

Results from Survey on Community Foundation Atlas

The survey and its purpose

This is a report on the survey of the [Community Foundation Atlas](#). The purpose of the survey was to discover the best way of showing information about the global field of community philanthropy. The starting point was people's opinions about the Atlas, though we were also interested to learn whether people want something different. There were, in addition, larger questions about what kind of information people need to do their work more effectively, and what they could contribute to the process going forward.

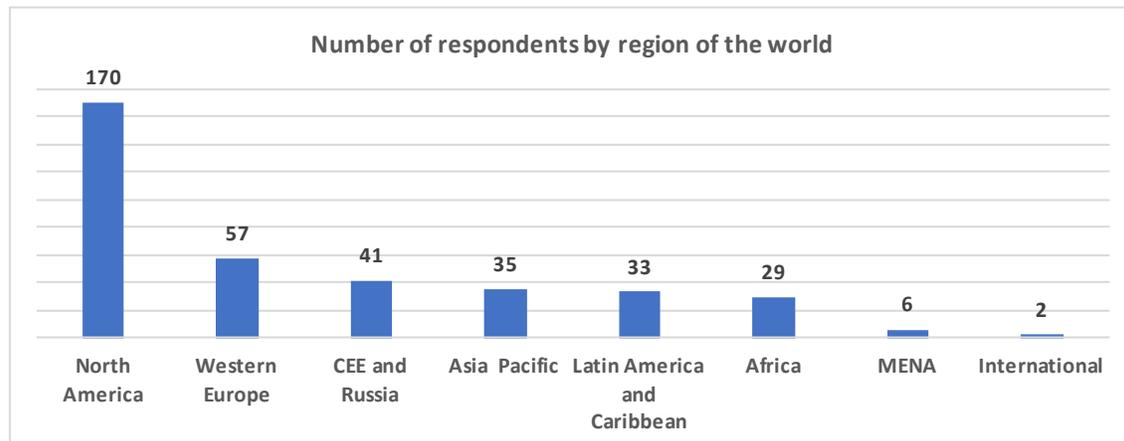
This survey, which was designed with brevity in mind, consisted of 11 questions and was estimated to take no more than seven minutes to complete. The main organisations supporting community philanthropy agreed to promote an open link to the survey, and all those who were included in the Atlas were invited to conduct it too. Responses were collected between 27 November 2017 and 4 January 2018.

The sample

A total of 385 people from 67 different countries responded. The number of people from each country is listed in Annex A.

Geographic distribution

The geographical distribution of respondents is shown in the next chart.

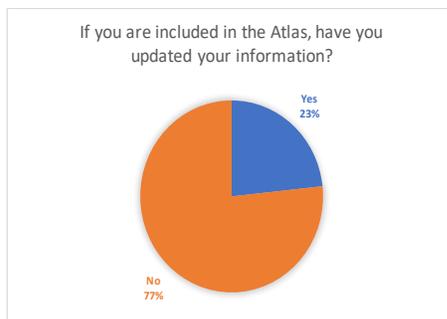
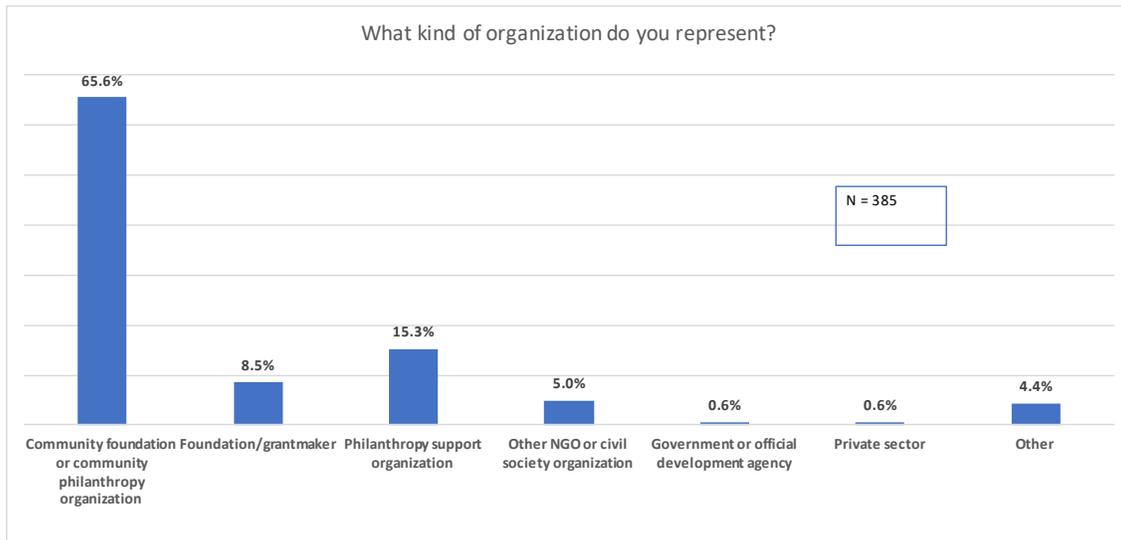


This enables comparisons between different regions in subsequent analyses, though numbers in MENA and 'international' are too small for statistical tests.

Type of organisation

People were asked to say what kind of organisation they represented. They were asked which of the following options best fitted their organisation: (a) community foundation or community philanthropy organization, (b) foundation/grantmaker, (c) philanthropy support organization (d) NGO or civil society organization, (e) government or official development agency (f) private sector, or (g) other (specify).

The distribution of responses is shown in the following chart.



Examination of the cases in the “other” category revealed that some could be reclassified for use in subsequent analyses. For example, several “association of grantmakers” and “academic centres supporting philanthropy” put themselves there, when the WINGS classification would include them as a “philanthropy support organisation”.

The results enabled a four-fold classification of organisation type to be used in subsequent analysis. There were sufficient numbers of community foundation/community philanthropy, foundation/grantmaker, philanthropy support organisation and NGO/civil society organisation, but too few numbers in government/official development agency and private sector to enable valid statistical comparisons, which were therefore excluded from subsequent analyses.

Listed in the Atlas?

In the case of respondents that selected "community foundation or community philanthropy organization", they were asked to say whether their organisation is listed in the Atlas.

The pie-chart shows the responses. Just under two-thirds were included in the Atlas.

Updating information

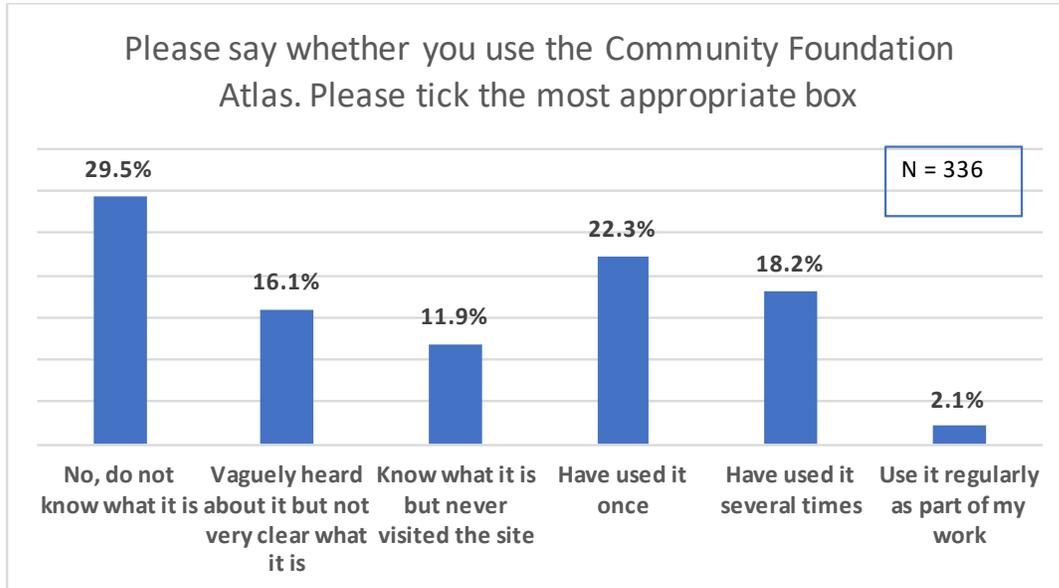
Again, if organisations are included in the Atlas, they were asked whether they had updated their information. Slightly less than a quarter had done so.



Awareness and use of the Atlas

People were asked about their awareness and use of the Atlas. They were asked to say which of the following options best fitted their relationship with the Atlas: (a) do not know what it is, (b) vaguely heard about it but not very clear what it is, (c) know what it is but never visited the site, (d) have used it once, (e) have used it several times, or (f) use it regularly as part of my work.

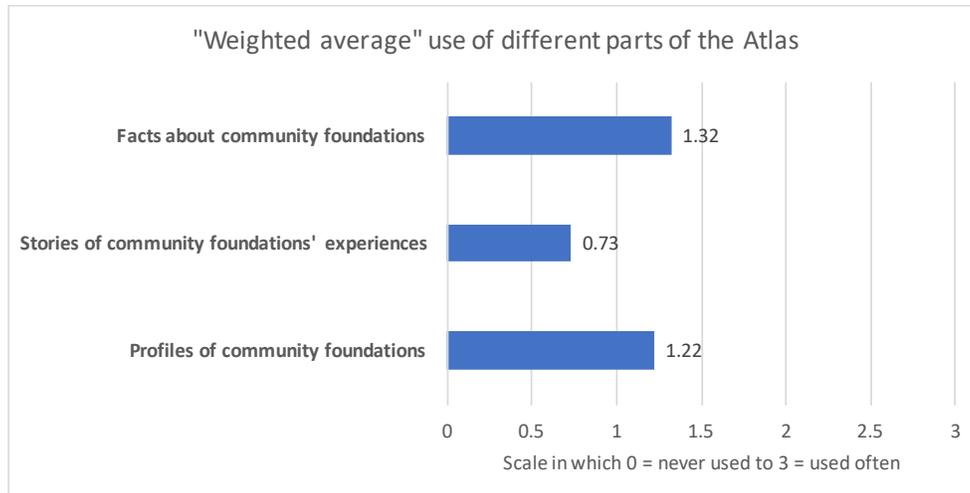
Answers show a scattered distribution. This is shown in the following chart.



Use of different parts of the Atlas

We were interested to find out whether some parts of the Atlas were used more than others. We asked people to say how often they used the section of facts, that on stories and the profiles of community foundations. Answer options included: (a) used often, (b) used sometimes, (c) used once and (d) never used. There was also a not applicable option for those respondents who did not know what the Atlas was. In coding responses, a score of “3” was awarded for used often, “2” for used sometimes, “1” for used once and “0” for never used.

The “weighted average” (leaving aside “not applicable” responses) for the three areas of the Atlas is shown in the following chart.



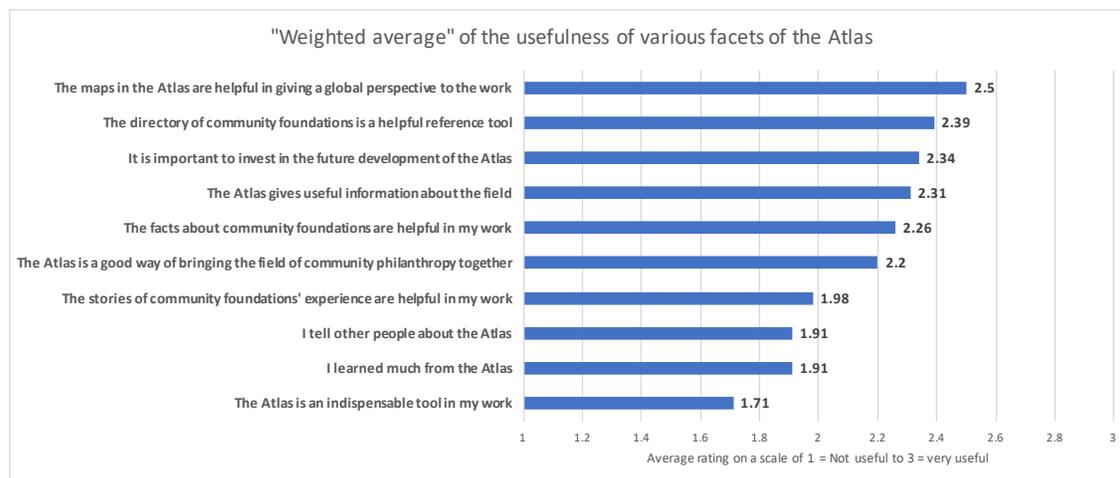
Overall, the part of the Atlas that was most used was the facts, and the least the stories. The difference was statistically significant.

Value of the Atlas in my work

We probed deeper into what value placed on the Atlas by taking a range of statements describing a particular characteristic of the Atlas and asking people to say whether they found it (a) "very useful", (b) "quite useful", (c) "not useful", or (d) "not applicable". The statements were:

1. The Atlas is a good way of bringing the field of community philanthropy together
2. The Atlas is an indispensable tool in my work
3. The Atlas gives useful information about the field
4. It is important to invest in the future development of the Atlas
5. I learned much from the Atlas
6. The stories of community foundations' experience are helpful in my work
7. I tell other people about the Atlas
8. The facts about community foundations are helpful in my work
9. The directory of community foundations is a helpful reference tool
10. The maps in the Atlas are helpful in giving a global perspective to the work of community foundations

In coding responses, we awarded a score of "1" for "not useful", "2" for "quite useful" and "3" for "very useful". In analysing the results, we discarded the "not applicable" ratings. The weighted average for each of the statements is shown in the next chart.



The responses to 10 items in this analysis were significantly interrelated, which means that a high score on one item predicted a high score on all the others. [Factor analysis](#) of the 10 items reveals that one underlying composite factor explains 48 per cent of the variance. The size of the correlations between these 10 ratings mean that it is possible to create a single index of "overall satisfaction" from the ratings.¹

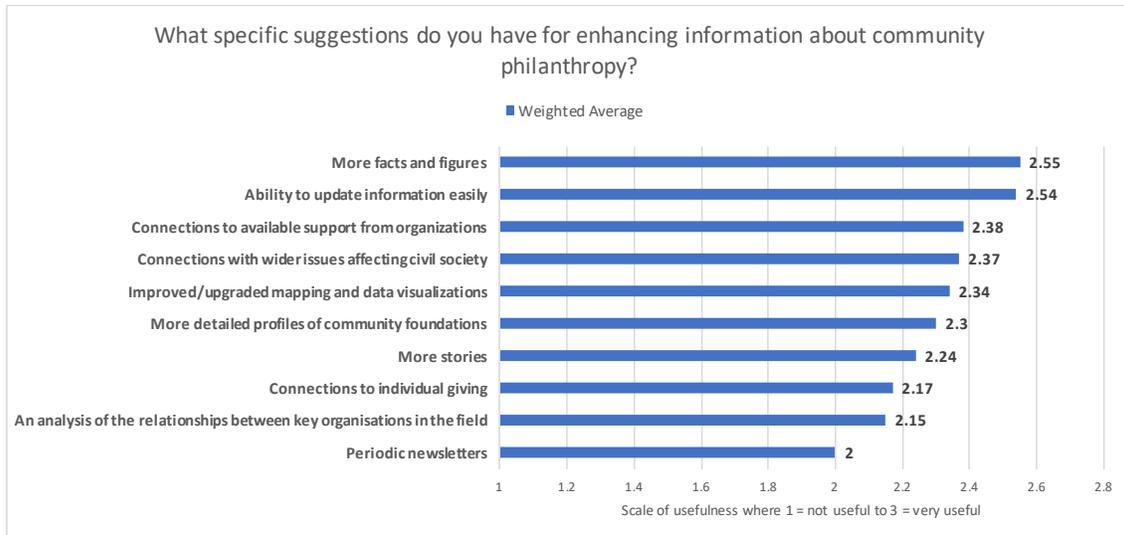
Specific improvements

We asked "What specific suggestions do you have for enhancing information about community philanthropy?" We set out the following options:

1. More stories
2. More facts and figures
3. More detailed profiles of community foundations
4. Connections with wider issues affecting civil society
5. Connections to individual giving
6. Connections to available support from organizations
7. Improved/upgraded mapping and data visualizations
8. Ability to update information easily
9. Periodic newsletters
10. An analysis of the relationships between key organisations in the field
11. Other (please specify)

For each of the options, we asked whether they would be (a) "very useful", (b) "quite useful" or (c) "not useful". Again, we gave a "not applicable" option, though left this out of the analysis. We gave a score of "3" for very useful, "2" for quite useful and "1" for not useful. Results of the weighted average are in the following chart.

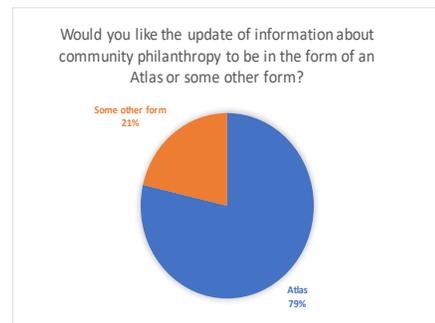
¹ Cronbach's Alpha = 0.878



Atlas or not?

We asked “Would you like the update of information about community philanthropy to be in the form of an Atlas or some other form?” Around four-in-five people opted for the Atlas, while the remainder preferred some other form. The pie chart gives the precise proportions.

People who replied “some other form” were asked to specify the nature of that form. There were 48 entries about these.



Inspection of these entries shows that, in many cases, people had little idea of the alternative. One respondent said “Not sure”, while another said “No idea”.

For many, the form of the information mattered less than the content. One said “I’m agnostic about the form”, and another commented “no strong views either way”. A third said: “An atlas is appealing graphically, but any kind of directory or database is useful.”

There was only one overtly critical comment about the Atlas. This respondent said: “I think it would be less colonial if it moved away from an Atlas.” This view was, however, exceptional, and a more prevalent view was summed up by one respondent who said “Atlas is fine for the global picture. Not sure if any form would be better.” Another respondent made a nearly identical remark though added “It might be worth exploring alternatives”.

There were 27 concrete suggestions for enhancements. The meaning of some of these was unclear, but the dominant theme was for a more interactive approach to the data with more frequent updates and the possibility of two-way interaction.

The most common suggestion was for short updates of new data and trends. The idea was little and often updates to keep information current. As one respondent put it, “There is so

much information that crosses the screens each day, regular snippets and updates making for quick reading would be appreciated.” Another said “bit sized publications”.

The other main suggestion was for a live database. There was a widespread view, offered at different points in the survey, that the Atlas was a static database without anything new happening. The idea of being able to update information and see changes online was an appealing prospect for some. A couple of people wanted a comprehensive information service about community philanthropy. For example, one said:

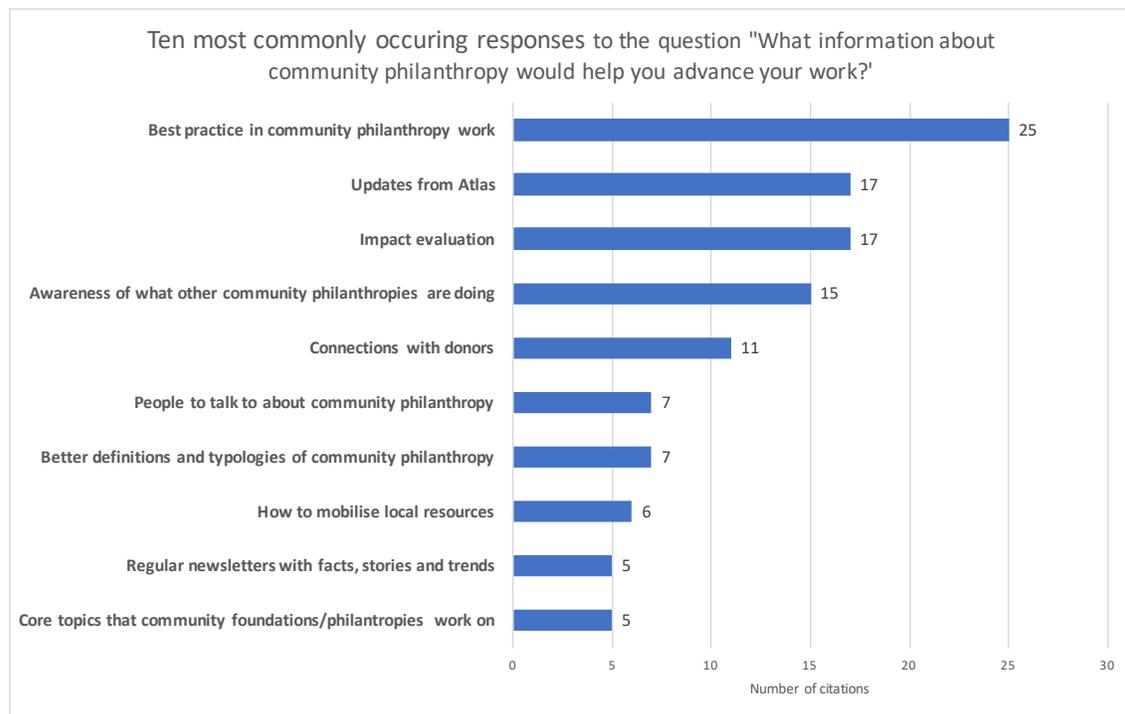
“The Rolls Royce model would be an atlas update which is complemented by innovations in periodically updating – e.g. with topical survey - and issue/questions narrative - as issues emerged in the field - so innovations in keeping it "live" and evolving so not just product but a product that triggers process of innovation and ongoing learning.”

There were other responses (each mentioned by two respondents): the desire for an online and interactive support centre, an annual report, email newsletters, a place for interactive conversations.

What information would be helpful?

We asked “What information about community philanthropy would help you advance your work?” This was an open-ended question.

There were 164 answers to the question, ranging over a very wide range of issues. To find patterns in the responses, the data was subjected to a content analysis. The ten most commonly responses are shown in the following table.



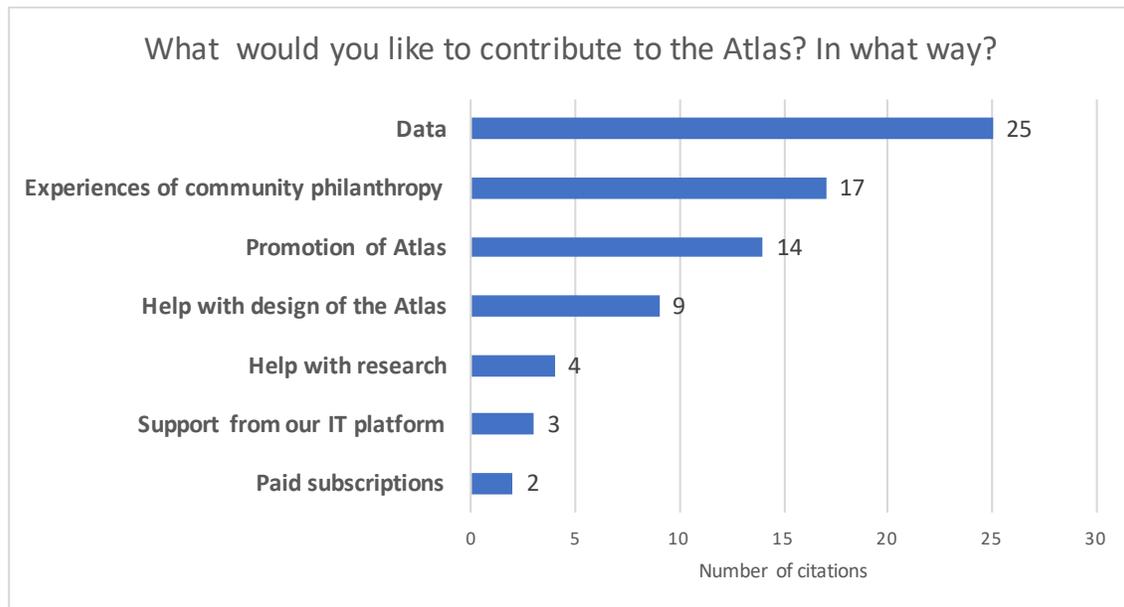
The chart gives a useful picture of the kind of information needed by the field. It is probable that any follow up to the Atlas would not be able to meet all these needs, some of which are plainly beyond the scope of a global information system. Nevertheless, the categories are a good guide to thinking about the possible functions that might be added on to the first version of the Atlas to make it more relevant to the needs of the field.

Your contribution

We asked: “Would you like to contribute to the Atlas? In what way?” There were 141 answers to the question, which – again – were subjected to a content analysis.

Examining the responses shows that there was much uncertainty about what was being asked for in this question. There were numerous responses that suggested, as one respondent put it, “Not sure exactly what I might contribute”. There appeared to be much goodwill towards the updating of the Atlas but for many the form of the question was too open for people to give specific answers about what they might do.

There were, however, definite suggestions, and the frequency of each is shown in the following table.



The responses to this question suggest that there is a pool of people who are willing to be involved in the follow up to the Atlas. The commonest way that people wanted to help was with the provision of data. It was not always clear what people meant by this. Usually, it meant data about their organisation, though sometimes it meant something broader such as a survey that had been done in their country or region that would be useful for the understanding of community philanthropy. The second most common response, was “experience”. This appeared to differ from the first category (data) in that it was in the form of a story giving wisdom (while the data category seemed to relate to knowledge or

information). Here is an example of what people seemed to be saying when they mentioned experience:

“YouthBank's story is first and foremost a young people's story, how they see their communities, what they understand to be the key issues they face, how they believe these should be tackled and what they learn along the way. Along with other participatory grant-making approaches some insights into the YouthBank experience and contribution would seem valuable.”

A rather different offer was help to promote the Atlas. This took the form of statements such as: “ we can propagate information about the Atlas. This will help the work of many people and NGOs” or “We can help by connecting more foundations to the Atlas”. These suggestions were based on a sense that the Atlas had not been well promoted and the value to specific audiences had not been properly thought through when the original Atlas had been designed.

There were other responses that related to the next stages of the Atlas. There were nine people who said that they were interested to be involved in helping to design the Atlas and four others who said that they would be willing to conduct research for it. Two others said they would make their IT platforms available for the Atlas.

All in all, the responses suggest that there is scope for a participatory approach to developing the next iteration of the Atlas should this be required.

Digging deeper

The large number of responses obtained means that it is possible to dig deeper into the data to give a more nuanced analysis than has been presented so far.

The analysis described in this report so far concentrates on looking at responses from the sample as a whole. This section looks to disaggregate the sample according to variables including:

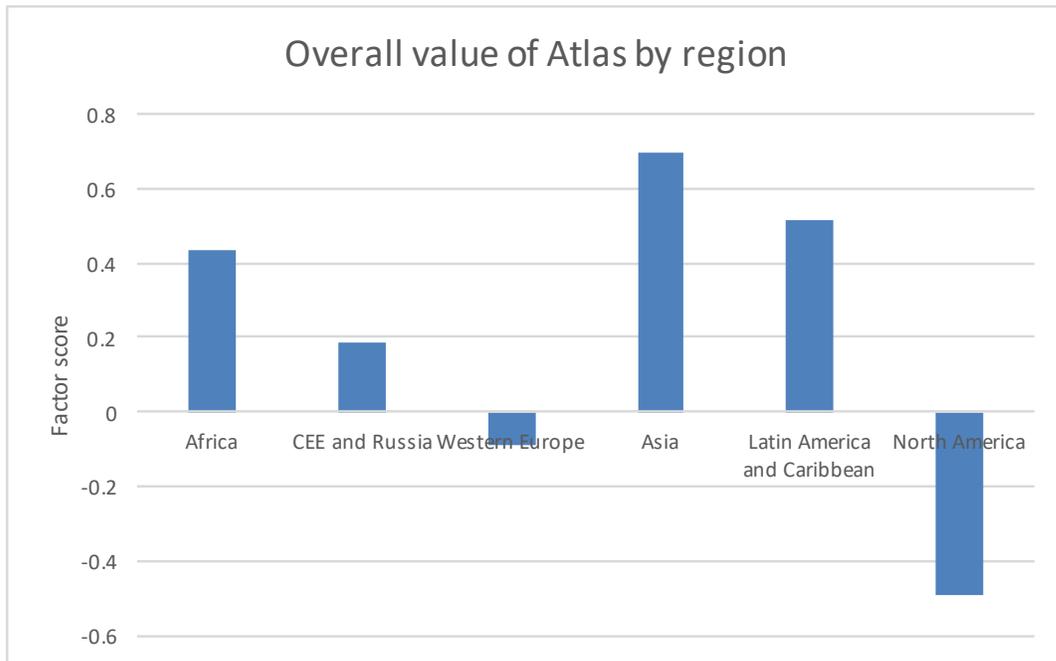
- Type of organisation
- Whether included in the Atlas or not
- Region of the world
- Extent of development of community philanthropy in each country

The method involves a series of analyses of variance ([ANOVA](#)). The above variables are used as “independent variables” and these are compared with a series of “dependent variables”. that measure the use and value of the Atlas. There are many of these in the survey, which leads to a massive statistical output (which I have available).

To simplify the analysis and make it manageable, this section concentrates on two key dependent variables: the use of the atlas and the value of the Atlas. These are “derived variables” based on grouping together responses from different questions into a single composite variable. The two key composite measures, referred to here simply as “use” and

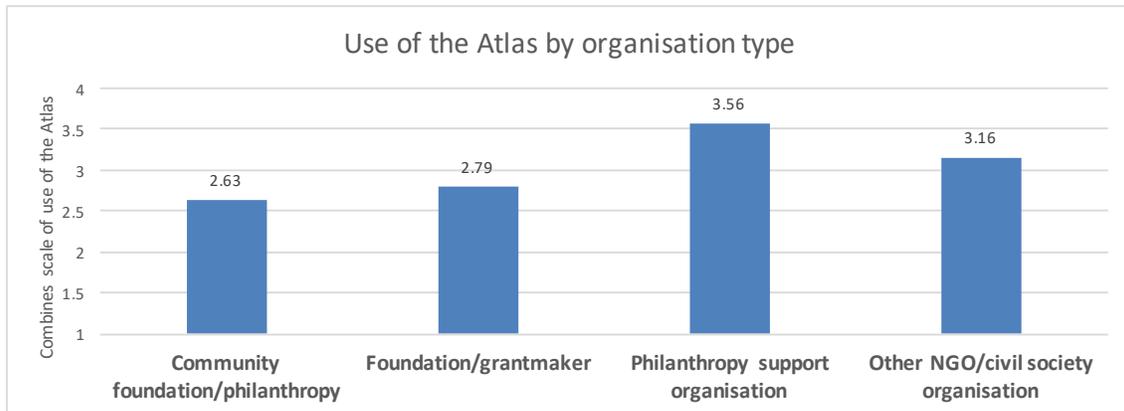
“value”, are significantly related which means that – unsurprisingly - people who the Atlas more value it more.

There is an inverse correlation between high ratings on both the use and the value of the Atlas on the one hand and places where the field of community philanthropy is highly developed on the other. The next chart shows the correlation between region of the world and perceived value of the Atlas. The differences are highly statistically significant.



Elaborating this result, I divided countries into quartiles according to the number of community foundations/philanthropies present there and coded each respondent accordingly. Comparing this with the overall perception of the value of the Atlas, respondents that value the Atlas most are from countries where there are the fewest community foundations/philanthropies (highly significant statistically). Qualitative comments from areas where community foundations are thin on the groups seems to suggest that this finding reflects that people in places where there is only one community foundation (e.g. Turkey) value the fact that they are part of a global phenomenon and are not alone.

Turning now to the type of organization that uses the Atlas, the next chart shows the use of the Atlas by organization type. Philanthropy support organisations are the biggest user.



It is striking that the community foundation/philanthropy group is divided by whether they are included in the Atlas or not. Those who are included tended to be rated higher on use of the Atlas, while those not included were commonly not aware of its existence. Looking at the qualitative responses from those who were not currently included in the Atlas, there was a clear desire to be included in the next iteration of the work.

Some of the community foundations and community philanthropies that were included in the Atlas commented adversely on the Atlas because it was out of date or contained incorrect information. Among this group, the scores on the value of the Atlas were significantly lower than the group of community philanthropies not included in the Atlas.

Concluding remarks

This summary report has been produced to provide a high level overview of findings. I am aware that some of the analysis would repay further examination and elaboration. I will be available to anyone who wishes to look up specific information not mentioned here or to run extra analyses.

Barry Knight

Annex A: Number of respondents from different countries

Country	Count
United States	132
Canada	37
Mexico	14
South Africa	13
India	12
Brazil	11
UK	11
United Kingdom	11
Germany	10
Italy	7
Romania	6
Russia	6
Australia	5
Ukraine	5
Ghana	4
Latvia	4
New Zealand	4
Northern Ireland	4
Spain	4
Bulgaria	3
Colombia	3
Indonesia	3
Kenya	3
Poland	3
Zimbabwe	3
Czech Republic	2
Belgium	2
China	2
Egypt	2
France	2
Ireland	2
Netherlands	2
Philippines	2
Singapore	2
Slovakia	2
Tanzania	2
Turkey	2
Uruguay	2
Zambia	2
Argentina	1
Austria	1
Azerbaijan	1
Bermuda	1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1
Costa Rica	1
Croatia	1
Global	1
Hong Kong	1
International	1
Jamaica	1
Macedonia	1
Moçambique	1
Moldova	1
Mongolia	1
Nepal	1
Norway	1
Pakistan	1
Palestine	1
România	1
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	1
Saudi Arabia	1
Scotland	1
Serbia	1
US & Vietnam	1
USA/Taiwan	1

