The New Idea

Dorota Komornicka is encouraging Poland’s youth to launch ventures that contribute to community development. Through her foundation, Dorota provides small investments for youth-led projects. Recipients also receive supplemental support to structure, implement, market and fund their ideas. While building youth entrepreneurship, Dorota is demonstrating the power of philanthropy as a way to teach youth—and entire communities—the meaning and value of the citizen sector.

The Problem

Vestiges of the communist era persist in Polish schools, especially in rural areas. Young people, for example, are permitted little room for independent thought and creativity. Constructive dialogue is rarely found in the classroom. This has resulted in a state of hopelessness among many young people who are led to believe they cannot change their difficult situations. Frustration and confusion often lead them to drugs, crime and other destructive activities.

Impact

- Dorota’s Youth Board for Local Fund, which educates young people about philanthropy, is now spreading to the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia.

- Dorota's community foundation has so far provided more than 430 project grants to 17000 young people.

- A leader in the Polish youth volunteer movement, Dorota has successfully taken the movement international by involving youth activists from the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia.

- Among Dorota’s many recognition are awards by The Academy for Philanthropy Development, The Soros Foundation and the Deutsche Bank of Poland.