

# The future of funding

Funding to support a thriving civil society  
in the Global South



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## About Bond

Bond is the civil society network for global change. We bring people together to make the international development sector more effective. [bond.org.uk](http://bond.org.uk)

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# 1. The future of funding

## How can we foster the leadership, action and conditions required to enable civil society in the Global South to thrive?

A thriving local civil society is intrinsically important to international development, promoting locally-owned solutions, legitimacy and value for money. Yet few of the resources allocated for development efforts are currently directly managed by civil society organisations in middle and low income countries ('Southern CSOs').

In recent years, some funders have increased efforts to fund Southern civil society directly, but substantial challenges remain. Meanwhile, many international civil society actors have begun to explore how they can better facilitate a shift of power and money to the South.

This report offers an introduction to some of the discussions taking place around this agenda, with a series of briefing papers to support funders who wish to consider evolving their funding practices. Although approaches differ – funding directly; devolved grantmaking; funding intermediaries – some key themes emerge. To support thriving Southern CSOs to respond to future development challenges, funders should:

- Ensure that downward accountability is prioritised
- Move beyond short-term measures as the sole means of judging success
- Invest in Southern CSOs' core competencies
- Scrutinise funding criteria that acts as a barrier for Southern CSO engagement
- Collaborate with other funders to promote learning and efficiencies

### Background

As the network for international development in the UK, Bond works with more than 450 organisations to increase their effectiveness to achieve impact. Bond's Funding Policy programme supports international development and humanitarian funders to engage in better funding practices, as well as supporting CSOs to sustainably mobilise resources. Bond's Futures programme promotes foresight and innovation amongst development practitioners, to support the sector in creating future-fit organisations and new models that meet changing needs.

These two objectives come together in an initiative that aims to consider the future of funding, the Future Funding Forum<sup>1</sup>. Supported by the Baring Foundation, Big Lottery Fund, Comic Relief and the Stars Foundation, the goal is to help funders and civil society to transition funding and models of support so that they are fit for the future. The seven-month project started with a launch event bringing together funders interested in promoting a thriving civil society in the South with the intention of identifying practical ways to fund Southern CSOs and agree a shared agenda to help effectively manage the critical transition of shifting power and resources.

## The current system

A vibrant, diverse ecosystem of civil society actors contributes to international development and humanitarian action. Different forms of civil society have different comparative advantages and legitimacy in the eyes of citizens, governments and other stakeholders.

To operate effectively, CSOs need to be appropriately resourced and enabled to carry out their work within conducive operating environments. Through a history of structures, practices and prejudices in the aid system, International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) – particularly larger ones – are able to dominate direct access to funding and to international policy-making fora relative to other types of CSO. Although large INGOs are often highly capable and well-motivated, this system has tended to overlook Southern CSOs.

The current dominance of larger INGOs often means that the potential of local CSOs is not being fully realised. The costs of the perpetuation of this system include lost capacity and expertise, suppression of local voices, and an over-emphasis on what matters to funders or INGOs relative to local citizens.

There is increasing awareness of the low levels of resources directly managed by Southern civil society despite their closeness to the issues. That only 1% of humanitarian financing goes directly to local organisations galvanised those at the World Humanitarian Summit to pursue a more active approach to shifting resources to local CSOs in crisis environments with the Charter for Change<sup>2</sup>.

Beyond the sector, a global shift of power and resources towards the South brings with it fundamental implications for how 'development' is undertaken (see Bond's reports *Tomorrow's World*<sup>3</sup> and *Fast Forward*<sup>4</sup>). This shift challenges the traditional roles of INGOs and funders. Many actors have begun responding to this: several UK funders have stated intentions to either increase direct funding for local civil society, or to ensure that local ownership is at the heart of their funding strategies. Some INGOs are scrutinising their approaches and undertaking radical transformations to shift the balance of power to their non-UK partners<sup>5</sup>.

The debate has shifted from whether this is the right thing to do, to how it can be done in practice.

## Recommendations for funders

The briefing papers in this report highlight a number of existing initiatives that intend to promote the effective resourcing of Southern CSOs. These papers, and the associated meetings that took place over 2016, aim to showcase good practice and encourage further action. Although the briefing papers have been authored separately, there are some connecting threads in their recommendations:

### 1. Accountability to those whom aid is intended to benefit should be paramount

Too often accountability flows 'upward', with funders setting the agenda. For development projects, programmes and CSOs to be truly effective, accountability needs to be to those most affected by the issues. Several of the briefing papers emphasise the need for those closest to the ground to set the agenda, and offer recommendations on how to do this.

Funders should encourage participation of citizens in all stages of a CSO's work, with feedback used to inform continuous improvement. For funders with public accountability, reframing communications can be a tool to encourage the general public to understand and support civil society in the global South.

### 2. Balance a focus on short-term results with long-term sustainability

A focus on results means keeping the intended outcomes for citizens at the forefront. However, too often in practice this has meant an emphasis on short-term, measurable project outputs, which may not be aligned with the types of long-term, sustainable social changes that we seek. Funding based on fixed plans, with adherence to those plans and achievement of pre-determined milestones and targets incentivised, risks 'doing the wrong things well'.

As we try to engage with a wide range of actors with different capabilities, and as we try to combat complex issues, we need to revise our metrics appropriately to reflect the reality on the ground. Several of the briefing papers note that a more flexible, long-term approach can encourage adaptation to changes in local context and a focus on impact better than rigidity to short-term measures.<sup>6</sup>

### 3. Invest in the core capacities of Southern CSOs

Many of the challenges included in the Sustainable Development Goals<sup>7</sup> are complex in nature. Addressing these problems requires resilient organisations and leadership that is able to respond to disruptive change. A briefing paper on Southern CSO's experiences of disruption offers insight into how this can be encouraged by funders.

Unfortunately, the most common approach to funding Southern CSOs currently emphasises project funding, with little support for building their institutional sustainability. Funders should use their resources – funding, networks, in-house expertise – to support and incentivise the building of Southern CSO capabilities for the long term. The briefing paper on devolved grantmaking cites the investment in the core capacities of Southern actors as a particular success of this approach.

### 4. Address funding criteria that act as a barrier to Southern ownership

Different funding modalities have a strong bearing on the profile of the CSOs that are able to apply. For example, a requirement for match funding will favour organisations with unrestricted funding or flexible larger donors – increasingly rarities. Relatively burdensome reporting requirements will also favour larger INGOs.

On the other hand, funding criteria that incentivise positive partnerships can encourage INGOs or intermediaries to better invest in their local CSO partners. Funders should consider the ways their eligibility and other requirements could be adapted to allow Southern CSOs to benefit. Recommendations around adjusting grant conditions to ensure minimal barriers to access are found in several of the briefing papers.

### 5. Funder collaboration can support CSOs on the ground

The 'Funding Ecology'<sup>8</sup> approach argues that good ideas and bottom-up change are undermined by a lack of strategic collaboration between CSOs and those that fund them. To address development needs, there should be more information-sharing, co-development of strategy and a holistic understanding of the broader drivers of change. For example, funder collaboration can ease the burden on Southern CSOs by streamlining reporting processes.

Funders can facilitate the creation of learning through the resourcing of robust evidence generation, and through support to peer-learning spaces. Funders should come together to contribute to existing platforms and initiatives, whether this is to combat the threat of the shrinking space for civil society or to streamline their assessment processes when vetting new grantees.

## Conclusion

This report showcases a range of current initiatives that offer possible avenues for funders seeking to engage with the agenda of shifting power and resources to Southern CSOs. From here, individual funders or funders joined together in a collective will need to decide how important it is for them to pursue this agenda. As well as offering some specific recommendations for funding agencies to take forward, the briefing papers give some suggestions for follow-up and collective action at sector level.

To build a thriving global civil society, and to support Southern CSOs to fulfil their potential, there is a need for funders to challenge and change the status quo by proactively pursuing new approaches. The briefing papers collated here offer a starting point for this discussion, but to truly shift the power funders must commit to creating change.

## 2. From the ground up

### Grantmaking to those grounded in the South

As traditional funders to international development shift their strategies to support more local civil society organisations, aspiring funders who seek to fund development are also asking how best they can leverage their resources for civil society in the Global South.

### A ground-up approach to philanthropy

This briefing offers advice to those funders who aim to channel philanthropic capital to the South but are not sure how to begin, where to invest and how to ensure their investment is effective. It draws on the experience of existing, impactful funders and advocates for a ground-up approach to philanthropy, one that focuses on identifying the most strategic use for their philanthropic capital.

Towards this end, it advises foreign funders to:

- Understand the local setting: Context is everything
- Partner with local funders: You don't have to do it alone
- Invest in local organisations: Strengthen local organisations for sustainable impact

The brief offers a few actionable steps that international funders may find useful when planning their philanthropic investment, with the hope that more funders will consider their potential to support development in the South. In the final part of this brief, these are summarised in some 'On-the-Ground Rules'.

### Introduction

Today, we stand in very exciting times when it comes to philanthropy. With the young getting wealthier and social awareness on the rise, there is growing restlessness to spark positive change where it is most needed.<sup>1,2</sup>

However, both individual and institutional funders are often discouraged by a trust deficit when it comes to operationalising their giving to the so-called Global

South ('the South').<sup>3</sup> In order to help aspiring funders move beyond this roadblock, the brief provides actionable advice based on the experience of successful funders and other stakeholders operating in the South.

### Key recommendations

#### 1. Understand the local setting

It is essential that any potential funders build their understanding of the local context. Funders need be aware of the interdependencies of development problems and solutions. As well as being the foundation of respectful relationships, it is critical for effective programming.

An example can be found in the experiences of funding girls' schooling in India. A big global bank wanted to help girls in India complete their schooling by providing class 12 scholarships to female students. Sounds like a good investment? Indeed. But not in a context where over 70% girls who enrol in school drop out before reaching class 10.<sup>4</sup> Clearly, other underlying factors need to be addressed to ensure more girls complete their schooling in India.

The problem of girls dropping out often begins post-menarche. A study conducted in rural Jharkhand found that over 90% school girls start missing school for one to two days a month, during their menstruation. Their absence is prompted in part by the cultural stigma that surrounds menstruation in India but also due to the lack of adequate school sanitation facilities that would enable girls to manage their menstrual hygiene with dignity.<sup>5</sup> Chronic absences undermine girls' interest and learning in school and, combined with other socio-cultural pressures, eventually push girls out of school.<sup>6</sup>

The connection of poor sanitation to girls dropping out of school in India highlights the complexity of social issues in the South. The underlying reasons may not be the obvious ones. And therefore it is critical to build a keen understanding of the local landscape prior to making investment decisions.

Today, the bank has championed the cause of improved sanitation and hygiene for adolescent girls in India, both as a right in itself as well as for the facilitative role it plays in keeping girls in school and helping them achieve their full potential.

The importance of lending a keen ear to the local landscape is one of the key lessons shared by Jennifer and Peter Buffett in a video which hears them talk about their approach to philanthropy as co-founders of the NoVo Foundation.<sup>7</sup>



The founders of the NoVo Foundation talk about the importance of local knowledge

## 2. Partner with local funders

**Systemic change requires collaboration. Solutions to poverty are often built in silos – and therefore fail.**<sup>8</sup>

Funders often feel overwhelmed by the magnitude and complexity of problems in the South, not to mention the lack of common systems or a common language to work with in these communities. Many are also concerned about the most impactful use of their investment in this set up. For all such funders, leading philanthropists have some good news: *'you don't have to do it alone!'*<sup>9,10,11</sup>

Combining forces with others who have similar interests can help new funders understand the broader picture and identify the most suitable role for their investment. Collaboration with local funders can prove to be an even greater asset, as it allows international funders to benefit from an 'insider' funder perspective and to access local networks. This on-the-ground knowledge is invaluable.

As with any other stakeholder, funders cannot be their most effective if they operate in isolation. They too need a trusted peer network to cross-learn, problem solve and ideate.

The case study below is one example of such a peer network; one that enables local and foreign funders to catalyse impact far deeper than what would be possible with only their own knowledge, skills and capital.

### Case study: Dasra's Giving Circles

One platform that allows networking and collaborative giving among funders is the Dasra Giving Circle. This platform brings together funders to create a community of givers who make funding decisions and support selected organisations through a process of cross learning and consensus building.

Each circle comprises of eight to ten funders who pool their financial resources as well as business and management acumen to help a selected non-profit reach impact at scale. Dasra works closely with the organisation for a period of three to four years to build its institutional capacity and help it utilise the funding received. It also organises a quarterly conversation between the giving circle members and the non-profit, where the latter reports on progress and seeks inputs on challenges faced in the process. So far, Dasra has formed 12 such giving circles comprising a total of 109 funders, channelling funds worth INR 36 crores (USD 5.4 million) to 12 civil society organisations (CSOs) across India. Despite being focused on giving to India, these giving circles have mobilised local and international resources, with 43% giving circle members hailing from outside of India.<sup>12</sup>

In the words of Aditi Kothari, Executive Vice President of DSP Blackrock Investment Managers, and existing giving circle member, this platform *"is a great way of getting people involved in giving, especially people who have never given before and are apprehensive about what kind of NGO to give to, who to give to, and which area it's most needed."*<sup>13</sup>

### 3. Invest in locally owned and led organisations

One of the most successful strategies for a funder is to invest in change that is sparked and owned by the community. In some ways it offers an in-built exit strategy; by funding locally-owned solutions, the funder is building local capacity and encouraging sustained impact beyond the period of the funding.

However, the lack of knowledge and trust that many international funders experience often pushes them to invest in international NGOs rather than local CSOs grown in the South. While the former is likely to be better versed in concepts and processes that build confidence with foreign funders, ground-level change can only materialise and be sustained if it is owned by community-based organisations.

To address the trust deficit international funders may experience around local organisations, they may benefit from learning about and then investing in not only the programme but also the overall institution and its leadership. When shortlisting proposals to support, the funder should look beyond just the project's anticipated results and also consider the organisation as a whole, including its track-record, management and potential.

As a corollary, funders must also move beyond project or programme funding to channel funds towards professionalising the organisation and building the capacity of its leadership and management teams. If relevant, some funders that hold business and management acumen could help build these organisations into stronger institutions, creating impact at scale. For those who are able to, and if requested by the local CSO, funders could advise their grantees directly. An alternative approach is to select valuable intermediaries to periodically consult with and support their grantees on issues of institution building and management.

Investment in local organisations that builds their institution and management capabilities not only constitutes a sound financial investment but also has exponential impact on the organisation's on-the-ground effectiveness, as is highlighted by the case below.

#### Case study: Society for Nutrition, Education and Health Action

The Society for Nutrition, Education and Health Action (SNEHA) is a CSO operating in the slums of Mumbai, Maharashtra since 1999. It invests in the health of women and children, as a critical building block to developing 'viable urban communities'.<sup>14</sup>

One of SNEHA'S signature programmes is *Aahar* (Food in English), which focuses on the period from conception to age three of a child's life to ensure they receive adequate nutrition and health care. The programme operates in Dharavi, one of the largest slums of Mumbai, and covers a population of 300,000 people.<sup>15</sup>

In 2011-2012, the programme covered over 32,000 households in Dharavi, reaching 5,350 children and over 800 pregnant women, with services to prevent and cure malnutrition. SNEHA also demonstrated promise at the organisational level, with a strong leadership at its fore and robust impact assessment mechanisms backing its work. The quality of the programme, organisation and leadership helped SNEHA secure an unrestricted funding grant of INR 2.5 crores (USD 375,000) in 2011-12, along with approximately 300 days of capacity building support. The funding and capacity building support were spread across three years and focused on scaling the impact of both the *Aahar* programme and SNEHA overall. SNEHA's management team received inputs to help build its fundraising capabilities, implement an effective organisational structure and reflect on its long term and strategic priorities, in addition to support on improving programme implementation.

With this support, SNEHA has grown significantly in both scale and impact, as is demonstrated by key statistics below, spanning the period from 2011-12 to 2014-15.<sup>16</sup>



SNEHA's story makes a strong case to funders to invest in local organisations with potential, and to direct funds towards both the programme and the larger institution in order to ensure higher ground level impact.

It also stresses the importance of accompanying unrestricted funds with capacity building support, as this can be critical in marrying the passion of local organisations with the processes required to make it a more impactful, efficient and sustainable solution for the development challenges it aims to address.

### Organisation growth: 2012-15

Organisation budgets	3.5x	INR 3.93 Crore to INR 13.85 Crore <sup>17</sup> (USD 0.6 million to 2.1 million)
Team strength increased	2.6x	149 people <sup>18</sup> to 382 people <sup>19</sup>

### Aahar programme growth: 2012-15<sup>20</sup>

Households covered	3.4x	32,323 to 110,468
Children reached	5.8x	5,350 to 31,075
Pregnant women reached	8x	801 to 6,405

## Conclusion and on-the-ground rules

These overarching recommendations should form the foundation of any international funding that aims to support Southern actors to have development impact. The 'On-the-Ground Rules' are:

1. Take time to understand the local context, including the challenges, underlying causes and potential solutions
2. Understand existing solutions and gaps to identify the most strategic and impactful focus for your support
3. Network with local funders to benefit from their insider perspective and to leverage their networks for cross-learning, problem solving and ideation
4. Invest in local CSOs that can ensure community buy-in and ownership, which is critical to sustain the change sparked by your investment, long after you have exited
5. Invest not only in the programme but also in building the capacity of the institution and its leadership, all three of which are critical to witness impact at scale on the ground
6. Be sure to invest in robust solutions that address the problem at its very root. Do note, however, that social change is a process and not like a 'for profit' investment that can be expected to yield returns on a quarterly basis. The process is not a swift one, and needs to be closely monitored and revisited to ensure it eventually leads to the desired impact

## 3. Disruptive change and Southern CSOs

### Getting good at disruption

Civil society organisations in the Global South are today confronting multiple disruptive forces, from natural disasters to changing regulatory requirements. Funders can do more to support CSOs experiencing disruptive change.

Over the past year and a half, the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) has been working with civil society leaders in middle and low-income countries ('the South') to explore their experiences of disruptive change. The initiative has also involved a series of informal discussions with international funders. Key insights for funders include:

- Major disruptive forces including climate change and urbanisation will change the development landscape in ways that demand new disruptive change capabilities within CSOs
- Disruption is already a daily fact of life for many Southern CSOs
- A disruptive change lens brings new building blocks to intelligent grantmaking at a time of heightened concern for the resilience of Southern CSOs
- Both responding to disruption and being disruptive are essential civil society roles
- Funders should review their approaches so that they play the best possible role in supporting Southern CSOs to get good at disruption

### Introduction

Civil society organisations in middle and low income countries ('Southern CSOs') are today confronting multiple disruptive forces, from natural disasters and migration to turbulence in the funding environment and changing regulatory requirements.

The resulting organisational disruption has profound implications for realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Not only can it hamper

the effectiveness of these CSOs now; it can also reduce their ability to address bigger shifts in the development landscape in ways that are themselves disruptive in positive ways.

Funders can and should do more to support CSOs experiencing disruptive change. More flexible funding and grant decisions informed by deeper understanding of the on-the-ground operational realities of disruption are important parts of the toolkit.

#### Key Terms

**Disruptive change:** a positive or negative change within a civil society organisation triggered by external or internal forces that exert lasting and significant impact upon the organisation's mission, values, or ways of working

**Getting good at disruption:** the process of developing skills, processes and capabilities to address disruptive forces in ways that allow for development and implementation of organisational strategy on a sustained and evolving basis

**Core / unrestricted funding / institutional support / general operating support:** funding that is provided on a philanthropic basis to a CSO for implementation of its mission but that is not earmarked for any particular use. In a variation, sometimes the term 'core funding' is used to refer to financial support that is earmarked for 'core' operating costs, such as overheads and / or governance or staff costs.

**Project / programme support:** funding that is earmarked for a particular project and / or programme of work.

## Disruptive change as a challenge for funders

Powerful and transformative drivers of change are at work on the landscape of international development. Demographic and geopolitical shifts, climate change, natural resource scarcity, urbanisation and technological transformation will have far-reaching and deeply felt impacts. They will also disrupt existing organisations and ways of doing things. This is disruptive change, and it demands innovation on a global scale.

Grappling with the challenges of disruptive change will be crucial to implementing the SDGs, which were adopted by world leaders from all members of the United Nations in September 2015 to guide a global agenda for action to 2030. Crucially, the commitment to 'leave no-one behind' that is woven into the SDGs will not be met if Southern CSOs are themselves left behind as a result of disruptive change.

For Southern CSOs, these are already turbulent times, with volatility and uncertainty a daily fact of life for many. The significant worry is that the urgent too often prevails over the important, hampering civil society efforts to prepare for the bigger shifts now on the horizon. This could prevent CSOs from realising their roles as positive disruptors, and to do this in the places where disruption bites on the world's most vulnerable people.

Over the past year and a half, IIED has been talking to leaders of Southern CSOs about their experiences with the organisational impacts of disruptive change. The increasing frequency and intensity of disruptive impacts from two particular external sources stand out: funding turbulence, and shifting (and too-often shrinking) operating spaces for civil society. Not only are these changes disruptive in their own right; they also significantly exacerbate the negative impacts of other disruptive forces.

For funders who support Southern CSOs – whether they do so directly or through intermediaries such as international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) – the intensity of already-existing disruptive forces coupled with the major shifts that lie on the horizon are an imperative for deep reflection on grantmaking approaches.

## An increased emphasis on support for organisational skills, systems and capabilities within CSOs needs to provide part of the response to the reality and prospects of disruptive change.

Ford Foundation is one major civil society funder that has explicitly linked an increased emphasis on institutional grantmaking to increased pressure on the civil society space, and on the imperative to help CSOs to be more resilient. Equally, it's no surprise to find that the Open Society Foundations, whose *raison d'être* is to support a vibrant civil society, have a dedicated Grant Making Support Unit working to build internal capabilities for a greater grantmaking emphasis on support of organisations, or sometimes their leaders.<sup>1</sup> Project or programme-based funding too often overlooks the foundational importance of these capabilities, or tacitly assumes that they will be nurtured and sustained through other processes.

*"We want to add to existing philanthropic knowledge about what it takes to build strong civil society organizations, and we want to do so meaningfully. In particular, we seek to better understand the kinds and levels of support that will make a critical difference to an organization's overall health and resiliency, and at what stages in its life cycle"*

Darren Walker, President, Ford Foundation, June 2016<sup>2</sup>

## Why support Southern CSOs?

There are plenty of reasons for funders to support CSOs in middle and low-income countries. One that is fundamental is a belief in the inherent value of civil society in any flourishing society, including in its organised forms.

The ability to respond to disruption and lead innovation is an essential function of civil society. This makes it vital to consider the ability of more organised forms of civil society to support people affected by disruption – even in times of change and uncertainty for civil society itself.

The work of CSOs rooted in the South is invaluable in amplifying the voices of ordinary people in these countries, and doing so on a lasting basis. CSOs are often close to the places where big disruptive changes are first felt. As a result, they are often in the best position to pioneer innovative ways to tackle them, whether it's through the social power of community organising or smart data in rapidly urbanising areas at severe risk from climate change.

**Crucially, the commitment to ‘leave no-one behind’ that is woven into the SDGs will not be met if Southern CSOs are themselves left behind as a result of disruptive change.**

The idea of disruptive change can mean different things to different people. Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, one of IIED’s Southern CSO leader interviewees in the disruptive change initiative, suggests that in layman’s terms the essential idea of a disruptive change is that ‘life won’t be the same again’. In the business management field, a ‘disruptive change’ refers to a shock that quickly and irreversibly changes a company’s expected future, challenging existing business models, values and norms.<sup>3</sup> In the context of civil society and international development though, the term ‘disruptive change’ has been applied more broadly. It encompasses major drivers of change that gradually disrupt the international development landscape, as well as the distinct drivers of change that affect development organisations’ operational realities.

It is important to recognise that a disruptive change for one CSO might be no more than a minor event in the peripheral vision of another. One organisation’s negative disruption may be another’s force for growth and innovation.

For funders, this means that a wide range of disruptors – from changes in leadership or board membership to technology and natural disasters for example – need to be factored into any dedicated approach to supporting CSOs as they ‘get good at disruption’.

*“There is a vast field of innovators, who can help us to move forward, to use disruption not as something to fight against but as a steppingstone for the transformation that is needed”*

Mariteuw Chimère Diaw, Cameroon

**What does it take for Southern CSOs to get good at disruption?**

IIED’s disruptive change initiative has been looking into what’s involved if Southern CSOs are to ‘get good at disruption’; or rather if they’re to get *even better* in ways that allow them to develop and implement organisational strategy on a sustained and evolving basis.

There is a strong body of existing literature describing the sources and impacts of organisational disruption.<sup>4</sup> Very little of it has addressed the experiences of Southern CSOs, and very little of it has addressed the skills and capabilities of effective disruptive change management. Yet ‘getting good at disruption’ is at its heart about developing organisational skills and capabilities and the internal processes to accompany them.

For CSOs facing disruption on an ongoing basis, getting good at disruption isn’t about *controlling* disruption, but about finding their way alongside, and in tandem with, disruption. Getting beyond reaction, or even adaptation, to *innovation*, offers CSOs a route to a future that is in their hands.

IIED’s conversations with leaders of Southern CSOs have also led to some high level, tentative, hypotheses.

**There are interlinked organisational characteristics associated with being ‘good’ at disruption:**

- ‘Distributed’ leadership; a non-hierarchical approach in which everyone in the organisation is empowered as a leader in one or more areas
- An organisational ability to nurture, enhance and fully deploy the internal skills base
- Organisational culture that empowers everyone
- Commitment to organisational learning and the use of foresight

Whilst these characteristics might be among the distinctive markers of a CSO that is more likely to be ‘good at disruption’, they are neither exhaustive nor sufficient. Adopting a disruptive change perspective doesn’t, for example, reduce the relevance of governance or financial management systems when it comes to understanding organisations’ effectiveness. It is, however, a perspective that brings new building blocks to intelligent and high quality grant-making at a time of great concern about the resilience of Southern CSOs. Funders could usefully ask whether their own strategies and practices accelerate, or hinder, the development of ‘disruption-ready’ characteristics within grantees.

*“Disruptive innovations, if not nurtured in the right way, fall flat. A lot of things are being developed, but there aren’t the right mechanisms for taking them forward”*

CSO leader, SE Asia

## Recommendations for innovating funder practice

Access to resources is essential for the survival of Southern CSOs, but these resources could do more than simply allow organisations to survive. Allocated effectively, funding can enable Southern CSOs to thrive in uncertain times.

Too often funding practices put up barriers to getting good at disruption. Interviews with Southern CSO leaders offer insights into how effective funding practices can catalyse disruption-readiness.

### 1. Fund flexibly

Organisational flexibility is one of the key demands of an effective disruptive change approach. For CSOs, whether flexibility exists or not is partly determined by leadership style and organisational culture. But financial resources are also a key determinant. And the financial resources available to many CSOs for investment in the skills, capabilities and processes to get good at disruption are extremely scarce.

Funding for CSOs needs to facilitate transformation in the face of disruptive change. Access to unrestricted funding or dedicated organisational development support is invaluable for CSOs that are working to get good at disruption. These funding approaches allow investment in organisational capabilities and learning processes. They build, and build on, trust. They enable a variety of flexible strategic processes within CSOs that give space to longer-term perspectives and foresight away from the urgent clamour of the short-term. Most importantly, they help CSOs to set their own course and to realise the full extent of their own agency.

*“There needs to be greater investment in developing institutions: organisations need space to develop their value proposition, a vision of where they want to go – and they need help delivering it. Projects can kill organisations when they make us lose our strategic focus”*

Lina Villa-Córdoba, Colombia

### 2. Fund intermediaries to support disruption-readiness

Funders that support INGOs could begin to reflect on these grantees' approaches to supporting partners experiencing disruptive change. As a start, funders could provide explicit incentives for finance provided to INGOs for learning or organisational development to be shared with Southern CSO grantees. Funders could also consider developing flexible grants for INGOs to provide technical support, on request, to Southern CSOs. This would reverse the direction of established contractual flows.

Those funders that feel distant from on-the-ground realities could consider the potential for engaging more closely with community foundations in middle or low-income countries as re-granting intermediaries. This is an exciting area with great 'disruptive change' potential where the community of practice is evolving rapidly.<sup>5</sup>

*“On the parts [of the grant the Northern NGO is] subcontracting, [the Northern NGO keeps all the funding for] all the systems and learning and overheads. They're only giving us the project funds”*

CSO leader, Kenya

### 3. Invest in shared learning

Different kinds of funders – from corporate and private foundations to bilateral donor agencies accountable to governments – will respond to disruptive change in different ways and at different paces. There is also plenty of scope for shared learning on what internal skills and capacities are needed as well as on emerging best practice.

Shared learning could usefully extend to Southern CSOs too. It's clear from IIED's conversations that their funding environment is rapidly changing; but it isn't clear what it's transitioning towards. This places a premium on qualities of adaptability and resilience. Funders can help by supporting learning processes for Southern CSOs to work through what these qualities mean when it comes to fundraising choices.

*“What is impossible to fund is transformational planning... You just can't fund 'organisational jumps' through project funding”*

Nicole Leotaud, Trinidad and Tobago

## Conclusion and the bigger challenge of transformative change

For CSO leaders involved in IIED's disruptive change initiative, early discussions on the funding implications of disruptive change have led naturally to a bigger question of agency: what approaches to generating financial resources in the global South have the best potential to catalyse positive transformational change? For funders, an explicit focus on supporting disruption capabilities among Southern CSOs holds the promise of more, and better, locally grounded and self-directed transformation. That's something that's surely worth investing in.

*“Adaptation is dancing to somebody else's music. Innovation is composing and playing your own music – and having others dance to it”*

Alfredo del Valle, Chile

## 4. Listening to Southern CSOs

### Using feedback to serve local communities

The localisation agenda and the drive to fund directly aims to devolve decision-making about how money is spent into the hands of in-country civil society organisations (Southern CSOs). The final objective of this is a local civil society that is more resilient, autonomous and empowered.

However, many funders are not able to fund directly, such as those who are legally bound to support UK registered charities only. How can funders ensure that grantmaking fulfils final objectives of encouraging a thriving local civil society, regardless of whether they fund directly or not?

### Meaningful feedback as a driver for change

Gathering and using feedback from local partners is one way that funders can make sure the voices of the CSOs on the ground are heard. Using feedback from Southern CSOs, this paper finds that:

- Southern CSOs value working with INGOs for a range of reasons, not solely funding. Funders should encourage their INGO grantees to support their CSO partners in achieving shared goals
- More than half of the Southern CSOs surveyed had less than four funding sources, and many reported that a diverse funding base is a priority. Funders can encourage this by supporting in-country fundraising capacity
- Southern CSOs report valuing clear and timely communication with their INGO partners, but felt under-resourced in their core costs. Whether working directly or through INGOs, funders need to prioritise Southern CSO core support

### Introduction

Since 2010, Keystone Accountability has conducted benchmarked surveys of the local partners of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs). In doing so, they have found that there are common key themes that CSOs in low- and middle- income countries ('Southern CSOs') report when they talk about their relationships with Northern funders. These suggestions are relevant to funders, including those who work through INGOs.

Over the past six years, Keystone Accountability's Partnership Survey has gathered responses from thousands of local partners to 120 questions, covering every dimension of partnership. The surveys are confidential, so local partners have a safe space to express their thoughts allowing for an open, data-driven dialogue for improving performance.

Benchmarks from the comparative data set tell the INGOs where they stand, relative to their peers. The survey uses a variation of the Net Promoter Score (NPS) model from the business world.<sup>1</sup> In this way, it offers an understanding of how many people are 'promoters' of a service, rather than 'detractors'. The NPS provides a single benchmark for each question, which can be tracked over time.<sup>2</sup>

Local partners give feedback in a wide range of areas. INGOs have used the results of their individual surveys to make various changes to the way they work, thereby improving the quality of their partnerships.

For example, INGOs have improved in areas such as financial flexibility, reducing burdensome monitoring and evaluation processes, and improved prioritisation processes by consulting partners about which needs are most pressing.<sup>3</sup>

The back-funder of an INGO plays an important part in this process, and therefore the results of the surveys hold recommendations for funders as well. Better relationships between funders, intermediaries and implementing partners (often a Southern CSO) make for improved development outcomes, and the data presented is an opportunity to hear the voices of thousands of Southern CSOs.

## Key findings

**Overall, the results of the surveys are unsurprising: Southern CSOs want to be respected and supported, and they seek to grow their sustainable funding base in the same way most organisations do.**

The survey analysis offers some insight into areas that may have particular relevance to funders.

### 1. Why do Southern CSOs work with INGOs?

Southern CSOs say they work with INGOs for a variety of reasons, not solely funding. Surprisingly, funding isn't even cited as the main reason they work with INGOs. The top four reasons that CSOs cited for working with INGOs are:

1. To achieve shared goals
2. To strengthen their skills and organisational capacity
3. For joint learning and understanding
4. Funding

### 2. What do Southern CSOs feel about their income streams?

Most respondents (36%) have worked with the INGO for more than six years. The local CSOs aspire to realise the diverse and robust funding bases of their INGO partners.

This table shows how many funders respondents have, with more than half of all Southern CSOs surveyed reporting less than four funders for their organisation.

Number of funders	Percentage of respondents
1-2	20.3%
3-4	29.2%
5-6	18.9%
7-8	9.3%
9 or more	20.5%
None	1.7%

Partners want to be financially sustainable, and many think that INGOs could help them with this by introducing them to other funders or promoting their work.

*"[Name] cannot finance all activities but can help in marketing its partner organizations [sic] through lobbying for more support and connecting them up to potential partners"*

Southern CSO survey respondent

### 3. What do Southern CSOs consider to be good and bad funding practices?

The survey asks Southern CSOs about the funding practices of the INGOs they work with, in terms of how funding is distributed for the work undertaken. Unsurprisingly, overall Southern CSOs want to be treated as equal partners, with their complaints, questions and concerns considered and responded to.

More specifically, survey respondents report the following as 'good funding practices':

1. Full explanations provided on the conditions of funding required by the original funders
2. Payments being appropriate (i.e. timely) so partners can manage their cash flow

In terms of 'bad' funding practice, the survey respondents cited the following:

1. Not allowing midcourse correction (the flexibility to be adaptive while the project is in progress)
2. Not covering core costs (i.e. providing funding for activities only, thereby not supporting the partner's essential administrative costs and other overheads)

*"They should focus on enabling us to become strong, visible and independent to achieve shared goals rather than as a vehicle to implement programs [sic] only"*

Southern CSO survey respondent

#### 4. How do Southern CSOs feel about relationships and communications?

Southern CSOs were asked how they felt about their relationship with their INGO partners, with higher scores indicating higher levels of satisfaction. Although the CSOs were responding to questions about INGOs in the survey, their responses are as relevant to funders that fund directly as they are to INGOs or other intermediaries.

With regards to what they felt were positive communications, respondents reported that:

- INGO partners understood their strategy and context (NPS 32)<sup>4</sup>
- INGO staff attitude was rated highly (NPS 49)
- Respondents were comfortable raising concerns to the INGO (NPS 50)

Respondents noted the following areas as needing improvement:

- INGOs should put more effort into promoting the work of their partners in the media (NPS -30)
- INGOs should introduce a proper complaints system (NPS -23)
- INGOs should ask their partners for advice (NPS -10)

One resounding request was that INGOs should clearly communicate the purpose of reporting and offer feedback on reports received. This may help address one issue, which is that only just over half of respondents (53%) believe that they are being asked to report on 'important issues'.

*"Involve partners more when developing strategic plans and project proposals, not just to call them in to implement"*

*"[Name] are very good in publicizing [sic] their work and we would love to see this extended to partners as a way of building partner profiles too"*

Southern CSO survey respondents

#### 5. What do Southern CSOs want their INGO partners to help with?

When asked what they would like their INGO partners to support them with, Southern CSOs said:

- 33% respondents wanted help accessing other sources of funding
- 16% wanted help with long-term strategies

*"[Name] is not a typical funder, we look at it more as a partner. They contribute, through assessments and support, to our organisational development. They also support our ability to communicate and document our work improving our efficiency and effectiveness"*

Southern CSO survey respondent

### Conclusion and recommendations

All of the feedback above is applicable to all actors in the international development system that work with or fund local, in-country CSOs, whether directly or via intermediaries such as INGOs. Those who are funding directly can take on these points, and those who fund via INGOs can incentivise positive behaviours that respond to this feedback through their grantmaking policies and practices.

A number of key recommendations can be drawn.

#### 1. Funders who work through INGOs should ask their grantees to report on their relationships with partners

Although partner relationships is not a metric that funders often require their INGO grantees to report on, it is vital to development outcomes, and should be included in proposals, milestones and reports. This could be done through independent third party tools, or by the grantees conducting their own surveys of partners and relaying the responses to their funders.

Funders should insist on both quantitative and qualitative evidence of positive relationship measures. Funders can request information that offers evidence of partnership and stakeholder engagement, including:

- Quantitative scores of different relationship measures, such as: levels of trust, how responsive the INGO is, and how included partners feel in the INGO's decision-making processes
- Qualitative case studies or interviews with partners, which develop on these important measures and include suggestions for how to improve



- Funders could incentivise particular efforts by monitoring specific indicators, such as Southern CSO's perspective of good communication, listening to partners' opinions and priorities and sharing information

The aim is for funders or INGOs to find a way to track their relationships with CSOs (and, ideally, the communities they intend to serve) over time, and to give due consideration to creating strong, lasting partnerships. Back-funders should be interested in these relationship measures as a possible predictor of sustainable outcomes and as an indicator of true locally-led development.

## **2. All funders should ask their partners about how they cultivate the voices of people they seek to serve and incorporate this feedback into improving their work**

Funders should ensure that their grantees are not only listening to Southern CSO voices but are also acting on what they hear and reporting back to all stakeholders, in effect 'closing the feedback loop'.

This type of 'adaptive management' can ensure that learning is not just gathered for reports or 'upward accountability', but can be used to enhance impact. Bond has written a guide on adaptive management, offering examples and guidance on how feedback and monitoring can improve success.

Whether a funder works through an INGO or directly with Southern CSOs, funder staff should prioritise the involvement of constituents in the design and monitoring of services. Funders can seek this input via requesting data from feedback mechanisms, and evidence that this information has informed the design or adaptations to the project or programme.

- Encourage ongoing monitoring of partners' opinions to track performance, and sharing this with all constituents
- Encourage INGOs to create equal partnerships with their Southern CSOs partners by gathering, monitoring and responding to data on the Southern CSO's perspectives of the partnership
- As well as the Keystone survey, this can be done through light touch surveys or by using the online benchmarking tool The Feedback Commons. The costs of these feedback processes should be allowed to be built into project budgets

## **3. Use the data reported here to adapt funding practices in response to Southern CSO feedback**

Even from the limited feedback offered in this report, there are a number of recommendations that can be drawn which funders of international development – whether direct or indirect – can note:

- Try to ensure that reporting is not overly burdensome and, where possible coordinate, with other funders to align requirements
- Provide feedback to partners (whether INGOs or Southern CSOs) on their reports and how they are used by the funder
- Encourage the INGOs you fund to offer tailored capacity building to their partner, or seek other ways of supporting this
- Ensure the INGOs you are funding are promoting and recognising the work of their CSO partners and, if appropriate, recognise the CSO partner in funder materials
- Seek ways to ensure that Southern CSOs are able to cover their core operational costs, and are not being 'starved' by project-to-project funding

We should all be seeking to ensure that centrality of the perspective of Southern CSOs and the communities they intend to serve in funded relationships. Those with resources need to utilise them in a way that embodies the principles of locally-led development, and feedback is a central part of this.

## 5. Public support for Southern civil society

### Building support to increase direct funding

Funders seeking to increase funding directly to southern CSOs can use insights into public perceptions and engagement in donor countries to shape their communications around this strategy.

While the need to shape communications will be particularly important for funders with formal accountability to the public, any funder who communicates with the public about development matters should also be aware of the evidence about what works when communicating with the public.

This briefing paper offers insight from research on public attitudes on international development and focuses on:

- Evidence that public support for international causes is weak and needs strengthening
- Evidence-based tips for how to build public support in this area
- Practical examples that funders can apply in their communications

### Introduction: Attitudes to aid

As funders seek to increase the amount of funding that they offer directly to civil society in the Global South, it is important to mitigate any negative impact this change could have upon public attitudes and engagement with global poverty. Instead, we should use the opportunity to bolster support.

Some funders are concerned that the public may react negatively to the allocation of an increasing proportion of institutional funds to civil society organisations (CSOs) in the Global South. The press and significant segments of the population are highly sceptical about aid efficacy and therefore funders, and others seeking to influence and partner with funders, must develop evidence informed strategies to encourage public support for these new financial flows.

### About this research

The Aid Attitude Tracker research programme,<sup>1</sup> a partnership between researchers, nine UK charities, the Department for International Development and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, gives the sector the ability to track and understand engagement as never before. The insights below come from this project, which involves a biannual tracking survey of 8,500 people in the UK, as well as additional bespoke experiments and qualitative analysis.

### Key proposals

Public perceptions of aid and other efforts to overcome global poverty are poor. Public engagement is declining: over three years the percentage of the public donating to international causes is down from 36% to 23%, and the percentage of the public fundraising for these causes is down from 7.6% to 4.6%.<sup>2</sup> Funders can play a key role in improving public opinion and increasing donations by using their access to public audiences and their credibility.

A significant proportion of the public do not see addressing poverty overseas as aligned with their moral frameworks and this shapes how they engage. Many worry that funding is ineffective and engaging with global poverty is increasingly unpopular. However, new and ongoing research gives development actors the evidence they need to influence public perceptions, increase public support for aid and development, and champion direct funding for partners in the Global South.

The following five tips will improve your communications and enable you to both actively engage the public and support funders' efforts to address global poverty.

### 1. Tell stories about how direct funding increases the impact of spending and participating

The Aid Attitude programmes work finds that:

- Only 10% of the public think that aid is 'effective'<sup>3</sup> while 56% think that 'most aid is wasted'
- Only 5% of the public believe they can personally make a significant difference to reducing poverty overseas<sup>4</sup>

However, analysis shows that the more people feel that their action and action taken by institutions can reduce poverty the more they are inclined to engage. It is particularly important to improve this perception among donors, volunteers and campaigners.<sup>5</sup>

To increase feelings of hope which can address these concerns, communication outputs should:

- Enable audiences to feel a closer connection to 'real impact' by sharing relatable examples of progress  
For example, improved learning outcomes in a classroom or access to justice for a person experiencing discrimination
- When asking people to contribute to change, ensure there is a clear and reasonable logic behind your call to action. Don't ask them to sign a petition to 'end poverty' or donate to 'end preventable child mortality' – such requests don't clearly show how individual contributions make an impact

Focus on improving perceptions of efficacy among those who are already supporting international development issues by donating or volunteering.

#### Case study

Though not from a southern CSO, Oxfam's South Sudan emergency appeal video is a good example of a piece of communication which successfully communicates a 'real impact' feeling.



### 2. Show people that reducing global poverty is consistent with their morals

People's sense of morality is important for their engagement with global poverty. The research shows:

- 25% of people agree that countries should increase aid because it is the morally right thing to do<sup>6</sup>
- 33% would feel guilty if they ignored the needs of poor people in poor countries<sup>7</sup>
- 20% agree that they should personally be donating money<sup>8</sup>

Analysis shows that increasing the perception that addressing global poverty is a 'moral cause' increases public engagement. This moral dimension is particularly important for disengaged audiences, as people subconsciously ask themselves 'Do I care?'.<sup>9</sup>

Working with Southern civil society partners, funders can improve engagement by:

- Making it apparent that supporting civil society in the Global South is a way for people to be consistent with the morals they already hold, such as a belief in 'fairness' or 'equity'. Being perceived as 'taking the moral high ground' or 'moralising' is likely to disengage audiences
- Engage people's moral triggers by using case studies, imagery and messages which make people feel the 'injustice', 'unfairness', 'inequity' and 'wasted potential' which programmes are addressing
- Use relatable moral concerns such as tax dodging, unemployment due to global market pressures and gender discrimination to form empathetic bridges between audiences and civil society partners

#### Case study

Action Aid's Make Tax Fair campaign successfully communicates this moral case, triggering a sense of shared unfairness and shared injustice, as tax dodging is a challenge in the UK.



### 3. Show audiences that other people 'like them' are happy to provide direct funding and break down barriers to build empathy

Group thinking has proven to be an effective way of encouraging people to act in certain ways.

Findings show:

- 26% of people believe that working with others to overcome poverty in poor countries is a worthwhile way to spend time<sup>10</sup>
- 47% agree that most people in Great Britain respect those who do charitable work to reduce global poverty<sup>11</sup>
- 40% feel that they have 'very little' in common with people in the world's poorest places<sup>12</sup>

Audiences are influenced by evidence that other people positively perceive programmes to end poverty, or evidence that others are getting involved in these causes. This influence is more powerful when these examples of the public offering positive support seem similar to the audiences hearing the message – a student hearing from another student, for example.

Although there is no evidence specifically on this area and work with Southern CSOs, action should be taken to promote increased engagement with Southern civil society:

- Identify messengers to act as 'peer advocates' who will show their support for new efforts to directly fund
- Consider how language and imagery can be used to break down barriers between audiences, civil society partners and programme participants. Images should show groups of people, not single individuals, and collective nouns such as 'we' should be used. These subconsciously trigger feelings of empathy
- Communications should show how joy, sadness, challenges and aspirations are universal

#### Case study

The 'Meet our Friends' section of the Save the Children fundraising pack works excellently at showing audiences how other 'ordinary' people support Save the Children's work.



### 4. Develop and raise profile of spokespeople from the Global South

Different 'messengers' – individuals delivering the message – are perceived differently by audiences. The most influential messengers are those who are perceived as warm (having aligned intentions to those of the audience) *as well as* competent (having the capability to achieve their intentions).

Frontline workers, whether from the West or the South, are the most influential messengers currently used in international development communications. They are perceived as caring for others, trustworthy, experienced and knowledgeable. These are all traits which influence public support.

Volunteers and iconic spokespeople (for example, Malala) are particularly prominent in being perceived as both warm and competent.

Sadly, people living in poverty who are presented as 'recipients' (as often happens) are perceived as neither warm nor competent, so they do not generate as much public support.<sup>13</sup>

- Funders directly funding civil society in the Global South can shift the narrative away from 'recipients' towards people living in poverty as active participants and leaders
- Encourage grantees to also shift their narrative where necessary
- Highlight frontline workers with job titles which sound practical or 'hands on' (such as Doctor, Teacher or Water Engineer) to increase support for direct funding of civil society in the global South, and of other efforts to overcome poverty

### **5. Make people feel anger towards poverty and inequality, as well as hope that injustice can be overcome**

Strong emotions are critical for engaging the public in efforts to address global poverty, and are also likely have the same effect when increasing support for direct funding. Tests have shown that two emotions are key to increasing support for aid, a sense of personal efficacy, and the propensity to donate:

1. Hope is the most powerful emotion for increasing propensity to donate and for increasing a sense of efficacy
2. Anger is also powerful, increasing donations and encouraging support for aid

Civil society in the Global South may be better able to convey these emotions, as they are more emotionally connected to the challenges faced and the solutions being put in place.

To encourage this, funders can adapt their communications:

- Convey hope by presenting need, clearly accompanied by evidence that there is an opportunity to reduce that need
- Trigger 'anger' setting a tone by declaring anger or outrage towards the situation of poverty
- Test the 'balance' of messaging between 'need' and 'solution', as research suggests that some audiences are significantly put off by overemphasis of need

## **Conclusion and recommendations**

**To increase the flow of aid toward civil society in the Global South, funders need to mitigate the risks of declining public support.**

Following the five top tips above will enable funders to mitigate the risks and maximise the potential of their communications relating to direct funding of civil society in the Global South.

Funders should seek to share and discuss these insights with their partners in the Global South so they can work together to design and develop the communication materials needed. Funders and partners should seek to monitor, evaluate and learn as new suggestions are implemented, and should use this learning to inform future public communications and appeals.

## 6. Southern civil society in the lead

### Putting local people in the lead

The UK's Big Lottery Fund allocates a part of their budget to international causes, including on occasion responding to natural disasters. In the pressures of an emergency, smaller community-based organisations are often overlooked, with recovery being less effective as a result.

Through conversations with practitioners and other experts, the Big Lottery Fund recognised the need to shift towards supporting smaller actors to achieve sustainable development outcomes.

The drive to support more locally relevant organisations has clear resonance with their new Strategic Framework, which focuses on:

- Confidence, not control: Flexibility and responsiveness to civil society actors
- Strength-based approach: Instead of seeing what people are lacking, focus on their strengths
- Simple processes, good judgements: Allowing Big Lottery Fund staff to work closer with applicants

Putting this into practice entails testing new ways of working and approaches, and very much learning by doing. The Big Lottery Fund is seeking ways to use simpler processes that enable their staff to make good judgements, with the intention being to be conversational and accessible, to help them make bold, informed choices about the resources given to them by players of the UK's national lottery.

To support the Big Lottery Fund in identifying groups who were most cognisant of the local context and with stronger relationships with communities, staff have changed the approach they had taken in previous funding rounds, looking to remove barriers to funding new and different organisations. This briefing paper offers insight into this process.

### Introduction

The Big Lottery Fund distributes 40% of the money raised for good causes through National Lottery ticket sales, roughly £650m per year. Of this, a small but significant budget (1-2%) is spent internationally, supporting international development work and on occasion responding to significant natural disasters.

Following the devastating earthquakes in Nepal in 2015, the Big Lottery Fund ('the Fund') announced that £2 million would be made available to help with rebuilding affected communities. This was the first international funding committed following the launch of a new organisational Strategic Framework, which has the ambition to put 'People in the Lead' at the heart of everything the Fund does.

'People in the Lead' is about focusing on assets, rather than deficits. The intention is to start with what people bring to the table, not what they don't have; it is rooted in the belief that people and communities are best placed to solve their problems, take advantage of opportunities, and rise to challenges. This involves changing funding policy and grant-making practice to reflect this approach.

### A shift in strategy

The 2015 Global Humanitarian Assistance Report<sup>1</sup> showed that just 1.6% of total international assistance went directly to local and national NGOs between 2010 and 2014. Humanitarian aid has at times been criticised for displacing rather than strengthening existing structures and not responding to the local context.

In the pressures of an emergency, smaller community-based organisations can be overlooked, with work being less effective as a result. Through conversations with practitioners and other experts, the Fund recognised this

need to shift towards supporting smaller actors, with the drive to support more locally relevant organisations having clear resonance with the desire to put people in the lead.

Like many funders, the Big Lottery Fund is unable to directly fund Southern organisations, and so supports work overseas through funding UK-based INGOs. Within this context, for the Nepal response they sought to identify the organisations who could most clearly demonstrate that they were responsive to, and respected by local communities.

To support the Fund in identifying groups who were most cognisant of the local context and with potentially stronger relationships with communities, staff changed the approach they had taken in previous funding rounds. In the first instance, they looked to remove barriers to funding new and different organisations.

In line with the Strategic Framework, they were looking to fund organisations that:

- Had genuinely strong local links and networks
- Were people-led
- Focussed on the existing strengths and assets within a community

The hope was that this approach would lead to communities taking more power and control over projects, therefore leading to greater sustainability.

The process for designing this new way of funding involved stripping back on all the processes used in previous, perhaps more bureaucratic programmes. This included:

- More involvement and a greater focus on building relationships with new groups
- Working more closely with the organisations shortlisted to develop proposals
- Discarding or greatly reducing the rules, matrices, criteria and deadlines that had at times hampered funding
- Instead of setting specific outcomes and objectives, some loose guidance around principles and the 'People in the Lead' vision sufficed to ensure the projects aligned with aspirations

## Key changes

In this new approach, the Fund aimed for:

### **A greater focus on identifying organisations that most closely aligned with the new People in the Lead ethos of community-owned actions**

**How:** Through a simpler application process and using networks to help identify organisations doing great work. The opportunity to develop and refine more detail around actual project proposals was allowed for during the second stage.

### **Not being prescriptive up-front as to the type of work the funding should support, in recognition that different communities would be facing different challenges**

**How:** Removing the requirement to meet specific thematic objectives (e.g. Education, Health, Livelihoods), and instead focussing on community ownership. One of the key criteria was that organisations could demonstrate strong community ties, and would develop a proposal that was truly responsive to the local situation and what communities themselves felt was needed, rather than a pre-conceived idea.

### **Removing arbitrary limits on the amount that could be applied for, and project length**

**How:** One of the Fund's similar, previous programmes had set a minimum grant amount of £1.5m which automatically narrowed the field of potential applications and disadvantaged smaller groups. The new funding round did not stipulate minimum or maximum grant amounts, instead encouraging people to apply based on what was needed and what they felt they could manage.

### **Simplifying application forms at initial stages to allow applicants to explain what communities themselves are seeking**

**How:** Requesting that an initial expression of interest be submitted in 2-3 sides of A4 as opposed to long forms. The questions in this focussed on examples of work with communities before and after the earthquake, thoughts about what was needed, and information as to how these thoughts were gathered.

### **Greater engagement of external expertise with insight into the local context to support our decision making**

**How:** Although decision making rested with the Fund, expert advice was sought from outside the organisation to support this process. This included gathering insight from a network of contacts who know Nepalese civil society well, along with insight from academics with knowledge of the wider challenges of disaster recovery work. Additionally, an external review was undertaken of the projects' adherence to the Core Humanitarian Standards, to provide both assurance and feedback on areas for development during project delivery.

### **Mitigating the intense competition of the second stage and instead encouraging dialogue**

**How:** By taking through a limited number of proposals that had a combined value within the overall budget for the programme. This allowed the Fund to work more collaboratively with applicants during the development phase to support them, rather than making the second stage intensely competitive. The approach encouraged a more open dialogue between Fund staff and applicants, and greater opportunities for applicants themselves to work together through a joint workshop on developing a theory of change. This also sowed the seed for ongoing learning initiatives in the UK and Nepal.

## **Initial outcomes**

**Eight applications were shortlisted, and ultimately funded, from a total of 46 initial submissions. Interestingly, only one of these funded organisations had previously been supported by the Fund.**

Some examples from the awarded grants are felt to particularly demonstrate the new approach of People in the Lead as distinct from the Fund's previous approaches. These include:

- An organisation that has been awarded funds to be distributed as small grants to small indigenous organisations in Nepal that would normally not have been able to access this funding
- A project that focuses on strengthening the action of local communities and individuals so that they can play a greater role in re-building their futures. In this, there is an unusual element of onward grant-making, as the basis of the project incorporates community mobilisation using a strengths-based approach, by embracing and promoting community philanthropy. This approach again allows the Fund access to a range of organisations that it would not normally have access to, allowing funding for small organisations that can be truly classed as being 'grassroots'

The learning from the approach taken with the Nepal funding, and how it could be applied to the future, will be considered in more detail over the coming months.

### **Case Study: PHASE Nepal**

PHASE Worldwide and their local partners PHASE Nepal have been working together in Nepal for 10 years. PHASE specialise in working in extremely remote Himalayan areas to deliver integrated community development work across health, education and livelihoods projects. PHASE had 80 staff in the field when the Nepal April 2015 earthquake hit and two (of four) of their project areas were among the regions worst hit by the disaster. In April 2016, PHASE received £537,114 from the Big Lottery Fund to support them to assist with recovery by working alongside local communities over the next 5 years.

Currently PHASE have just 3 staff in the UK, whereas PHASE Nepal have 150 staff. Just 3% of the funding will be retained in the UK, as most of the monitoring and evaluation work and project development will be done by the Nepal team. The initial project plans were also led by the Nepal team in consultation with the communities. PHASE are able to easily undertake this as the majority of the staff team are based in project communities for 10 months of the year.

Jiban Karki, Executive Director of PHASE Nepal said: *"Although we are DFID funded, the grant from the Big Lottery Fund is the largest we have received through our UK partner, PHASE Worldwide. The key differences between this and applications we have done before include that the funding application process felt more like a conversation, where the views of the local organisation were really taken into account.*

*The project is over 5 years which means we can support recovery in the longer term and can be more flexible in responding to changing needs. For example, we had a particularly bad monsoon season this year and had to limit all staff movement. This will impact on the project but the flexibility means we have time to recover to ensure impact.*

*We didn't specify all the project activities until all the baseline work was completed which meant we could be very sure we were responding to truly to community need. The project areas are very remote, and accessing them can take several days by foot – Big Lottery have recognised this and give us the time we need to gather additional information."*





Focus Group Meeting, Keraunja region, Nepal, May 2016

## Conclusion and recommendations

Although it is too early to say what the long-term impact of funding in this way and using this different approach will be, the Fund has already seen changes, for example in the types of organisation it has been able to support.

Responsibilities or constraints that must be maintained include accountability to the public as a public-facing donor, and being required to fund through UK organisations. Thus whilst the above represents just a small movement towards shifting power South, the Fund do feel that this new portfolio of grants is a step in the right direction that can continue to be developed over the coming years.

The timing is ripe for this shift in direction. Prior to the Global Humanitarian Report being released, many INGOs and other stakeholders within the sector had recognised the need to relinquish power to the Global South, with EveryChild as an example of just one UK INGO who are winding up their UK operations in order to enable local CSOs to take leadership themselves. The work that Bond are doing with the Shifting South: Future Funding Forum initiative demonstrates the growing interest amongst the sector in resourcing Southern civil society in a more effective way.

Alongside this wider recognition that it is the 'right thing to do' to support more community-led approaches, one key reflection would be that as a funder it takes an internal enabling environment to allow for exploring new ways of working. The Big Lottery Fund's Strategic Framework was borne out of the Your Voice Our Vision consultation that ran in 2014, convening 39 roundtables across the UK attended by 500 representatives from a broad range of sectors, and gathering hundreds of comments through their website. This was followed by an intensive period of internal reflection and planning to arrive at this shared strategic direction.

The new People in the Lead framework is a key backdrop to have in place in order to make changes to the way the Fund works internationally. It has been a catalyst to introducing new ways of working within all programmes at the Fund; senior staff are keen to ensure that programme teams are trusted to explore new ways of working and learn by doing. It is likely that there would have been a number of internal barriers to running a programme in this way prior to this.

The principles of the Fund's Strategic Framework are now being implemented across the organisation. Whilst the bulk of funds are spent domestically, it is increasingly important for the approach to international programming to mirror that of the rest of the Fund, more so than was previously the case. Supporting community driven, asset-based approaches is a key area of interest that can be prioritised both within the UK and internationally, and the Fund is keen to share learning between its portfolios.

Another element that offers potential for a joined-up approach to domestic and international programming is in the area of learning between grantees and with the Fund. Taking a more collaborative approach with applicants has led to increased opportunities for projects to learn from each other. The Fund is keen to build on this momentum, hoping to ensure that fewer organisations are working in silos, instead promoting greater opportunities to address challenges jointly.

These two aspects – supporting community-driven, asset-based work and sharing the learning that this work generates – are two priority areas that will be key facets of both the Fund's international and domestic portfolios going forward. In this way, The Fund hopes to ensure that – whether they are in the Global South or in the UK – people will be firmly in the lead.

*"If you want to do good, get out of the way!"*

Anna Feuchtwang, ex CEO of EveryChild, on The Future of Doing Good

## 7. Devolving grantmaking

### Learning from approaches to devolved grantmaking

In this paper, Comic Relief seeks to share its experiences as one of the first UK funders to undertake devolved grantmaking and to invest in local grantmakers.

Many foundations are unable to give funding directly to grassroots civil society organisations in the Global South, yet wish their funds to reach these communities. Working via local grantmakers offers funders in the UK an alternative way of pursuing the agenda of shifting resources into the hands of Southern development actors.

### Why devolved grantmaking?

This paper focuses on a review of Comic Relief's funding of African grantmakers, and highlights some of the aspects that worked well, what they would do differently in the future, and some key considerations for others seeking to work in a similar way. Devolved grantmaking offers the opportunity to:

- Fund a wider range of organisations, including many that are far smaller than previously reached
- Support the capacity development of these organisations
- Build partnerships and collaborations

However issues of reporting, both for the African grantmaker and the final grant recipient, as well as the long-term impact of these small grants, need to be carefully considered for future devolved grantmaking approaches.

### Introduction

Comic Relief is proud of being one of the first UK-based funders to not only pilot devolved grantmaking to African grantmaking organisations, but also invest in the capacity of the grantmaker to support them to bring about long term social change.

The first devolved grant was given 10 years ago in 2006, to two African grant-makers. This was then extended in 2011 with Phase Two of the initiative, which funded five

African grant-makers. Since then, 18 devolved grants have been made, totalling £15 million to a range of organisations, from African grantmakers to INGOs and Foundations. After each stage of funding, Comic Relief has sought to review and learn from the previous phase. This paper focuses on the review of Phase Two, the funding of the five African grantmakers.

The specific goals for the devolved grantmaking programme were that Comic Relief would work with African grantmakers to support:

- People, groups and communities that Comic Relief doesn't normally reach, and organisations who may not have relations with UK agencies
- Work that generates fresh insights and learning about effective ways of grantmaking and international development programming on the continent, and which provides opportunities for sharing experiences of grant-making
- The development of effective grantmakers, to run efficient, cost effective and transparent programmes that provide local CSOs with resources to enable them to improve and expand their work based on their own priorities

### Context and background

The context for funders of international development is continually changing, but over the past 10 years there has been a shift towards direct funding and local ownership.

The intention is for funders to enable government and other Southern organisations to have greater ownership over the funding they receive, in the belief that this increases aid effectiveness and impact. Southern actors should be supported to design and, where possible, implement their own plans and initiatives according to their own priorities.

As many foundation funders are unable or unwilling to give to government or directly to small, local CSOs, this has led to a burgeoning number of African grantmakers to support those foundation funders who nevertheless want to pursue this agenda. In turn, there has been a rapid increase in the amount of funding these local grantmakers receive. By channelling funding through these grantmakers, the assumption is that funders are provided with the opportunity to fund initiatives where ownership issues, innovation, 'hard-to-reach' communities and issues of diversity can be addressed.

Comic Relief is one of the funders that seeks to support local ownership and respect for Southern civil society by investing in local grantmakers, thereby devolving some of their grantmaking in-country.

## What worked well?

There were several positive outcomes of the devolved grantmaking approach:

### The scope and breadth of organisations funded

Many interesting organisations and projects have been funded through Comic Relief's approach to devolved grantmaking, and grants have gone to particularly disadvantaged target groups.

Of particular note is the size of many of the grant recipients compared to many of Comic Relief's previous grants. Some grants went to smaller organisations that would not normally have been funded due to a lack of track-record, systems or relationships with UK charities. Many of the grantees that receive this funding do not typically have any access to European or American funding. Having received grant funding and capacity building support, some of these small CSO grant recipients have gone on to be able to access Comic Relief funding directly.

### Building the capacity of grantees

As well as providing funding for projects and programmes, African grantmakers invest in the institutional development of their grantees by providing capacity building support. The same has applied to Comic Relief's funding to the grantmakers. The type of devolved grantmaking funding Comic Relief offered has provided flexible core funding for institutional strengthening, helping to cover essential costs like equipment maintenance and back office costs, which are notoriously hard to cover via traditional project funding.

The devolved grantmaking approach has provided opportunities for joint learning and networking for grantmakers. Evidence gathered from the grantmakers showed this helped them strengthen their systems, processes and governance, and in-turn helped their grantees to strengthen their systems, leverage more funds, and build movements in and across countries. There was also evidence of a cascade effect, e.g. grantees offering technical support to other organisations in the locality.

Some grantees reported that they strongly prefer funds received from the devolved grantmaking approach to other grantmaking models because of its flexibility and the capacity strengthening support they receive from the grantmaker.

Many of the goals for funding through African grantmakers appear to be borne out, with grantees positive about their 'deep understanding of the context', limited bureaucracy, respectful interactions and flexible use of funds.

### Building partnerships

The principle of local ownership, where the agenda is set by those applying for the funding rather than by the funder, appears to be much stronger in these devolved grantmaking arrangements. This is the case both between Comic Relief and the African grantmaker, and the African grantmaker and the final local CSO grantee. Aspects of the relationship that the grantmakers stated that they are appreciative of are:

- honest communication;
- sharing of skills and lessons; and
- that they were able to select grantees without interference

### Positive collaboration

An advantage of this approach to devolved grantmaking is that it can create spaces for grantees to interact, share and learn, leverage different strengths and create and exploit opportunities for collaboration. For example, a grant given led to the group of grantmakers conducting a detailed mapping of all NGOs, faith based organisations and local CSOs involved in peace building in Kenya, the convening of a national conference on this issue, and the creation of a national plan of action to ensure peace in Kenya during the subsequent elections.



Courtesy of MEMPROW

Young people involved in the Mentoring and Empowerment Programme for Young Women in Uganda

## What were the challenges?

There is much to learn about how to improve future devolved grantmaking:

### Reporting and upward accountability

As a funder, Comic Relief is accountable to their Committees and Trustees, and ultimately, the British public. Their duty is to ensure that the money donated by individuals in the UK is spent well, and has a lasting impact. This requires that Comic Relief holds their grantees – in this case the African grantmakers they have devolved funding decisions to – to account for how the money is spent.

In this programme, Comic Relief found that the internal capacity of some organisations (particularly organisations that are relatively new to grantmaking) was underdeveloped in terms of systems, governance, monitoring and evaluation and communication. This has meant that some grant-makers faced challenges around meeting the standard of reporting required by Comic Relief for upward accountability.

It is important to be cognisant of these challenges (as well as the fact that organisations are often trying to juggle reporting requirements for multiple donors) when shaping reporting and upward accountability requirements, to ensure the format and regularity are not too burdensome for the grantmaker, but also that they meet the requirements of the funder.

### Grantees reporting

As well as the grantmakers that were the recipients of the devolved funding, final grantees faced difficulties in reporting the impact of their work. Furthermore, due to the short timeframe for funded projects, it was hard to both achieve and attribute change in this period. Grantees also sometimes struggled to collect good quality data.

For future devolved grantmaking, reporting requirements should be carefully considered to ensure they are appropriate for this type of funding. If one of the objectives of devolved grantmaking is to build in-country grantmaking institutions, then funders need to be

mindful of imposing their own reporting obligations and processes that may not be necessary for, or appropriate to, the devolved grantmaking institution.

It is important for funders to consider ways in which they and their grantmaking partners can support the final grantee recipients to fulfil reporting requirements. Devolved grantmaking programmes may need to consider longer timeframes if there is an intention to understand longer-term outcomes, or funders need to accept that they may not get the type of reporting that they are used to. Funders need to be realistic about what can be achieved when offering short-term grants to organisations that are often much smaller than their traditional grant recipients, and possibly lower their expectations around attributing change.

### Long-term impact for grantees

There is always a challenge around achieving long-term impact with short-term funding, and in Comic Relief's Phase Two devolved funding programme the funding was often delivered in the form of single year grants. Whilst these small grants can be catalysts for change, they do not necessarily fit well with Comic Relief's traditional monitoring, learning and evaluation model that would track change over time, or promote the long-term impact of outcomes and institutional development that is desirable.

### Reach

Whilst there is some evidence that the grantmakers reached some organisations that Comic Relief would not have funded due to their size, location and track record, the overall areas that they have been working in are broadly similar to those that Comic Relief is already funding. No new themes have emerged from this approach. The conclusion has been reached that the real added value of working through grantmakers is more to do with how they work, rather than their unique reach.

So in this case, rather than funding entirely new types of work, the benefit of the devolved grantmaking approach was that the African grantmakers funded civil society according to the CSO's own agendas and what emerging local needs were, and they are 'on the ground' to offer capacity building support and movement building.

## Conclusion and recommendations

Overall, Comic Relief has had a positive experience of devolved funding, with some significant achievements, including:

- Strengthening grantmakers and supporting them to develop their grantmaking systems, and
- The impact, collectively and individually, of grantees on the ground delivering exciting and much-needed work with vulnerable groups

The recommendations Comic Relief are making going forward are:

1. It is important to assess the grantmakers internal capacity and use that to make a decision on grant size, or to provide funding for organisational development accordingly. Monitoring and evaluation should be reviewed, so that collectively all organisations decide together how to manage reporting, to provide better evidence about how the programme is progressing and where the balance in terms of accountability lies
2. There is a need to have explicit performance criteria and agreed objectives at the start of the grant
3. If the devolved grantmaking re-granting programme is targeted at 'hard to reach' communities, there needs to be some compromise in terms of what systems and processes the funder expects those grantees to have in place, and what their reporting can deliver
4. There is some evidence that, for the purposes of devolved grantmaking, a national or regional grantmaker may be more adept at offering organisational capacity building to their grantees (primarily because of cost and logistics of working across different countries). This should therefore be prioritised
5. Funding timeframes should be extended to allow time at the beginning to build relationships and to allow for capacity building to take place. In Comic Relief's experience, this has taken around 18 months, and so adequate time should be allocated

In the future, Comic Relief will continue to explore the potential of devolved grantmaking as a means of building as thriving local civil society. Under Comic Relief's new strategy they will look for opportunities to undertake devolved grantmaking by funding beyond solely African grantmakers. In the future issues of longer-term impact will differ to those outlined in this paper, as the new phase of devolved grantmaking will focus on Comic Relief's four thematic areas. Finally there is the hope that an increasing number of those Southern CSOs funded via the devolved grantmaking approach will be able to eventually access funding from Comic Relief directly.

### Case Study: The Mentoring and Empowerment Programme for Young Women in Uganda

The Mentoring and Empowerment Programme for Young Women (MEMPROW) was founded in Uganda in 2008. They are a young organisation that has, over a relatively short period of time, developed an innovative and exciting programme of support to young women. In doing so, they have created an emerging movement of young women determined to tackle gender based violence and occupy positions of leadership.

In the early days their focus was on work in Kampala, which enabled them to build their understanding of the context and also identify potential for expanding their work. They received several annual grant awards (of a maximum of \$20,000 per year) from the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) that enabled them to grow in confidence and expand their work to new areas. However, with this, they out-grew the smaller AWDF grants, and came to the attention of Comic Relief in 2012, who were able to support MEMPROW's organisational growth.

When the first grant to MEMPROW was made by Comic Relief, it was clear there was a strong sense of dynamism and energy about the organisation. However, there was a limited amount of experience, especially in the area of programme development, implementation, and monitoring, evaluation and learning. For that reason, a more modest grant over a shorter time frame was proposed that would enable Comic Relief to test the waters with MEMPROW and enable MEMPROW to build its own capacity and more gradually scale up its programme of work with disadvantaged young women.

The most recent grant made to MEMPROW (a 5 year grant of £750,950) has and will continue to support programme expansion and organisational strengthening in three main areas:

- Monitoring, evaluation and learning;
- Implementing an effective transition plan and long term planning, including recruitment to a new post of Programme Director; and
- Becoming a Centre of Excellence for building a feminist movement of young women to strengthen their capacity for outreach among the youth

It also enabled them to strengthen their partnerships with like-minded organisations and local and traditional leaders and networks of teachers and community leaders.

## 8. Sharing due diligence

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### **Collaborating to enable more effective due diligence for funders and CSOs**

In order to provide the most enabling environment for CSOs working in the Global South, funders can take actionable steps to reduce time and costs associated with due diligence.

This briefing paper offers insights from the Sharing Due Diligence workshop hosted by Stars Foundation on 28 September 2016 and attended by seven funder organisations, varying in size from Comic Relief to Synchronicity Earth<sup>1</sup>. The report outlines the next phases for funder collaboration, focusing on:

- Existing due diligence processes among funders categorised by importance and how easy it would be to share
- Centrally sharing standardised due diligence while creating networks for qualitative information
- Ensuring effectiveness by addressing both CSO and funder needs as well as robust market research

### **Introduction**

As funders seek to create a shared vision for how 'Southern' civil society can best be supported by international funders, it is important to develop a streamlined and collective approach to due diligence processes that enhances funding effectiveness for both funders and civil society organisations.

The key outcome of the Sharing Due Diligence workshop was that participating funders proposed to consider a means of sharing standardised due diligence information (e.g. CSOs governance documents), but they also need to consider ways to link funders working in the same geographic and programmatic areas in order to share 'softer' due diligence information (e.g. programmatic assessments of CSOs).

## Key findings

Most due diligence requirements are considered shareable between funders; how this information could be shared varies according to its nature. Findings suggest standard compliance requirements could be streamlined and shared through a central database, while qualitative insights are best shared through trusted funder networks. Both initiatives require thorough market research on existing tools, sectoral buy-in and CSO validation.

### 1. Most due diligence requirements are considered shareable between funders

There is a clear appetite for cross-funder collaboration on due diligence processes, and furthermore participating funders classified 64% of typical information collected as shareable with others.<sup>2</sup> To inform strategy for sharing, it is important to have an understanding of what due diligence information is collected by different funders, their reasons for collecting it, and what qualifies items as shareable or confidential (see table on right). Some items cannot be shared due to compliance and legal restrictions, while others remain private in order to maintain trust.

- There is a difference between information obtained formally and informally. Background checks or research into CSOs may be carried out at an informal stage, prior to formal agreements. This may be considered essential but is not actually included in the formal compliance assessment
- A review of requirements shows a clear distinction between standard compliance documents necessary for funding and the qualitative information, describing the organisation and its expected outcomes (e.g. Theory of Change), which are essential for funders making decisions on who to fund
- Sensitivity to context must underlie all decisions. Particularly in the case of quantitative information, a 'one size fits all' model does not suit all situations, where different partnerships require different approaches at varying stages in their relationships
- Though consensus fluctuated between what was essential versus additional information for due diligence, distinction between shareable and non-shareable information was more clear-cut

## Shareable

Factual information such as government documents and financial statements

Public information, like online presence and programme materials

## Non-shareable

Confidential information, such as bank account details

Information that breaches trust (e.g. third party references and, dependent on relationship stage, organisational assessment)



Rose Longhurst

Attendees of the due diligence workshop hosted by the Stars Foundation

## 2. Simplify, be consistent and provide CSOs with clear guidance on due diligence processes

Full consideration of CSO partner needs will ensure that sharing due diligence is mutually beneficial. Beyond the workshop, participating funding organisations agreed on a 'needs-analysis' and 'user-testing' process with partners in the Global South. Through their current experience, however, funders identified certain barriers, fundamentally relating to inconsistencies in requirements and, subsequently, the excess of time dedicated to each application. To address these needs, funders suggest:

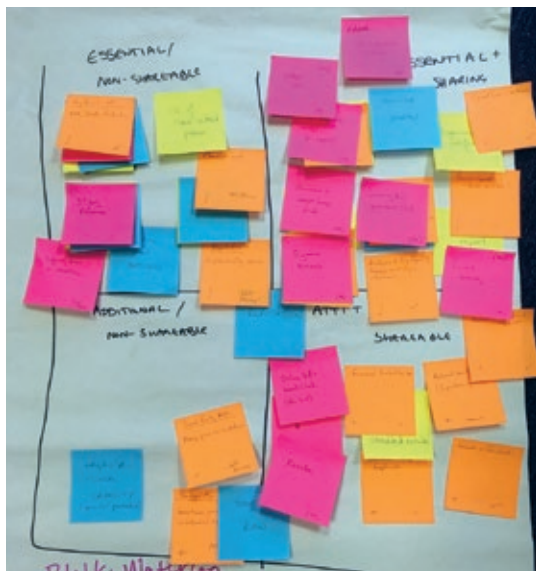
- A consistent format between grant applications. For example, a central database or joint funding application is likely to maximise return on resource investment, since one process of due diligence information submission and collection could be used for multiple sources of CSO funding, rather than applicants multiplying efforts in order to satisfy each funder organisation's separate requirements
- Sensitivity to situation, language and culture must underlie any initiative. There must be a balance between consistency in criteria, guidelines on expectations and flexibility, in order to account for language and technological barriers while allowing CSOs to 'tell their story' in a way that is meaningful to them. Organisations should not be judged on language ability or writing style

- There is, furthermore, a need to favour simplification over technical jargon. To increase chances of success, guidance on content and format is due, clearly laying out the level of detail required (e.g. specific questions and word limits) as well as the expected focus of the application at each stage (e.g. project outcomes versus compliance requirements).
- With consideration for time and effort, requirements must be sequenced, constructive and scaled:
  - Regarding sequencing, the earliest stage should represent an initial filter for CSOs and programmes that meet eligibility criteria and have chances of success, before moving on to collect compliance documents and then subsequently, engaging in the full-fledged grant application process
  - As application stages sequentially increase in complexity, feedback should be provided on applicant status, highlighting why an application has or has not been successful
  - The length and complexity of requirements should be scaled appropriately according to the size and level of risk associated with the grant, whereby small, low-risk grants need not require a lengthy and onerous due diligence process

## 3. Standardise compliance information and create funder networks for 'softer' information sharing

Upon analysis of funder and CSO needs, workshop participants proposed two projects, noting that both must link with and build on information collected from existing platforms:

- A central database to collect and record essential and shareable compliance information for UK and non-UK organisations. Considerations for the working group include complying with data protection laws and third party contract restrictions, gaining appropriate CSO permissions, agreeing on common reporting standards and favouring a user-friendly sharing format
- Setting up smaller funder networks, with overlapping issues and geographic areas of interest, to share the qualitative, narrative and mission-related information that can inform the due diligence process less formally. Whilst quantitative compliance requirements are easier to centralise, it is the programme and its proposed outcomes that lie at the core of funding partnerships. Though some of the latter information was classed as 'additional', they lie at the core of both funders' and their partners' missions



Rose Longhurst

Funders compared their information requirements



#### 4. Implement thorough market research on existing resources and feasibility

The most immediate next step is a three-part market analysis covering existing resource, project feasibility and CSO validation.

##### Existing Resource

- To avoid duplication of efforts and furthering the spirit of collaboration, a mapping of existing networks, platforms and their respective gaps in this space will follow. There are many similar or linked initiatives (e.g. IATI<sup>3</sup>, GrantNav<sup>4</sup>, PADOR<sup>5</sup>, BRIDGE<sup>6</sup>, etc.), and therefore next steps should involve collaborating and building on existing initiatives
- A basic tool for understanding who in the UK is working where, and on what will facilitate the informal sharing of assessment information, especially for those grassroots organisations that may not have websites, for example. Bond will test out a basic version of this to present funders with a map of who is working where. As a first step to inform this, funders are asked to show a more transparent and open approach by signposting their partners and areas of operation on their website.
- A working group was proposed to guide and review these two pieces of work over the coming months, to develop Terms of Reference for this project and to lead on any next steps. Bond has called for a volunteer to be the focal point to guide this work

##### Project feasibility

- Based on gaps in due diligence sharing to be addressed, further market analysis must gauge who would buy into the database, including trustee agreement, and what constitutes critical mass
- Bringing the idea to action will require money and development; research must identify capacity to fund and create the database

##### CSO Validation

- As previously highlighted, this collaboration-focused process must not follow a top-down approach. It is fundamental to this project that CSOs be consulted in order to ensure value is added to all stakeholders. This will involve checking assumptions, gauging core needs and testing solutions with primary users

## Conclusion and recommendations

The practical issues around funder due diligence information collection are often seen by CSO partners as an onerous and time consuming aspect of applying for international funding, while these are not the most critical and valued components of the process. Collaboration among funders on a shared due diligence process is a tangible way to assure funders of the probity of organisations while freeing up resource in order to maximise support to civil society in the Global South and to enable a focus on achieving mission-driven, positive impact.

Next steps for galvanising momentum in the short term include:

1. gathering feedback from colleagues, trustees and CSO partners on the desirability and feasibility of the proposed next steps
2. creating a working group to push forward the central database and funder network strategy

Success will mean a task force is created, CSOs share positive feedback, funders no longer request compliance documents and, instead, download information from a central database.

*“The more we share, the more we have”*

## 9. Effective funder collaboration

### Streamlining and building funding networks

In order to move forward with the next steps proposed in the Sharing Due Diligence briefing paper, this report will analyse some of the existing tools and databases that funders and grantees can use to streamline their grantmaking processes.

The intention is that, by sharing grantee information, we can decrease demands on CSOs, reduce duplication, and expose funders to lesser-known Southern CSOs.

While the tools explored in this report are by no means exhaustive or conclusive, they represent a cross section of what is currently available and used by funders and grantees. From this mapping, we can draw valuable lessons about the next steps that should be taken to make the due diligence sharing process more streamlined, and build valuable funding networks and partnerships.

Recommendations for funders include:

- Use existing information and databases rather than creating any new tools to ensure that there is not yet more duplication of information and demands on grantee time
- Work with non-public facing directories, such as PADOR, to encourage them to make the data that they hold accessible to all
- Create networks that directly link funders with Southern CSOs and partners on the ground, and show where funding is going, to support awareness of CSOs who may lack the capacity of larger organisations

### Introduction

Building stronger partnerships, becoming more transparent and diversifying funding will support both funders and civil society organisations (CSOs) to best meet the challenges and opportunities that the international development sector faces over the coming years. One way of collaborating, promoting accountability and exposing CSOs (especially Southern CSOs) to new funders is by encouraging funders to share information on their grantees and the projects that they fund.

To facilitate this, Stars Foundation hosted a number of workshops that investigated some of the barriers to sharing due diligence information. The outcomes of this workshop can be found in another briefing paper in this series.<sup>1</sup> In summary, funders felt that there are two approaches:

- Building and strengthening partnerships between funders, and the CSOs they fund, to develop a trusting networks of funders with shared interests
- Streamlining grant application processes by sharing standardised due diligence information, such as governance or finance documents, in a way that is accessible to multiple funders

To address the first point, there is a need for a means of linking funders working in the same geographic or programmatic areas, allowing them to share 'softer' assessment information in a safe space, and thereby encouraging funders to link with smaller CSOs, especially those working in the global South.

This paper focuses on the second point, which necessitates a mapping of what methods funders currently use to gather and share more standardised assessment documents. This includes highlighting how data that is already available could be made more accessible.

## Key findings

Highlighted in this section are some of the tools that are currently available for funders and CSOs to share information publically, build partnerships, or apply for grants. Though only a cross-section of the databases that funders currently use, these key findings offer a snapshot of the range and variety of possible sources of information already available.

This section gives a short overview of several current initiatives, and offers a brief recommendation as to their application in supporting the agenda of sharing due diligence information and streamlining processes. Further information on each of these applications can be found in the Further Reading.

### Potential Applicant Data On-Line Registration (PADOR)

Used by the European Commission (EC), this is a database where organisations who wish to apply for EC funding annually upload their organisation's information, such as financial data, geographical and sectoral experience, methodology and strategy. The EC fund substantial numbers of Southern CSOs.

**Relevance:** If made more public facing, PADOR would allow for a streamlining of the grant application or due diligence process, as other funders could access the information uploaded. By allowing CSOs to share their most recent general due diligence and financial data, they would not have to upload data separately for each project, grant or funder, thus making the process simpler and less time consuming.

### International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI)

IATI is an initiative which aims to improve the transparency of the flow of development resources by providing a mechanism for organisations involved in international development and humanitarian response to publish their activity and financial information to a defined standard as open data. The IATI Standard is unique within the development sector as it brings together data from multiple types of agency – as at November 2016, organisations publishing information using the IATI standard included bilateral donors,

development finance institutions, UN agencies, international NGOs, think tanks and academic institutions, private sector companies and national NGOs.

**Relevance:** IATI is an excellent tool for promoting transparency and effectiveness surrounding financial aid flows. As anybody can access IATI data, it allows CSOs to show that they are eligible for grants and funding, and that they have a track record of partnerships with major funders. Since IATI data can also be selectively narrowed down, areas where funding has gone can also be deduced. As per the recently released Civil Society Partnership Review (CSPR), DFID is now expanding their requirements for grantees publishing to IATI to include partners. This will result in many more organisations publishing to the IATI Standard. Foundations should engage with the bilateral funder drive towards better accountability and transparency.

### The Good Financial Grant Practice Standard

Though still in its first stage of development, the aim is to develop an integrated system for financial governance of grant funds awarded to grantees, which will standardise, simplify, and strengthen the governance of grant funding across Africa. Funded by the Wellcome Trust and the UK's Medical Research Council, this initiative should lead to substantial streamlining of the financial elements of due diligence, as accreditation will be a guarantee of financial grant-readiness.

**Relevance:** The Good Financial Grant Practice Standard has the potential to create a thorough and standardised system for storing and assessing the financial governance of international aid and grants. The concern is that the system may be too advanced for many of the smaller CSOs working on the ground, who approach accountability and partnerships differently. More informal financial accountability would not be enough to be accredited for the new Standard, and therefore organisations which do not adhere to these certified methods may be left behind.

### Basic Registry of Identified Global Entities (BRIDGE)

**Overview:** BRIDGE is a relatively new initiative that assigns a unique identifying code to individual social sector entities around the world, which can then be used to track financial movements and streamline information sharing. Similar to the Charity Commission number in the UK, the intention is that the number could be used by all funders, thereby simplifying sharing information by linking all the data about an organisation with their unique BRIDGE number. Currently its use is very limited, and is mainly limited to US based organisations.

**Relevance:** BRIDGE identifiers may be useful for pulling information together via Application Programming Interfaces (API), which allow content which has been created in one place to be posted and updated in multiple locations on the web. If implemented, data could be linked together from various other sources (such as IATI) in order to streamline, simplify and speed up funding applications. However this may only be possible if there is a sector-wide uptake and partnerships are built with other sources of data.

### DueDil

**Overview:** DueDil aims to inform businesses about each other by building a worldwide database of all companies. It does so by taking information and live data from a variety of authoritative sources, combining it, and presenting it all in a clear and accessible format. Includes due diligence documents, information about leading staff, financial reports, and business strategies.

**Relevance:** The idea behind DueDil, of bringing organisation data together in one place would be incredibly useful in the grantmaking process. However, in order to be fully effective in the international development sector, there would have to be a way whereby smaller organisations with less capacity would not be excluded.

### GrantNav

**Overview:** Born out of the 360Giving<sup>2</sup> initiative, UK-based database which supports both funders and grantees in the UK in publishing their grants data in an open, standardised way. Enables users to search and report in detail on who, where, and how much in grants they have been given by UK grantmakers.

**Relevance:** GrantNav provides excellent insight into where and what grants have been made by many significant donors, and if expanded to an international level, would allow funders in the sector to more efficiently search and understand different organisations and funds.

### Beehive

**Overview:** An online portal, Beehive allows grant applicants to fill in an online form showing features of the programme which they are trying to find funders for, and then Beehive matches them with eligible funders based on their grant criteria. It is mostly UK-focussed.

**Relevance:** This tool allows for grantees to more easily search for and find grants which they are eligible to apply for, so could save time by cutting out grants which the organisation is not eligible for. However this doesn't necessarily help funders identify new CSOs to work with, or reduce duplication in the assessment of CSOs.

### Foundation Center

**Overview:** The US Foundation Center operates an online database of philanthropy information on US and global grantmakers and their grantmaking. Their website also has lots of interactive maps detailing where funders are and what they have donated to, although almost all their services are operated via a paid-for or subscription model.

**Relevance:** An excellent store of information and interactive maps that allows funders to see where and what money is going towards, although the information is particularly US-centric. The main barrier for many may be the is the cost of joining the Foundation Center, which may exclude organisations with limited funds.

## Guidestar

**Overview:** Guidestar is a large database of basic information about charities in England and Wales, with partner databases in Belgium, Israel, India and the US. The information provided includes contact details, organisation classification, activity description, beneficiaries, basic financial details, and mission / objectives. Data is gathered primarily from the Charity Commission, and then can be edited by the charity themselves.

**Relevance:** If kept up to date, would be a good first point of call for grantees and funders looking for partners. However, there are limited categories by which organisations can search, thus meaning that already unknown charities are very hard to find. Furthermore no organisations in the global South are currently registered on Guidestar.

## Insight on Conflict

**Overview:** Insight on Conflict offers an interactive map that works with local stakeholders in conflict or post-conflict areas to record the activities of peacebuilding organisations or individuals who are operating in the area. The tool offers information on the organisations themselves, where they are, the projects and work that they are carrying out, and how much EC funding they have received. Additionally, there is the option of being put directly in touch with the peacebuilding partners on the ground.

**Relevance:** This interactive map is extremely useful for finding partners on the ground, in reference to peacebuilding. In addition to being partly compiled by local stakeholders who have access and insight that an outside party would not, this tool also allows for direct contact with these stakeholders and the organisations working there. Though it currently only shows how much EC funding is directed to each CSO working in an area, if this was expanded to all funders and to CSOs working in sectors other than peacebuilding, this tool could support effective network-building.

## GlobalGiving

**Overview:** A crowdfunding site for CSO projects, GlobalGiving allows organisations to upload information on projects they are trying to raise funds for. Information includes target amounts, what the funds will go towards, and information on the project including videos, photos, blogs, and reports from people who have had contact with, or work with the organisation.

**Relevance:** Though essentially a crowd-funding tool, the website shows a large range of projects, which can be easily divided into area and sector. GlobalGiving has an extensive due diligence process, along with a large amount of first-hand information available about each project and organisation. Additionally, contact with the organisations is facilitated, allowing partnerships to be formed and stronger networks to be built. There is potential for more funders to partner with GlobalGiving, allowing smaller CSOs' due diligence documents to be circulated more widely, broadening scope for collaborations.

## Key Recommendations

Even without an exhaustive mapping, we can conclude that there are myriad useful initiatives that intend to support and streamline assessment and application processes for CSOs and their funders. From analysing each of these tools, the following conclusions can be drawn:

### 1. There is enough information already available

Rather than creating another data source and replicating information that is already available, the focus should be on pulling data together and making what is available more accessible and public facing.

- Web API technology can act as a bridge between sites, allowing content to be accessed in multiple locations. This means that funders could access content that a grantee has uploaded to systems such as IATI or PADOR, without the applicant having to go through the process of uploading the same data again. The sector should focus on supporting technological initiatives that use currently available data, and encouraging existing sites to embrace web APIs that make their information more accessible and obtainable
- If databases such as PADOR were made easily accessible to the public, and the data that they collect made available to other funders, this would open up a vast amount of information on thousands of CSOs across the globe. Advocating for PADOR, and potentially other databases, to release their information to other funders and become more public facing would be huge step forward

## 2. Information about where funding is going needs to be made accessible

A 'funding ecology' approach – where we attempt to understand whether there are gaps in funding (sectoral or geographic) acting as barriers to overall development impact – needs data to offer a picture of what is being supported already. This could also avoid duplication or saturation of funding. To do this, information on who is funding where to needs to be better monitored and made accessible.

- Interactive maps such as those established by the Foundation Center and Insight on Conflict are excellent tools for showing where money is being channelled. Additionally, Bond's IATI map, which uses open data published by organisations using the IATI open data standard to the IATI Registry, and InterAction's NGO Aid Map<sup>3</sup>, create a constantly evolving map of where various organisations are funding or carrying out projects. Knowing where funds are being directed can support sharing, and presenting this information in an easily accessible, visible format is a useful way to do this. Funders should support efforts for content from PADOR, IATI and other sites to be transformed into easily accessible visualisation maps
- GrantNav-type databases showing funded projects which can be searched for by area and sector, would be useful if they were then expanded to include international projects

## 3. Build funding networks that allow contact between funders and CSOs working on the ground

To avoid top-down approaches to funding, we need to build partnerships with Southern CSOs, so that they have a say in what needs financing. This also allows funders to understand who else is operating in these areas, enabling them to work together and form collaborations.

- Insight on Conflict not only allows for visualisation of which other organisations are operating in the area but means that direct contact can be made with partners on the ground. This model could be expanded beyond just peacebuilding into other sectors or locations

- GlobalGiving allows funders to be in direct contact with organisations that are requesting funding, thus allowing for stronger networks to be formed. Direct contact between funders and CSOs encourages tailored approaches which take into account the individual capacities of partners. Funders should attempt to build stronger partnerships with CSOs on the ground, by using the channels available through sites such as GlobalGiving and Insight on Conflict
- Databases such as IATI and PADOR should be encouraged to allow smaller in-country CSOs to participate by reducing the minimum requirements they need to register on these sites. Furthermore, new initiatives such as the Good Financial Grant Practice standard should have options for smaller local CSOs to engage with them. There needs to be a recognition that smaller Southern CSOs organisations, that may understand the local landscape well, may not have the same capacity as the larger INGOs to engage with these initiatives. Opportunities to profile them need to be tailored to suit their capacity

## Conclusion

**Donor harmonisation is not a new issue.**

All of the initiatives listed above are attempts at streamlining and supporting efficient grantmaking processes. If done well, these initiatives could reduce duplication and increase access to a wider range of CSOs, as well as building stronger networks and better understanding of where funding needs to be directed. However, as funders try to standardise and streamline, we need to ensure that smaller Southern CSOs are not disadvantaged due to their lack of capacity and access to the major funders that buy into these initiatives. Furthermore, we do not want to create new initiatives that place further demands on CSOs to publish in new areas. Finally, we need to recognise that there are data protection issues that CSOs and their funders need to be aware of. To ensure that sharing due diligence works in the future it needs to work for Southern civil society, and ensure that smaller CSOs are not left behind

# Author information

## 1. The future of funding

**Rose Longhurst** is the Funding Policy Manager at Bond where she oversees Bond's work in the area of effective CSO resourcing. Since 2005 Rose has worked in a wide range of CSOs and funders, including Womankind Worldwide, HelpAge International and the Commonwealth Foundation.

Bond is the UK's INGO network, and facilitates workshops and training around funder collaboration, through the Future Funding Forum. For further details, contact Rose Longhurst, Bond's Funding Policy Manager at [rlonghurst@bond.org.uk](mailto:rlonghurst@bond.org.uk)

## 2. From the ground up

**Sonvi A. Khanna** works as a Team Lead in Dasra's Strategic Philanthropy business unit. She works with the team to plan and execute knowledge creation on a host of development issues across Dasra's priority areas: Strategic Philanthropy; adolescent girls; water and sanitation. She also works with the management to help institutionalize processes for achievement of team and organisational targets.

Prior to Dasra, Sonvi worked in a research capacity with the International Center for Research on Women in India and the Ashoka Foundation in the U.S. Sonvi holds a Masters degree in International Relations from the University of Warwick and a Bachelors in English Literature from Gargi College, University of Delhi.

**Gayatri Kaul** works as an Associate in Dasra's Strategic Philanthropy business unit. She engages with Corporates, Foundations and Philanthropists to help them make informed decisions on giving to the social sector. She has previously worked as an Associate in the Global Wholesale Strategy team at Nomura.

She graduated with a Master of Arts in International Relations from King's College London and a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Economics from Lady Shri Ram College for Women, Delhi. Gayatri is a trained vocalist and a travel enthusiast. She hopes to use her professional and academic experience to collaborate with influencers and help them create a lasting impact in the social sector.

We would like to thank **Deval Sanghavi**, Co-Founder, Dasra, for his inputs on conceptualising this brief.

**Dasra** meaning 'enlightened giving' in Sanskrit, is a pioneering strategic philanthropic organization that aims to transform India where a billion thrive with dignity and equity. Since its inception in 1999, Dasra has accelerated social change by driving collaborative action through powerful partnerships among a trust-based network of stakeholders (corporates, foundations, families, non-profits, social businesses, government and media). Over the years, Dasra has deepened social impact in focused fields that include adolescents, urban sanitation and governance and has built social capital by leading a strategic philanthropy movement in the country. For more information, visit [www.dasra.org](http://www.dasra.org)

## 3. Disruptive change and Southern CSOs

**Halina Ward** is an independent consultant who works as a researcher, advisor and facilitator with a wide range of civil society groups on organisational strategy and change, monitoring and evaluation, and programme design. She also serves as one of seven Compliance Experts with the Project Complaint Mechanism of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Between 2001-2008 she was Director of the Business and Sustainable Development Programme at the International Institute for Environment and Development. She has also held posts as Director of the Foundation for Democracy and Sustainable Development, as a Senior Research Fellow with Chatham House, and as a solicitor practising commercial environment law. [halina@halinaward.co.uk](mailto:halina@halinaward.co.uk)

**Lila Buckley** is an anthropologist specialising in ethnographic research methodologies with a focus on Chinese civil society, agriculture and environmental policy, as well as China-Africa agriculture aid, trade and investments. Beyond China, she also focuses on dynamics of the informal economy as well as organisational change management and disruptive change readiness in southern NGOs. Lila leads the China in global development team, including overseeing team-level project development, fundraising and management, ensuring quality assurance on all research outputs and policy engagements, and fostering multi-disciplinary teams in China to develop their research and policy influence. In addition, she has been developing IIED's 'disruptive change' initiative, which fosters learning on the practical aspects of NGOs' structural and functional responses to disruptive change in the post 2015 development world. [lilabuckley@iied.org](mailto:lilabuckley@iied.org)

#### 4. Listening to Southern CSOs

**Lynn Morris** is communications director for Keystone Accountability. Keystone Accountability is a not-for-profit organisation that helps social change organisations understand and improve their performance by harnessing feedback, especially from the people they serve. Keystone has developed a method called Constituent Voice™, a rigorous feedback system that monitors the impact of activities from the perspective of those most affected by them. This data is used as the basis for learning dialogues, relationship building, and course correction to improve performance. Constituent Voice™ provides independent real time data that fosters more accountable relationships with constituents, early identification of problems and unintended consequences.

In addition to bespoke consulting services helping organisations to set up feedback systems Keystone offers a variety of products including customized, benchmarked surveys of partners for international non-governmental organisations, grantmakers, networks and social investors. Our online tool, the Feedback Commons, allows organisations to easily and cheaply collect, and benchmark their own feedback data.

*“Keystone’s surveys have provided us with invaluable information about the quality of our partnerships in development. This knowledge has been an important part of improving our relationships and programme performance. It is something that all development organisations should pay close attention to”*

Bruce Lawson-McDowall, DFID Zambia

#### 5. Public support for Southern civil society

**Will Tucker** is a communications, campaigns and partnership development consultant specialising in developing and delivering evidence informed public, political and business engagement. Will’s clients include the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Children’s Investment Fund Foundation, developing advocacy partnerships and supporting communication and engagement. Will also works with a number of NGOs on public engagement and partnerships. Get in touch via [will@willtuckerconsulting.com](mailto:will@willtuckerconsulting.com)

#### 6. Southern civil society in the lead

**Chris Manion** is a Portfolio Manager at the Big Lottery Fund, working across a number of its programmes since 2008. He has a long involvement in the Fund’s international work, overseeing delivery of the £80m International Communities programme, as well as its disaster response work. He is currently working with colleagues on considering approaches for its new international funding strategy.

**The Big Lottery Fund** is responsible for distributing 40 per cent of all funds raised for good causes (about 11 pence of every pound spent on a Lottery ticket) by the National Lottery – around £670 million last year. Since June 2004 it has awarded over £9 billion to projects supporting health, education, environment and charitable purposes, from early years intervention to commemorative travel funding for World War Two veterans.

Its funding supports the aspirations of people who want to make life better for their communities. Funding is delivered throughout the UK, mostly through programmes tailored specifically to the needs of communities in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland as well as some programmes that cover the whole UK. The National Lottery has funded an international programme since 1997 and the Big Lottery Fund has maintained a steady level of funding to international initiatives, which represents around 2 percent of the value of total awards.

#### 7. Devolving grantmaking

**Comic Relief** works to make a difference to the lives of people both in the UK and in some of the world’s poorest communities through:

- Two big campaigns: We raise millions of pounds, mainly through our two big fundraising campaigns: Red Nose Day and Sport Relief
- Tackling poverty and injustice: We spend the money raised to tackle the root causes of poverty and social injustice in the UK and across the world
- Raising awareness: We use the power and influence of our brand to raise awareness of issues where we feel we can make the biggest impact.

#### 8. Sharing due diligence

**Stars Foundation** hosted the Sharing Due Diligence workshop and commissioned **Marelisa Vega** to facilitate it and write this briefing. Stars Foundation invests in organisations and ideas that transform the lives of disadvantaged children and their communities globally. For more information, please visit [www.starsfoundation.org.uk](http://www.starsfoundation.org.uk)

Marelisa is a consultant with C&E Advisory and a Community Investment manager. She specialises in youth and community development with extensive experience in Latin America and the UK, stimulating multi-stakeholder groups through participatory processes that enable innovative approaches to complex social challenges. Get in touch via [marelisa@candeadvisory.com](mailto:marelisa@candeadvisory.com)



C&E Advisory works with others to harness the power, assets and skills of Business, NGOs, ambitious philanthropists and Government entities: creating new beginnings and shaping innovative and sustainable outcomes that are capable of achieving profound change for the common good. For more information, please visit [www.candeadvisory.com](http://www.candeadvisory.com)

## 9. Effective funder collaboration

**Beatrice Waddingham** is the Effectiveness and Futures Trainee at Bond, and works supporting the Effectiveness and Learning team with their work on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning; Transparency and Accountability; and Funding and Foresight. She has extensive experience working with small CSOs, community partners, and social development projects in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia, and so understands some of the struggles that CSOs face when engaging with the grant-making process. Contact her on [bwaddingham@bond.org.uk](mailto:bwaddingham@bond.org.uk)

# More information and further reading

## 2. From the ground up

The Bridgespan Group (2013). Conversations with Remarkable Givers. [Online] The Bridgespan Group. Available at: [www.bridgespan.org/insights/library/remarkable-givers/profiles](http://www.bridgespan.org/insights/library/remarkable-givers/profiles)

Stanford Social Innovation Review (2016). Foundations: New and Innovative Ideas for Leaders of Foundations. [Online] Stanford Social Innovation Review. Available at: <https://ssir.org/topics/category/foundations>

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Dasra (2016). India Philanthropy Series: 2016. Video Series available at: [www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLgbFKRCqfOtQD47vdM5L-Fio5pG0JQRcH](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLgbFKRCqfOtQD47vdM5L-Fio5pG0JQRcH)

Dasra (2016). Funding in the 21st Century: Trends and Priorities in the Foundation Sector. Available at: [www.dasra.org/insight/trends-and-priorities-in-the-foundation-sector-in-the-21st-century](http://www.dasra.org/insight/trends-and-priorities-in-the-foundation-sector-in-the-21st-century)

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Dasra (2016). Dasra Philanthropy Forum 2015: London. Video series available at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qay5woe2be8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qay5woe2be8)

Dasra (2016). Dasra Philanthropy Forum 2015: Stanford University. Video series available at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=zswfCFdEQ6E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zswfCFdEQ6E)

## 3. Disruptive change and Southern CSOs

Lila Buckley and Halina Ward, *Getting Good at Disruption in an Uncertain World: Insights from Southern NGO Leaders*, Working Paper, IIED, London, 2016. Available at <http://pubs.iied.org/11505IIED>

Slide-decks on the implications of the initial review and interviews for:

- a) international NGOs: [www.slideshare.net/IIEDslides/getting-good-at-disruption-in-an-uncertain-world-learning-for-international-nongovernment-organisations-ingos-from-southern-ngo-leaders](http://www.slideshare.net/IIEDslides/getting-good-at-disruption-in-an-uncertain-world-learning-for-international-nongovernment-organisations-ingos-from-southern-ngo-leaders), and
- b) DFID: [www.slideshare.net/IIEDslides/managing-disruptive-change-in-an-uncertain-world-learning-for-dfid-from-southern-ngo-leaders](http://www.slideshare.net/IIEDslides/managing-disruptive-change-in-an-uncertain-world-learning-for-dfid-from-southern-ngo-leaders)

Blog post on the 'Disrupt and Innovate' website in September: <https://disrupt-and-innovate.org/getting-good-at-disruption-learning-from-southern-cso-leaders>

Post on the Bond website: [www.bond.org.uk/news/2016/03/disruptive-forces-at-work](http://www.bond.org.uk/news/2016/03/disruptive-forces-at-work)

#### 4. Listening to Southern CSOs

Keystone Accountability – [www.keystoneaccountability.org](http://www.keystoneaccountability.org)

Keystone Partnership Survey – <http://keystoneaccountability.org/international-non-governmental-organization-survey>

Results of the survey – <http://keystoneaccountability.org/2016/07/25/what-do-your-partners-really-think-of-you>

The Feedback Commons – <http://api.feedbackcommons.org/product-tour>

Find out more about the changes INGOs have made as a result of taking the survey:

Peace Direct <http://keystoneaccountability.org/2016/09/19/peace-direct-introduces-two-way-reporting-to-partners>

Oxfam <http://keystoneaccountability.org/2016/08/16/taking-the-survey-is-the-first-step-it-is-what-happens-next-that-counts>

WaterAid <http://keystoneaccountability.org/2016/08/01/wateraid-explains-how-they-used-keystones-partnership-survey>

#### 5. Public support for Southern civil society

For further advice and support making these adjustments, please get in touch with Will Tucker on [will@willtuckerconsulting.com](mailto:will@willtuckerconsulting.com)

Bond members can access the MyBond Public Support Hub for more data, insights and analysis about public attitudes and engagement with global poverty.

Bond facilitates workshops and presentations about public engagement with development. For details, get in touch with Alice Delemare, Bond Campaigns Advisor at [adelemare@bond.org](mailto:adelemare@bond.org)

Bond, Charity Comm's, Devex and Guardian Development Professional Blogs all publish blogs about public engagement with development. Look out for blogs by Jennifer van Heerde Hudson (UCL), David Hudson (UCL), Tom Baker (Bond), Alice Delemare (Bond), Will Tucker (Consultant) and others.

#### 6. Southern civil society in the lead

<https://futureofdoinggood.org.uk/2016/07/01/anna-feuchtwang-empowerment-in-action-not-words>

[www.cloresocialleadership.org.uk/Generous-leadership-Big-Lottery](http://www.cloresocialleadership.org.uk/Generous-leadership-Big-Lottery)

[www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/about-big/strategic-framework](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/about-big/strategic-framework)

[www.yourvoiceourvision.org.uk](http://www.yourvoiceourvision.org.uk)

#### 8. Sharing due diligence

Stars Foundation has worked to share due diligence and assessment information on its awardees with other donors. For more information on this or the sharing due diligence workshop, please contact David Crook, Development Director at [david@starsfoundation.org.uk](mailto:david@starsfoundation.org.uk)

#### 9. Effective funder collaboration

##### PADOR (POTENTIAL APPLICANT DATA ON-LINE REGISTRATION)

###### What does it do?

Database where organisations who wish to apply for EC funding upload their organisation information, such as financial data, geographical and sectoral experience, and methodology and strategy.

###### Who are the partners?

European Commission

###### Who is it aimed at?

Organisations wishing to apply for EuropeAid funding

###### How many organisations use it?

No information – but all who have or are applying for EC funding

###### Positive aspects

Organisational data rather than just project data means that an organisation only needs to upload one set of data, rather than a new set for each project.

Through set of information about organisations, which, if made public, could provide an excellent basis for due diligence for other funders, thus streamlining the due diligence process.

The partner search tool allows for organisations to find others who work in similar fields, and can mean partnerships are formed for both funding and projects.

###### Areas to consider

Though some of the information available through PADOR is accessible to other organisations, it is not fully public and requires a log in to access. Financial data about organisations is not available at all, and access to all of this information would greatly help other funders, who could use this instead of their own due diligence processes.

**IATI (INTERNATIONAL AID TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE)**

**What does it do?**

A voluntary initiative which aims to improve the transparency of aid in the NGO and aid sector, by allowing organisations to publish their financial and aid cooperation data to the IATI Standard, which can then be accessed by all organisations.

**Who are the partners?**

Works alongside DAC

**Who is it aimed at?**

Organisations who want to be more transparent and open with their aid data.

DFID have made publishing to IATI a requirement of those organisations wishing to receive grants from them, so is essential for these organisations.

Taxpayers can use IATI data to hold those that they donate to accountable.

CSOs can monitor where further funds need to be directed, and can hold governments accountable for where funding is sent.

The media and journalists can investigate where resources are applied and by whom.

**How many organisations use it?**

491 organisations have published to the IATI Standard so far

**Positive aspects**

Some donors have made publishing to IATI one of their funding conditions, showing how much they value transparency, and this is leading the trend.

IATI data can be accessed by anyone and anyone can publish to it, making it globally relevant, not just in the UK.

Free to publish to.

Programme centric, so gives a huge amount of detail and allows for organisations, governments, and individuals to find out what is being funded where and by whom.

Data has to be updated every 3 months, which means that it is always up to date and recent.

**Areas to consider**

IATI may be a bit technical to publish to, requiring instruction by experts on how to properly publish data.

Human error while publishing may be an issue with regards to accuracy, as there is no external check that the data published is actually correct.

For smaller organisations, capacity may be in issue in that publishing to IATI is quite time consuming, particularly since it has to be updated so regularly.

**GOOD FINANCIAL GRANT PRACTICE STANDARD**

**What does it do?**

Though still in its first stage of development, so not actually active yet, the aim is to develop an integrated system for financial governance of grant funds awarded to grantees, which will standardise, simplify, and strengthen the governance of grant funding across Africa.

**Who are the partners?**

African Academy of Sciences

Mango

First phase funded by the Wellcome Trust and the Medical Research Council (UK)

**Who is it aimed at?**

Pan-African organisations, both funders and grant recipients, who wish to be more transparent and accountable.

**How many organisations use it?**

Since this standard is not yet in use, no organisations currently use it, though it hopes that the scope will stretch all over Africa.

**Positive aspects**

A standard which is consistent across the board would hold organisations to account, simplify grant processes, and make information more easily accessible.

**Areas to consider**

Since the standard is only in the preliminary stages of development, there is no real way of knowing whether it will be a success or not.

Only African organisations will be able to use the standard, though, if a success, there may be room for expansion to a more global audience.

There are well over 1500 languages spoken in Africa, there may be some issues regarding which language the standard will work in, and questions regarding exclusion of groups who do not work in that language.

The accountability and transparency which the GFGP demands, may be very different from what local organisations believe accountability to be – hopefully local customs and practise will be taken in to account, and the process will not be too top down.

Hopefully the bar will not be set too high for local CSOs, who maybe do not have a huge amount of capacity.

## BRIDGE (BASIC REGISTRY OF IDENTIFIED GLOBAL ENTRIES)

### What does it do?

Assigns a unique identifying code to individual social sector entities around the world, which can then be used to track financial movements and streamline information sharing.

### Who are the partners?

Foundation Center  
Global Giving  
Guide Star  
TechSoup

Supported by the Hewlett Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Google Inc.

### Who is it aimed at?

Social sector organisations such as NGOs, schools, churches, who are assigned BRIDGE identifiers.

Anyone can search for an organisation's BRIDGE number.

### How many organisations use it?

3 million entities currently have a BRIDGE identifier.

### Positive aspects

Other identifying numbers are not always unique to one organisation but are duplicated by other identifying systems, BRIDGE claims to be completely unique.

### Areas to consider

BRIDGE doesn't actually pull the information together itself, but is just a way of using the number to identify information online, therefore the actual use of it may be limited.

In order to search for anything using BRIDGE, you have to already know the organisation name or BRIDGE number.

Largely US based at the moment- will have to see how far use of this identifying tool stretches.

## DUEDIL

### What does it do?

Aims to inform businesses about each other by building a worldwide database of all companies, by taking information and live data from a variety of authoritative sources, combining it, and presenting it all in a clear and accessible format. Includes due diligence documents, information about leading staff, financial reports, and business strategies.

### Who are the partners?

DueDil has raised funds from organisations based in both the UK and the US including Oak Investment Partners, Passion Capital and Notion Capital.

### Who is it aimed at?

Global businesses, but Comic Relief has started using it, so maybe there is scope for the charity sector as well as the private sector.

### How many organisations use it?

175,000 businesses currently use DueDil to find out about the companies that they deal with.

### Positive aspects

All of the information that you might need when exploring a company that you want to form a new partnership with, easily accessible, and in one place.

Due diligence documents easily accessible.

### Areas to consider

DueDil is quite expensive to actually access, therefore limiting who can afford access to it, and making it in danger of excluding partners who simply do not have the means to sign up.

## GRANTNAV

### What does it do?

Database which supports both funders and grantees in the UK in publishing their grants data in an open, standardised way. Enables users to search and report in detail on who, where, and how much grants they have been given by UK grantmakers.

### Who are the partners?

360 Giving

### Who is it aimed at?

UK based funders and recipients

### How many organisations use it?

25 funders  
14,099 recipients  
21,350 grants

### Positive aspects

Information is given in a clear, standardised format, that is consistent across the board, meaning that comparisons can be made easily.

Searches can be made by district, size of grant, recipient, and funder, which allows searches to be narrowed down very quickly and easily, making information easy to access.

Site is free to access and explore, meaning that it is open to everyone.

Very extensive set of data available- over £8 billion worth of grants have been recorded on there.

### Areas to consider

Since this site only records information from UK based organisations, it may not be a lot of help for the international development field.

However, if it could be adapted to include international grants and organisations, this would be an extremely useful tool.

## BEEHIVE

### What does it do?

Grant recipients fill in an online application form showing features of the programme which they are trying to find funders for, and then Beehive matches them with eligible funders based on their grant criteria.

### Who are the partners?

360 Giving  
Beehive

### Who is it aimed at?

For UK funders and recipients looking for grants, though can fund projects outside of the UK.

### How many organisations use it?

30+ funders  
70+ funding programmes  
20,000+ grants available

### Positive aspects

Excellent tool for allowing recipients to find grants which they are actually eligible for, rather than just applying for everything they find, which may waste time and effort.

Site is free to access, you just have to create an account.

### Areas to consider

This site is only for UK organisations (although the grants can be used to fund non-UK projects), which narrows down the scope for partnerships.

The site prefers to give recipients at least some grants which they can apply for, even if the eligibility is still very small.

**FOUNDATION CENTER**

**What does it do?**

Online database of philanthropy information on US and global grant makers and their grants. Also conducts research, education, and training programmes, and has lots of interactive maps detailing where funders are and where they have donated to.

**Who are the partners?**

Foundation Center

**Who is it aimed at?**

Funders and grantees who wish to connect and build partnerships, who are seeking to find grants, or find organisations that they wish to fund.

**How many organisations use it?**

140,000 grantmakers make up the database.

**Positive aspects**

Huge amount of informative and in-depth information regarding grantmakers and the grants that they offer and to whom, along with interactive maps which detail amount and location of funding.

**Areas to consider**

You have to pay to access most things on the website, and this could be a problem for smaller organisations who cannot afford the fee.

Though this website allows you to find partners, the actual grant process then has to take place outside of Foundation Center, so the site is good for finding funders but then is not useful in making the actual grant applications.

**GUIDESTAR**

**What does it do?**

Database of basic information about charities in England and Wales (partner databases for Belgium, Israel, India and the US), including contact details, organisation classification, activity description, beneficiaries, basic financial details, and mission/objectives. Data is gathered primarily from the Charity Commission, and then can be edited by the charity themselves.

**Who are the partners?**

Information is gathered primarily from the Charity Commission.

Part of the TechSoup Global group.

**Who is it aimed at?**

For charities who want to make a wider audience aware of their existence.

General people who want to find out basic information about a charity, or find out what charities there are available.

**How many organisations use it?**

162,000 charities are currently registered to the site.

**Positive aspects**

Excellent first port of call for people wanting to find out about charities of a certain size or in a specific area, whether they already know about them or not.

**Areas to consider**

Information does not seem particularly up to date or relevant, and the amount of information on each charity varies in content and value, suggesting that, even though charities can maintain their profiles themselves, they actually don't.

**INSIGHT ON CONFLICT**

**What does it do?**

Interactive map that partners with local correspondents in conflict or post-conflict areas to record the activities of peacebuilding organisations or individuals who are operating in the area. The tool offers information on the organisations themselves, where they are, the projects and work that they are carrying out, and how much EU funding they have received. Additionally, there is the option of being put directly in touch with the peacebuilding partners on the ground.

**Who are the partners?**

Peace Direct

Funded by:

- United States Institute of Peace (USIP)
- Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- European Union
- Requests donations from those who use the site and find it helpful

**Who is it aimed at?**

Primarily people or organisations who want to learn about and connect with peacebuilding institutions around the world, but also peacebuilding practitioners, researchers, and journalists.

**How many organisations use it?**

33 local correspondents  
44 conflicts covered  
1410 local peacebuilding organisations profiled

**Positive aspects**

The map allows for easy visualisation of what organisations are where and how many other institutions are working in the area.

In-depth profiles of both the organisations and the projects that they are working on are very informative, and being able to actually connect with the institutions creates potential for excellent network and partnership building.

**Areas to consider**

This tool is just focussed on peace building institutions, but the format could be expanded to include other development organisations – thus making it an excellent tool for mapping development projects.

There is no real funding or due diligence aspect to the map, though it does highlight how much EU funding each project or organisation has received – maybe this could also be expanded to include all funding.

## GLOBAL GIVING

### What does it do?

A crowdfunding site for INGO projects, whereby organisations upload their projects which they are trying to raise funds for, along with target amounts, what the funds will go towards, and information on the project including videos, photos, blogs, and reports from people who have had contact with, or work with the organisation.

### Who are the partners?

GlobalGiving

Supported by DFID, CAF, Nominet Trust

### Who is it aimed at?

Grantees who want to get their project out there for anybody to donate to it, not just bigger grants but public donations too.

For donors, such as the public who want to donate directly to projects rather than having their funds swallowed up by large organisations as a whole.

Businesses who want to form corporate partnerships with organisations, or support certain projects.

### How many organisations use it?

Since 2002, 544,938 donors have given £149,699,049 to 15,174 projects.

### Positive aspects

The rigorous due diligence process that Global Giving puts the organisations wishing to post projects through, ensures that they are charitable in nature, transparent, accountable, and registered with their local government. This means that donors can trust the projects and are reasonably aware of where their money is going.

Being able to donate directly to the project is a bonus for many donors, especially when accountability and transparency is so much in the news at the moment.

There is a lot of information available about the projects which are being donated to, including blogs, videos, accounts from staff, along with a breakdown in costs and budgeting (i.e. £6 will buy hot meals for a child for a month), which improves accountability and transparency further.

Wide range of projects from all over the world, which can easily be narrowed down depending on interest.

### Areas to consider

Information available is mainly about the projects rather than the organisations themselves, and so further research may need to be done into this by potential donors.

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4. [www.bond.org.uk/data/files/reports/Fast\\_Forward\\_0515.pdf](http://www.bond.org.uk/data/files/reports/Fast_Forward_0515.pdf)
5. See EveryChild's journey from an INGO to a network of CSOs, Family for Every Child: [www.baobab.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/EveryChild-Hailey.pdf](http://www.baobab.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/EveryChild-Hailey.pdf)
6. Bond's work on Adaptive Management offers insight for CSOs and funders on how to be flexible and responsive in development programmes: [www.bond.org.uk/resources/adaptive-management-what-it-means-for-csos](http://www.bond.org.uk/resources/adaptive-management-what-it-means-for-csos)
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### 3. Disruptive change and Southern CSOs

1. See the New Executives Fund: [www.opensocietyfoundations.org/about/programs/new-executives-fund](http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/about/programs/new-executives-fund)
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4. See our review in Buckley, Lila and Halina Ward *Getting Good at Disruption in an Uncertain World: Insights from Southern NGO Leaders*, Working Paper, IIED, London, 2016. <http://pubs.iied.org/11505IIED>
5. See in particular the work of the Global Fund for Community Foundations: [www.globalfundcommunityfoundations.org](http://www.globalfundcommunityfoundations.org)

### 4. Listening to Southern CSOs

1. The Net Performance Score (NPS) is the percentage of respondents scoring 9s or 10s, minus the percentage that score 0-6s
2. The net performance score works on a single question where respondents give a rating from 0-10. Those who answer 9 or 10 are considered promoters, passives give 7 or 8 and detractors give 0-6. Detractors are unhappy and could damage the organisation through negative word of month. The net performance score is generated by subtracting the percentage of detractors from the percentage of promoters.
3. Strong assumptions are that these improvements are continued though to end-user service delivery, although we don't have conclusive proof of this yet.
4. These numbers are benchmarked for all respondents of all the surveys. Although Net Performance Scores can range from a low of -100 to a high of 100 and higher scores are better indicators of satisfaction, the numbers organisations receive are mostly relevant in reference to the benchmark.

### 5. Public support for Southern civil society

1. [www.bond.org.uk/public-support](http://www.bond.org.uk/public-support)
2. Aid Attitude Tracker, Engagement Analysis
3. Aid Attitude Tracker, Question 20, responses 7-10 on a 0-10 scale "How effective do you think Government spending on overseas aid is?"
4. Aid Attitude Tracker, Question 21, responses 7-10 on a 0-10 scale "How much of a difference can you make to reducing poverty in poor countries?"

5. Original analysis by Jennifer vanHeerde Hudson and David Hudson, University College London and Harold Clarke and Marianne Stewart University Texas Dallas, unpublished. Further qualitative analysis conducted by Jarn Carn, YouGov, contact [will@willtuckerconsulting.com](mailto:will@willtuckerconsulting.com) for details
6. Aid Attitude Tracker, Question 46, responses 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree' to statement "Countries should give more overseas development aid because it is the morally right thing to do."
7. Aid Attitude Tracker, Question 48, responses 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree' to statement "I would feel guilty if I ignored the needs of poor people in poor countries."
8. Aid Attitude Tracker, Question 90, responses 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree' to statement "I personally should be giving money to reduce poverty in poor countries."
9. Original analysis by Jennifer vanHeerde Hudson and David Hudson, University College London and Harold Clarke and Marianne Stewart University Texas Dallas, unpublished. Further qualitative analysis conducted by Jarn Carn, YouGov, contact [will@willtuckerconsulting.com](mailto:will@willtuckerconsulting.com) for details
10. Aid Attitude Tracker, Question 61, responses 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree' to statement "Working with others to overcome poverty in poor countries is a worthwhile way to spend time."
11. Aid Attitude Tracker, Question 65, responses 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree' to statement "Most people in Great Britain respect those who do charitable work to reduce poverty in poor countries."
12. Aid Attitude Tracker, Question PAR6\_5, Wave 4, responses 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree' to statement "I have very little in common with people in the world's poorest countries."
13. Initial qualitative research undertaken for the Aid Attitude Tracker by Jane Carn of YouGov, Quantitative analysis undertaken by Jennifer vanHeerde Hudson and David Hudson of University College London.

### 6. Southern civil society in the lead

1. [www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/report/gha-report-2015](http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/report/gha-report-2015)

### 8. Sharing due diligence

1. Participating organisations included Comic Relief, Bond, Freedom Fund, International Tree Foundation, Stars Foundation, Synchronicity Earth, The David and Elaine Potter Foundation and the Waterloo Foundation.
2. See Further Reading 9 (page 42) for tables and figures detailing the typical data collected by participating funders and their respective classification of due diligence requirement importance and potential for sharing.
3. <http://iatistandard.org>
4. [www.threesixtygiving.org](http://www.threesixtygiving.org)
5. [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/etraining/pador/en/index.html\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/etraining/pador/en/index.html_en)
6. <http://bridge-registry.org>

### 9. Effective funder collaboration

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2. [www.threesixtygiving.org](http://www.threesixtygiving.org)
3. [www.ngoaidmap.org](http://www.ngoaidmap.org)

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