

...ASSETS [ARE] NOT ONLY THINGS THAT ALLOW SURVIVAL, ADAPTATION AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION; THEY ALSO ARE THE BASIS OF AGENTS' POWER TO ACT AND TO REPRODUCE, CHALLENGE OR CHANGE THE RULES THAT GOVERN THE CONTROL, USE AND TRANSFORMATION OF RESOURCES.

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CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS IN

SOCIAL THEORY: ACTION, STRUCTURE

AND CONTRADICTION IN SOCIAL ANALYSIS

link local community organizations with other partners, both public and private, as meaningful allies in setting priorities and allocating resources that address poverty and injustice.

- There is an increasing willingness to include social and environmental values in the fundamental operations of business and markets. Making markets work for the poor and disadvantaged—by promoting shifts in corporate behavior, cultivating consumer preferences, and strengthening government regulation—helps ensure that our grantee partners have a real chance to create permanent and durable social change. This can link capital to community well-being in unprecedented ways.
- A new movement is emerging to mobilize governments, international agencies, and other public systems to be the base for equitable treatment of citizens. Government should be a key change agent—overseeing the private marketplace and developing public investments to address historic and contemporary injustices and to eliminate poverty.

As we grapple with the implications of these changes for asset building, we are mobilizing our resources to build new knowledge, support practical experimentation, and encourage sound policy development and advocacy. Some preliminary results of these efforts—and the ingenuity and creativity of our grantee partners—are illustrated in the stories presented here. They give us reason to believe that building assets can make a difference in reducing poverty and injustice. As we learn from the asset building efforts of people and organizations worldwide, we want to continue sharing these lessons with others. We hope that these results will be helpful to all who care about creating a just society in which individuals and communities are active agents in their efforts to move out of poverty.

