



#ShiftThePower

Global Summit





A collective goal & a bond in diversity. (Bogota, Colombia)

What started off as a convening to facilitate conversation within a community that dreamed of philanthropy and development done better has since birthed a movement. This movement saw multitudes of development practitioners, philanthropy support organisations, non-profits, grassroots organisations, funders, academia and more converge in Bogota to collectively celebrate the milestones achieved so far, strategize for the future and form connections to further advance the shift in the development system.

The Global Fund for Community Foundations convened the **#ShiftThePower Global Summit**, a gathering that was highly diverse and largely attended by participants from all over the world and different corners of the philanthropy and development space. The summit took place from 5th to 7th December in Bogota, Colombia at the Agora Convention Center.

To provide context on the origins of this gathering, we revisit 2016 when GFCF launched the hashtag **#ShiftThePower** during a conference they organized in Johannesburg that December. They set out to have genuine conversations about moving from the top-down system in international development and philanthropy towards a flatter and more equitable system; one that's more people-centered. While community philanthropy served as their entry point to this conversation, the broader concern at stake was power.

CivSource Africa had the opportunity to participate in this convening and the movement itself in various ways. Ainembabazi Madonna Vicky and Afoyomungu Olum Lornah represented CivSource Africa at the summit; the former as a **#ShiftThePower Fellow** and both as facilitators of Decolonising conversations that CivSource has championed in Uganda and globally as well. Preceding this summit, CivSource Africa participated in various weaving conversations led by the Decolonising Wealth Project, Peace Direct, and the [Liberation Alliance](#) among many others seeking to take apart what it would take to decolonize international cooperation and African philanthropy. CivSource Africa organized a session titled “*Better Ways of Philanthropy: Testing 1,2*” to prompt reflection on the decolonial aspects of participatory grantmaking and the unintentional perpetuation of colonial structures, we may advance in reimagining philanthropy particularly within participatory grantmaking.



We had the opportunity to co-create a session with partners from the [Decolonising Wealth Project](#), [Peace Direct](#) and [Rede Comua](#) themed, “Decolonization – from narrative to practice. What do we mean and how do we get there?” at the summit this December.

We collectively responded to two key questions:

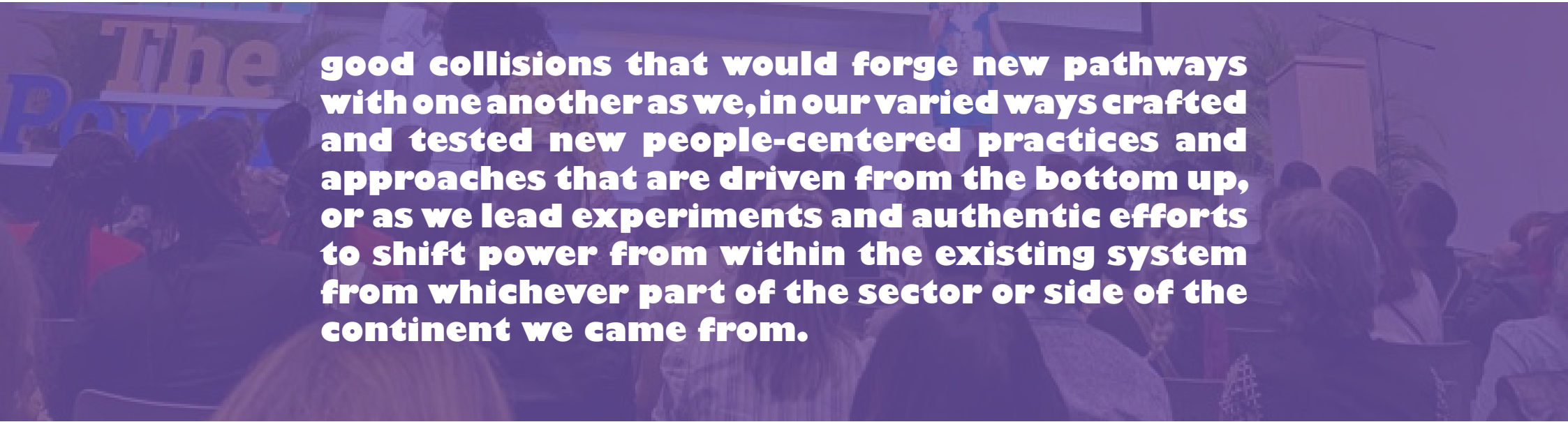
- 1. Where are we now and what is holding us back from decolonization?**
- 2. What are the one or two things we need to do collectively to pave a path toward decolonization?**

The insights and thoughts that brimmed bountifully from this discussion, we cannot cover adequately here. We intend to cover them separately so keep on the lookout for more.

What stayed with us after the #ShiftThePower is the aura and state of optimism that affirms us in the truth that better and new is possible. The summit reinforced the conviction that we possess the agency to shift the wheels of power in our various contexts creating a ripple effect on global systems of development and philanthropy. From one of the sessions themed **“What’s the point of the revolution if we can’t dance? Sustaining ourselves, nurturing our movements and regenerating our activism”** we took away the idea that, despite the foundations of current development and philanthropic systems being rooted in pain, we have the option to advance the revolution in enjoyable and uplifting ways. A realization emerged that our journey toward systems change can be one infused with pleasure, fun, and dancing in our efforts to bring about transformation.

In addressing the anxiety that comes from perceived or actual powerlessness or the unease and apprehension that springs from having more power than those around you, a flat and perhaps more equitable system serves as the antidote. The #ShiftThePower summit tested what that flat and equitable development world would look like by assigning summit participants name tags free of titles and classifications. It blurred the lines between speakers and participants, funders, and non-funders, creating an environment where it was challenging to discern roles and the labels that would perhaps classify the haves and have-nots of power.

As we walked in and out of the #ShiftThePower Summit in The Agora, we identified as people who through the summit were here to make



good collisions that would forge new pathways with one another as we, in our varied ways crafted and tested new people-centered practices and approaches that are driven from the bottom up, or as we lead experiments and authentic efforts to shift power from within the existing system from whichever part of the sector or side of the continent we came from.

©Madonna Vicky Ainemababazi
Philanthropy Lead at CivSource Africa

#Shift The Power

A Global Summit
5-7 December 2023, Bogotá

#Shift
The
Power

