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III. PROFILE

W.K; Kellogg Foundation

by Linda G. Greenberg

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation, one of the three largest private foundations in the United States, has a long-standing tradition of helping people locally, nationally, and internationally to improve their health and well-being. In 1930, during the first year of the Great Depression, Will Keith (W.K.) Kellogg, the breakfast cereal entrepreneur, created the foundation with a personal commitment to an old-fashioned principle: "To help people to help themselves."

Based on Will Kellogg's personal interest in the well-being of children and the disadvantaged, the foundation is committed to supporting promising projects serving children, families, and communities. Kellogg's traditional family and social values continue to influence grant making and are the most prominent characteristics of the foundation.

In the foundation's sixty-year history of grant making, with grants totaling $1.4 billion, agriculture, health, and education have been its main priorities. Current funding focuses on youth, leadership, volunteerism and philanthropy, higher education, community-based health services, food systems, rural development, groundwater resources, and economic development in Michigan. In the early years of the foundation resources were concentrated in Battle Creek; Michigan, Kellogg's hometown, and surrounding rural areas. Today, three-quarters of the foundation's resources are directed to projects across the country, with the remainder going to Latin America, the Caribbean, and southern Africa, according to the foundation's 1990 annual report.

In the pattern of many large philanthropic foundations, Kellogg has a solid reputation for efficiently marshaling its resources to combat a range of social problems. While Kellogg is known for its commitment to institutions—both academic and professional—for education and health services delivery programs, it is also recognized for its commitment to community-based projects.

In the health arena, Kellogg has traditionally funded comprehensive and cost-effective health and social services, health promotion and nutrition education, and health professions education. The foundation has supported many maternal and child health projects, as well as nursing education and projects that strengthen the role of nurses in the community.

New Priorities For The 1990s

In late 1989, Kellogg outlined an agenda for funding priorities in the 1990s. New emphases on the following program areas of interest reflect Kellogg's responsiveness to communities and changing social needs.

Communities. Throughout its long history, Kellogg has been dedicated to effecting change in communities. By focusing on local projects, Kellogg aims to help communities improve their quality of life and renew the importance of community values. Helping poor and underserved communities identify and meet their critical health and social service needs, particularly for urban minorities and rural families, is a priority. This grass-roots focus brings together a broad cross section of community interests—education, welfare, religion, government, and business—to work as partners for change.

Youth. Kellogg is also focusing on America's youth, whose well-being is threatened by substance abuse and other serious social issues. New funding will support innovative educational programs for children, kindergarten through grade twelve; leadership training for at-risk youth and other adolescents; and linkage of youth organizations, both public and private, for programs promoting adolescent health and well-being.

In one of its largest grants ever, Kellogg awarded $65 million in spring 1990 to help establish the International Youth Fund. The fund aims to prevent drug use and school dropout and contribute to the healthy de-

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development of youth worldwide. It plans to develop a database on effective youth programs around the world so that they may be replicated elsewhere. The fund will initially focus its resources in Brazil, Costa Rica, Kenya, Mexico, the Philippines, Poland, the United States, and Zimbabwe.

Health services. “Health is used as an entree to much broader community issues,” said Helen Grace, Kellogg program director and coordinator for health programs, in an interview. Kellogg believes that in using a “team approach” to solve health and human services needs, communities will be able to address other complex social challenges. Under its “community-based, problem-focused health services” funding category, Kellogg supports primary health services and outreach for underserved persons, particularly the young and the elderly.

In health giving, Kellogg has not funded projects that deal with specific diseases such as heart disease, renal failure, and cancer. Nor has it awarded grants for advocacy, religious purposes, or general operating support. As general foundation policy, capital projects also are not funded.

Health professions education. In the past, Kellogg has supported projects to make health professions education more responsive to the needs of individuals and, by extension, to make access to health services more readily available. In June 1991, Kellogg announced new funding to reform health professions education and to help students prepare for careers in primary health care. This new activity builds on the Community Partnerships: A Kellogg Initiative in Health Professions Education, which was launched in 1989. The Community Partnerships foster cooperation between local communities and medical, nursing, and public health educational programs. Under the new health professions education funding initiative, seven academic institutions or university consortia will receive $6 million each to provide community-based primary health services, particularly focusing on people who are most underserved by the health system. This $47.5 million initiative has a strong community emphasis, in contrast to traditional medical education that is hospital-based and physician-focused. New funding also will be awarded to projects that encourage minorities in health professions.

Leadership. In 1980, Kellogg established its National Fellowship Program to provide leadership preparation for people in a wide variety of professions who have key decision-making responsibility. Kellogg has funded projects that prepare government and community leaders to develop and manage local health and human services programs. In the words of Kellogg President Norman A. Brown, “The purpose of leadership development is not the grooming of tomorrow’s politicians . . . [but] the identification and development of . . . emerging and established societal leaders who will make a real difference in their communities.”

International grant making. With more than fifty years of international grant-making experience? Kellogg has focused substantial resources on international leadership training and fellowship programs. With goals similar to those of the National Fellowship Program, the Kellogg International Fellowship Program aims to develop future leaders in a wide variety of professions. Its purpose also is to build the capacity of individuals to advise the foundation on ways to make international grant-making initiatives more effective.

Kellogg’s southern Africa program, begun in 1986, initially supported scholarships for students in Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, South Africa, and Zimbabwe to pursue careers in health, agriculture, education, business, public administration, and veterinary medicine. Kellogg has begun to support projects to improve health care for South Africans through health professions education and community outreach services. Since 1986, Kellogg has awarded 181 grants in health and other priority areas, with commitments totaling over $39.6 million for its southern Africa program. It hopes to expand grant making to other nations in that region.

Kellogg’s grant making in Latin America over the past fifty years, with over 150 funded projects, has focused mainly on community-based primary health care. For example, Brazil’s Paulista School of Medicine received funding in 1989 to establish com-
munity-based health programs for Xingu Indians in the Brazilian rain forest preserve, who are increasingly exposed to illnesses of the Western world. Physicians cooperate with local folk healers to provide health care and train community health workers.

Also, Kellogg has awarded two grants totaling over $2 million to projects addressing health needs along the U.S./ Mexican border. These projects will establish health professional education programs and community-based health care systems in Juarez, Mexico, and in the United States. Special efforts will be made to provide poor pregnant women with access to prenatal care.

Learning From Experience

The lessons learned from grantees in Latin America have helped lead the foundation to its new emphasis on communities. One of the most important conclusions that Kellogg has drawn from these projects is that simply providing health and social services and health professions education does not necessarily have a long-term impact on the health system. One impediment to the foundation’s success in Latin America was the frequent shifts in countries’ leadership, said Thomas Allen Bruce, Kellogg program director, at a Grantmakers In Health meeting in April 1991. Though not defeated in its efforts to develop comprehensive and long-lasting health programs, Kellogg has become firmly committed to new strategies that teach communities-both in this nation and abroad—how to develop practical solutions to their local problems.

Public health initiative. As a result of this community concern, Kellogg has moved into the public health arena to launch a new initiative. The Community-Based Public Health Initiative, announced in early 1991, was created to improve the delivery of public health services, particularly in poor and underserved areas. Communities, academic public health programs, and local public health agencies will collaborate on innovative plans to meet local needs. The foundation will support up to fifteen consortia nationwide to develop these initiatives. Up to five of these consortia then will receive a total of $10 million over four years to implement their plans.

“This [public health] initiative gives the foundation a philosophical approach to be looking at how one accomplishes societal goals and systems changes that in the long run seem more appropriate,” Bruce said. Recommendations for strengthening the public health field were included in a 1988 National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine report on the future of public health, which received support from Kellogg and spurred the foundation to establish its public health initiative.

Future Outlook

Kellogg’s assets have grown rapidly in recent years. From 1984 to 1991, the foundation’s market value increased from nearly $1.3 billion to approximately $4 billion. During 1989-1990, the foundation awarded grants totaling $148 million. Kellogg helps its grantees to become self-sufficient by providing them with technical assistance to obtain additional financial support from public and private funding sources. In future grant making, Kellogg will maintain a solid funding base in community projects “to be grounded in reality” and to work toward systems change, specifically in health and public health fields, Grace said.

One of the foundation’s greatest accomplishments has been “to give a voice to people who would not be ordinarily heard,” Grace continued. While Kellogg is restrained from funding projects that directly affect public policy, it has provided limited funding for policy-related projects. Comprehensive evaluations of a large number of community-based health services projects are beginning to yield information that will be disseminated to policymakers. Additionally, Kellogg-funded projects include non-partisan public policy analyses of ways to improve access to high-quality, cost-effective health services for uninsured persons and others. Kellogg “walks the narrow line of informing public policy rather than influencing it,” Grace said.