



Philanthropy
and Education

Fabrice Jaumont

Unequal Partners

American Foundations
and Higher Education
Development in Africa

Foreword by Vartan Gregorian



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***Unequal Partners:
American Foundations and Higher Education
Development in Africa***

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Palgrave-MacMillan

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Endorsements

“This book provides the reader with a window to peek into the world of foundations, a world that is often closed and not understood by the public. A must read for those interested in working with development agencies and for those depending on donor funding for development.”

-Teboho Moja, Professor and Program Director, Higher Education Program, New York University, USA

“In this book, Jaumont sheds light on the collaborative efforts of major US foundations on the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa. An important resource for those interested in understanding or improving educational philanthropy.”

-Richard Arum, Professor of Sociology and Dean, School of Education, University of California Irvine, USA

“This book is vitally important at a moment when higher education is internationalizing and global partnerships proliferate. Jaumont asks that academics, funders, and practitioners think about that which they do by casting bright light on the hard won opportunities of a crucial partnership in African higher education and the challenges that remain.”

-Thomas Asher, Program Director, Social Science Research Council

Series Editor Preface

Fabrice Jaumont has written a book that needed to be written decades ago. *Unequal Partners: American Foundations and Higher Education Development in Africa* tells the complicated story of how philanthropy has shaped higher education, in both positive and negative ways. Although the “great” philanthropists have been lauded in many books for decades, recent scholarship has challenged their benevolence and that of their foundations. Jaumont provides a fair portrayal of major foundation players in African higher education—those with a long track record and those that have just started to play a role. Rather than present these foundations as saviors that uplift higher education on the continent, Jaumont presents a nuanced view, detailing the profound impact as well as the “unequal” relationships that result when one of the partners has more resources and the other is in need of resources. Of note, the discussions and themes featured in the book are useful to those studying and working with foundations in the USA as well as in Africa. Interestingly, many of the interventions in Africa are similar to those in urban and minority communities in the USA. Overall, *Unequal Partners* is beautifully written, succinctly and effectively argued, and timely.

Marybeth Gasman

University of Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, PA, USA

Presentation

This book offers a nuanced analysis of a US-led foundation initiative of uncommon ambition, featuring seven foundations with a shared commitment to strengthen capacity in higher education in Sub-Saharan African universities. From a sociological perspective, the author puts new philanthropic trends into historical context even as he examines the conditions under which philanthropy can be effective, the impasses that foundations often face, and the novel context in which philanthropy operates today.

This study therefore assesses a genuinely important topic while engaging two issues around which there is emerging interest among researchers and practitioners alike: the shifting grounds on which higher education globally is positioned and the role of global philanthropy within these changing contexts. This is especially important in a moment where higher education is once again recognized as a driver of development and income growth, where knowledge economies requiring additional levels of education are displacing economies predicated on manufacturing, and – amidst this all – in a context where higher education itself appears increasingly precarious and under dramatic pressures to adapt to new conditions. Foundations play a role in facilitating this transformation and in responding to these new conditions but not in ways that are well understood or widely accepted. The book offers the tantalizing promise of allowing us to better understand the conditions of our changing present, the future that foundations would allow us to inhabit, and the constraints and possibilities that all actors involved in these efforts face.

There have been a number of recent studies of foundations, on the one hand, and higher education, on the other. Despite a long history of foundation support for higher education, there have been few books that have engaged the subject of foundations and higher education or research. This in itself makes the project novel and an original contribution that will attract attention from university-based readers and readers who are interested in the role foundations play in cultivating institutional capacity generally. Moreover, many of the more recent books on foundations have tacked between two extremes, at once excessively generic in subject matter in their efforts to look at foundations as a broadly conceived field or excessively focused on a

single philanthropic organization. Similarly, recent books on the topic have been excessively laudatory of the role of foundations, or too satisfied with mere criticism, viewing them as empty vehicles for other interests, whether those of corporations or states.

The book resists gravitation to these poles and instead offers a depiction of philanthropic activity that is original in three specific ways. First, the author looks at conditions under which philanthropic efforts were successful in achieving their intent. Second, with a sociologist's imagination he captures the conditions of possibility that allow foundations to effect change and influence grantees, governments, and other foundations alike. Third he looks at efforts of foundations to act in concert and the constraints they face. In exploring in granular detail these three areas of inquiry, he simultaneously offers a nuanced theory of how institutions can influence external actors and motivate transformation.

For this reason alone, even without the rich description of a broadly interesting case study, the book should attract broad sociological interest. Moreover, the author moves these discussions forward in a number of ways. First, he does more than neatly stitch together anecdotal evidence. He has assembled an impressive dataset that greatly exceeds anything analyzed at present. Moreover, by focusing on a set of interrelated and overlapping efforts by seven foundations, he has set the parameters of his study more carefully than other researchers. His dataset is vast and concisely defined at the same time, no small feat. He supplements this data set with an impressive array of interviews, drawing attention to the question of how foundations both establish and make use of their legitimacy, their authority, and their capability to effect change in the world.

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About the Author



Fabrice Jaumont holds a Ph.D. in International Education from New York University's Steinhardt School of Education, Culture and Human Development. His research finds itself at the intersection of comparative and international education, international development, cultural diplomacy, and philanthropy. His areas of research are international development education, U.S. private foundations, and higher education development in Africa. He is the author of *Unequal Partners: American Foundations and Higher Education Development in Africa* (Palgrave-MacMillan, 2016).

His involvement with various linguistic communities in North America and Europe has also led him to publish several articles and book chapters on the topics of heritage language and bilingual education, language maintenance, and community development and empowerment. A father of two bilingual girls, and an advocate for bilingual education, Fabrice Jaumont is currently working on his next book: *The Bilingual*

Revolution (Multilingual Matters, 2017).

He currently serves as Program Officer for the FACE Foundation in New York, and as Education Attaché for the Embassy of France to the United States.

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