



Global Philanthropy Leadership Meeting

16-17 May, 2009, Rome

Report

List of Participants

Muna AbuSulayman Director General, Alwaleed Bin Talal Foundation, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Bisi Adelewe-Fayemi Executive Director, African Women's Development Fund, Ghana

Melissa A. Berman President & CEO, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, United States

Flemming Ellebaek Borreskov Chief Executive Officer, Realdania, Denmark

Nicolas Borsinger Executive Director, Pro Victimis Foundation, Switzerland

Peter Cleaves Chief Executive Officer, Emirates Foundation, United Arab Emirates

Michael Deich Director of Policy and Government Affairs, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, United States

Peggy Dulany Founder and Chair, The Synergos Institute, United States

Barry Gaberman Global Fund for Community Foundations

Rayna Gavrilova Executive Director, Trust for Civil Society in Central & Eastern Europe, Bulgaria

Mall Hellam Executive Director, Open Estonia Foundation, Estonia

Barbara Ibrahim Director, John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement, Egypt

Steve Killelea Founder, The Charitable Foundation, Australia

Avila Kilmurray Director, The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, United Kingdom

Daniel Kropf Executive Vice-Chair, Universal Education Foundation, France

Wilhelm Krull Secretary General, VolkswagenStiftung, Germany

Atallah Kuttab Director General, Welfare Association, Palestine

Massimo Lanza Director, Fondazione di Venezia, Italy

Carol Larson President and Chief Executive Officer, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, United States

Peter Laugharn Executive Director, Firelight Foundation, United States

Norine MacDonald President, Gabriel Foundation, France

Vincent McGee Senior Advisor, The Atlantic Philanthropies, United States

Nicola McIntyre Executive Director, Mama Cash Foundation, Netherlands

Bhekinkosi Moyo, Program Director, Trust Africa, Senegal
Valentina Qussisiya Director General, Jordan River Foundation, Jordan
Marta Rey García Profesora Doctora, Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales, Universidad de la Coruña, Spain
Judith Rodin President, Rockefeller Foundation, United States
Suzanne Siskel Head of Philanthropy, The Ford Foundation, United States
Bradford K. Smith President, The Foundation Center, United States
Ralph R. Smith Executive Vice President, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, United States
Chet Tchozewski President, Global Greengrants Fund, United States
Pier Mario Vello Secretary General, Fondazione Cariplo, Italy
Emílio Rui Vilar President of the Board of Trustees, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Portugal
Jorge Villalobos Executive President, Mexican Center for Philanthropy (Cemefi), Mexico
Jane Wales President & CEO, World Affairs Council/Global Philanthropy Forum; Vice President, The Aspen Institute, United States
William S. White President and CEO, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, United States
Erna Witoelar Chair, Indonesia Biodiversity Foundation; Chair, Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium, Philippines

Council on Foundations
Rob Buchanan, Managing Director, International Programs
Steve Gunderson, President & CEO
Kristin Lindsey, Chief Operating Officer

European Foundation Centre
Ana Feder, Networking Committee Senior Officer
Wendy Richardson
Leticia Ruiz-Capillas, Chief Operating Officer
Sevdalina Rukanova, Senior Officer
Gerry Salole, Chief Executive

Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support (WINGS)
Marissa Camacho-Reyes, Executive Director
Fernando Rossetti, Chair

Facilitator
Tom Lent

Executive Summary

Foundation leaders from Europe, the Americas, Africa, Asia and Australia (see list of participants) gathered on 17 May 2009 in Rome with the aim to explore the need and opportunity for the establishment of a joint process and an agenda towards the strengthening of global philanthropy and global philanthropic leadership with a view to more effectively addressing global issues and challenges the world is facing today. The meeting was jointly convened by the Council on Foundations, the European Foundation Centre and WINGS.

The discussion, facilitated by Tom Lent, was structured around three main themes:

- Global challenges, visions for the future and philanthropy's role
- Legal and policy environment and conditions for enabling global philanthropy
- Strategies for achieving global change and strengthening global philanthropy and leadership

Brief concept papers, each introduced by a foundation leader, provided the context and framework for the discussion.

The main outcome of the meeting consisted in the inception of a **joint task force**, comprising foundation leaders from all over the world, to tackle in greater depth the most pressing issues underlined throughout the day, namely:

- campaign for a more favourable environment for cross-border giving
- develop models/vehicles for pooling resources together and increasing collaboration; and
- identify key political moments and levers to engage with policy makers/multilateral organisations.

The key ideas and points of consensus coming out of the discussions, including further details on the role of the joint task force, are summarised below:

1. Global context, challenges – vision for the future – philanthropy's role

Rayna Gavrilova of the Trust for Civil Society in Central & Eastern Europe introduced the first discussion basing her comments on the background paper on the “Vision for the Future and Philanthropy’s Role.”

In her remarks, she highlighted two main issues, namely:

- How foundations think of and adapt to change, identify and support change agents, and relate to other actors in a rapidly changing and globalised environment; and
- In times of crisis, do foundations invest in developing innovative approaches to addressing social issues or do they revert to safer options that had been tried and tested?

Key messages from the discussion which followed, including further development of the aforementioned points, are summarised below:

- Visions for the future: a more just, equitable, peaceful, environmentally-sustainable and economically-stable world that respects and embraces diversity, empowers people and communities.
- What role for philanthropy? Participants recognised that many of the challenges the world is facing today are age-old; what is really different is that they are much more complex and evolve at a faster pace: they are intertwined, interconnected, interdependent and global/moving across borders.
- Participants underlined that addressing these challenges effectively requires:
 - long term commitment;
 - the will to better align priorities and funding;
 - transparency and accountability;
 - going beyond own institutional frameworks to collaborate – with other foundations, as well as with all other relevant sectors/clusters of actors at all levels (local, regional, global);
 - recognition of the need to preserve advances made – by investing in building resilience and strengthening existing infrastructure, competences, capabilities;
 - the need to invest in promoting change – by supporting new ideas (innovations, intellectual capital, knowledge networks), citizens' voice and agents of change, such as children and youth, and local capacity and infrastructure to mobilise people and resources, where such is weak or does not exist.
- The landscape of philanthropy is changing rapidly as is the array of potential partners and the processes of movement building: foundations need to take stock of these changes and assess how these might affect their work, and what their own responses should be. This raises also the question of whether and how foundations are equipped to deal with adversity.
- The current economic crisis demands urgent responses and foundations are well positioned to act quickly to strengthen/build safety nets, and address the needs of the most vulnerable; at the same time, it is necessary to keep the long term view and invest in analysis of the structural problems, in raising awareness of these problems and supporting the development of solutions and conditions/actors for change to happen. It was suggested to think about timely and relevant responses while staying focused on the timelessness of the long term agenda as set out in the vision.

2. Legal/policy environment – conditions that enable global philanthropy – internal barriers

Judith Rodin of the Rockefeller Foundation introduced the second discussion basing her comments on the background paper on “Improving the Legal/Policy Environment and Conditions for Enabling Global Philanthropy.”

In her remarks, she highlighted the following points:

- We are experiencing today a paradox in which government rules and regulations for philanthropy have become more protectionist while the world – and the challenges facing it – have become more globalised and interdependent.
- The global system needs to be reformed in order to provide a structural basis for philanthropic interdependence that can connect funding more easily to areas of the world where it is needed. Some regional efforts are underway but more needs to be done, for instance, to create a common definition of a charitable organisation and to extend domestic tax benefits for charitable giving to giving that crosses borders.
- The reforms need to occur in many areas: government policy changes, NGO codes of conduct, government-endorsed multilateral agreements (like the UN Millennium Development Goals), and legally binding treaties to reduce or eliminate barriers to cross-border charitable giving.
- The question whether foundations can afford to go on with “business as usual” in a context of changed dynamics, new actors, and the nature of global challenges was raised as was the role of global committed leaders to address the challenges to effective collaboration to take place.

In the ensuing discussions, participants identified a number of internal and external barriers to growing and strengthening global philanthropy.

Internal barriers:

- mandate, role of the board, sovereignty, and own name/brand;
- tension between long term mission/vision and short term cycles of funding;
- internal capacity, knowledge and capabilities to deal with much more complex problems/situations that require new ways of thinking as well as multi-disciplinary approaches, among others;
- decision-making structures – and how this affects relations with the different stakeholders; how foundations learn and share knowledge;
- legacy, self-sufficiency and independence as barriers to “real” collaboration.

External barriers:

- The most important external barriers identified entail the regulatory environment for cross-border giving.
- There is a paradox: while the world becomes ever more global, interdependent, and interconnected, there is a trend towards more regulation and protectionism, potentially exacerbated by the current crisis.
- For global giving/philanthropy to grow, such structural barriers will have to be addressed through both existing tools and through building of new mechanisms/tools to enable the flow of giving across borders.
- Participants recognised, that politically, the time might be right to work together to advocate for a more favourable and enabling environment for cross-border/global giving (new US administration; multilateral organisations – strong interest in

engaging with foundations; EU – European Foundation Statute campaign and opportunity with the new Parliament and Commission, etc.)

- As part of this process, clarity on definitions would have to be established – a key issue towards mutual recognition of entities.

3. Strategies and tools to overcome barriers and achieve vision

Bhekinkosi Moyo of Trust Africa introduced the third discussion basing his comments on the background paper on “Strategies for Achieving Global Change.”

In his remarks, he deconstructed some of the questions and assumptions underlying the discussion of the realisation of the vision of global philanthropy, namely:

- Whose vision is it? Who sets it? Is it possible to align the global philanthropy vision with the thinking outside philanthropic circles? Are we right in assuming that philanthropy is an appropriate vehicle to realise this vision? Is philanthropy in its current nature and character appropriate for the realisation of that vision? – There is a need firstly to interrogate the very fundamentals of philanthropy and reform these before we are in a position to achieve that vision.
- There is an underlying assumption that as philanthropic actors our role is to solve the problems of those we support and not much thought is put into how the solutions to the problems addressed may reside within the communities supported.
- Related to this is the fact that money on its own is not the solution to the kind of challenges that confront the world. Philanthropy’s role ought to be that of building communities.

After attempting to clear the conceptual terrain, Dr. Moyo offered examples of strategies for realising a vision for global philanthropy:

- Partnerships and collaboration: the nature of the current challenges demands a collective approach-away from a lone-ranger approach;
- Convenings and Dialogues: the power of philanthropic institutions to convene other stakeholders must be put to effective use;
- Research and knowledge generation: knowing what to do in the future can only be achieved by having extensive knowledge about the past, the present and the alternative scenarios for philanthropy in the future.

Three strands of ideas emerged out of the discussion:

- Foundations have to become better at deploying their non-financial assets (knowledge, networks, convening power, influence, voice).
- Making collaborations work: learn from past and present collaborative models/platforms particularly those that have cross-border/global purpose and have pooled resources from a diverse array of partners (Network of European Foundations (NEF), Design to Win/Climate Works): what are the ingredients that make these work? Several elements were highlighted during the discussion: a common value base and purpose; a sense of urgency; commitment to stay involved over a period of time; willingness to give up some sovereignty.

- Paradigm shift: beyond “we fund – they receive” and “problems – solutions thinking” towards “working together for systemic change”, and this implies also:
 - grounding philanthropy in reality and aligning its vision to that of those on the outside;
 - building/strengthening local capacity, competences and infrastructure;
 - increasing transparency and accountability of foundations;
 - taking a systems view and approaches to funding that are more collaborative and complementary.

4. Next steps: what can we do together, with full recognition and respect for diversity?

Participants identified three priority areas to take forward, and mandated the convenors of the meeting to put forward a proposal for the creation of a **joint task force** to address the following areas:

- Campaign for a more favourable environment for cross-border giving. It was proposed that one of the aims would be to produce a set of cases that clearly identify specific legal, tax and administrative barriers for cross border giving. The task force will draw on the work of COF, EFC, APPC, Trust Africa, and the Ease of Global Giving Project of the Mercator Fund.
- Develop models/vehicles for pooling resources together and increasing collaboration. This task force will look at models such as NEF and Climate Works, and reflect also on global/regional financing mechanisms to pool and direct resources more effectively to local organisations.
- Identify key political moments, levers and seize windows of opportunity to engage with policy makers/multilateral organisations, for example the COF’s work with the Obama Administration, engagement with the UN, the World Bank, the EFC’s work with the EU around the European Foundation Statute, and opportunities with multi-lateral organisations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Engagement will have to be around specific issues; the task force will look at what these issues could/should be - migration and global governance were put forward as examples.

Furthermore, participants underlined the importance of connecting better existing philanthropic structures, networks and learning environments; the need to have better access to data that is already out there; and for documenting practices/initiatives on global funding/funding with a global lens. In the short run, this would help underpin the work of the joint task force; and in the long run, this would help strengthen the infrastructure to underpin global philanthropy.

The joint task force would be modelled on the EFC-COF Joint Task Forces on disaster response and on accountability in international philanthropy. The convening organisations would in the coming months develop a proposal and action plan on how to move this initiative forward.

Several foundation leaders present at the meeting indicated their interest to provide support to take this work forward.