

The New Italian Kid on the Block



Angelo Moretti,
Chairman, Fondazione
Comunità di Benevento

[Fondazione Comunità di Benevento](#) is the latest community foundation established in Italy and refers to the Benevento province, in the Campania region. In this interview, Angelo Moretti, Chairman of the organisation, shares with us why and how the community foundation was set up and their vision for putting social capital at the centre of local inclusive development.

Mr. Moretti with its establishment Fondazione Comunità di Benevento becomes the 9th community foundation in the South of Italy and joins the wider national movement. Let's first talk briefly about the underlying process of setting up the community foundation: how long did it take, which were the main actors involved, what challenges and which potential did you see for the territory?

The community foundation did not appear overnight but was set in motion by three major concurring events that prompted a tighter collaboration among local actors. In chronological order, the first one was the shared understanding by local civil society that the national policy tool, the so-called [health budget \(budget di salute\)](#), was not usually adopted in our province. This instrument, not defined by law yet, should guarantee essential services to people affected by physical and mental disabilities. Therefore, along with the local Caritas and the consortium Sanità Terra, we gave life to a strong partnership to face this issue. The second event was the flooding in the province of Benevento in 2015: a devastating phenomenon for the city and its economy, that heavily relies on local agriculture. On this occasion, Caritas and the Benevento Red Cross began to work together to handle and manage the consequences of these floodings. Finally, the third event that ignited the whole process was the introduction of the newest Social Network Analysis programme by Professor Francesco Vasca at the local university, the University of Sannio. At that time, the professor was studying how social capital in defined territories comes together and can be untapped to achieve a shared vision and goals for the community itself. This programme created the cultural condition to see ourselves in a new light and set a meaningful path for community participation.

While the issue-based collaboration among local actors strengthened, the response of what type of organisation would suit better came to us: Fondazione Con il Sud, the community foundations support organisation in the south of Italy, reached out to explain what a community foundation was and shared their incubator and accelerator programme. This idea would perfectly fit our ambition and sound tailor-made for achieving our vision!

In 2017, following the leadership change in the local archdiocese, Caritas formally disengaged from the project; however, we continue to collaborate proactively today. The founding partners remained the Benevento Red Cross Committee, the consortium Sale Della Terra and the association Rete Sociale.



In January 2022 the 20th, we launched the idea of the community foundation with a public event, and in the following four months we managed to raise the money needed to set up the foundation: on 20 January 2023, we were born with assets of 450,000 euro.

Why? Why was a community foundation chosen over other forms? What could be its strengths?

Our goal is not only to represent but to have the entire local community actively participate: we did not want to be just a financial intermediary, but a pivotal centre of involvement and engagement for the entire province. To do so, we have created an internal system of participation and consultation such that every decision made in the foundation is also a participatory and community process. For example, the board of directors encompasses five members of the foundation, plus two members elected by the donor committee (of all those individuals who donate more than EUR 1,000 to the foundation). The aim is to have two more members on the board who will be representatives of local institutions. In addition, there is also a body called the Council of Public Entities: it does not sit on the board of directors, but it participates in the foundation's decisions and represents various entities and groups within the city. This particular configuration aims to facilitate civic participation, assess at its best the needs and desires of the community, achieve capillarity and being the most representative of the community itself.

Future perspectives: do you already have a specific focus for the coming period? Are there specific needs and desires of the territory you want to work on?

As previously said, creating a system of welfare and community participation are already two goals of our organisation. Our welfare model is inspired by the conception of the alliance 'For a new welfare' ([Per un nuovo welfare](#)), the union of more than 130 Italian organisations to work on a holistic, community-based welfare model, that puts at the centre the sustainable economic development of our society. Nowadays, it is impossible to think of an economic model without considering the crucial importance of social relations. If the ties within a community work, if we build their resilience and ability to face the multiple challenges we are faced today, then we can also create a fairer creation and distribution of wealth.

Based on the community needs, our current focuses are educational gaps and disadvantages and individual/family support from a health and sanitary perspective. In this last area, the current project is the 'Health Budget and Health Poverty' call, to ensure access to a PRTI (Individualised Therapeutic-Rehabilitation Project) for those who cannot afford it. Furthermore, we also have created two dedicated funds focused on climate and poverty, particular the community energy one and the circular economy.

Interview conducted by

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