on www.kbfafrica.org.

“I was the first person to be sent to work there by DEME at the very start of the project. I had to be sure about the way things were being set up with our Taiwanese partner; contacting suppliers, ensuring the follow-up of offers, developing the network of associates. I think the most difficult thing for me was getting to know the off-shore wind sector and coming face to face with a triple change in my life – the business sector, the country and the language.”

With a grant from the Prince Albert Fund, Justine Thiry joined the Taiwanese local partner of DEME, the Antwerp company which specialises in (amongst others) construction of windfarms at sea.

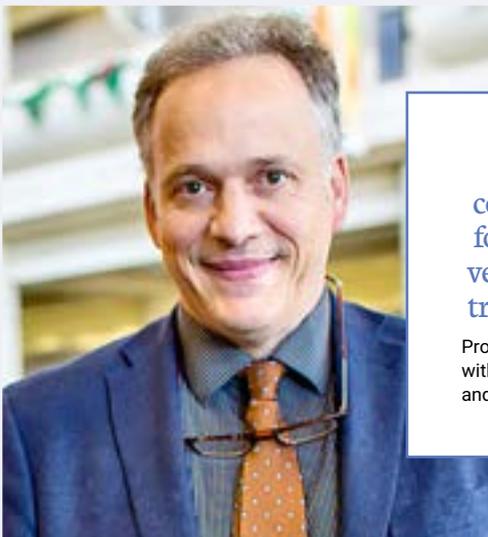
Read the full story on www.kbs-frb.be.

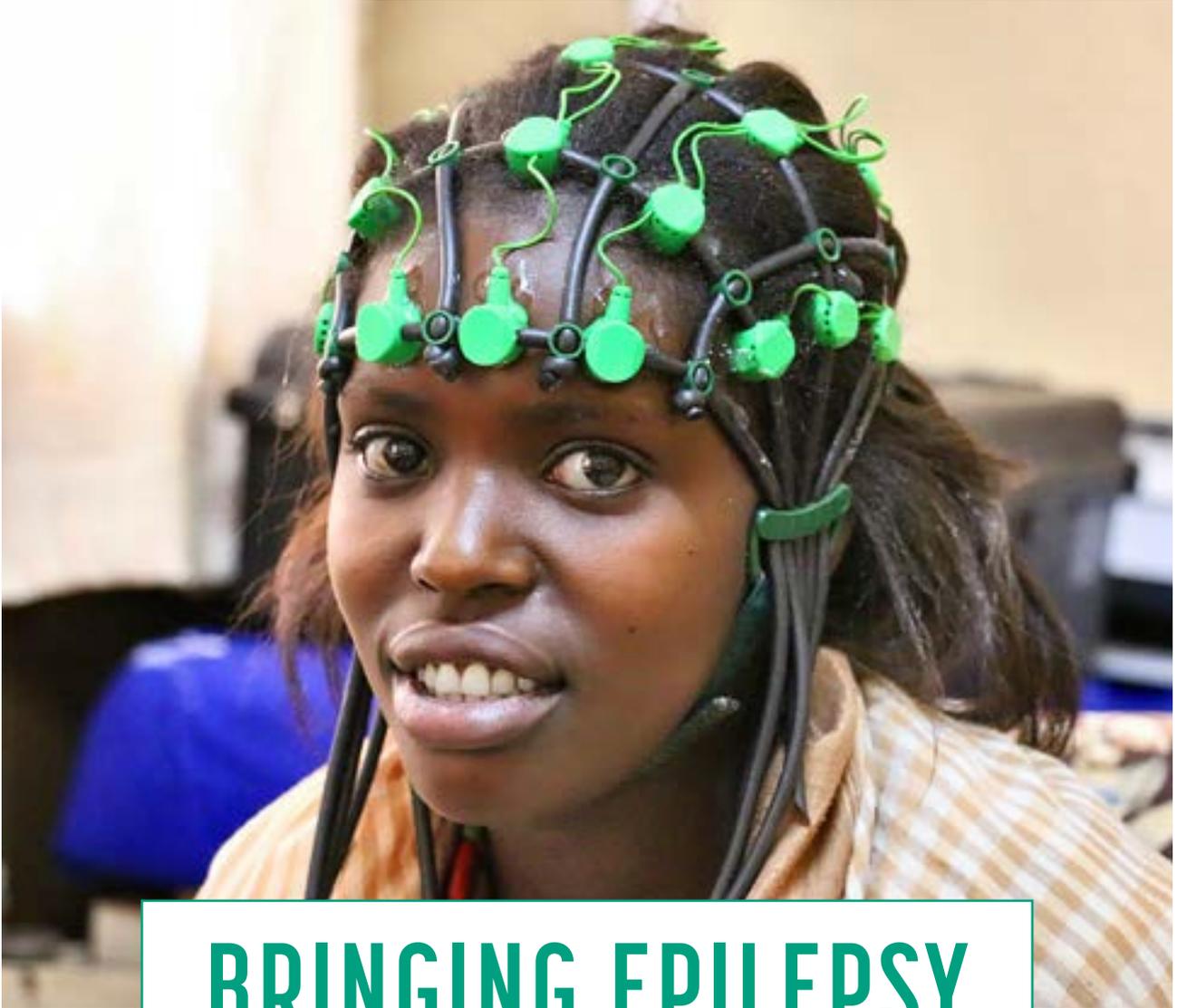


“I am convinced that gene therapy can really make a difference and I am cautiously optimistic when it comes to cures, but we simply have not been doing this for long enough to know what the effects will be in the very long term. It’s encouraging that animals (that were treated) remain free of disease until they die of old age.”

Prof. Thierry VandenDriessche (VUB) conducts research into gene therapy, with financial support from the Walter Pyleman Fund, the Cremers-Opdebeeck Fund and the Richard Depasse Fund, which are managed by KBF.

Read the full story on www.kbs-frb.be.





BRINGING EPILEPSY OUT OF THE SHADOWS IN RWANDA

Rwanda has a higher than average incidence of epilepsy. In this country, however, the battle against the disease faces two obstacles: a lack of knowledge about the nature of the condition and a severe shortage of neurologists who can make an appropriate diagnosis and provide treatment.

The [UCB Societal Responsibility Fund](#) is helping to overcome these two obstacles.

The initial spark behind this idea came from a former employee at pharmaceutical company UCB. While staying in Lubumbashi, where she was visiting family members, she was surprised to see how a man having an epileptic seizure was simply left alone. UCB specialises in immunology and neurological conditions, including epilepsy. She wanted to know whether her

company could support projects, based on scientific evidence, to help patients with epilepsy in poor countries.

This became the mission of the UCB Corporate Societal Responsibility department. In 2013, after a few years of activity, the department contacted the King Baudouin Foundation for assistance with its administration, resulting in the

creation of the UCB Societal Responsibility Fund. For 12 years UCB supported the neuropsychiatric centres run by the Brothers of Charity in Congo and across the border in Rwanda with their epilepsy consultations.

A curse or poisoning

One of the first priorities in Rwanda was to provide training for

neurologists. When the Societal Responsibility Fund was created, the country had one neurologist, Dr. Fidèle Sebera, in a country with 11 million inhabitants.

“My diary was crazy”, says Dr. Sebera on the telephone from Kigali. “Epilepsy has a relatively high incidence in Rwanda, but it is traditionally not viewed as a disease. For many Rwandans, epileptic seizures are due to a curse or attempted poisoning. Sometimes they think it is infectious. Patients with epilepsy are stigmatised, marginalised and shunned.” They only go to the doctor once their condition is very serious. Otherwise they seek help from traditional healers, who sometimes do more harm than good, at least in physical terms.

Health services and district hospitals did not have expertise in diagnosis and treatment or access to adequate medication. As the only neurologist in the country, Dr. Sebera was unable to do the impossible. “He has since been joined by two colleagues, one of whom was trained in Dakar, with help from the Fund. Today there are a further three Rwandan doctors being trained at Cheik anta Diop Universiteit in Dakar (Senegal)”, says Dr. Dirk Teuwen, head of Medical Sustainability at UCB.

Academic training

For Rwanda, having three neurologists represents progress. “Nevertheless, it is all too small scale”, says Dirk Teuwen. He therefore arranged a meeting between the UCB Societal Responsibility Fund and the Rwandan Government to work out a new project that would give a serious boost to the number of neurologists in Rwanda.

Dirk Teuwen developed an academic training course in Neurology for the University of Rwanda; he worked on the content with Professor Paul

Boon, Head of Neurology at UZ Gent, and his colleagues. By 2025 to 2028 there should be a further sixteen neurologists working throughout the country. The Fund is also releasing a further 800,000 to 900,000 euros to help King Faisal Hospital in Kigali, where the country’s only public MRI scanner is located, to install meeting rooms, teaching rooms, a stroke unit and an EEG unit.

Raising awareness in the villages

In recent years, work has also been done on providing epilepsy training for doctors in district hospitals and nursing staff in health centres. This has been done together with the Rwandan League against Epilepsy, which is chaired by Dr. Sebera, and with support from the Fund. Furthermore, action is taken to raise awareness in villages, including with ‘tradipraticiens’ (traditional health workers). “In local communities, the key is to have health workers who we can teach about epilepsy so that they can provide information, identify cases and refer them to a health centre or hospital”, says Dirk Teuwen.

Finally, the Fund also supports scientific research in Rwanda, into epilepsy and other neurological



disorders such as stroke and Parkinson’s disease. Dr Sebera himself is currently finishing his doctorate on depression in patients with epilepsy.

The UCB Societal Responsibility Fund, managed by KBF, works to improve access to high-quality neurological care for people with epilepsy in low and middle income countries in Africa.

Since its creation in 2013 the Fund has supported epilepsy-related projects involving four organisations in Rwanda, Uganda, DR Congo and Madagascar, with funding totalling 2.8 million euros.



A model for more joint action: THE COVID-19 SOLIDARITY RESPONSE FUND BY WHO



It was an unprecedented collaboration to generate funds for the pandemic response, which raised 246 million US dollars. The positive experience with the COVID-19 Solidarity Fund leads the World Health Organisation to build on this model in order to maximize the efficiency of its new WHO Foundation.

As the world was quickly getting to know the devastating effects of the new virus, now more than a year ago, the World Health Organization (WHO) ventured into new grounds: it urgently wanted to create a way for individuals, companies and philanthropists around the world to contribute to its response efforts. "Never before in WHO's history", explains Gaudenz Silberschmidt, Director of Health and Multilateral Partnerships at the WHO, "was it made possible that these groups in the general public could donate and contribute directly to WHO's work." The idea had been expressed earlier by

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus to establish a WHO Foundation but elaborating a legal structure and staffing takes time and February 2020 came too quickly.

[Transnational Giving Europe](#)

To act swiftly, the WHO partnered with the UN Foundation and asked the Swiss Philanthropy Foundation (SPF) to create the COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund. Since SPF is one of the partners in the network of the Transnational Giving Europe, its involvement opened the door to TGE and to donors all over Europe wishing to contribute.

“This was all agreed upon and set up at incredible speed”, recalls Gaudenz Silberschmidt. “From our first meeting, it only took three weeks to have the tools up and running. Two months later, the mark of 200 million dollars in donations was already hit. I’m convinced that being first out of the gate was an important factor: people wanted to react and help, they just needed a trustworthy way to donate.”

He was struck that there were even donations from Lombardia in Northern Italy, the region that was one of the epicentres of the pandemic at the time. “People explicitly mentioned with their donations that ‘we are all in this together, this is a global problem’. This was the general feeling. Part of the success is that nobody plays political or positioning games with the Solidarity Response Fund. Everybody involved is very much aware of being part of the largest ad hoc fundraising mechanism in UN history for non-state donors.”

250 million items of protective equipment

By the end of 2020, 246 million dollars had been donated to the Solidarity Response Fund, “which is more than 10% of the estimated effort needed, so that’s an important part, funded by more than 664.000 individual donors” – 32 million dollars of this was donated through the TGE network.

The WHO transferred almost 65 million dollars to partners like Unicef, the World Food Programme, the African Center for Disease Control and also to CEPI, the global initiative to accelerate vaccine development. That leaves 169 million spent by WHO directly.

Gaudenz Silberschmidt sums up some of the results: “Thanks to the support, the WHO shipped more than 250 million items of personal protective equipment; provided technical support to hundreds of laboratories; supplied more than 250 million COVID-19 tests; coordinated the deployment of more than 180 teams and missions; and supported over 12,000 intensive care beds to prevent health systems from being overwhelmed. We invested in supply chains and innovation, e.g. for oxygen provision. We conducted sero-epidemiological studies and gave guidance and tools to monitor the rate of infections in a comparable way in various countries.”

WHO Foundation

Soon after the launch, with TGE already involved, more partners joined to strengthen the efforts. For the convenience of Canadian donors, [KBF Canada](#) became the Fund’s official partner. Supporters in the United States are funding the effort with donations



through KBFUS and several foundations and organisations followed its lead, amongst others in Japan and China. “The Solidarity Response Fund was a successful proof of concept: it worked. The model of fiduciary partners proved very effective and cost-efficient”, says Gaudenz Silberschmidt, “and we are sticking to it for the WHO Foundation. So indeed, the TGE network remains a very important partner to facilitate donations from European donors.”

The WHO Foundation relaunched the Solidarity Fund in March and April, with a new campaign for vaccination giving through the Covax initiative. As they are receiving a vaccine for free, many people want to express their gratitude by sharing – with a donation, they help the distribution of vaccines in lower-income nations.

WHO’s first experience with mobilising the general public has been “an absolutely impressive journey”, concludes Gaudenz Silberschmidt, “and we did this together.”





GETTING THINGS MOVING FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE

The number of people who are homeless is rising in almost all European countries. The King Baudouin Foundation has coordinated a process of counting the people affected in order to gain a better perspective of the numbers and typical profiles, with the aim of bringing about improvements in policy. The Foundation has also supported some practical initiatives to help people to find housing, and recently the IKEA Fund has come alongside us to help.

The COVID-19 crisis, protective measures and lockdowns in several sectors are having a serious impact on people in socioeconomically vulnerable situations and particularly on homeless people. These are people who do not have a real home but are living in temporary accommodation, sleeping on a friend's sofa, relying on unconventional solutions (living in a garage, an old caravan or a car) or even sleeping on the streets. Their situation has been made even worse because both night shelters and informal networks have had to introduce additional precautionary measures.

The biennial counts in the Brussels Capital Region show, as do European figures, that the phenomenon is on the increase. Since we do not yet have comparable figures for Belgium, the KBF took the initiative to count the homeless and vulnerably housed people in Belgium.

Young adults and women

The large number of young adults (aged 18 to 25 years) is striking. Those affected include more and more young people and more women and girls, a trend which is also being seen in other European countries.

The homeless people we see in the public space are only the tip of the iceberg. There is a lot of 'hidden' homelessness: people who are forced to stay temporarily with friends or family members. Equally worrying is the large number of homeless or vulnerably housed children, many of whom are in situations of invisible homelessness or housed in shelters, either with or without (one of) their parents.

Many studies have shown that once people have their own home, they are better at solving their other problems and finding a way towards social inclusion. As a Foundation and thanks to several philanthropic

Funds we manage, we have already been supporting organisations that look for solutions to provide more suitable housing for vulnerable people.

The IKEA Fund has been a committed partner in this work. After providing material support to shelters during the initial, emergency phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, IKEA decided to entrust the Foundation, through the IKEA Fund it manages, with organising a call for projects to provide financial support to organisations looking for sustainable solutions. The aim is to speed up the transition from 'collective' housing to 'individual homes'. The focus was on projects that help single parent families (often single mothers with children) and young adults.

A place called home

"We are convinced that everyone deserves a place called home", says Caroline Gastaud, Sustainability and CSR manager of IKEA Belgium. "It is a human right to have a decent and affordable home which is also safe and healthy. The pandemic has drawn our attention even more to systemic inequality: people with fewer resources are impacted more."

"Better homes create better lives. A home is a starting point from which to build your life. That is why we want to help provide better access to real homes in the communities where we work, where we have our stores or where our products are made. With a better transition from a shelter or another institution to a new home, these organisations can prevent young adults or single parent families ending up homeless."

"Similar actions are taking place in several countries. In Belgium, we are building on our cooperation with the

KBF. We appreciate the KBF's expertise in the area of social action and the fact that it covers the whole of Belgium."

The call for projects entitled 'A place called home' has resulted in support being provided to 36 organisations throughout Belgium, which are helping homeless and vulnerably housed people to find a way to a home of their own (more) quickly. These organisations have received support totalling about 500,000 euros.

Teenage mothers

One of the grantees is Emmaüs, an organisation which provides assistance to children and families in vulnerable situations, and requested the financial support specifically for the furnishing of some studios for pregnant young girls or teenage mothers.

"With the corona measures we received a lot of requests to help (future) teenage parents. Staying with family or friends was often no longer an option. Or their financial situation became so precarious that rent became unaffordable. Also, relational tensions were sometimes so high that relationships broke down or living together was no longer possible", says Els Lieckens, educational director.

"It is distressing not to be able to offer a young girl who is heavily pregnant and whose world has been turned upside down a place where she can quietly prepare for the arrival of the baby and take her first steps as a parent, sometimes together with her partner. Alternatives such as homeless shelters or other facilities for teenagers are not adapted to a baby, which increases the chance that the child will need to be placed with another care facility after birth."

There is no such thing as a typical homeless person.

The results of the count break the stereotype of the single man with addictions.

20%
to
25%

of the people identified are young adults (aged 15-25 years). Their reason for leaving home was often a conflict with their parents or family. The various counts carried out in Belgium showed that women make up about

26%
to
32%

of homeless and vulnerably housed people in the towns, cities and region where they were conducted. Homeless women are more likely to be housed in shelters or with friends or family members, while men are more likely to live in the public space, emergency shelters or unconventional spaces (garages, tents etc.).

At the initiative of the King Baudouin Foundation and working alongside researchers from two universities and some 120 organisations and their front line volunteers, counts were carried out in the cities of Liege, Ghent and Arlon and the whole province of Limburg. The results were extended to include similar counts in the cities of Brussels and Leuven.

All the results are available in French at www.sansabrismeabsencechezsoi.be and in Dutch at www.dakenthuisloosheid.be.

DIGITISATION OF THE NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR: IMPORTANT BUT HUGE TASK

The increasing digitalisation of society has consequences for all sectors, including the not-for-profit sector. To encourage them in their digitisation process, the King Baudouin Foundation offers support in various ways: through needs assessment, project support for federations, and knowledge sharing.

Digital innovations can make operations more efficient and increase the impact of associations' activities, with new kinds of interactions with their target audience and new offerings and services. However, a study conducted at the request of the King

Baudouin Foundation showed that only 20% of not-for-profits are truly 'digitally mature'. Seven out of 10 are aware that they are not on track, to a greater or lesser extent. While most associations do use the common office applications, less than half have introduced e-invoicing, for example. More than

50% struggle with a lack of resources and expertise – they feel lost facing the range of tools on offer.

In the field, the demand for help is therefore extremely high. It is a huge task, which the KBF certainly cannot tackle alone.



The Foundation has chosen to support federations and umbrella organisations in the not-for-profit sector, which in turn can provide efficiency improvements and guidance to their members.

Coaching

With two Go.Digit!-calls for projects, a total of 20 projects were selected. In addition to financial support, this includes, for the grantees, the assistance of coaches and digital strategies experts.

Coaching aims at clarifying the objectives and accompanying the organisation in the approach of experts and digital tools best suited to their needs. From the guidance and knowledge sharing, the Foundation will also be able to draw lessons for further steps. The fact that a total of 300 applications were received for the Go.Digit!-calls is another strong signal of the needs. The analysis of these applications provided extra insights into the needs, challenges and opportunities for not-for-profit organisations.

A BETTER OVERVIEW OF THE MISSIONS OF RED CROSS VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers of local Red Cross branches are on the road every day. Some visit elderly fellow citizens who live in a residential care centre or in their own home. Others accompany children who are visiting a parent in prison. It takes a lot from the coordinators at the local level to match all the requests, and to keep track of who has taken on which mission and when.

"We are creating an online platform to plan and track everything," Aurélie Moreau, strategy officer for Red Cross Belgium, says. "Not only we and our volunteers will have access, but also partners such as residential care centres or the psychologists who receive the children at the gate of the prison and accompany them when they visit. You can then submit requests, indicate that a visit went well, pass on questions if the elderly need additional help or follow up on how the child experienced the visit and so on."

Go!Digit also includes consultancy. "We were immediately on the same wavelength: the coach confirmed our fears that our relatively old volunteers will struggle a bit to get used to it. We are going to involve them in the development and tests so that it really becomes a tool of and for them."

SCOUTS SHOULD BE SPECIALISTS IN GAMES, NOT IN ADMINISTRATION

The scouting federation FOS Open Scouting coordinates over 50 scouting groups and receives support from Go.Digit! to link its member management system to the groups' own management systems. "The groups register all their members in our central system, among other things, because we take care of the insurance," says Jan Verbeure, federal manager. "A survey revealed that they would like to make the link with their own administration - over time, each autonomous group has chosen tools for this, albeit often simple office applications. With a link to the central system where all members are registered anyway, the administration of registrations and payments for a summer camp, for example, would become much easier for them. Thus, the young volunteers in the local groups would have to spend less time on paperwork."

At the request of FOS Open Scouting, the technical partner who made the member management system will make those links technically possible with an API. The solution can then also benefit other associations. "The provider will bear the costs of the development, because this will be an addition that can also be offered to other client organisations. The financial support from Go.digit! will mainly serve to cover our users' costs."

The publication 'Why digitise your association and where to start?' (available in French and Dutch) can be downloaded free of charge on www.kbs-frb.be. It is KBF's intention to add more publications and/or (diagnostic) tools, to disseminate lessons learned from and with grantees as much as possible.



KEEPING A MEDIA LIGHT ON LESSONS FROM HUNGARY

Under Hungary's present government, many independent or critical voices in the media have been silenced. Yet journalists have built new business models to go on holding the powerful to account. The founders of investigative news [site Direkt36](#) want to share what they've learned as "pioneers" in the art of surviving in the face of populist assaults on free media. Direkt36 is supported by Civitates.

His telephone ringing angrily in the middle of the night was the wake-up call for Gergő Sáling. It was 2014 and he realised his days as editor-in-chief of Origo, one of Hungary's biggest private news sites, were numbered. The pressure he came under to lay off a story about a senior Orban ally signalled the end of the site's independence from the government.

"The pressure started to grow. It's very difficult to explain. There are many factors, many players ... These are smart people ... I have no tape recordings or documents to prove what I went through. But, somehow, at the end, I was forced out of my job."

Shining a light on corruption

Sáling's reporter digging into expensive travels undertaken by the Orban aide was András Pethő, freshly back from a fellowship in the US and keen to put new investigative reporting skills to use. "It was just routine journalism," Pethő says of the story. But the government took his questions about the trips

as ‘an orchestrated attack’. The site’s owners soon found that such stories were not in their interests.

Sáling and Pethő quit. With more and more of Hungary’s news media run by or beholden to the government, they were determined “to hold the powerful to account by shining a light on political corruption and other forms of injustice”.

Their answer is Direkt36, a non-profit online news site. In six years, it has built a base of more than 2,500 crowdfunding supporters who cover more than 75% of the high costs of producing long-form investigative articles by a team of seven, led by Sáling and Pethő. Major topics include government (and opposition) corruption, Russian and Chinese influence and, for the past year, the government’s handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and a sharp downturn in the economy.

Crowdfunding brings independence

“The political pressure is coming through the business or the financial channels,” says Pethő. Direkt36 sticks to fact-based, non-partisan reporting. But investors and advertisers in media which irk the government risk quietly losing other business. “We wanted to eliminate that. We don’t have to rely on investors and advertisers. We don’t have to rely on political actors or state agencies.”

Partnerships are important, too. Charitable grants helped launch Direkt36 in 2015. Invaluable was advice from German crowd-funded news site Krautreporter. Major Hungarian media relay Direkt36 stories to a wider audience,

adding to its revenue. Joint reporting with foreign media includes taking part in two major international investigative journalism syndicates.

Ready to share lessons

With Hungary’s surviving independent media under even greater financial pressure as COVID-19 hits the economy, Sáling is delighted with a surge in support for the latest crowdfunding campaign and with a new grant of 144,430 euros over three years from Civitates: “It gives us flexibility and security. We can make longer plans, not just what will happen during the next six months.”

“The political pressure is coming through the business or the financial channels. We wanted to eliminate that. We don’t have to rely on investors and advertisers. (...) And crowdfunding is a good, self-reflective way to do this business.”

**András Pethő,
co-founder of Direkt36**

With the grant comes a network of media grantees supported by Civitates to share ideas. In Budapest, they are keen to improve audiovisual output and learn new investigative tools. But they also believe they can offer some hard-won insights into survival in what Sáling sees as a newly hostile environment toward independent media in countries around the world. “I think we are really the pioneers, and this is waiting for everyone,” he says.

“Journalists have to get used to it, especially if you’re covering high-stakes politics and business.” Running a news outlet that has to battle for economic survival by nurturing its relationship with readers also brings benefits. Crowdfunding supporters get special newsletters and interact with the news team. Sáling says the Direkt36 model forces journalists to go beyond any lofty ideals about their role in a democracy and to demonstrate how they can have a real impact on what matters to people: “Crowdfunding is a good, self-reflective way to do this business.”

Civitates is a joint Philanthropic Initiative for Democracy and Solidarity in Europe, by a network of foundations, including the King Baudouin Foundation.

Recently it granted 2,467,000 euros to 11 independent public-interest journalism organisations across Europe for a period of three years in order to help them develop in a sustainable, resilient and inter-connected way.

It aims to help organisations operating in contexts where the market has failed to support independent journalism, media have been captured by state or non-state actors, or where there has been a hostile legal environment for public-interest journalism.

Another important aspect of the Civitates grant is the network effect – the organisations differ and complement each other so that the group of grantees can strengthen one another by exchanging practices and ideas and embark together on a journey of growth and support.

www.civitates-eu.org

U.S. DONORS HELP REVIVE JEWISH CULTURE IN POLAND

In the early 1930s, Poland was home to the largest Jewish community in Europe. Several nonprofit institutions are working hard to document the country's long Jewish history, to celebrate its rich Jewish culture, and to connect the Jewish diaspora with their Polish roots.

Since the middle of the 10th century, Poland provided a haven for Jews fleeing religious persecution elsewhere. By the early 20th century, the country was home to three million Jews. But the second World War proved catastrophic.

Nearly 90 percent of Polish Jews were killed during the Holocaust. Among the survivors, many had fled to neighboring countries, and during the decades that followed, quite a few started a new life in the United States or Israel. During the Communist period, more Jews left the country. Much of Poland's Jewish life, but not quite all, went quiet.

Today only an estimated 21,000 to 30,000 Jews remain in the country. But Poland's Jewish community is resurging, and the community's culture is coming back to life, thanks to the efforts of philanthropists like Tad Taube.

Born in Krakow in 1931, Taube immigrated to the United States in the spring of 1939, just months

before the outbreak of World War II. He studied at Stanford University, served as an officer in the U.S. Air Force, and became a successful businessman. "The main reason we support the Jewish community and its heritage in Poland is that it is part of our cultural legacy," explains Tad Taube. "In the United States, an estimated 75 percent of all Jewish people trace their history back to Poland. Poland is where it all began, starting in medieval times."

Documenting Poland's Jewish History

Based in San Francisco, Taube Philanthropies established the Jewish Heritage Initiative in Poland to support the cultural and communal revitalisation of Jewish life there, including through





partnerships with several museums, community centers and the Jewish Culture Festival in Krakow – the largest event celebrating traditional and modern Jewish culture in the world.

One of Taube Philanthropies' grantees, the Taube Center for the Renewal of Jewish Life in Poland, connects Jewish people from around the world with their Eastern and Central European heritage. The Center organises heritage study tours and develops educational programs and resource materials for use in Poland and internationally.

It partners with the Galicia Jewish Museum in Krakow, which was founded in 2004

by British scholar John Webber and British photographer-journalist Chris Schwarz. As an act of self-preservation, talk of Jewish life was removed from public discourse for nearly 60 years after the war, explains Jakub Nowakowski, the director of the Galicia Jewish Museum.

"That's why the story of Poland and its Jewish people is so compelling. Reclamation of memory and the past and the rekindling of Jewish identity are the best examples of resilience," says Helise Lieberman, executive director of the Taube Center.

"Without our partnership with KBFUS, it would be much more complicated for us to accept contributions from US donors."

**Jakub Nowakowski,
Galicia Jewish Museum, Krakow**

Shifting to Virtual Programming

Pre-pandemic, the Galicia Jewish Museum welcomed more than 70,000 visitors a year, and much of its revenue was generated through ticket sales and space rentals. The museum has now pivoted to online programming. To fill the revenue gap, it relies on outside partners like Taube Philanthropies, which has supported the museum since its start, to keep the museum's core operational side running.

Likewise, the Taube Center has shifted to virtual programming, with a monthly webinar series. The Center now receives donations from its digital attendees and counts on grants, in addition to the generosity of individual donors.

That includes donors based in the US. When the Galicia Jewish Museum looked for a fiscal sponsor a few years ago, to receive tax-deductible donations in the United States on its behalf, it found KBFUS. "Without our partnership with KBFUS, it would be much more complicated for us to accept contributions from US donors," Nowakowski says. Similarly, when the Taube Center decided to further diversify its sources of funding, it also reached out to KBFUS. "We're delighted that the donations come in so quickly," Helise Lieberman says. She adds that it feels like KBFUS really wants the Taube Center to succeed in its fundraising efforts, so that it can fulfill its mission.

Part of that mission involves connecting with Jews across the globe. "Many people come to Poland to visit the six death camps that were established by the Nazi occupiers. The Taube Center's approach is to enhance an understanding of the history of Polish Jews, its traumas, contributions, and its resilience," Helise Lieberman says.

The King Baudouin Foundation United States (KBFUS) is the leading resource for philanthropic giving to Europe and Africa – a trusted advisor for US donors seeking to support their favorite causes and non-profits overseas.



To learn more about our donor-advised funds, legacy funds and KBFUS ART, please visit www.kbfus.org. Or contact us at (212) 713-7660 or info@kbfus.org.



WORKING HAND IN HAND TO ANSWER BEIRUT'S CALL FOR HELP

On August 4 2020, a catastrophic explosion at the Port of Beirut shook the Lebanese capital to its core. Thanks to generous Canadian donors with ties to Lebanon, including lead donor The Rossy Foundation, KBF CANADA is spending over one million US dollars to repair damaged homes there as well as supporting the reconstruction of the historic St. George Hospital.

Considered one of the most powerful non-nuclear explosions in history, the blast in the Port of Beirut resulted in over 200 deaths and 6,000 injuries. Damage from the explosion affected over half the city, destroying homes, schools, businesses and hospitals and leaving over 300,000 people homeless.

"It was incredible, you cannot imagine what happened," says Lebanese engineer Nicolas Manasseh. "We have been through years of war and bombing, nothing like this. The day after the blast it was the apocalypse."

Worldwide solidarity

The disaster could hardly have happened at a worse time. Lebanon was already struggling with deep economic crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic put further pressure on the economy and healthcare system. Lacking a strong centralised response, Lebanese citizens mobilised to clean up debris and organise relief efforts.

The Lebanese diaspora spread across every continent came together to respond to the call for aid. The infusion of "fresh dollars" from organisations abroad was essential in light of hyperinflation and the liquidity crisis preventing access to Lebanese bank funds. "We couldn't not participate, we couldn't lead our normal lives," says Zeina Farhat,

director of fundraising for LIFE, a worldwide organisation for Lebanese professionals in the diaspora. "Everything stopped for us on the 4th of August. Everything had to be for Beirut." Together with fellow Lebanese diaspora organisation SEAL, LIFE raised 8.8 million US dollars for the Beirut Emergency Fund to cover the urgent rehabilitation of

homes, SMEs and hospitals as well as medical and mental health relief. It was a race against time to bring people back to their homes. LIFE joined hands with KBF Canada to support the daily monitoring of the Canadian-funded reconstruction projects with the help of Manasseh, a highly experienced Lebanese civil engineer who lives in Beirut.





They are dedicating their time on a voluntary basis, providing crucial guidance and due diligence in a complex environment.

Helping people come home

To provide adequate shelter for those who cannot afford to repair their homes, KBF CANADA is working with two agile young NGOs with strong reputations for effectiveness and transparency. The two organisations, Beit el Baraka and Baytna Baytak, were selected with the help of LIFE and non-profit accreditation specialists 3QA. “The NGOs have very little overhead compared to the larger international organisations. All the money spent is really for the people wounded and touched by the blast,” says Farhat. Both organisations run professional teams of architects and contractors.

From day one, Beit el Baraka has been deployed in the low-income Jesuits’ Garden neighbourhood in the Geitawi area of Beirut. The damage there was extensive, ranging from dislocated windows to shattered ceilings. With the support from Canada they are repairing 84 homes, benefitting 170 needy residents, over half of them elderly. “We help the most fragile segments of society who need to feel at home when coming to us (beit) and who need a second chance at a life filled with blessings (baraka),” says founder Maya Chams Ibrahimchah. Baytna Baytak, which means “our

home is your home,” is also working to improve living conditions for marginalised citizens. “What drives us is that we want to help build a Lebanon we imagine and want to live in,” says president Maroun Karam. With the Canadian funds they are refurbishing 298 damaged homes in low-income areas. “I am happy Baytna Baytak came to repair my house,” says Rene, a 76-year old resident of Geitawi. “After the blast my home was not suitable to live in. They repaired everything: the doors, the windows, and even the balcony ceiling that was about to collapse.”

Healthcare and hope

Directly facing the epicentre of the blast, Saint George Hospital University Medical Center is Beirut’s oldest hospital. Already at maximum capacity due to the pandemic, it cared for those injured from the blast even while its intensive care units were destroyed and evacuated. Four nursing staff, 12 patients and one visitor lost their lives and hundreds were injured. The Canadian project is funding the reconstruction of the hospital’s intensive care unit (ICU) and paediatric intensive care unit (PICU), closely monitoring the building process with the intervention of LIFE and Manasseh.

As Lebanon continues to come to grips with the impact of the destruction while battling COVID-19 and economic collapse, hope is

often hard to find. “Being abroad and working for our country is very rewarding, but every day you have to find the drive,” says Farhat, who is based in Europe. Meeting the urgent need for shelter and healthcare is an essential foundation for rebuilding the country. For Farhat it was especially moving to visit St. George, the hospital where she was born. “I’m very happy that I could do this, I was really emotional,” she says. “The trauma is not just for the people who have lived the explosion. It intersects with all of our stories.”



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- **It works with individuals, families, corporations and foundations, to enable donors to support charitable activities outside of Canada.**
- **KBF CANADA crafts personalised solutions for one-time gifts or recurring donations through donor-advised funds.**

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IN FIGURES

2020

€ 96,320,573
IN SUPPORT PROVIDED

685
INDIVIDUALS SUPPORTED

3,873
ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTED

178
CALLS FOR PROJECTS

3,380
EXPERTS IN OUR INDEPENDENT
JURIES AND COMMITTEES

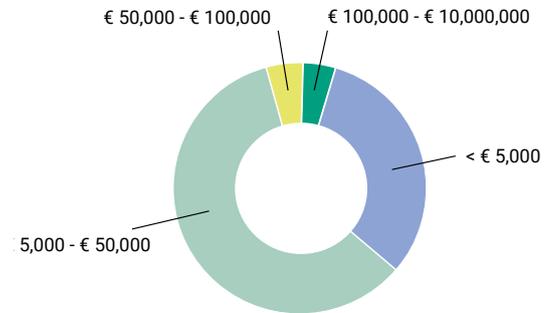
1,030
ACTIVE FUNDS SET UP BY
INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES

58
PUBLICATIONS

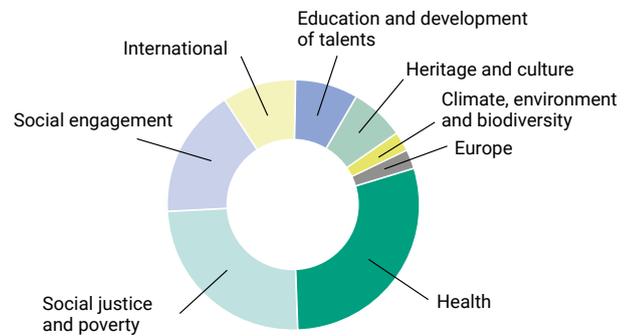
208,467
DONATIONS TO THIRD PARTY
PROJECTS MADE VIA THE KBF

96
MEMBERS OF STAFF
AT THE KBF

SUPPORT: AMOUNT



SUPPORT: MEAN THEMES



Our detailed 2020 accounts will be available on www.kbs-frb.be. You can also find on our website information about the composition of our Board of Governors, the Advisory Council, various steering committees, support committees, management committees and the independent juries for our calls for projects.

2021

AROUND **€ 120,000,000**
BUDGET

WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

