Dollars and Dissent

Donor Support for Grassroots Organizing and Nonviolent Movements



Special Note

The report does not offer legal advice. It provides a partial overview of rules regarding lobbying, election-related activities, and grantmaking for United States—based donors. It does not cover all the nuances and details of these rules. It is recommended that you contact legal counsel if you seek legal advice on these or related topics.

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Dollars and Dissent

Donor Support for Grassroots Organizing and Nonviolent Movements

by Benjamin Naimark-Rowse



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We are living in an era when more people than ever before are using nonviolent collective action for rights, justice, and democracy around the world. Nonviolent action has been twice as effective as violence at achieving revolutionary movement goals. And political transitions initiated through nonviolent action have been three times as likely to lead to democracy as political transitions initiated through all other means. Yet, from 2011 to 2018, public charities and private foundations gave only three percent of their total human rights funding to support nonviolent collective action.

Why does such a small percentage of human rights funding support a strategy that is so effective and that is being used so often? Why and how have some institutional donors in the United States supported the work of grassroots organizers and nonviolent social movements in non-democracies? What can we learn from their experiences?

This report outlines trends in donor support from 2011 to 2018, and it details how donors' values, organizational structures, and perceptions of risk affect support for the work of grassroots organizers and nonviolent social movements. In so doing, it opens the black box of donor decision-making.

This report assists donors seeking to deepen their understanding of whether, when, where, and how to support the work of grassroots organizers and social movements. It brings to light common tensions donors have faced when considering support for grassroots organizing and movements in the world's closing and closed spaces. It does so through in-depth interviews with donors and grantees, an electronic survey of donors, and case studies of two donors—the American Jewish World Service and Humanity United. In addition to donors, this report informs policymakers, scholars, and movement leaders.

This report finds that donors that focus on a potential grantee's institutional form as the primary criterion for its legitimacy tend to be less disposed to support organizing and movements. Additionally, public charities tend to be more likely than private foundations to adapt their grantmaking in real time to movements' changing needs. Furthermore, a lack of donor coordination can be particularly harmful to the work of organizers and movements.

This report offers actionable principles and practices that donors can adopt and adapt to their particular context, including:

- i. Do no harm.
- ii. Cultivate relationships of trust with organizers and movements, instead of control over them.

- iii. Foster movements' resiliency and legitimacy in the eyes of their own constituents.
- iv. Defer to organizers' and movement leaders' expertise in deciding whether, when, where, and how to support their work.
- v. Defer to organizers' and movement leaders' risk assessments and theories of change.
- vi. Double down on support for resiliency in moments of repression and for learning in moments of "failure."
- vii. Be transparent about your biases and proactively mitigate power imbalances with grantees and potential grantees.
- viii. Accept mechanisms for reciprocal accountability: allow grantees to hold you accountable for your grantmaking.

These findings, principles, and practices offer new insights into donor–movement relationships and shed light on how donors can support the work of grassroots organizers and nonviolent movements.

Throughout history, movements have been central to shifting norms and laws about women's and LGBTQI+ rights, ending wars and securing peace, opening entire regions to democracy, expanding electorates, and provoking individuals' imaginations of what is politically possible in their societies.

Philanthropy is an expression of political power. As donors consider whether, when, where, and how to support the powerful work of grassroots organizers and nonviolent movements, it is important to focus not only on supporting the processes that lead to more just and democratic power relationships within a society, but also on how to shift power in their relationships with grantees.

Moreover, movements win primarily because of what they do within their country, not because of the support they get from outside their country. It is important for donors to stand in solidarity with organizers and movements, to do no harm in the process, to be transparent about and learn from mistakes, and to keep showing up in the spirit of solidarity in moments of failure just as in moments of success.

INTRODUCTION

Follow the Money

From 2011 to 2015, public charities and private foundations such as the Gates Foundation, Fidelity Charitable, and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation gave only three percent of their total human rights funding to support social change activities that included grassroots organizing. From 2015 to 2018, while the total amount of human rights dollars committed to grassroots organizing increased, the total share remained at three percent (Ingulfsen, Miller, and Thomas 2021).

At its core, grassroots organizing seeks to build power and increase participation in collective action. Research shows that higher levels of participation in nonviolent collective action—especially when participants are from diverse sectors of society—is the primary reason nonviolent collective action succeeds (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). Throughout the 20th century and the start of the 21st century, nonviolent collective action has succeeded twice as often as violent action (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Chenoweth 2020). And currently, people around the world are using nonviolent collective action more than ever before in recorded history (Chenoweth 2020). Yet, from 2011 to 2015, 31% of all human rights funding went to support social change strategies that involved advocacy; 14% went to capacity building and technical assistance; and 11% went to research and documentation. In comparison, just 3% of human rights funding went to support grassroots organizing (found in Figure 1 on page 5). So, why did institutional donors give such a small percentage of their human rights funding to a social change strategy that has a proven record of success? Why and how did some institutional donors support grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements? And what can be learned from their experiences?

Relying on newly collected survey data, in-depth interviews, and two case studies, this report opens the black box of donor decision-making about whether to support grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements, or not. It finds that donor staff and board members' values and lived experiences tend to be the main reasons *why and how* donors support organizing and social movements. It finds that donors' and grantees' risk perception,

Grants to support a strategy involving grassroots organizing amounted to 3% of total funds given over the 5-year period 2011–2015, and 4% of the total number of grants given over the same period. Social change strategies describe the implementation approach supported by a given grant. Grants were tagged by Candid and Human Rights Funders Network (HRFN) using their Advancing Human Rights taxonomy as supporting one or more strategies. They used three types of data to determine which strategy to assign: i) grant details, ii) grantmaker profiles, and iii) recipient profiles. The full list of 11 strategies can be found in Figure 1 on page 5. Since the creation of this trends dataset, Candid and HRFN have changed some of these categories. The current list of strategies is available online at: https://humanrightsfunding.org/strategies/.

relationships between donors and grantees, and donors' internal structures tend to be the main drivers of *how* donors support organizing and nonviolent movements. All these variables affect whether a donor supports organizing and movements in the first place.

More specifically, this report finds that donors that focus on a potential grantee's institutional form as the primary criterion for its legitimacy tend to be less disposed to support organizing and movements. Public charities tend to be more likely than private foundations to adapt their grantmaking in real time to movements' changing needs. Furthermore, a lack of donor coordination can be particularly harmful to the work of organizers and movements.

From 2011 to 2018, only 3% of human rights dollars were given to support grassroots organizing.

This report assists donors that seek to deepen their understanding of whether, when, where, and how to support the work of grassroots organizers and nonviolent movements. It also informs policymakers, scholars, and movement leaders. To these

ends, this report highlights common tensions that donors have grappled with in their relationships with organizers and movements. In lieu of offering recommendations, this report offers detailed principles and practices that donors can adopt and adapt to their particular context.

It is important to define key terms. The terms *grassroots organizing*, *social movement*, *nonviolent collective action*, and *social movement organization* describe different phenomena. *Grassroots organizing* is an activity whereby homegrown leadership enables a constituency to turn the resources they have into the power they need to achieve the change they want. A *social movement* is a widespread, voluntary, civilian-led, collective effort to bring about consequential change in a social, economic, or political order using a diverse repertoire of tactics such as protests, boycotts, and sit-ins. *Nonviolent collective action* is an extra-institutional strategy of sustained political, social, psychological, or economic action used to apply power in a conflict without the threat or use of violence. In the context of a social movement, the word *nonviolent* describes the movement's primary strategy regardless of whether violence is used against it.

Social movements are often comprised of multiple entities, which can include student organizations, unions, and other forms of organized civil society. In this context, they are considered social movement organizations. Movements often include people doing grass-roots organizing. But grassroots organizing can take place outside a social movement. Movements may not always have well-defined leaders, but they often have some form of leadership, which is defined as the people who accept responsibility to enable others to achieve their shared purpose in the face of uncertainty (Ganz 2010).

Figure 1 details trends in human rights funding from 2011 to 2015, categorized by the social change strategy that the grantee implemented to achieve the grant's goals. Grants can be tagged with multiple strategies. This figure from the Foundation Center and Human Rights Funders Network's 2011–2015 trends in global foundation grantmaking report, which offers the most comprehensive, comparable data available of institutional donor support in the 21st century for human rights, democracy, and social justice goals. The present report offers deeper analysis of 2011–2015 trends an extends its analysis through 2018 using newly collected survey data, in-depth interviews, and two case studies.

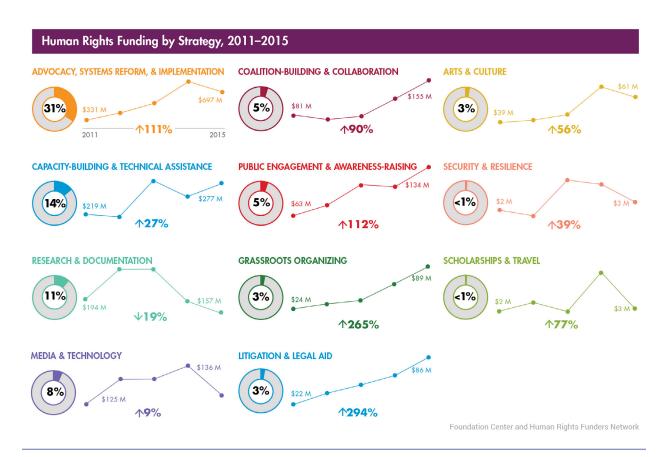


FIGURE 1. Trends in Donor Support for Grassroots Organizing and Other Social Change Strategies, 2011–2015, based on research by Candid and Human Rights Funders Network

(Source: Foundation Center and HRFN 2022)

² For additional information about the Advancing Human Rights dataset, including details about the subset of funders included in this 2011–2015 trends analysis, see HRFN 2020a.

There is no social movement category in the 2011–2015 trends in global foundation grantmaking report, but there is a category for grassroots organizing. Grants categorized as supporting grassroots organizing are those that seek to "[build] popular support for, [encourage] activism around, and [help] to organize individuals and communities to mobilize in support of particular issues" (Candid 2020). Such a strategy relies on a logic of social change driven by collective action outside of political institutions (e.g., from the streets). The other strategies listed in Figure 1 rely on a logic of social change driven primarily from within or in collaboration with political institutions (e.g., through advocacy with lawmakers or through capacity building and technical assistance to nonprofit organizations). This distinction between social change driven from within institutions versus social change driven from outside institutions is critical to understanding donor decision-making. For example, supporting extra-institutionally driven social change necessarily entails interacting with different communities than supporting institutionally driven social change. Advocacy and lobbying are often undertaken by non-profit organizations and entail meeting with elected officials to discuss policy proposals, whereas grassroots organizing often entails building power among historically excluded populations such as women and youth and using nonviolent actions—such as strikes, protests, boycotts, sit-ins, and occupations of public buildings—to pressure elected officials (Pinckney and Rivers 2021). This data suggests that donors favor supporting the former strategy over the latter. Understanding the underlying logic that drives each strategy helps to explain donors' preference.

Box 1. Definitions

Institutional donor is defined as a public charity or private foundation. Institutional donors are understood to be nongovernmental entities. This report considers specific configurations of institutional donors, including pooled funds, intermediaries, fiscal sponsorships, donor-advised funds (DAFs), limited liability corporations (LLCs), and community foundations. This report does not directly explore governmental and multilateral donors, giving by private individuals or corporations, or diaspora support. And although self-generated support—also known as autonomous resourcing—is most important to the success of social movements, it is discussed in this study only briefly. The terms *donor* and *foundation* are used synonymously as shorthand for an institutional donor.

A social change strategy describes the approach a grantee proposes to use to achieve a grant's stated goals. Examples of social change strategies include research and documentation, capacity building and technical assistance, litigation and legal aid, and grassroots organizing. Nonviolent resistance is a social change strategy. However, it is not one of strategies explicitly included in the aforementioned dataset. It is not uncommon for grantees to seek social change using multiple strategies at once or sequentially.

Box 1, cont'd

Grassroots organizing is defined as an activity where homegrown leadership enables a constituency to turn the resources it has into the power it needs to achieve the change that it wants. Grassroots organizing may be used to turn resources into violent or nonviolent power. This report only explores grassroots organizing that relies on nonviolent actions. This report uses the term organizing as a shorthand for grassroots organizing.

A social movement is defined as a widespread, voluntary, civilian-led, collective effort to bring about consequential change in a social, economic, or political order using a diverse repertoire of tactics such as protests, boycotts, and sit-ins. A social movement is comprised of social movement organizations (defined below). This report is focused on movements that use nonviolent means to advance human rights, social justice, and/or democracy. Nonviolent describes a movement's primary strategy regardless of whether violence is used against it. The terms nonviolent movement and social movement are used interchangeably. This report uses the term "movement" as shorthand for both.

Nonviolent collective action is defined as an extra-institutional strategy of sustained political, social, psychological, or economic action used to apply power in a conflict without the threat or use of violence. In the context of a social movement, the word nonviolent describes the movement's primary strategy regardless of whether violence is used against it. Boycotts, sit-ins, and protests are commonly used tactics in nonviolent collective action. The terms nonviolent resistance, civil resistance, and nonviolent collective action are used interchangeably.

A social movement organization (SMO) is defined as an organization that is part of a social movement. Organizations that could be considered SMOs include: a research center that publishes data on repression of movement leaders, a non-profit organization that provides free legal defense to movement participants, a union that mobilizes its members to participate in a movement, or small, informal community groups that support activists or engage in activism.

A *grassroots organization* is defined as a local, rural, or community organization with homegrown leadership of a defined constituency. Members of such constituencies are often referred to as *the grassroots*. Influencers and community leaders in such constituencies are often referred to as *grasstops*.

Leadership in the context of grassroots organizing and movements is defined as the people who accept responsibility to enable others to achieve their shared purpose in the face of uncertainty.

A Donor-Centric Approach

This report answers the question of why and how have institutional donors in the United States supported grassroots organizing and nonviolent social movements in non-democracies? This research is donor-centric. It does not seek to understand the effect of donor support on the success or failure of grassroots organizing or social movements,³ and it does not evaluate or compare donors. Instead, it sheds light on why and how institutional donors have supported grassroots organizing and social movements in the first place. It is focused on understanding the policies and practices of institutional donors whose mission statements and guiding principles seek to advance human rights, social justice, and democracy.⁴ And it focuses on support to grantees in non-democracies because those contexts often present the greatest practical and ethical challenges to donors (and grantees).

This research assumes that grassroots organizing and social movements require material resources to achieve their goals. Even though successful movements rely primarily on domestically generated resources, this report assumes that some organizers and movement leaders seek resources from foreign entities. It also assumes that foreign entities can provide some of these resources.

Explanations for Foreign Support for Human Rights, Social Justice, and Democracy

Significant bodies of research exist explaining the relationship between foreign support and human rights, social justice, and pro-democracy activities.⁵ This existing research commonly focuses on three dynamics: (i) foreign state support for rights, justice, and democracy, (ii) foreign non-state support for rights, justice, and democracy, and (iii) foreign support for non-violent movements.⁶ It notes the importance of donors' motivations, values, and interests, as well as the characteristics of those who receive support. It highlights countervailing and

³ For answers to that question, see Chenoweth and Stephan 2021.

In so doing, this research excludes donors that support grassroots organizing or social movements for anti-democratic or anti-human rights goals such as Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Act of 2014. This research includes social movements that seeks reformist (i.e., policy change) as well as revolutionary (i.e., regime change) goals.

⁵ This literature follows Gourevitch's (1978) work on the international sources of domestic politics, or, as he referred to it, the "second image reversed."

An additional set of literature focuses on foreign support for violent rebellion. This literature suggests that rebel groups value transnational relationships, information exchange, and foreign state support. It also finds that foreign support is less likely when rebel groups are very strong and very weak. Country characteristics such as income and geopolitical power are largely unrelated to whether rebel groups receive foreign support. Savvy rebel leaders that are able to frame their cause in a way that matches the interests and concerns of international actors are, however, likely to receive the most resources. This literature suggests that the ability of nonviolent social movement leadership to communicate information internationally may be worth exploring. Likewise, it suggests that the perceived strength of a movement may influence if, and when, it receives foreign support (see Clifford 2005; Byman 2013; Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham 2011).

unintended consequences of foreign support. It details the importance of relationships, formal alliances, and other linkages affecting donors and recipients. It emphasizes that foreign support for grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements requires a unique donor mind-set, and that foreign support is neither necessary nor sufficient for movements to succeed.

Foreign State Support for Human Rights, Social Justice, and Democracy

Literature explaining state support for rights, justice, and democracy outside their own borders tends to emphasize the security and economic interests of the donor states as well as the needs and characteristics of recipient states. Recent scholarship has shifted a critical eye to the role of democratic donor states as unlikely accomplices aiding and abetting democracy's decline in many countries around the world (Klass 2016). This includes the "taming of democracy assistance" when donors support activities that do not challenge the interests of the government in which the activities take place (Bush 2015). The literature focuses on governments as external actors, but not on institutional donors as external actors. However, the literature does suggest a utility in exploring the motivations, values, and interests of donors and the needs and characteristics of grassroots organizers and social movements.

Additional scholarship focuses more generally on foreign support for democratization. It highlights the effects of bilateral and multilateral aid in various contexts, the role of alliances, and the importance of donor state leverage over and linkages with recipient states. This scholarship tends to not distinguish between support for institutional pro-democracy activities (such as elections and political party building) and support for extra-institutional pro-democracy activities (such as grassroots organizing and social movements). Ignoring this distinction entails conflating two very different logics of democratization—one that emphasizes change as happening from the top down, driven from within institutions, and another that emphasizes change as happening from the bottom up, driven from outside of institutions. However, this literature does suggest that the types of relationships that exist between donors, between donor and grantee, and between grantees might help explain donor decisions about giving support and what form that support takes.

Two reports do explicitly acknowledge the distinction between institutional and extra-institutional nonviolent action. They suggest that support for grassroots organizing and social movements requires donors to have a different mindset and orientation than support for traditional nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) (Stephan, Lakhani, and Naviwala 2015). The first report notes that a traditional model of policy

⁷ See Murithi 2009; Blodgett 2011; Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2009; Carothers 2009; Christensen and Weinstein 2013; Easterly 2006; Hancock 1989; Wright 2008; Wright and Winters 2010; Faust and Bader 2014.

⁸ See Burnell 2005; Finkel, Pérez-Liñán, and Seligson 2007; Levitsky and Way 2005; Whitehead 2001; Wright 2009; Dietrich and Wright 2015.

change depends primarily on small numbers of "experts and insiders" whereas movement-led change depends primarily on a broad base of "individuals and communities affected by the social conditions that the movement is seeking to change" (Masters and Osborn 2010). The second report found that supporting organizing and movements that seek change via extra-institutional activities like protests, boycotts, and sit-ins requires donors to think and act differently than supporting traditional NGOs and CSOs that seek political change primarily through institutional activities like lobbying, elections, and legislative reform (Stephan, Lakhani, and Naviwala 2015).

Foreign Non-State Support for Human Rights, Social Justice, and Democracy

A second set of literature explores support by institutional donors and the broader third sector for human rights, social justice, democracy, civic participation, organizing, and activism abroad. This includes a focus on the growth of international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) and international advocacy networks. Such scholarship highlights how international advocacy networks and INGOs' local presence can have countervailing effects by exacerbating existing tensions and inequalities, as well as by fostering new alternative systems and opportunities for advocacy and solidarity (Gallo-Cruz 2012; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Murdie and Bhasin 2011). This scholarship suggests the relevance of ethical and practical questions for donors about the risks and opportunities posed by foreign funding and any local presence they have. It also suggests that INGOs' organizational structures and capacity impact their legitimacy and effectiveness (Balboa 2018; Wong 2012).

Foreign Support for Nonviolent Movements

The third set of existing literature explores foreign governmental and nongovernmental support specifically for nonviolent movements.¹⁰ It highlights the existing international legal and normative basis for foreign support (Wilson 2005; Ackerman and Merriman 2019). It notes the central role of solidarity and transnational activism, including from diasporas (Clark 2009; Della and Tarrow 2004; Moss 2021; Petrova 2019¹¹). It finds that foreign support for nonviolent activism is not uncommon and can come in many forms and from many actors (Chenoweth and Stephan 2021; Bunce and Wolchik 2011). It emphasizes that foreign support is neither necessary nor sufficient for movement success and is always of secondary to domestic

⁹ See Berman 1983; Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, and Vidal 2001; Eliasoph 2013; Guilhot 2007; Parmer 2012; Pinto-Duschinsky 1991; Salamon 2003; Stroup and Wong 2017.

See Dudouet 2013; Chenoweth and Stephan 2021. This literature also includes several publications that grass-roots organizers and movement participants have authored or substantially contributed to. They include Nonviolent activists from around the world 2011; Clark 2009; Miller-Dawkins 2017; CIVICUS 2019.

¹¹ This particular study highlights how diaspora support is positively associated with rebel groups adopting nonviolent tactics.

support (Chenoweth and Stephan 2021; Dudouet 2015). Foreign support has mixed and sometimes countervailing effects on the dynamics and outcomes of nonviolent movements. Positive effects include increasing local demand for rights and accountability, strengthening activist relationships, improving strategic planning and resilience, increasing participation levels, decreasing fatalities from repression, and generating international solidarity. Negative effects include undermining movement legitimacy, fostering division within movements, decreasing participation levels, and increasing the risk of repression. Research has found that the effects of donor support can sometimes be the opposite of the donor's intent (Klaas 2016; Bush 2015). The possibility that a grant may have positive, negative, and unintended consequences on the lives of activists and on their communities further reinforces the importance of donors considering ethical questions with respect to their grantmaking.

This report differs from existing studies by focusing on institutional donors' decisions and motivations for supporting grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements. Unlike much existing scholarship, this report is explicit in distinguishing between support for social change driven from within institutions (i.e., from the top down)—which is outside the scope of this research—and support for social change driven from outside of institutions (i.e., from the bottom up)—which is the key interest of this report. Focusing on support for social change from the bottom up is valuable because the logic of such change has a strong record of success (Pinckney 2022; Bayer, Bethke, and Lamback 2016). It is being used more than ever before (Chenoweth 2020). It relies on a different logic of change than top-down reform and therefore may have different causes and consequences. Directing donors' focus toward these differences may enable better informed and more strategic social change grantmaking.

It is important to note that some scholarship creates confusion by using the terms "foreign support" and "external support" interchangeably (Chenoweth and Stephan 2021). This report considers foreign support to be financial and non-financial resources provided to a recipient in a country other than the country where the donor is based. The primary difference between foreign support and external support is that external support may come from a source within the same country as the grantee. Recent grants made by MacKenzie Scott—American philanthropist and ex-wife of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos—offer an example. Scott's recent gift to the Movement for Black Lives is external support but not foreign support, since she is external to the Movement for Black Lives yet both she and the movement are located in the United States (Scott 2021).

¹² See Chenoweth and Stephan 2021; Perkoski and Chenoweth 2018; Jackson, San-Akca, and Maoz 2020; Johansen, Jorgen 2010; Nepstad 2011; Zunes and Ibrahim 2009.

Why and How Have Donors Supported Grassroots Organizing and Nonviolent Movements?

This report focuses on three plausible explanations for why and how institutional donors in the United States have supported grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements in non-democracies. The first explanation is that the *values* held by board members, staff, and founders of a given institutional donor explain support for organizing and movements. Values held by board members, staff, or founders could motivate very different preferences for (i) how the public perceives their grantmaking, (ii) the level of control they require over grants and grantees, or (iii) the types of goals, communities, or strategies that they prioritize in their grantmaking. While this may not hold true in all cases, the values held by the founders, board members, and executive directors may very well have a stronger influence on a foundation's strategy and its decision-making processes than values held by staff. Nevertheless, staff may play an important role in determining whether those values become embedded in the foundation's organizational culture. And values may vary widely even among human rights, social justice, and democracy donors.

The *lived experiences* of board members, staff, and founders offer a second explanation for why they support organizing and movements. These personal experiences could include (i) growing up under dictatorship, (ii) one's formal or informal education, or (iii) any relationships developed over time with organizers, movement leaders, or other political actors. For example, living under an authoritarian regime during one's youth could lead to the formation of a strong affinity for pro-democracy dissent, whereas receiving an education in a system that ignores or distorts the transformative power of movements could lead to an unwitting bias against organizing and movements. Likewise, having weaker personal and professional relationships with movement leaders compared to traditional NGO leaders may unknowingly steer donors to privilege the political analysis or funding requests of traditional NGOs over grassroots organizers and social movement leaders. Again, while this may not hold true in all cases, it may very well be expected that the lived experiences of founders, board members, and executive directors have a stronger influence on a foundation than the lived experiences of its staff.

While existing research suggests that donors' values, their lived experiences, and their relationships may explain their grantmaking, those characteristics are sticky and primarily individual ones. That is to say, the values, lived experiences, and relationships that a founder or board member brings to their grantmaking are accumulated over a lifetime and therefore are often path dependent and slow to change. Focusing solely on these characteristics would miss traits of the foundation itself that may be more variable. For example, many foundations undertake strategic reviews of their grantmaking when their leadership changes or after a fixed period. The internal structures of a foundation may affect who is eligible to receive

support, what is eligible to be supported, and the degree to which—and the ways in which—learning happens. As such, this research also focuses on the *internal structures* of institutional donors and how they may explain support for organizing and movements. A foundation's internal structures are understood to be the norms, processes, and organization that exist for the foundation to carry out its activities.

It's possible that donor staff want to support grassroots organizing or social movements but cannot due to perceived or actual legal, political, or human resource constraints. For example, English-language calls for proposals or online reporting requirements might create unintended obstacles for entities without staff fluent in English or for informal, unregistered entities with inconsistent or insecure internet access. Alternatively, donor staff might have so much funding to disburse within a fiscal year that spoken or unspoken biases exist to seek out, vet, manage, monitor, and evaluate a small number of grantees to receive large grants, rather than doing so for a larger number of grantees who receive smaller grants. Donors often present such a bias as a way to keep administrative costs or overhead low. Large grants may very well be easier to make to well-established non-profits with development departments and 501(c)(3) equivalency status than to informal networks of organizers or to movement organizations that have no professionalized fundraising apparatus, such as development officers whose sole job is often to secure funding from and maintain relationships with donors.¹³

Research Methods

Values, lived experiences, and internal structures all plausibly affect why donors support grass-roots organizing or nonviolent movements. These three factors are also likely to influence how donors go about supporting organizing and movements. The next sections of this report offer new data and fresh analysis that illustrate why and how some donors support organizing and movements. An online survey offered a broad range of donors the chance to anonymously share their experiences and opinions. This allowed respondents to be free to offer their most candid reflections. The survey was shared via email lists not of the author's creation, which allowed this research to incorporate the views of donors beyond those immediately within the author's network. As such, the way in which the survey was disseminated reduced potential selection bias with respect to the individuals who had a chance to share their opinions with the author. It also sought to identify (i) any common characteristics of donors that might make them more or less amenable to supporting organizing and movements, and (ii) common constraints that donors face in supporting organizing and movements.

¹³ Anonymous interviewees speaking with the author

Case studies of the American Jewish World Service and Humanity United provide a deep dive into the different trajectories two donors took to supporting the work of organizers and movements. The case studies collected data that illustrate not only why, but also how, those donors have supported organizing and movements. By documenting how donors grappled with and overcame constraints, this report is able to not only describe common challenges but also to offer actionable solutions.

Finally, semi-structured interviews allowed donors, grantees, and philanthropic experts to offer reflections and propose ideas that challenged the author's initial assumptions about support for organizing and movements. These interviews fostered discussions about broad trends in donor support for organizing and movements, and the kinds of support organizers and movements tend to want and to not want. These interviews also provoked creative thinking about the ways that donors can respond to the needs and requests of organizers and movements.

This report offers a range of data that, taken together, inform principles, practices, and findings that will hopefully inspire donors to think deeply—in high-level strategic planning, individual grant decisions, and everything in between—about whether, when, why, and how to support the work of grassroots organizers and nonviolent movements.

Donor Survey

To better understand why and how donors have supported organizing and nonviolent movements, the author developed an anonymous survey to document donors' views about grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements. The survey sought to capture qualitative and quantitative data from a broad range of donors. The survey also sought to test the extent to which the three variables below determine why and how donors have supported organizing and movements:

- i. the values held by a foundation's board members, founders, and staff
- ii. the lived experiences of a foundation's board members, founders, and staff
- iii. a foundation's internal structures

The survey consisted of six demographic questions and sixteen substantive questions about donors' understanding of and experience with grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements in non-democracies (see Appendix 2).¹⁴ It was first tested with a small number of donors and philanthropic experts before being disseminated to the email lists of the three largest networks and alliances of US-based donors that support human rights, peace, and democracy: Human Rights Funders Network (HRFN), the Peace and Security Funders Group (PSFG), and the EDGE Funders Alliance (EDGE). Over the course of 15 days during October 2019, 30 individuals completed the survey.

The Survey Population and Their Foundations: Descriptive Statistics

The survey was shared via email with the three aforementioned networks of donors.¹⁵ Human Rights Funders Network also emailed the survey to individuals who had participated in a webinar series titled *Stronger Together*. This webinar series explored funders' roles in supporting social movements and included conversations with donors, organizers, academics, and monitoring and evaluation experts.¹⁶ As such, the population surveyed for this research

Due to an error administering the survey, the Tufts University Institutional Review Board required that all responses to questions that sought "human subjects data" be deleted (and therefore not used). This included all demographic data (i.e., responses to questions 1–6) and all responses to questions 20 and 22.

An EDGE staff person shared the survey with its email lists of European and North American donors/members. A staff person of a PSFG member organization—the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict—shared the survey with the PSFG email list. The survey was also included in HRFN's newsletter that was emailed to members.

More information about the first and second parts of HRFN's *Strong Together* webinar series can be found online at: https://philanthropynewyork.org/event-calendar/stronger-together-new-frontiers-funders-supporting -social-movements-june-webinar and https://philanthropynewyork.org/event-calendar/stronger-together -part-ii-building-capacity-social-movements-december-webinar-hosted.

had disproportionately more exposure to organizers and to social movement concepts, data, and strategic thinking than if the survey had been sent to randomly selected donors. Because this survey was not disseminated randomly, the survey results are a compilation of the views of these 30 respondents. The survey results should not be construed as representative of all donors or of all human rights, social justice, and democracy donors. Nevertheless, the survey results are valuable because they increase the breadth of expertise included in this report. The survey allowed donors who might otherwise not comment publicly to do so

In recent years, donors have increasingly funded grant proposals that use terms related to organizing and movements.

anonymously. And because the responses were collected systematically, trends that might otherwise be invisible became visible.

Respondents worked at donors of all sizes and were spread fairly evenly across them—as determined by total paid staff. One-fifth (20%) of

respondents worked at a foundation with 1–10 paid (full and part-time) staff. Nearly one-third (30%) worked at a foundation with 11–25 paid staff. More than one-quarter (27%) worked at a foundation with 26–49 paid staff. And nearly one-quarter (23%) worked at a foundation with 50 or more paid staff.

For more than half of the foundations represented, \$50,000 or less was the most common grant size. For more than one-quarter (27%), the most common grant size was \$5,001–\$25,000. The next most common grant size for one-fifth (20%) of respondents' foundations was \$25,001–\$50,000. Thirteen percent (13%) of respondents' foundations gave average grant sizes of \$50,001–\$100,000. Another thirteen percent (13%) of respondents' foundations gave average grant sizes of \$5,000 or less. Ten percent (10%) of respondents' foundations gave an average grant size of \$100,001–\$250,000. Seven percent (7%) of respondents' foundations gave an average grant size of \$250,001–\$500,000. The final 10% of respondents did not know or could not report a most common grant size.

These responses are noteworthy because the most common average grant size is relatively small: \$5,001–\$25,000. This may be due to the preferences or available funds of the respondents' foundations. It may be because these donors view such grants as less risky.

The most common grant duration of respondents' foundations is in two ranges: for one-third (33%) of respondents' foundations, it was 7–12 months, while another third (33%) reported 24 months or more. The most common grant duraction for 17% of respondents' foundations was 13–23 months. The most common grant duration for 7% of respondents' foundations was 0–6 months. Three respondents (10%) selected "Other" when asked for their foundation's most common grant duration.

This data suggests that more than one-third of respondents' foundations (40%) do not typically offer multi-year grants. What factors push some donors to favor grant lengths of one year or less and others to favor longer, multi-year grant lengths? What effects do these donor preferences have on potential grantees? These questions are discussed later in this report including in "Tension 2. Rapid Response, Project-Based, or General Operating Support?" on page 64.

The number of foundations supporting grassroots organizing or social movements has increased steadily and markedly over the past two decades according to survey respondents. More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents' foundations supported grassroots organizing or social movements within the time period 2016–2019. That is a 21% increase over the number of respondents' foundations offering such support from 2011–2015, a 53% increase over the 2006–2010 time period, a 109% increase over the 2000–2005 time period, and a 187% increase over the time periods 1999 and earlier.

And in recent years, donors have increasingly funded grant proposals that use terms related to organizing and movements. For example, from 2015 to 2016, the number of grants that incorporated the terms "movement" or "grassroots" increased by 79% and 35%, respectively (Koob and Thomas 2019). And from 2016 to 2017, the number of grants that mentioned "movement building" or "community organizing" increased by 80% and 43%, respectively (Koob and Thomas 2020).

As the number of foundations supporting organizing has increased, grants have become increasingly explicit about supporting organizing and movements. Yet, the percent of human rights dollars given for grassroots organizing did not increase from 2011 to 2018 relative to support for other social change strategies, such as advocacy and technical assistance. This comes at a time that individuals are using nonviolent action more than ever before (Chenoweth 2020). This suggests that increases in total dollars given to support grassroots organizing may reflect an overall increase in human rights giving.

More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents reported that their foundations supported organizing and movements in Latin America (including Mexico). A majority (60%) of respondents reported that their foundations supported organizing and movements in sub-Saharan Africa, while nearly half of respondents (47%) reported that their foundation supported organizing and movements in Asia and the Pacific. Approximately one-third of respondents reported that their foundation supported organizing and movements in each of the following regions: the Caribbean; Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Russia; and the United States and Canada. Nearly one-quarter (23%) of respondents reported that their foundation supported organizing and movements in the following regions: the Middle East; North Africa; and Western Europe. Of note, nearly one-third (30%) of respondents reported that their foundation supported grantees that did transnational organizing and movement work.

More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents reported working for a foundation that does grantmaking from the United States. Geographic proximity may play a role in more foundations giving to grantees in Latin America than in any other region. But the fact that the next largest percentages of donors supported organizing and movements in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia & Pacific regions suggests that geographic proximity in and of itself might not actually play a prominent role in determining where donors direct their funding.

Donor Goals

Following are survey results that describe donors' goals for their organizing and social movement grantmaking. Respondents were asked: "What goal(s) does your foundation seek to achieve with the support it gives for grassroots organizing and/or social movements in non-democracies?" A similar percentage of respondents stated that their foundations' goals for these grants fell into three categories.

Box 2. Survey Takeaways Concerning Foundation Goals for Supporting Grassroots Organizing and Movements

- 37% reported movement building as a goal and specifically mentioned supporting:
 - · leadership development,
 - · relationship building and skills training, and
 - coordination and strategy.
- 37% reported resilience, safety, and maintaining civic space as a goal and specifically mentioned support for:
 - · resilient local communities,
 - · protecting rights defenders, and
 - maintaining grassroots infrastructure and capacity in challenging times.
- 30% reported policy change or democratization as a goal and specifically mentioned support for:
 - · durable policy change,
 - · strengthening democratic institutions, and
 - · advancement of justice, rights, and peace.

The first category of donor goals (i.e., movement building) relates to the means that grantees can develop and use to achieve their stated ends. The second category of donor goals (i.e., resilience, safety, and maintaining civic space) also relates to means that grantees can develop, yet it is perhaps more dependent than the first category on the political context in which they operate. And the third category of donor goals (i.e., policy change and democratization) relates to whether grantees ultimately achieve their end goals.

These categories become particularly relevant when evaluating the success of a grantee at achieving the goals laid out by the donor. Whereas the first and second categories of donor goals are largely related to fostering the political agency of grantees, the third category is related to the outcomes for which that agency may be utilized to achieve. For example, do donors consider grants to be successful if their grantee achieves greater political agency in the form of leadership development, increased membership, and protecting their members—even if there is not a single policy reform? Alternatively, do donors consider grants to be successful if any policy reform occurs even if said reforms restrict the political agency of their grantees? It is also important to note that these are donors' stated goals, which may overlap to varying degrees with their grantees' goals. Some donor or grantee goals and preferences may be unspoken or assumed. Different and unspoken preferences and goals can lead to misunderstandings and tension between donors and grantees. This is discussed for fully in Tensions 5 and 6 in the Findings section of this study (starting on pages 70 and 73, respectively).

Constraints on Supporting Grassroots Organizing and Social Movements

Respondents were asked to identify the primary constraints that keep their foundations from giving the level or type of support that they think their foundations should be giving for grass-roots organizing and social movements in non-democracies. Box 3 summarizes the responses. Respondents were allowed to list multiple primary constraints, so the percentages do not add up to 100%. Following is a narrative description of Box 3.

Of the 30 survey respondents only two reported that US legal or tax considerations were a primary constraint to supporting social movements in non-democracies. Three respondents (10%) reported that something akin to a lack of donor understanding of movements was a constraint. One-fifth (20%) of respondents said that risks or threats were the primary constraint.

But what about the other 60%—the majority—of respondents? Nearly one-quarter (23%) of respondents reported that procedural considerations were a primary constraint on supporting grassroots organizing and social movements in non-democracies. More than one-quarter (27%) of respondents stated that insufficient funds or insufficient staff capacity at the foundation were a primary constraint. Nearly one-third (30%) of respondents stated that their foundation's priorities were a primary constraint.

Box 3. Survey Takeaways Concerning Constraints on Supporting Grassroots Organizing and Movements

- 7% reported that US legal or tax concerns were a primary constraint
- 10% reported that lack of understanding of movements was a primary constraint and specifically mentioned:
 - · Institutional or industry groupthink,
 - · a belief that the likelihood of positive change is low, and
 - · internal failure to understand power of movements.
- 20% stated that risks or threats were a primary constraint and specifically mentioned:
 - · physical and digital threats,
 - · safety and security concerns for grantees and staff, and
 - how to do no harm.
- 23% stated that procedural questions were a primary constraint and specifically mentioned:
 - difficulties getting funding into countries and monitoring those grants,
 - · uncertainty how to get money to organizers,
 - · uncertainty navigating recipient country legal restrictions, and
 - only funding grantees with sufficient English-language expertise to manage diligence and reporting requirements.
- 27% stated that insufficient financial and human resource capacity were a primary constraint and specifically mentioned:
 - · not having enough funding to give, and
 - · not having enough staff capacity.
- 30% stated that donor priorities were a primary constraint and specifically mentioned:
 - · being focused on law and policy reform, and
 - · only funding grantees within the US.

Donor values may drive most of these responses. But one-third of respondents stated that a lack of understanding of movements or procedural considerations were the primary constraint to supporting social movements and organizing. As this report will discuss further, many donors have overcome procedural considerations like the ones survey respondents mentioned. Donors have found ways to mitigate risks. And some donors like the Libra Foundation have decided against designing their grantmaking processes around mitigating the risk of a low likelihood event (Clark 2022).

Whereas this survey captured a wide range of donor reflections on their understanding of and engagement with organizing and movements, the next section of this report digs deeper into these themes through in-depth case studies of two donors: the American Jewish World Service and Humanity United.

Case Studies

The following case studies of the American Jewish World Service and Humanity United trace the trajectories that these two donors have taken with respect to supporting grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements.¹⁷ The case studies document the values, lived experiences, relationships, internal structures, and information that drove these donors' decision-making. Both foundations granted the author access to their inner workings, including access to internal documents, staff, founding leaders, board members, and grantees. Such access is often restricted, which means many reports on grantmaking do not include critical information—the perspectives of the individuals who set grantmaking priorities, make funding decisions, and evaluate grants. This report relies on publicly available data, interviews with grantees and philanthropic experts, and extensive primary source material from the foundations themselves.¹⁸

Case Study Selection

To offer in-depth analysis of primary source material, the author sought institutional donors that would offer access to their archives and authorize their staff, board members, and grantees to participate in this research. The author sought two donors that annually gave similar amounts of funding to similar thematic causes in similar geographic regions. Furthermore, selecting two donors based in the same country was necessary to control for differences in national tax and other laws that could affect donor decision-making. The goal was to select two donors that have had differing relationships to grassroots organizing and social movements.

As a point of departure, this research does not set a fixed threshold for total grant dollars or total number of grants for a donor to be counted as one that supports organizing or movements. Case selection proceeded in three stages: The first stage involved determining if a donor had undertaken any formal process for deciding whether to support organizing or movements. Donors that could not describe their decision-making with respect to organizing and movements—suggesting that no such decision-making process took place—were excluded as potential case studies. Those that had undertaken such a decision-making process advanced to the second stage of case selection. This stage involved determining

¹⁷ Neither donor provided financial support for this research.

As Tompkins-Strange (2016, 8) noted, "access to foundations' inner workings is often restricted. Foundations' actions are frequently opaque, concealed in order to protect against legal and reputational risk." To encourage comfort and candor from interviewees who included foundation staff, board members, and grantees, I offered to protect the anonymity of every interviewee and respondent if they so desired.

whether donors would grant access to internal documents, staff, founders, board members, and grantees.¹⁹ Donors that considered granting such access advanced to the third stage of case selection, in which the author attempted to select two donors similar in important respects (such as thematic foci) but with different trajectories regarding their support for grassroots organizing and social movements.

Leadership of the American Jewish World Service (AJWS), a New York–based public charity that has consistently prioritized support for the grassroots agreed for their foundation to be included in this research as the first donor. Humanity United (HU) is a California-based private foundation that has had a different relationship to grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements—as HU matured as a donor, its peacebuilding work evolved from primarily prioritizing elite and grasstops advocacy and engagement, research and documentation, and mobilization of public opinion to prioritizing the work of movements, grassroots organizers, and local grantees. Humanity United leadership agreed for their foundation to be included in this research as the second donor.²⁰

The American Jewish World Service and Humanity United share some common characteristics. Both donors are based in the United States. Neither has an endowment. Their net assets at the end of 2018 were comparable: \$45 million (AJWS) and \$52 million (HU) (USDT–IRS 990 2018; USDT-IRS 990–PF 2018). Both foundations support human rights, democracy, justice, and peace-related activities. Both undertake grantmaking and advocacy. Both provide general operating support and project-based support. Both offer multi-year grants. Both assist grantees to obtain funding from other donors. And both help grantees network with each other. AJWS is explicitly inspired by a Jewish commitment to justice while Humanity United has no such explicit religious values.²¹

There are also differences between the two donors. AJWS is a public charity that raises funding from many sources. Humanity United is a private foundation that is funded by philanthropists Pam and Pierre Omidyar. AJWS is two decades older than Humanity United. As such, this report presents the stories of Humanity United's and the American Jewish World Service's relationships to grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements in parallel, but not in comparison to each other.

¹⁹ Scholars such as McGoey (2015) have studied philanthropy and individual foundations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation without using primary source material from the foundation. Research without access to staff, board members, and internal documents necessarily misses a relevant perspective on a foundation. And so, the author remained committed to only researching donors that permitted access to primary source material.

²⁰ To carry out this research, Humanity United required that the author and Tufts University sign a three-way confidentiality and nondisclosure agreement covering "confidential information" about Humanity United.

²¹ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

American Jewish World Service

The story of the American Jewish World Service is one of an organization that has consistently prioritized support for grassroots and locally driven activities, and for connecting people across borders. It is a story of serendipitous, thorny, and personality-driven growth. And it is a story of an organization that felt its way from supporting grassroots grantees around the world to developing an approach to supporting social movements that is grounded in human rights and prioritizes grassroots grantees.

In the early 1980s, an Oxfam America director named Laurence Simon reflected on all the famine and disaster relief operations in which he had worked. He observed that, "We [Jews] were present but we were silent Jews, like me, who were not there [specifically as] Jews" (Simon 2011). He recalled his father's "quiet determination to social justice," and noted "the ethics of Judaism, a legacy from the experience of slavery and exodus, the law of Mount Sinai, and the ages of suffering..." (Simon 1985). In 1985, Simon alongside a strategic partner, Lawrence Phillips, founded the organization that they hoped would be an identifiably "Jewish Oxfam." They called the organization the American Jewish World Service (Simon 2011, 2).

Simon holds degrees in philosophy, political theory, and international development. Yet, some of the most influential education in his life came not from his degrees but from interpersonal experiences. He observed and absorbed the ways people of different traditions connected powerfully with the oppressed and the poor. At Fordham University he worked with Paolo Freire and Bishop Helder Camara, two central figures in the liberation theology movement. While in the Dominican Republic, India, and the Philippines, he gained a direct understanding of the lived experiences of historically excluded people and communities (Simon 2011, 15; Simon in discussion with the author 2019). Simon maintained that a "direct experience has to radicalize you—not in an irresponsible way, but it has to give you the sense of urgency of dealing with the issues that are perpetuating repression" (Simon 2019).

At its founding, the American Jewish World Service sought to undertake two sets of activities: (i) international relief and long-term development, and (ii) visible opportunities for American Jews to support, study, and work on self-reliant development efforts in developing nations (Simon 1985). AJWS pursued the former by establishing "collegial relationships" with and funding grassroots organizations—local, rural, and community organizations with homegrown leadership—such that they could increase their capacity to become self-reliant, reach the poorest sectors of rural communities, and incorporate women and other traditionally excluded groups in the process of development. AJWS also sought to support humanitarian assistance and to link it to longer-term development programs.

When support for these two sets of activities came into conflict with each other, Laurence Simon prioritized supporting local and grassroots relief and development work while Lawrence Phillips prioritized opportunities for American Jews. In June 1989, practical and moral differences

between the two founders with respect to whether AJWS would remove its identifiably Jewish branding from an aid shipment to Eritrea (to better facilitate its delivery) sharply split the AJWS board. During a contentious board meeting, the majority sided with Phillips and decided to not remove the branding. Simon and some of his allies on the board left the organization. The meeting did not resolve the tension between AJWS's dual mission. But over the next decade, members of the staff and board—including Executive Director Andrew Griffel and Board Member Don Ambramson—kept the organization committed to its relief and development work.

This meant that despite Laurence Simon's departure, AJWS would continue to fund local, grassroots projects and organizations.

In 1998, Ruth Messinger left a career in New York City politics to become president of AJWS. Over 18 years, she drove AJWS's growth, expanding the annual budget from \$2 million to nearly \$70 million (USDT–IRS 1998; USDT–IRS 2016. This was

"[D]irect experience has to radicalize you—not in an irresponsible way, but it has to give you the sense of urgency...."

-Laurence Simon

spurred in large part by influxes in donations immediately after natural disasters.²² But unlike many other international relief and development organizations, AJWS grants were commonly under \$30,000, which made it a better match for smaller, local rather than larger, national grantees—the latter of which preferred and could more easily absorb six- and seven-figure grants.²³ AJWS's commitment to supporting local initiatives for long-term development meant that its New York and in-country staff and consultants had institutionalized incentives to develop long-term relationships with grantees in affected areas (Gaynor 2019, 208).²⁴ This facilitated their ability to steward influxes of funding in ways that responded to evolving local needs.²⁵ This growth aligned with Simon's original vision that AJWS support international relief and long-term development efforts despite the fact that his role in the organization's founding went largely unrecognized during this period.

Messinger and many of the staff she hired had experience working and volunteering with organizations that promoted and supported human rights, social movements, and organizing. This differed from many other donors whose staff spent the majority of their careers working in philanthropy and had themselves never been organizers or social movement leaders. Messinger herself had trained and served as a social worker before her career in New York City politics. "I thought I was going to do case work, but became a community organizer," she

²² Ruth Messinger in conversation with the author, 2019.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

²⁵ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

recalled. "That's what I did—I asked communities, How can I help you?" She stressed the importance of relationships in her work. "Coming from NYC politics, by and large you are relational, or you don't make it." Developing and maintaining relationships was necessary for her to be effective in this climate—a philosophy she brought to AJWS. As a public charity that raised its funding largely from the American Jewish community, AJWS staff could avoid presenting themselves as giving away the money from a single wealthy patron or spending an endowment. Staff presented AJWS as a donor "representing [the Jewish] community in the US...." This facilitated their ability to develop relationships with grantees that were not only about a transfer of funds, but also about connecting communities to each other. 28

It was largely through learning from a small number of staff, peer organizations, and local partners that AJWS started a transition from supporting local and grassroots organizing to supporting social movements that included local and grassroots organizing.²⁹ There were few AJWS staff "preaching about social movements" in the late 2000s and early 2010s.³⁰ One of them was a program officer named Angela Martinez. Martinez had previously worked closely with movements throughout Latin America. One of her colleagues recounted that Martinez "saw the power of movement-led change." "She wasn't looking at the change she was trying to make, organization by organization...." She saw the organizations she funded as connected to one another, "a constellation with a common agenda." Her understanding of and commitment to movements helped to expand the knowledge of and curiosity about movements within AJWS.

The organization's understanding of movements was also influenced by other donors. In 2006, AJWS started a grantmaking portfolio called "Collegial Partners" to partner with organizations that could strengthen the work of AJWS and its grantees. Fellow donor Grassroots International (GRI) had more than two decades of experience supporting social movements, and AJWS staff invited GRI to be its first Collegial Partner specifically to help strengthen AJWS's work supporting social movements.³² At one level, the collegial partnership facilitated information sharing, including, (i) what supporting social movements means relative to supporting traditional NGOs, and (ii) GRI's model of social movement accompaniment. GRI and AJWS jointly developed regional programs in Latin America and co-funded organizations in several countries. GRI introduced social movements to AJWS, including Via Campesina, with whom AJWS still works closely. And AJWS and GRI collaborated on advocacy in Washington. AJWS has continued to partner

²⁶ Ruth Messinger in conversation with the author, 2019.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

²⁹ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

³⁰ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

³¹ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

³² Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

with Grassroots International. Other donors have also influenced AJWS's support for social movements. For example, AJWS developed a social movements assessment tool that was inspired and informed by the Global Fund for Women's movement assessment tool.³³

"We did not—probably more so out of ignorance—take our approach from the global normative human rights framework but from how activists talked about rights," recalled a former senior staff person. "The idea that AJWS started as a development organization is very critical here because that was the entry point into movement building—because it tended to [be with]

people who were thinking of grassroots developmentworkand bottom-upapproaches to cultivating land or building health systems or looking at access to education issues."³⁴

In the wake of a decade of growth halted by the 2008 financial crisis, AJWS embarked in early 2010 on its first strategic planning process to clarify its grantmaking strategy and narrow its "The idea that AJWS started as a development organization is very critical here because that was the entry point into movement building. . . . "

—Former senior staff person

focus areas. The process spanned 18 months and relied on staff and outside consultants to conduct interviews with key stakeholders, collect and analyze data about AJWS's past grantmaking, and make recommendations. The data affirmed that support for local and grassroots grantees was the common thread in their grantmaking. The ensuing strategic plan for 2012–2016 introduced a "tiered approach" to grantmaking that for the first time explicitly rooted AJWS grantmaking in human rights. This approach entailed a continued commitment to supporting grassroots organizing.

The first strategic plan also included a decision to "expand upon its Collegial Partners program—reconceived as a Strategic Allies program—to support national, regional, and international NGOs that can, in turn, provide complementary support to AJWS's grassroots partners and amplify their voices on specific issues" (AJWS 2011). This strategic plan also led AJWS to narrow and focus the number of priority countries and issue areas, and to create a Strategic Learning, Research, and Evaluation (SLRE) division to support evidence-based decision-making (AJWS 2018, 11).

This decision to link support for grassroots grantees with support for their national, regional, and international partners was AJWS's first formal commitment to what the organization would come to call—in its second strategic plan in 2018—a "grassrooted" approach to grantmaking (see Box 4 on the next page). This grassrooted approach continues to define AJWS's grantmaking today.

Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author. See AJWS 2022 for a description of the AJWS tool. The Global Fund for Women's Movement Capacity Assessment Tool (MCAT 3.0) is designed for movement leaders and is available online: https://www.globalfundforwomen.org/apply-for-a-grant/movement-capacity-assessment-tool/.

³⁴ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

Box 4. A Grassrooted Approach to Grantmaking in Nicaragua

The American Jewish World Service's grantmaking in Nicaragua offers an example of their grassrooted approach, which entails supporting primarily grassroots grantees from marginalized communities as well as their national, regional, and international allies to undertake transformational change in order to realize their human rights. In 1998, AJWS gave its first funding to a Nicaraguan grantee. That grant was for humanitarian assistance in the wake of Hurricane Mitch. AJWS's next 15 years of grantmaking in Nicaragua supported not only projects and organizations that provided direct humanitarian and development assistance, but also women's rights, the rights to health and education, LGBTQI+ and Indigenous communities, and land rights. In line with its vision of change, AJWS gave long-term and flexible grants to support the goals of marginalized communities, developed long-term relationships with local partners, and supported grantees' capacity to strategize, organize, and advocate for policy reforms.

AJWS's first portfolio of new grants supported self-identified needs of the youth, students, and other local actors to continue building the movement for democracy and justice. AJWS directly funded projects and general operating expenses for (i) safety and security, (ii) capacity building for pluralist democracy, nonviolent social movement building, and transitional justice, (iii) advocacy to keep Nicaragua on the international agenda, and (iv) psychosocial support for organizers who suffered from repression. This support included grants to emerging groups with diverse movement building strategies, social movement coalitions, and civil society organizations.

AJWS's support also went to existing grantees that sought assistance refining strategies to (i) achieve new national demands for democracy and justice, (ii) maintain movement cohesion, and (iii) otherwise sustain movement capacity and legitimacy.

The relationships that AJWS had developed with marginalized communities in Nicaragua over 20 years yielded trust. This trust facilitated their ability to have open and honest conversations with local actors and to understand the root causes of protests when they erupted in 2018. AJWS's institutionalized commitments to supporting local organizers' self-identified needs and to transformative political change allowed its staff to fund activities with goals beyond procedurally free and fair elections. Its flexible grantmaking policies allowed staff to provide funding in the ways and timeframes that local actors requested. And its long-term approach allowed staff to hold off on a new portfolio of grantmaking until Nicaraguans could convene, coordinate, and develop their own vision for change and a strategy to achieve it.

However, the volatility of the political and health situations in the country—including repression of organizers and civil society organizations and a growing economic crisis—impeded the development of such long-term strategic planning. It compelled local actors and AJWS to prioritize immediate needs of organizers and the movement, while continuing—at a much smaller scale—support for long-term strategic planning.

Humanity United

The story of Humanity United is one of an organization guided by the goals of its living donors to cultivate the conditions for enduring peace and freedom. Their aim is to address human rights abuses such as genocide, atrocities, violent conflict, and human trafficking, and to build peace and advance freedom in parts of the world where those ideals are challenged most (The Omidyar Group 2022). It is a story of an organization with big and broad goals. And it is a story of an organization whose staff have piloted and embraced multiple approaches to social movements.

While Pam and Pierre Omidyar founded Humanity United in 2008, their experience in institutional philanthropy began a decade earlier. In 1998, the couple created the Omidyar Family Foundation (OFF) after eBay—the company that Pierre founded—went public.³⁵ They registered OFF as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit but noted the Internal Revenue Service—imposed limitations on the types of activities and organizations that they could support (Bade 2019). Many foundations develop their grantmaking strategy within these limitations, but the Omidyars sought greater flexibility and new ways of undertaking their philanthropic endeavors. By 2004, they converted OFF to a hybrid philanthropic investment firm called the Omidyar Network (ON). It was comprised of both a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and a limited liability corporation (LLC). This hybrid structure allowed ON to support and invest in not only non-profit but also for-profit entities (Wallace 2021).

Pam and Pierre Omidyar share a commitment to fostering citizen engagement in society. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, in addition to disaster and humanitarian aid around the world, that commitment was manifested as grantmaking within the United States. The Omidyar Network incubated the first years of this work. And the Omidyars committed to spending \$100 million over five years to help eradicate "two of the worst things that man does to man": genocide and human trafficking (Henn 2008). Their role in shaping the organization's trajectory continued as it became an independent organization called Humanity United in 2008. Over the years, their broad goals and funding have endured while the strategies Humanity United has used to achieve them have evolved. Pam Omidyar continues to be engaged with Humanity United as a board member, but holds deeply that operational decisions sit with the organization's staff and leadership.

Humanity United is one of several philanthropic and non-profit organizations that Pam Omidyar and her husband Pierre founded. They co-founded a philanthropic investment firm called Omidyar Network that funds for-profit and non-profit entities to create opportunities for individuals around the world to improve their own lives. Pam also founded HopeLab, a non-profit created with the idea that young people who have chronic illnesses can make positive behavior changes to improve their treatment. These entities among many others, including Humanity United, make up a part of the Omidyar Group.

For the first eight years after its founding, Humanity United's grantmaking focused on two thematic areas, (i) *atrocity prevention*, and (ii) *advancing freedom*. The former included support for efforts to prevent and respond to genocide and mass atrocities, as well as support for peacebuilding and justice efforts. It also included support for efforts to encourage political leadership on these issues—especially in the United States. The latter included support for efforts to end human slavery and human trafficking, as well as support to victims of slavery and human trafficking (which are outside the focus of this research).

During those first years, staff within these programs described having substantial autonomy in their grantmaking. For example, they described the final decision about grant proposals being more dependent on their weekly discussions with members of the leadership team than on an overarching, long-term strategy.³⁶ This procedural flexibility facilitated Humanity United's support for different approaches to atrocity prevention and advancing freedom.³⁷ Through 2014, Humanity United was focused on three primary strategic pillars: Voice and Will, Rule of Law and Good Governance, and Markets and Business. While HU supported some civil society efforts in local settings, the organization emphasized grasstops advocacy and engagement, research and documentation, and mobilizing public opinion (HU 2021b).³⁸ Such grantmaking included support for research, documentation, and advocacy by organizations such as the Crisis Action, Human Rights Watch, International Crisis Group, and various universities, including Harvard and the University of California, Berkeley, Non-profits such as the ENOUGH Project and United to End Genocide mobilized public opinion in addition to conducting advocacy and research. And in partnership with the Senegal-based TrustAfrica foundation, HU supported technical assistance, training, and funding to civil society organizations in Liberia, Sudan, and South Sudan to—among other things—build their monitoring and evaluation capacity, foster dialogue and diplomatic capacity, and successfully advocate for increased civil society representation in the creation of a national constitution, respectively. Some of these grants supported local civil society organizations and were focused on building their capacity to successfully influence elites and grasstops leaders through institutional mechanisms. These grants did not feature language about supporting grassroots organizing or nonviolent movements. Yet as HU's grantmaking evolved, it supported advocacy and educational activities, which were part of a broader civil society movement to end atrocities committed in the Darfur region of Sudan (Hamilton 2011; Mamdani 2009; HU 2021a; HU 2021b).

In its first years, Humanity United sought to hire staff with deep relationships and expertise in specific countries, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, and Sudan.

³⁶ Anonymous interviewees speaking with the author.

³⁷ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

³⁸ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

Then-Director of Investments David Mozersky was one of those staff members who leveraged their relationships and experience to support both elite-level and locally led projects.³⁹ Mozersky led HU's atrocity prevention and peacebuilding grantmaking in Sudan and South Sudan. During his tenure, Humanity United provided grants for elite-level and grasstops advocacy, research, and documentation, as well as for local peacebuilding activities developed and led by Sudanese and South Sudanese organizations. The elite-level support included Humanity United seconding Mozersky for one year to the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan as an advisor to their mediation team (HU 2021a). Humanity United's funding for locally led peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives went largely to projects that were already underway and were based in regions of violent conflict, such as Darfur and South Kordofan. Providing support to such locally led initiatives was complicated by the fact that Humanity United did not have local staff or local offices. But the relationships, experience, and situational awareness Mozersky brought from years of working in the region facilitated his ability to identify individuals and efforts in these localities, support them, and connect them to each other. Humanity United worked alongside international and local partners, who helped inform and shape this work. In subsequent years, some of these same Sudanese partners played key roles in civil society-led movements for peace and democracy in Sudan.

In 2014, six years after Humanity United formally launched, the organization initiated a review of its past grantmaking with an eye toward sharpening its approach and responding to the root causes of mass atrocities, human slavery, and human trafficking. Humanity United staff and consultants began to review internal processes and, in so doing, reshape the foundation's strategic approaches, its substantive foci, and its internal grantmaking structures. Following the review, in alignment with the broader Omidyar Group's embrace of systems thinking, Humanity United leadership introduce an HU-wide systems thinking practice in 2014. "Systems thinking is a general term for viewing the world as a series of complex interconnections that each influence one another. A systems practice uses this approach to better understand complex environments to address intractable social problems over time" (HU 2016). As one staff member described it, this process resulted in Humanity United shifting its grantmaking to focus on changing "systems rather than symptoms." "40"

This shift to a systems thinking approach was time consuming and "wasn't easy," recalled then—President and CEO Randy Newcomb in HU's 2016 Performance Report.⁴¹ This shift required staff to transform major aspects of their grantmaking. This included learning new

³⁹ Anonymous interviewees speaking with the author.

⁴⁰ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

⁴¹ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

terminology, adapting to a new framework for visualizing and analyzing potential grantees and the context in which they operate, and giving up some flexibility they previously had in past grantmaking (HU 2016). Operating within a systems practice entailed, amongst other things, learning and following a multistep process that included (i) consulting with outside experts and local partners to document system dynamics at play, (ii) creating a visual map and narrative about the system that Humanity United hoped to change (e.g., peacebuilding), (iii) relying on the map to identify opportunities for leverage and change within the system, (iv) developing an investment strategy and key performance questions to maximize measurable impact on the system, (v) structured learning, and (vi) iterative updating of the system map. These procedural and administrative shifts gave staff a shared framework for grantmaking to tackle root causes head on. They also led to a more formalized grantmaking process. For example, a new online grantmaking platform streamlined administrative processes and created a more systematic process for approving and reviewing grants. Some program staff recognized that the new system created incentives to support grantees that could easily interface with the online grants system.⁴²

Spurred in part by the shift to a systems approach within Humanity United and in part by sector-wide efforts to localize humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding work, HU initiated a strategic review of its conflict prevention, atrocity prevention, and peacebuilding grantmaking.⁴³ The review, which began in 2014, included convening experts, evaluating past grantmaking, and mapping similar work by other actors. It included enlisting John Paul Lederach as an advisor in February of that year. Lederach is an international authority on conflict resolution and peacebuilding, having authored nearly two dozen books and designed and conducted trainings in conflict transformation in more than two dozen countries. The strategic review also included learning by doing—a 12-month pilot project in Burundi that included support for media coverage, advocacy, and in-country grantmaking to avert atrocities around the 2015 presidential elections there. The review identified two key systemwide challenges that would guide the development of Humanity United's future peacebuilding strategy: (i) a failure by the international community to prevent mass violence around the world, including in the Central African Republic and South Sudan, and (ii) a second failure by the international community to build sustainable peace (HU 2015). The Burundi pilot project also highlighted gaps within violence and conflict prevention infrastructure, including (i) a bias toward external actors and insufficient regard for Burundian actors' analysis and efforts to

⁴² Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

⁴³ Anonymous interviewees speaking with the author.

prevent violence, (ii) unrealized potential of regional actors and institutions, and (iii) insufficient strategic coordination between local prevention and peacebuilding efforts.⁴⁴

The lessons and challenges identified in this strategic review suggested to Humanity United staff that the global peacebuilding system was in need of reform. In 2016, HU redesigned its approach to peacebuilding into the Transforming Peacebuilding initiative that would seek to achieve the goal of "a fundamentally transformed peacebuilding system that fosters inclusive and sustainable peace" (HU 2016). In the first phase of work, the initiative proposed investing in (i) emerging domestic actors—such as social movements and young leaders—generating new approaches and significant capacity to mobilize for domestically driven peace, and (ii) deepening an understanding of the dynamics of conflict and directing resources accordingly. The first phase entailed investments in three focus countries—Mali, Kenya, and Zimbabwe—and in a new coaching corps for African organizers. At that time, Humanity United also began exploring what it would look like to invest in fostering a network of young peacebuilders in one African country. This redesigned peacebuilding portfolio meant that Humanity United's efforts to support the work of organizers and movements would remain central within the portfolio in the years to come.

These investments marked a shift in Humanity United's peacebuilding work from primarily prioritizing elite and grasstops advocacy and engagement, research and documentation, and mobilization of public opinion to prioritizing the work of movements, grassroots organizers, and local grantees. For example, the investment in Zimbabwe was intended to build multi-stakeholder peacebuilding coalitions and to support social movement building. And the investment in what would become the African Coaching Network focused on training and connecting social movement leaders to build grassroots power across the continent (HU 2016; HU 2017). Learning from these investments would drive additional grantmaking focused on building grassroots demand for transformative reform of the international peacebuilding system. HU's early work supporting civil society organizations and locally led projects facilitated this shift. In this way, HU evolved to support social movement work directly and to shape the broader political environment in which they operate.

In 2017, to continue its shift to a systems approach, Humanity United began to reorganize what had been independent programs into two programmatic portfolios: Forced Labor and

⁴⁴ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

⁴⁵ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

⁴⁶ Anonymous interviewees speaking with the author.

⁴⁷ African Coaching Network: https://africancoachingnetwork.org/.

Box 5. A Multifaceted Approach to Peacebuilding

The "guiding star" (i.e., macro goal) of Humanity United's peacebuilding work is "a transformed peacebuilding system that is centered on the agency and power of local actors" (HU 2019). Practically, Humanity United's peacebuilding grantmaking covers three priority areas: (i) People Power, (ii) Shifting Institutions, and (iii) Catalyzing the Conditions for Peace. Grantmaking is substantively focused on peacebuilding in the context of political transitions, movement mobilization, and peace processes.

This multifaceted approach to peacebuilding is grounded in the belief that local peacebuilders are the primary drivers of enduring and resilient peace. They should play a leading role in the design and implementation of peace in their societies and come together in a broader movement to transform peacebuilding systems nationally and internationally.

Support for the first priority area—People Power—entails creating opportunities for local peace-builders to harness and translate their energy, wisdom, and creativity into deep relationships and enduring collective action. For example, this includes support for the continent-wide African Coaching Network (ACN). ACN is an informal network for learning and capacity building, developed by and for organizers and movement leaders on the continent. It facilitates training, peer learning, and networking among organizers, groups, and emerging movement leaders involved in peacebuilding at local and national levels. By supporting these change agents, HU hopes to promote learning around how horizontal engagement between local peacebuilders and vertical engagement with elites leads to more inclusive peace processes.

Support for the second priority area—Shifting Institutions—entails creating the demand and conditions for institutional actors to shift their internal structures, policies, and power dynamics away from constraining local agency and toward creating opportunities for local peacebuilders to organize and demand change in the global peacebuilding system. This includes partnering with Peace Direct and Conducive Space for Peace to create the Shift Power for Peace initiative that seeks to shift decision-making in global peacebuilding to local change agents building peace in their own communities.

Supporting the third priority area—Catalyzing the Conditions for Peace—entails funding a small number of amplifier organizations such as the Alliance for Peacebuilding and the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict that undertake educational activities and foster networks throughout the peacebuilding and nonviolent action fields, respectively. The work of these amplifier organizations seeks to transform the international system of peacebuilding directly and indirectly such that it that centers the agency and power of local peacebuilders in the service of enduring, resilient peace.

Box 5, cont'd

Humanity United also seeks to avoid siloed grantmaking by bridging its People Power and Shifting Institutions grantmaking. It is undertaking a three-year exploratory phase for this Nonviolent Action and Inclusive Peace work, which catalyzes opportunities for historically excluded peoples to engage and influence political elites, security elites, and institutions of governance and justice. In one African country, it entails grantmaking to organizations that support strategic planning, capacity building, iterative learning, and physical and mental health services for historically excluded populations to mobilize nonviolently and to sustain broad-based alliances for peace, democracy promotion, and reconciliation.

HU undertakes this work using a partnership model. It relies on grantees, consultants, and partner organizations based in-country to supplement frequent, extended visits from its United States—based staff. It prioritizes support for local activities, and it leverages lessons learned from them to promote systems change to peacebuilding at the international level. It explores and tests the interplay between civic participation, networks, and social movements. And it is committed to adapting future grantmaking to lessons learned.

Human Trafficking, and Peacebuilding. 48 It hired Melanie Greenberg, former president and CEO of the Alliance for Peacebuilding, as well as additional staff, consultants, and fellows with deep relationships and expertise in peacebuilding, politics, movements, and philanthropy—especially on the African continent. 49 By 2019, Greenberg had shepherded the merger of the Transforming Peacebuilding initiative and country-specific programs in Africa and Latin America to create the Peacebuilding portfolio, for which she continues to serve as the managing director. The Peacebuilding portfolio then envisioned what could become "a ten-year journey to amplify the power of local peacebuilders and make the global peacebuilding system more responsive to the needs of local actors" (HU 2019). This journey included funding (i) for local peacebuilders to develop relationships and build enduring power via collective action, including through organizing and movements, (ii) to create the demand and conditions for institutional actors, including traditional NGOs, to foster efforts by local peace-

⁴⁸ Anonymous interviews and email with the author.

For example, HU hired Dr. Bryan Sims as Senior Manager, Peacebuilding. He wrote his dissertation on land reform in Zimbabwe and developed relationships with African civil society and movement leaders during previous positions at Freedom House, the National Endowment for Democracy, and other civil society organizations focused on Southern Africa. Dr. Akwasi Aidoo joined HU as a Senior Fellow. He has chaired the Boards of the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), the Africa Regional Board of the Open Society Foundations, and the Fund for Global Human Rights, and served as a trustee of several international organizations, including OXFAM America, Resource Alliance, and AfriMAP.

builders to reform peacebuilding systems worldwide, (iii) for organizations that catalyzed conditions for peace, and (iv) exploratory work to understand how marginalized citizens can influence elite actors and state institutions to become more receptive to people power and

Humanity United's peacebuilding work is grounded in a hypothesis that prioritizes local-level and movement-led theories of change.

more committed to social contracts that are sustainable, inclusive, and peaceful. Greenberg noted that, "One of the reasons we felt so strongly about including social movements as part of the peacebuilding portfolio was the opportunity to tap into the energy and power of local citizens. These local actors might not identify as professional peace-

builders but are advocating for transformative change at the local and national level through nonviolent movements. This kind of citizen action allows scale not always available in more traditional peacebuilding processes" (Greenberg 2012).

Humanity United's peacebuilding work is grounded in a hypothesis that prioritizes local-level and movement-led theories of change. "If, through a deeply networked approach, we support and amplify the demand for locally led models of peacebuilding, harness collective action for peace beyond a core of professional peacebuilders, and help seed translocal spaces that allow for new forms of engagement and change, then we will move toward a global peacebuilding system centered on the agency and power of local peacebuilders, with the potential for more enduring, resilient peace" (HU 2020b). Moreover, HU distances itself from the projectization of peacebuilding and focuses on supporting "the power of communities and movements to create space for local actors to harness their agency and power" (HU 2020a). In other words, HU supports the work of locally led organizing and movements and connects them across borders as one of multiple parts of its peacebuilding work. Box 5 offers a more detailed description of HU's approach to peacebuilding.

Supporting Grassroots Organizing and Nonviolent Movements

This section of the report offers detailed analysis of why and how donors have supported grassroots organizing and social movements. It focuses on donor values, lived experiences, and internal structures. First, this section analyzes the different trajectories that Humanity United and the American Jewish World Service have taken with respect to organizing and movements. Second, this section takes a step back from the case studies and considers more generally the unique ways that organizers and movements build political power in society and how donors foster and constrain that political power. Some donors will never support grassroots organizing or social movements, but for those considering it or already doing so, the lessons learned from these two case studies may very well be informative.

Two Donors, Two Trajectories

Both the American Jewish World Service and Humanity United arrived at multilevel approaches to supporting the work of organizers and movements around the world including in non-democracies. AJWS refers to their approach as grassrooted, while HU refers to theirs as a systems approach. In detailing how they arrived at these approaches it is important to note that the maturation periods for these two donors are of very different length. AJWS was founded in 1985 whereas HU was founded in 2008.

Like many donors, AJWS and HU have undertaken lengthy reviews of their grantmaking. Humanity United's systems review reflected the leadership's belief that their work should target root causes, not symptoms, of some of the worst things humans do to each other. This belief was grounded in a commitment to citizen engagement, as well as a desire to use funds efficiently to remedy complex, interconnected injustices. While HU's interest in a systems approach initially came from a board member and its founders, the transition to this method built on a multi-year review of past grantmaking, mapping global peacebuilding and humanitarian systems, and discussions with peer donors, academic experts, and grantees. The peacebuilding map allowed staff to visualize (i) how the system marginalizes local peacebuilders, (ii) how collective action beyond professional peacebuilders can be powerful, and (iii) how support for locally led organizing that is connected across borders can allow for new forms of agency and change. In this way, while the shift to a systems approach was predicated on the values and knowledge of its senior leadership, it was undertaken by staff and experts in systems thinking and peacebuilding.

Humanity United's strategic review of its conflict prevention, atrocity prevention, and peacebuilding grantmaking was shaped by experts, an analysis of past grantmaking, and

mapping similar work by peers, as well as a pilot project in Burundi. The review led to a shift away from primarily focusing on supporting civil society organizations including elite and grasstops advocacy, research and documentation, and mobilizing public opinion. The updated focus of HU's peacebuilding portfolio would invest in movements and networks, explicitly prioritizing young and local peacebuilding leaders, and leveraging lessons from these investments in change from the bottom up to fundamentally transform peacebuilding systems globally. In this way, HU shifted its focus towards more movement-led and locally led initiatives based on learning from staff, learning from substantive and geographic experts, and learning by doing.

American Jewish World Service undertook its two strategic planning processes based on a desire by the organization's leadership to systematize and refine its grantmaking. The first review included internal analysis of past trends in grantmaking as well as external input from consultants, grantees, and peer foundations. It found that support for local and grassroots grantees was the common thread running through their nearly 30 years of grantmaking. The tiered approach to grantmaking that emerged from this first review was more so an explicit acknowledgement and evolution of a longstanding approach to grantmaking than a shift to an entirely new approach. AJWS's second review (and the ensuing transition to a grassrooted approach) was initiated out of a desire by leadership to further refine and focus the organization's grantmaking. A commitment to supporting historically excluded communities to realize their human rights through their own agency had become embedded in the ethos of the foundation. New hires were attracted to work at AJWS because of what they saw as a movement-oriented approach that permeated AJWS's grantmaking and was visible in its internal structures. For example, AJWS's grants management team sits within its programs division, not within its operations division. This has facilitated communication and coordination between the staff responsible for the technical side of grantmaking and the staff with expertise in the issues and communities being supported. The resulting knowledge sharing has made implementing grantmaking in logistically complex and politically complicated settings easier and quicker.

While thinking systemically may allow AJWS, HU, and other donors to place organizing and movements within a coherent grantmaking framework, some activists have suggested that the term "systemic change" is rarely used by social movements. "For one thing, it has no mobilising power," they argue "and, for another, it is very often untranslatable or meaningless in local languages" (Čukić and Ferrer 2020). Scholarship on foreign aid has suggested that donors and the grassroots may interpret organizational characteristics, such as professionalism, in different ways. Thus, these donor activists argue that "the exact same characteristics that provide donor legitimacy simultaneously bring grassroots illegitimacy" (Elbers, Schulpen, and Frobisher 2021). While this is not necessarily a call to avoid using terms like

"systemic change" or "systems change," it does highlight the fact that transparent conversations between donors and grantees should perhaps develop a shared understanding of terms related to what it is they are trying to change in society and how they will go about effecting that change together. This includes discussions of how to shift power within society and within relationships between donors and grantees.

Political Power in Society

Understanding why and how donors support organizing and movements is not possible without first understanding how donors perceive different strategies for building and shifting power in a society. This section explores these two themes in depth.

Organizers and movements often seek to build, activate, or shift political power in society. They train regular people how to organize and lead their communities. They often inspire people who have never viewed themselves as "political" to engage in politics for the first time. And they do so in ways that can fundamentally shift and expand the communities that hold power in society.

Unlike traditional NGOs that tend to seek political change primarily through institutional activities like lobbying and legislative reform, organizers and movements seek political change extra-institutionally, that is, primarily outside of formal political structures. As such, those who hold power in society often perceive movement strategy and movement tactics such as protests, sit-ins, and boycotts as being outside of societal norms. Moreover, move-

ments often emerge when individuals and communities feel that they have no viable possibility for achieving rights, justice, and democracy through those same formal institutions. As such, organizers and movements often have goals that have been rejected by those in power. It is therefore common for those in power to perceive

"There is no such thing as a centrist social movement."

–Senior Staff Member,Private Foundation

movement goals, strategy, and tactics as being radical or extreme. This tension between movements and the individuals and institutions that represent the status quo led a senior staff member at a private foundation to offer the incisive reflection that from where they sit, "there is no such thing as a centrist social movement." ⁵⁰

This perception—whether stated or unstated—that social movement goals, strategy, and tactics are not near the center of a society's political spectrum has profound implications for donors as they consider supporting organizers and movements. For example, when

⁵⁰ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author. January 29, 2019.

movements build power outside of institutional politics, they often challenge not only policies, but also entire political systems. Grantmaking is not a politically neutral activity, and so by directly or indirectly supporting organizing or movements, a donor may be perceived as aligning itself against those in power (Bush 2015; Winig and Ganz 2017). This may be the case when grantees are in democracies, and it may be especially so when grantees are in non-democracies.

Donor support for the work of organizers and movements raises a wide range of practical and ethical questions not only about the perception of such grantmaking, but also about potential physical risk to grantees and donor staff. As a result, some donors may prefer to support traditional NGOs that tend to rely on less provocative tactics rather than organizers and movements. For example, foundation leadership may believe that supporting pro-democracy activities such as human rights documentation, litigation in domestic or international courts, education, advocacy and lobbying by traditional NGOs, or formal negotiation and peace processes may present less physical risk to grantees and less legal or reputational risk to their foundation. Yet, a growing number of countries, including India and Russia, impose restrictive and authoritarian controls on foreign support for a broad range of civil society actors, including traditional NGOs (Council on Foundations 2020). This suggests that donors may need to be prepared to face accusations of partisanship and authoritarian responses regardless of whether they support institutional methods of social change, such as those used by traditional NGOs, or extra-institutional methods of social change, such as those used by organizers and movements. This also suggests that when considering support for any grantee it may be useful for donors to determine not only the extent to which their substantive priorities align with potential grantees' goals, but also the extent to which their risk tolerance aligns with potential grantees' strategies and tactics. Donors undertaking this kind of strategic decision-making can find guidance later in this report in "Tension 4. How Can We Build Expertise in Supporting Organizing and Movements?" on page 68.

This We Believe: Two Trajectories to Building and Shifting Power in Society

While foundations' grantmaking portfolios and priorities are not always easy to find, the values that underlie those portfolios and priorities are often even harder to identify. These values are often derived from the lived experiences of their board and founders. Sometimes, those values are longstanding and find consistent expression throughout a foundation over many years, as has been the case with the American Jewish World Service. Other times, the expression of values change as foundations mature, respond to changes in their environment, and hire new staff, as has been the case with Humanity United.

The American Jewish World Service was founded in response to the perception that Jews were visibly excluded and invisibly included in the development sector. On the one

hand, AJWS co-founder Laurence Simon felt called to carry on his father's commitment to social justice rooted in legacies of slavery, exodus, and suffering. On the other hand, he noted that Jews were often active participants in famine and disaster relief operations while actively not publicizing their Jewish identity. His time exposed to liberation theology and his and co-founder Laurence Phillips's prior professional experiences with long-term development work at Oxfam America provided AJWS—at its founding—with a clear set of values: a commitment to supporting locally driven activities and to connecting people across borders to repair the world. Longtime AJWS President Ruth Messinger held similar values but came to them through experiences within the United States as a politician in New York City and as a social worker. Her lived experiences and the similar experiences of the staff she hired created a critical mass of support to institutionalize these values. They are now upheld not only by individuals; they have become baked into AJWS's institutional structures. These self-defined social justice values guide internal structures that position AJWS to strive toward assisting marginalized people in the developing world to realize their human rights. These internal structures include a reliance on in-country consultants (ICCs)—individuals with deep in-country and, often, movement experience—to manage activities and relationships in the countries where AJWS works. And they include a risk tolerance that allows AJWS to support the work of organizers and movements in some of the world's closed and closing societies. See Box 4. A Grassrooted Approach to Grantmaking in Nicaragua on page 28 for a detailed description of the expression of these values in one context.

Pam and Pierre Omidyar founded Humanity United with a shared commitment to fostering citizen engagement in society. HU's early grantmaking focused on eradicating human suffering in the form of genocide and human trafficking. While that commitment to citizen engagement did not change, institutional learning shifted how the foundation expressed this commitment in its grantmaking. For example, as HU matured as a donor, it transitioned its grantmaking from responding to mass atrocities to promoting peacebuilding. HU also reoriented its peacebuilding work away from being primarily elite and project-focused toward centering the agency of local and grassroots groups and social movements. Additionally, the hiring of staff and fellows who had longstanding relationships with local actors facilitated HU's ability to support locally driven and movement work. The current expression of Humanity United's values is described in depth in *Box 5*. A Multifaceted Approach to Peacebuilding on page 34.

The Importance of the Institutional Form of Donors and Grantees Alike

In deciding if and how to support organizing and movements, donors do not just consider whether their priorities and values align with the goals, strategy, and tactics of potential grantees. Donors also consider the institutional form that potential grantees take. Foundations normally do not give grants to movements as such; they give grants to individuals or

organizations that are part of a movement. Those individuals or organizations must then fulfill the foundation's grant application, monitoring, and evaluation requirements. One common requirement is that a grantee hold 501(c)(3) non-profit status or its equivalent. However, many movements are diffused, decentralized, and even, leaderless (Stephan, Lakhani, and Naviwala 2015). The entities that comprise a movement are often informal, unregistered, and grassroots, lacking the professional fundraisers or development departments of traditional NGOs. This means that grantmaking processes and procedures that are common among US-based donors—even if available in non-English languages—may not be legible to some organizers

Movements are your funding strategy.

Anonymous foundation staff member

or movement leaders. Additionally, individuals who often assume leadership roles in a movement may not want or be able to receive foreign funding directly. Conversely, the fluid institutional form that many movements take may lead donors to question whether they can even give

support legally or procedurally. Furthermore, the Internal Revenue Service imposes specific restrictions on private foundation grantmaking to individuals (USDT–IRS 2020a). These constraints are reflected in the survey results: Barely 17 percent of survey respondents stated that their foundation gives grants to individuals for research, study, or travel. Nearly one-quarter (23 percent) of survey respondents stated that procedural questions—such as uncertainty navigating recipient country legal restrictions and uncertainty in how to get money to organizers—were a primary constraint in keeping their foundations from supporting organizing and movements in non-democracies. Donors that seek to better understand this structural and institutional friction with movements can find additional discussion as well as solutions in "Tension 1. Will My Foundation Support Informal, Unregistered, or Grassroots Entities?" on page 60.

This structural and institutional friction between donors and movements led Mahomed, Hopstein, and Krämer (2020) to argue that "it is vital [for donors] to move beyond seeing institutional form as the [main] criterion for legitimacy and to think much more comprehensively about what civic action looks like in all forms.... [M]ovements serve as expressions of local agency. If our goal is systemic change so that people can claim agency, then we need to see support for movements (and other alternative organising) not just as means to an end, but as important civic spaces in their own right." That is to say, the very form and function of movements that make them difficult for some donors to support are also what help make them powerful. As one staff person at a public charity put it, "Movements are your funding strategy."⁵¹

⁵¹ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

Focusing on a potential grantee's institutional form may be particularly problematic for donors operating in political contexts different from their own. Donors may assume that movements and the regimes they target take a predetermined institutional form. This can lead to underestimating a movement's potential impact. It can also lead to "false negatives" (i.e., not noticing a movement) or "false positives" (i.e., identifying a movement but having misplaced expectations for how it will behave) (De Waal and Ibreck 2013).

While the institutional form that movements take is important to understanding why donors support organizing and movements, so is the institutional form that donors take. This research focuses on the decision-making of institutions organized as public charities and private foundations, which are both nongovernmental organizations and can both undertake grantmaking activities. However, their own funding tends to differ. Private foundations tend to receive their funding from a single source, such as an individual philanthropist, a family, a corporation, or an endowment (Candid 2021). The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and Humanity United are private foundations. Meanwhile, public charities tend to receive their funding from a wider range of sources, including the general public, governmental sources, and private foundations. Grassroots International, Thousand Currents, and American Jewish World Service are public charities.

Whether a donor is a private foundation or a public charity may influence why and how it supports organizing and movements in at least three ways. First, although the IRS regulates philanthropic giving by both private foundations and public charities, private foundations are subject to additional rules to which public charities are not. For example, private foundations are subject to a tax on any money spent on lobbying (Boulder Advocacy 2022). This tax creates an additional consideration for private foundations when deciding whether to support organizing or movement work that could be defined as lobbying. This report expands on related IRS regulations as well as provisions that permit private foundations to support public charities that lobby in "Tension 3. Does US Federal Tax Law Permit Us to Support Social Movements and Grassroots Organizers That Conduct Lobbying?" on page 66.

Second, because private foundations rely on a very small number of philanthropists or an endowment for their revenue, private foundation leadership tend to not be beholden to the beliefs, priorities, or interests of a large number of financial supporters. Staff and leadership at public charities on the other hand may feel compelled to consider in their grantmaking decisions the beliefs, priorities, and interests of a relatively much larger number of financial supporters. For example, funding for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Gates) and Humanity United (HU) comes primarily from Bill and Melinda Gates, and Pam and Pierre Omidyar, respectively. Funding for Grassroots International (GRI) and American Jewish World Service (AJWS) comes from hundreds of individuals and private foundations, amongst others. As such, GRI and AJWS have, relatively speaking, many more stakeholders who might

influence their grantmaking decisions (or hold them accountable for those decisions) than Gates or HU. Such influence can affect substantive and geographic grantmaking priorities, staffing preferences, and foundation norms, amongst other things. This is not to say that private foundations do not or cannot support organizing or movements. Humanity United supports movements and the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict is a private foundation whose educational mission is focused exclusively on nonviolent movements. This is to say that the values, lived experiences, and interests of a smaller number of individuals tend to influence private foundations' decision-making relative to public charities' decision-making with respect to organizing and movements. It may also mean that because funding coming into public charities is more fragmented and from a more diverse set of supporters, those who fund public charities may have lower expectations about the influence they have over grantmaking decisions. And perhaps counterintuitively, staff at public charities may have more flexibility and autonomy in their grantmaking decisions because each funder gives a relatively smaller percent of the overall budget and therefore expect to have less control over grantmaking decisions.

Third, where a foundation's money comes from tends to affect how grantees and governments perceive that foundation. This may be particularly true in non-democratic societies without independent, free, traditional media outlets. The criticisms of George Soros's "political philanthropy" is perhaps the most prominent example of how those providing the revenue for a foundation affects how the foundation itself is perceived (Tamkin 2017; Soros 2019). As a public charity that has raised its funding largely from the American Jewish community, AJWS staff could present themselves not as representing one or two wealthy individuals, but as "representing [the Jewish] community in the US...." This positionality has facilitated AJWS's ability to foster horizontal relationships between their own donor community and grantees' communities while avoiding the challenges of being associated with a single, individual donor. It also played a role in AJWS deciding not to undertake grantmaking in the Middle East.

Organizing and Movements Exist in a Broader Political Ecosystem

When donors like HU and AJWS accept social movements—with their fluid institutional forms, provocative demands and tactics, and broad bases of support—as legitimate expressions of civic action, it may actually free them to support not only organizing and movements but also traditional NGOs that undertake institutional approaches to political change as part of a broader movement ecosystem.

Movements may operate outside of formal political institutions, but they do not operate in a political vacuum. Instead, movements operate within an ecosystem of organizations and

⁵² Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

individuals—some of which undertake institutional activities that complement the work of organizers and movements. Donors who are willing to support the work of organizers and movements but who are unable to support them directly can consider supporting more traditional NGOs or individuals in the movement ecosystem. In short, "Not every foundation needs to support the 'rebels'" (Mahomed, Hopstein, and Krämer 2020). Some foundations

can support traditional NGOs that shape the broader political environment such that it is more conducive to the work of organizers and movements.

"Not every foundation needs to support the 'rebels."

-Mahomed, Hopstein, and Krämer

This kind of transnational solidarity and support between nongovernmental entities (including

among social movements) is not new (Azaransky 2017; Smith, Chatfield, and Pagnucco 1997). Numerous examples exist for how donors have supported the work of organizers and movements without directly funding them. Some donors, including AJWS, have indirectly supported movements' and organizers' goals by funding safe spaces or civic spaces that they need to do their work (see Box 4 on page 28). In this way, donors shape the political environment and protect the enabling environment for organizers and movements. Donors have funded accompaniment and legal services to help keep organizers safe and to free them from unjust detention, as well as advocacy and litigation to promote the rights of people to organize freely and speak critically (Nonviolent Peaceforce 2022). Donors, including Humanity United, have funded and undertaken advocacy for humanitarian assistance and arms embargos where movements operate (Crisis Action 2012). Donors have funded digital access as well as accurate and independent domestic and international media coverage of movements and the repression they face (Crisis Action 2019; National Endowment for Democracy 2021).53 Donors have also supported education and advocacy toward foreign states and multilateral bodies, such as the African Union, to withdraw recognition or support from governments that repress organizers and movements seeking rights, justice, and democracy (Crisis Action 2019; Tilly and Tarrow 2015; Bob 2005). Support for the work of think tanks has been useful to organizers and movements (Datta and Baertl 2020; Anonymous interviewees speaking with the author). All these activities can not only help strengthen movements and protect the spaces they need to do their work. Such activities can also help change the narrative about which goals, strategies, tactics, and communities are considered legitimate in society.

For donors whose values and priorities align with the goals—as well as the strategies and tactics—of a movement, recent scholarship by Chenoweth and Stephan (2021) offers guidance for the types of direct support to organizers and movements that may be most

The NGO Access Now offers grants "to grassroots and frontline organizations fighting for human rights in the digital age." More information is available online: https://www.accessnow.org/grants/.

helpful and least harmful. Different types of support are likely to pose different legal, political, or practical challenges for donors. In the period prior to a movement's peak mobilization, donor support for printing and distribution of educational materials, or for training that strengthens local leadership, organizing capacity, movement strategy, and resilience may increase participation, lessen the effects of repression, and increase the likelihood of generating defections from the target government. Such skill building is important for movements to succeed. But support for training and convenings of organizers can perhaps more importantly offer opportunities for relationship building, peer learning, and strategic planning (Chenoweth and Stephan 2021). Additionally, "long-term technical and financial assistance to civic organizations, election monitoring, political parties (USDT-IRS 2020b), think tanks, youth movements, unions, and independent media has helped build the demand side for human rights, civic participation and government accountability" (Chenoweth and Stephan 2021). Investment in local and third-party mediation as well as engagement with political, diplomatic, and security actors can mitigate repression and facilitate movement work. Furthermore, efforts to block or decrease foreign support for violence via arms embargos can help protect organizers and the civic space in which they work. Some of these types of support pose additional legal, political, and practical challenges for donors and represent an area that some donors do not undertake. An example is support for advocacy or educational activities directed toward foreign governments to withdraw their support for a repressive regime. Quantitative and qualitative data offer differing assessments of whether and how foreign funding given directly to movements affects their characteristics and outcomes. However, Chenoweth and Stephan (2021) find, "Flexible donor funding that minimizes bureaucratic obstacles has been most helpful to movements."

The Importance of Donor Coordination

Donor support for the work of organizers, movements, and traditional NGOs in the movement ecosystem has the potential to create tension with grantees and between potential grantees. Funding has led to competition between organizations over resources, fissures within organizations over control of funding, disruption of organizers' strategic plans, and heightened disagreement over movement strategy and tactics. These tensions can create barriers to collaboration between donors and grantees (whether social movement organizational NGOs, or policy and advocacy groups) as well as between social movement organizations and partners in their movement ecosystem (whether traditional NGOs or policy and advocacy groups) (Afadzinu, Asantewa, and Savage 2020; Datta and Baertl 2020). In non-democratic contexts, where governments may already seek to divide and conquer movements, donor support that provokes similar tensions is particularly problematic for sustaining nonviolent collective action.

American Jewish World Service's grassrooted grantmaking in Nicaragua (as detailed in depth in Box 4 on page 28) offers one example of how a donor overcame the potential problems of competition between organizations and disruptive timing of grantmaking. In 2018, in response to a nascent nonviolent movement in Nicaragua, AJWS's first new grant supported a well-respected civil society organization to provide a safe space where organization to provide a s

nizers could convene, coordinate, and receive training in civic participation and alternatives to strongman rule. AJWS deliberately spent the next eight months closely following organizers' learning and strategizing before making additional grants. After this pause in grantmaking, AJWS's first portfolio of new grants included support for emerging groups with diverse movement building strat-

If politics is "the art of the possible," then movements expand what is politically possible in a society.

egies, social movement coalitions, and civil society organizations. These decisions insulated AJWS from accusations of picking winners. These decisions also fostered safe civic space for organizers to do the work according to their own priorities.

Traditional NGOs with policy experts, lawyers, and development professionals on staff may be the ones that take the lead in the latter steps of achieving social change, such as drafting peace agreements, organizing elections, and writing constitutions. That work often formalizes the change that organizers and movements make possible (Engler 2018). If politics is "the art of the possible," then movements expand what is politically possible in a society. However, organizers and movements can play a role in facilitating inclusive political transitions and consolidating political gains alongside traditional NGOs (Bayer, Bethke, and Lambach 2016; Lambach et al. 2020). This relationship between institutional and extra-institutional social change suggests that donors whose values and priorities align more so with the goals of a movement rather than their strategy or tactics can consider supporting (i) traditional NGOs that offer legal services, digital access and security, and education and advocacy that help maintain the civic space that organizers and movements need to operate, and (ii) the policy groups that can help institutionalize movement wins (Sowa 2020).

While a single donor might only support one part of the ecosystem, it is critical that they coordinate with donors that fund other parts of the ecosystem. Such a posture can undermine learning and collaboration among grantees that might seek the same pro-democracy goals but through different strategies (Pinckney 2018; Cockburn 2018). When working in a coordinated fashion, organizers and movements build, activate, and shift political power, thereby changing what is politically possible in a society. Traditional NGOs can foster movement work and formalize shifts in political power. Through coordination in-country and at headquarters, donors can sequence support such that movements understand the importance of and linkages to traditional NGOs that help draft peace agreements, support elections, and codify

constitutional and legislative reforms, thereby formalizing movement-led political change. Likewise, through coordination, donors can sequence support for traditional NGOs such that they understand and are prepared for movement-led success at expanding both what is possible and which constituencies are included in political decision-making. In short, by coordinating among themselves and by linking disparate groups in a movement ecosystem, donors can help traditional NGOs expand their imagination and prepare to formalize broader reforms than they might have imagined possible. Through coordination and linkages, donors can also help movements remain resilient and maintain high levels of mobilization while also engaging in broad and inclusive dialogue and negotiation, and ultimately make credible commitments (often including political compromises) with those they have opposed to help formalize the political changes movements seek (Pinckney 2020; Dudouet and Pinckney 2021).

When the work of traditional NGOs is closer temporally to achieving formal political change, donors might consider the implications for how they evaluate these traditional NGOs differently from their social movement organization collaborators. Grants and evaluations of grants to organizers and movements could be more process-oriented than outcome-oriented relative to evaluations of grants to institutionalized NGOs. This report expands on evaluation challenges and offers examples of how donors have undertaken such evaluations in "Tension 6. How Do We Monitor and Evaluate Organizing and Movements?"

How power is distributed in society and how donors engage in efforts to redistribute that power is only part of the story of foreign support for the work of organizers and movements. How power is distributed in donors' relationships with their grantees is another critical part of the story. The next section of this report explores these questions of power—who holds it, what legitimacy they have to hold it, and the effects of different distributions of power in donor—movement relationships.

Power in Donor-Movement Relationships

Understanding why and how donors support organizing and movements is impossible without first understanding how donors understand the political power they wield in their relationships with grantees and potential grantees. This section explores that dynamic in depth.

Donors that support shifting power in a society through support for organizing and movements do not necessarily shift power dynamics in their relationships with movements and organizers (Paige and Kotsiras 2021). Even well intentioned grantmaking may unintentionally replicate inequitable power dynamics in donor—movement relations (Villanueva 2018).

A growing consensus around the importance of two critical dynamics in donor—movement relations can act as a guide for how donors think about their relationships with organizer and movement grantees: First, foreign support is always secondary to domestic support when it comes to social movement success (Chenoweth and Stephan 2021; Dudouet 2015).⁵⁴ Second, some donors intentionally and unintentionally influence movement goals and strategies such that their actions amount to "movement capture" (Ming Francis 2019). This may end up having negative effects on movement legitimacy and effectiveness. This report will discuss each of these dynamics in turn. These two dynamics suggest—in the words of a senior staff member at a public charity—an imperative for donors to "follow the movements."

Foreign Support is Always of Secondary Importance

Foreign support has mixed and sometimes countervailing effects on the characteristics and outcomes of nonviolent movements. Positive effects include increasing local demand for rights and accountability, strengthening activist relationships, greater resilience and strategic planning, increasing participation levels, and decreasing fatalities from repression. Movements that receive foreign support may become better recognized and more relevant in the international community, which could have benefits such as an ability to help frame narratives and increase visibility for movement causes outside of the country—for example, at the United Nations and in foreign capitals (AJWS 2019).⁵⁵

Negative effects of foreign support include undermining movement legitimacy, decreasing participation levels, and increasing the risk of repression.⁵⁶ For example, movement leaders may redirect precious time from movement building at home toward communicating

and networking with donors in New York, San Francisco, or Washington, and completing grant applications, reports, and evaluations. One movement leader went so far as to say, "Whenever we [are given] financial resources it seems we are less resourceful. When we had zero money, our organization was growing. It is such an interesting challenge" (Winig and

Foreign support is always secondary to domestic support when it comes to social movement success.

Ganz 2017). An increased focus on an international donor audience may decrease leaders' connection to and visibility with their constituents at home. Legitimacy and credibility at home are necessary for mobilizing large numbers of diverse participants. And research has shown

⁵⁴ Success is defined as achieving the campaign's stated goals.

AJWS' work on Burma is an example of how grantmaking can increase international visibility issues of import to Burmese organizers and movements (AJWS 2019; AJWS 2007). I credit Amaia Elorza Arregi with the idea of relevance to the international community.

See footnote 12 for the pertinent literature.

that mobilizing large and diverse local participants is the main way movements achieve their goals (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011).

Foreign support may not only negatively affect movements' legitimacy and credibility. Additional negative effects include grants to one social movement organization but not another, causing rivalry or factionalization. Moreover, the effect of donor support can sometimes be the opposite of the donor's intent. For example, a grant to rent meeting space might eliminate the need for individuals to open their homes, religious centers, or businesses for meetings. Those individuals might feel less invested in a movement if their in-kind contribution is no longer needed. And meeting in the same space instead of rotating spaces might make movement leaders more easily identified by groups seeking to infiltrate or disrupt movement work. In this way, grants may have the unintended effect of displacing internally generated resources and undermining a movement's ability to keep participants invested in its work.

Foreign support can undermine more than a donor—grantee relationship. Foreign support can also tarnish the image and credibility of the international community more broadly. Local actors who feel pushed around or disrespected by some international donors might become more skeptical of other international actors. This could make it harder in the future for NGOs or humanitarian aid organizations to be accepted in-country. It could also make it harder to find honest brokers for election monitoring, peace processes, or other forms of international cooperation. A report written for the European Parliament in 2009 noted, "International support...must be an extension of, not a replacement for, local strategically-planned nonviolent resistance, and should be informed by close consultation with grass-roots nonviolent movements about what is welcome and appropriate" (Dudouet and Clark 2009).

See "Tension 5. How Can We Avoid Harmful Power Imbalances Between Donor and Grantee?" on page 70 for additional discussion of the challenges related to engaging with and following the lead of organizers and movements, as well as actionable principles and practices that donors can adopt and adapt to their context. See also "Principles for Supporting Grassroots Organizing and Social Movements" on page 75 for additional discussion of ethical and other principles related to foreign support.

Philanthropy "to" Movements, "with" Movements, or "by and from" Movements

One framework developed in academia may help donors consider what, if any, grantmaking they may undertake to support the work of grassroots organizers and movements. G. Albert Ruesga (2011) notes that philanthropy that supports the work of grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements can be categorized into three approaches: philanthropy to grassroots organizers and movements, philanthropy with grassroots organizers and movements, and philanthropy by and from grassroots organizers and movements. The first approach—philanthropy to—involves top-down support for activities that the donor believes will benefit

grassroots organizers and movements in some way. In philanthropy to, organizers and movement leaders are not involved in funding decisions. The second approach—philanthropy with—also involves support for activities that the donor believes will benefit grassroots organizers. However, in philanthropy with, community members, organizers, and movement leaders are involved in grantmaking decisions or the design, implementation, and evaluation of grantmaking programs, at least to some degree. The third approach—philanthropy by and from—involves ordinary people giving time, money, and other forms of support for organizing and movement work. This third approach can be referred to as internally generated support or autonomous resourcing.

Internally generated support—philanthropy by and for organizers and movements—is always more important for movement success than foreign support. And philanthropy to organizers and movements without their input has the potential to lead to blind philanthropy, direct harm, or movement capture. But an advantage of philanthropy with organizers and movements is that the strengths of funders, organizers, and movement leaders can complement each other to cogenerate broader impact (Ruesga 2011). AJWS's grassrooted approach to grantmaking is one example of such cogeneration with organizers and movements. HU's systems approach to grantmaking is similarly designed to leverage learning from its support for the peacebuilding movement ecosystem at local, national, and regional levels to affect international peacebuilding systems. More specifically, pro-democracy organizers and movement leaders in one country may benefit from solidarity and peer learning alongside organizers and movement leaders in another country, but they may not have the resources or networks to make such connections. HU has supported the African Coaching Network (ACN), which spans multiple countries on the continent. ACN is itself not a movement—it has no political agenda. Instead, it is an informal network of social movement coaches that operates like a guild, facilitating training, peer learning, and networking among organizers and movement leaders involved in peacebuilding at local and national levels.⁵⁷

While arguments about increasing movement effectiveness and protecting movement credibility and legitimacy may be powerful in affecting how donors engage with organizers and movements, the argument for agency may be even more powerful. Organizers, movement leaders, and movement participants are the ones who tend to suffer the brunt of repression in democratic and non-democratic countries alike. They have the most to gain and the most to lose from participating in a social movement. Moreover, they suffer, endure, and enjoy the effects of activism long before donors show up and long after donors leave. Thus, donors that follow the lead of movements may not only be increasing movement

⁵⁷ Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

effectiveness, credibility, and legitimacy; they may also be fostering their grantees' agency over their own lives and communities.

Movement Capture

The second critical dynamic in donor—movement relations is *movement capture*. Ming Francis (2019) coined the term and defined it as occurring when a donor uses their influence to link funding of movements to movements pursuing new goals or strategies. Francis and others argue that foreign support for movements inherently influences movement dynamics (Boothe and Smithey 2007).⁵⁸ This influence happens along a spectrum. Movement capture is often understood to happen when there are strings, or conditions, attached to grants. Many donors understand that capture can be overcome by offering general operating support. Yet, movement capture can happen even when donors are unaware of it: through discussions between donor and grantee, in the funding decision-making process, or even long before a grant application is submitted.

Movement capture can happen in discussions between well-intentioned donors and potential grantees. When organizers and movement leaders approach donors for support, they enter a relationship of unequal parties. Donors have resources, and organizers and movements often seek those resources. As such, when donors seek consensus with organizers and movement leaders between the goals, strategies, and tactics that organizers and movement leaders pursue and those that donors think they should pursue, donors may redirect movements from their own goals and strategies toward the donor's—different or differently emphasized—preferences.⁵⁹ In so doing, even when seeking consensus, donors may reinforce existing power imbalances and their own privilege (Boothe and Smithey 2007).

Donors may also inadvertently capture movements during the grantmaking process. Theo Sowa (2020), CEO of the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), noted that, "We've ended up boxing activists up. Funders tend to say, 'we can support your action, but only if you are a registered [community-based organization] or NGO.' And they end up forming artificial organisations and relationships, where people are distracted from their core activity because they are setting up something that is not relevant to their context but which they need to do to attract resources."

"Offering support to movements that remain informal or unregistered, rather than forcing them to become legal entities can be essential to maintaining credibility. [Civil society

Foreign support is one type of external support. For example, organizations that were central to the US Civil Rights Movement including the NAACP received external support from donors such as the American Fund for Public Service (AFPS), also known as the Garland Fund (Ming Francis 2019; Morris 1984; Jenkins 1983).

⁵⁹ I credit Erica Kohl-Arenas (2020) with the idea that efforts to "find consensus" between greatly unequal parties can reinforce existing power imbalances.

organizations] and social movements enjoy distinct constituencies and capacities – funders should consider what kinds of support will improve, not weaken, their local standing" (Mahomed, Hopstein, and Krämer 2020). Yet, funding informal or unregistered groups is not always possible within many donors' existing internal grantmaking structures and processes. For additional discussion about this challenge, as well as actionable principles and practices for overcoming it, see "Tension 1. Will My Foundation Support Informal, Unregistered, or Grassroots Entities?" on page 60.

Various forms of movement capture may even occur long before grant applications are submitted. To what degree, if any, does a foundation board or senior leadership include

anyone with movement expertise or experience to help guide high-level strategy and staffing decisions? Lack of experience and expertise at the highest levels of a foundation can lead to uninformed or ill-informed decisions about the goals that program directors should seek to achieve, or the way they undertake

The restrictions funders impose can be as problematic as the absence of money.

grantmaking to organizers and movements. Organizers and movement leaders often view marginalization as intersectional. This may lead a movement to have multiple goals that fit into many different grantmaking portfolios, or none. Does a foundation have a portfolio for movement support, civic participation, or similar that is not siloed by issue areas?⁶⁰ Humanity United's Nonviolent Action and Inclusive Peace grantmaking is an example of one such portfolio.

Moreover, many organizers and movement leaders come from historically excluded communities and do not appear in traditional international NGO and donor networks. Do donors have in place the human resources, expertise, and networks to identify and vet these organizers and movement leaders as potential grantees? AJWS relies on its in-country consultants as a first step in identifying and vetting such leaders. Many organizers and movement leaders, especially in non-democratic settings, have unreliable or insecure internet access. Does a foundation accept grant applications, reports, or evaluations in languages other than English or in formats that do not require reliable, secure internet access? These dynamics in donor—grantee discussions, in the funding decision-making process, and long before grant applications are submitted led one philanthropy professional to note that "the restrictions funders impose can be as problematic as the absence of money" (Milner 2020).

Research suggests that the starting point for finding this balance should not be the transnational but the local. "The prime movers for change are not those abroad who offer economic

⁶⁰ Consider HRFN's resource Funding for Intersectional Organizing, available at: https://www.hrfn.org/resources/ahr-intersectionality-report-2022/.

support or training, nor those who try to bring issues to the attention of international policy-makers, nor even those who come to the country to contribute what they can to the struggle and share some of the risks facing local activist. This should all be subordinate to the work of the people trying to change their own situation" (Eguren 2009). Changing internal structures to minimize movement capture and to facilitate following the movements may require educational work with donor staff and board members about how movements define the problems they seek to remedy, how movements work, and how long-term efforts to build power lead to policy reform opportunities.

Donors can also be transparent about the interests, biases, and limitations that they bring to a relationship with a grantee and the broader community of stakeholders. Being explicit about transparency can avoid intentional or unintentional "strategic camouflage" of donor interests and biases, and help increase grantee effectiveness (Lambin and Surrender 2021). Such transparency may go a long way to starting such relationships on a strong footing based on trust and a shared interest in minimizing movement capture. Learning from movements directly by searching them out, listening to them, and adapting to their formal or informal expertise can be a powerful learning experience. Likewise, it may be through learning with peer donors that foundation board members and senior directors may become open to adapting internal structures to facilitate support for organizing and movement work. Humanity United brought on personnel with deep local and movement expertise. American Jewish World Service's learning came in part from its own staff and in part from a peer donor, Grassroots International, via their Collegial Partners program. And Grassroots International and Thousand Currents have prioritized philanthropic leadership and donor organizing around grantmaking that supports the work of organizers and movements (Grassroots International 2020; Thousand Currents 2020; Spector 2017). This report expands on this challenge and offers solutions in "Tension 4. How Can We Build Donor Expertise in Supporting Organizing and Movements?" on page 68.

Evaluating Support for Organizing and Movements

Building expertise in supporting organizing and movements includes building expertise in evaluating grants that support such work. To do so, this section explores trends in philanthropic evaluation and discusses challenges and examples of evaluating the perceived "messy" work of organizing and movements.

With the rise of strategic philanthropy over the past two decades, many donors have increasingly viewed their grants as "carefully calibrated investments," incorporating evaluation "into the grantmaking process itself, with outcomes defined in terms of closely monitored 'deliverables' and frequent benchmarking of performance metrics" (Soskis and Katz 2016). Strategic philanthropy can be defined as a self-consciously business orientation in which

"donors seek to achieve clearly defined goals; where they and their grantees pursue evidence-based strategies for achieving those goals; and where both parties monitor progress toward outcomes and assess their success in achieving them to make appropriate course corrections" (Soskis and Katz 2016). Taken at face value, this orientation could positively or negatively affect donor support for organizing and movements. Many movements are strategic in their decision-making, including in their decision to use nonviolent action. 61 Yet the ascendance of business-based theory within the philanthropic sector has transformed philanthropy's basic epistemology. "The impulse toward evidence-based quantitative assessment can channel philanthropic interventions in certain directions, since ideas regarding what can be accurately measured can shape beliefs about what should be funded. Critics of strategic philanthropy have argued that it has eschewed 'messier,' movement-based causes in favor of 'neater,' more clearly delineated programs and initiatives, in which a causal link could be firmly forged between the philanthropic intervention and the desired outcome" (Soskis and Katz 2016; see also McGoey 2021). While movement-based change may indeed be "messier," it is measurable. Both the Global Fund for Women and the American Jewish World Service have developed social movement assessment tools (see AJWS 2022 for a description of the latter).

And yet, although movement-based change is measurable, assessment tools must leave open the possibility of unexpected and unimagined outcomes. The greatest power of movements is, arguably, not their ability to achieve policy reform or changes in governance, but their ability to shift the Overton window in a society (i.e., to expand the policies and practices that are acceptable to the mainstream population). Movements change what people believe is politically possible. As such, some movement outcomes are deemed impossible or are not even imagined until they happen.

Distinguishing Between a Movement and a Grantee

In evaluating support for organizing and movements, it is important for donors to distinguish between the activities, progress, and setbacks of their grantees, and the activities, progress, and setbacks of the broader movement that the grantee may be a part of. Movements are rarely made up of one organization. They often consist of a variety of organizations and individuals that seek similar outcomes. Donors rarely fund all the organizations and individuals that form a movement. They are more likely to fund only some of the organizations or individuals that are part of the broader movement ecosystem. Therefore, donors that conflate individual grantees with a movement may very well skew their understanding of what that

⁶¹ See Dudouet 2013; Chenoweth and Ulfelder 2017; Butcher and Svensson 2016; Gleditsch and Rivera 2015; and Chenoweth and Stephan 2011.

individual grantee can reasonably achieve on its own, and the activities, successes, and setbacks it can reasonably be held accountable for.

Moreover, movement lifecycles are not linear. "Mobilizations are easy to spot during their peak moments [after a trigger event] when thousands of people are in the streets." But as, organizer and trainer, Carlos Saavedra (2018) noted, "the organizing and capacity building that takes place during slower, quieter times can also be essential to consolidating movement gains and laying the groundwork for future outbreaks." Sometimes these slower phases of a movement's lifecycle are in the months and years prior to peak activity. Sometimes they come after a movement has experienced losses or repression. These may be periods of disillusionment, but they may also be periods of learning and reflection in which organizers rebuild and movement strategy evolves. "For funders, the important thing is recognizing what stage a movement is progressing through at a given moment and adapting their support to that moment's needs" (Saavedra 2018).

Figure 2 depicts common phases of a movement's lifecycle. In the early stages of a movement, when anger in society is growing but before it reaches the news headlines, it may be challenging for donors to identify organizers and movement leaders. But it is in these

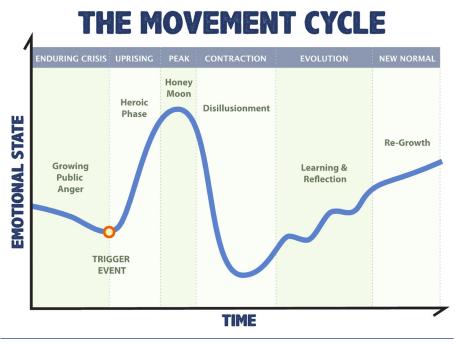


FIGURE 2. The Movement Lifecycle

(Source: Gan 2019)

moments when support for educational materials about nonviolent action, skill-building in the form of trainings in nonviolent discipline, and support for safe civic spaces can facilitate relationship building, peer learning, and strategic planning (Chenoweth and Stephan 2021). As a senior advisor at a public charity noted, "Sometimes movements strategize in silence." The strategy, skills, and relationships developed in between phases of peak activity might in fact create the basis for more effective action in peak periods.

In between peak periods—for example, in moments of contraction and disillusionment—flexible support for movement leaders and core volunteers may be critical for them to continue

their work, absorb lessons, evolve, and remain resilient. In fact, funding in moments of failure may not only facilitate learning and resilience, it may also demonstrate to organizers and movement leaders that a donor is indeed committed to their work in the long-term and not only the immediate returns on their

"Sometimes movements strategize in silence."

-Senior advisor, public charity

investment that take the form of successes published on the front page of the *New York Times*. Developing such shared commitment and trust often begins long before peak movement activity. Humanity United staff, including Bryan Sims and Dave Mozersky, arrived at HU with such longstanding relationships. And AJWS develops such relationships with partners through long-term technical and financial assistance to development organizations that may not initially be intent on being part of a movement, but that find themselves joining or leading a movement due to changes in their political environment. Such long-term relationships often require donors to have wide ranging or flexible grantmaking portfolios or to coordinate with other donors.

The nonlinearity of a movement's lifecycle is also important when it comes to donors evaluating a grantee's success at achieving the goals of a given grant. For example, if a grant's goals are related not to ends (e.g., policy reform) but to the means organizers use (e.g., training individuals in nonviolent discipline, developing leadership in the movement's ranks, and refining the movement's strategy), then a day of mass action by a movement could be a success even if it results in no policy change. That day of mass action may allow a movement to demonstrate to the media and the world that it can mobilize widespread support without using violence and gain the moral high ground over the regime. It may make a movement more visible and inspire growth, thanks to new and diverse sectors of the population joining the movement. It may also allow up-and-coming movement leaders to practice skills they learned in quieter times and thereby gain experience and confidence. In fact, these successes are measurable, and they indicate that a movement may have the ability to safely

Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

scale up in size. In this context, going to scale may not result in immediate policy change, and it may even provoke repression of a movement and its leadership. But it may generate momentum, which can be a crucial ingredient for movement success (Chenoweth and Belgioioso 2019). This suggests that donors may facilitate movement success by having grant deliverables and evaluation metrics focus on the means that organizers use to build power, leadership, and agency rather than on ends.

Getting Proximate to Movements

Increased donor proximity to a movement is another way that donors can distinguish a grantee from a movement. Jennifer and Peter Buffett, co-chairs of the NoVo Foundation, note that

Donors hiring only from among local elites can entrench inequality at the local level.

they find expertise and solutions "close to the ground, close to experience. The communities who have direct experience of an issue are by far the best experts on it" (Villanueva 2018). Listening to local organizers or movement leaders on a scoping or grant evaluation trip is one way of gathering local expertise. American Jewish World Service has a practice of hiring individuals with deep movement experience including

senior staff as well as in-country consultants (ICCs) to manage grantmaking and relationships with grantees and non-grantee partners. This includes hiring the former executive director of AJWS's first collegial partner, Grassroots International. The lived experiences, networks, and relationships of these ICCs is central to AJWS's grassrooted approach to grantmaking. Hiring local staff and opening local offices is another way, as is the practice of the Open Society Foundation's network of national and regional foundations.

However, hiring locally does not necessarily ensure equal representation of local interests. Inequalities exist in most societies, and hiring only from among local elites can entrench inequality at the local level. Moreover, while establishing and maintaining large local offices may facilitate donor proximity, it may also run a greater risk of fostering local dependence on foreign assistance than hiring a small number of in-country personnel. Likewise, establishing local offices in undemocratic contexts may be difficult logistically or pose serious risks to donor staff and grantees.

Being proximate or close to the experience of organizers, movement leaders, and their communities does not always have to mean being physically proximate in the form of incountry offices. Proximity to a movement may also be achieved figuratively. For example, Humanity United brought on Akwasi Aidoo as a senior fellow and Bryan Sims as a senior manager. Both have deep expertise with civil society, movements, and philanthropy in Africa.

Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

HU staff travel regularly and for extended periods to the countries where they undertake grantmaking, and in-country consultants assist with evaluation and relationship building.

The International Center on Nonviolent Conflict (ICNC) and Thousand Currents are two other donors that have relied more so on figurative than physical proximity. ICNC's mission is educational. It develops and shares knowledge and resources on nonviolent movements with interested recipients, including organizers, scholars, educators, nongovernmental organizations, media professionals, and members of the policy community. Its staff are based primarily in the United States. But it has developed and maintains longstanding relationships with organizers and movement leaders who have participated in or benefited from its educational programming. Similarly, despite not having staff or offices in-country, Thousand Currents has developed deep and long-term relationships with organizers and movement leaders. Whether a donor prioritizes physical or figurative proximity, organizers and movement leaders repeatedly note that a donor's commitment to relationships of trust is key to grantmaking to and with organizers and movements (Milner 2020).

This section of the report zoomed in on the different trajectories that Humanity United and the American Jewish World Service took as their support for organizing and movements evolved. Despite being driven by slightly different values, having significantly different lifespans, and having different internal structures, both donors arrived at systemic, multilevel approaches to how they support the work of organizers and movements. This section of the report also zoomed out by discussing more generally the unique and provocative ways that organizers and movements build political power in society and how donors can both foster and constrain that power. Whether a foundation is a public charity or private foundation has implications for both the rules and the stakeholders that influence donor strategy and grantmaking. The institutional form that a donor takes—whether as a public charity or a private foundation—may be particularly influential in driving why and how it supports the work of organizers and movements. Yet, donors that see beyond the institutional form of potential grantees and support diverse expressions of agency—even if they're not in the form of a traditional, registered NGO—can have a powerful impact on their grantees' ability to build and sustain successful, nonviolent, collective action.

Anonymous interviewee speaking with the author.

Findings

This report avoids making prescriptive recommendations for whether, when, where, or how specific donors should support grassroots organizing and social movements. However, it recognizes that social movements have been central drivers of democratization and human rights-oriented social change in many countries. Movements and organizing require financial and other resources. Movements are often led by individuals and communities historically excluded from financial and political power. Some movements and organizers seek financial and non-financial support from foreigners. And so, this report takes a normative position that donors should seriously consider how they can best support transformative social change through the work of grassroots organizing and social movements.

This report diverges from the standard policy report format, which might offer specific recommendations for donors, organizers, and movements. Instead, this report offers three types of takeaways that seek to serve as a resource for donors. These takeaways have been derived from interviews, case studies, and the online survey conducted by the author, as well as from a review of secondary literature.

First, this report details common tensions that donors have faced with respect to supporting grassroots organizing and social movements. Accompanying the tensions are descriptions of and links to possible solutions that donors have used to work through these tensions. Second, this report presents key principles that donors may consider with respect to supporting organizing and movements. Finally, this report highlights key takeaways and opportunities for future research.

Common Tensions and Practices in Supporting Organizing and Movements

The following six tensions are not meant to be an exhaustive list. They are the most common tensions that surfaced during interviews and in the survey of donors with respect to donors supporting organizing and movements. Each tension is accompanied by practical examples of how donors have overcome the tension. These practices are referred to as possible solutions for donors to consider adopting or adapting to their specific context.

Tension 1. Will My Foundation Support Informal, Unregistered, or Grassroots Entities?

Supporting grassroots, unregistered, or informal entities such as a social movement organization can be complicated for donors in ways that differ from supporting traditional, legally recognized nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Social movement organizations often

lack formally recognized non-profit status (or its equivalent), professionalized staff responsible for fundraising, a board with legally recognized oversight responsibilities, an organizational bank account, or even a fixed mailing address. These institutional features are not minor details and are required by many donors.

In contrast to legally recognized NGOs, social movements might have none or only some of these institutional features, thereby adding complications for donors (based on the IRS or the foundation's own rules) that consider providing direct support. Moreover, donors might not have the time, relationships, knowledge, or local staff needed to find and vet movement leadership, which may be diffuse, not based in a capital city, not fluent in English, or who keep their leadership private. In short, "the more excluded people are, the harder it is [for donors] truly to hear them" (Walker 2015). Yet, many creative solutions exist for donors to get sufficiently proximate to hear and consider supporting the most marginalized.

Possible Solutions

i. Donors can provide grants to intermediaries, such as public charities that re-grant, fiscal sponsors, ⁶⁵ or community foundations that are based in the same region as organizers or movements. These intermediaries may be formal organizations with institutional features, such as legal status, local multilingual staff, and longstanding relationships with organizers and movements, that allow them to effectively (i) receive, manage, and report on grants from US-based donors, and (ii) give grants to informal, unregistered, and grassroots entities. TrustAfrica, ⁶⁶ the Urgent Action Fund's "Sister Fund" model, ⁶⁷ and the Fund for Global Human Rights are three examples of localizing and formalizing grantmaking to grassroots organizers and social movements.

Donors can seek guidance from other donors and NGOs. For, example, Peace Direct and Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights (UAF) established a network of consultants around the world who provide advice and guidance on potential grantees, contextual issues, and other considerations relating to finding and funding local organizations. UAF has 2,000 in-country unpaid advisors who help with endorsements on groups being considered for funding.

If an organizer or a social movement is unregistered and seeks foreign support, they can find a registered 501(c) (3) or 501(c)(4) entity to serve as their fiscal sponsor. Public charities and private foundations can then make project specific grants to the organizer or movement via the fiscal sponsor by following "expenditure responsibility" oversight and reporting requirements. For more information, see Alliance for Justice 2015, 38.

⁶⁶ TrustAfrica: http://www.trustafrica.org/.

⁶⁷ Urgent Action Fund's "Sister Fund" model: https://urgentactionfund.org/who-we-are/uaf-sister-funds/.

Alternatively, donors can fund individual organizers or movement leaders directly to cover travel or living expenses so that they can focus full-time on their work.⁶⁸ Donors can support organizers and movement leaders via awards⁶⁹ and fellowships to strategize, co-create, and network with other organizers.⁷⁰

Such direct support, however, can have negative consequences. Direct support can raise suspicion about foreign influence over a movement. It can create resentment and division among those who receive funding and those who do not. And it can compel grantees to be increasingly accountable to foreign donors instead of to local constituents whose participation is key to movement success.

ii. Instead of funding organizers or movements directly, donors can offer them free educational materials or trainings that strengthen local leadership, capacity, strategy, and resilience. For example, the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict offers educational material⁷¹ published in more than 70 languages and dialects, online courses, and regional training institutes. In the period prior to a movement's peak public activity, support through leadership development, organizational capacity building, training in strategic nonviolent action or grassroots organizing, and labor, legal, and medical training for organizers have led to higher levels of participation in a movement, lower fatalities, and a greater likelihood of generating defections from the target government (Chenoweth and Stephan 2021)—three factors that have been shown to increase, on average, a movement's chance of achieving its goals (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011).

Grants to individuals can pose ethical and practical challenges for donors. Funding one movement leader but not another can create tension and practically be viewed as selecting winners and losers. However, grants to individuals or a family member can also free them of day jobs and permit them to organize full-time. Grants to individuals are considered non-taxable expenditures if the they are given on an objective and nondiscriminatory basis under procedure pre-approved by the IRS and meet one of three criteria: (i) the grant is an award or prize that the grantee did not seek, that recognizes a past achievement(s), and that does not require the grantee to render substantial future services, (ii) the grant is a scholarship or fellowship for degree and non-degree study including living expenses at an educational institution, or (iii) the grant is to achieve a specific objective, produce a report or similar product, or improve or enhance a skill or talent of the grantee (USDT–IRS 2020a).

⁶⁹ Human Rights Fund's (HRF) Havel Prize: https://hrf.org/havel-prize/.

⁷⁰ HRF's Freedom Fellowship: https://hrf.org/programs_posts/freedom-fellows/.

⁷¹ ICNC Press: https://www.nonvi olent-conflict.org/icnc-publications/.

⁷² ICNC Online Courses: https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/online-courses/.

⁷³ ICNC Regional Institutes: https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/regional-institutes/.

- iii. **Donors can support safe spaces for organizers, movement leaders, and movement participants to convene, co-create, coach, network, and support each other.**⁷⁴ This could take the form of permanent local spaces in the spirit of co-working spaces such as Civic Hall,⁷⁵ co-creation labs like the CIVICUS Youth Action Lab,⁷⁶ and hybrid online and offline networks such as Leading Change Network.⁷⁷ Organizers often seek these spaces, which have been proven to help organizers strategize and learn from and build relationships with each other (Chenoweth and Stephan 2021).
- iv. Instead of providing direct financial, educational, or in-kind support to organizers and movements, donors can help shape the political environment in ways that facilitate organizing and movement work. For example, donors can engage embassies to pressure governments to not repress organizers. A Diplomat's Handbook for Democracy Development Support⁷⁸ describes a range of tools that diplomatic missions have used to foster democracy. Military Engagement: Influencing Armed Forces Worldwide to Support Democratic Transitions⁷⁹ includes a section on how military officers from democracies can influence fellow officers in non-democratic countries to support the will of the people. Donors can also shape the political environment by supporting independent journalism that documents and disseminates accurate information about organizing and movements.⁸⁰
- v. **Donors can fund security as well as physical and mental health services for organizers and movements.** The Enabling Environment for Human Rights Defenders program⁸¹ run by the Fund for Global Human Rights is one example. Such support can also include funding organizations that offer in-person accompaniment services and

⁷⁴ This is in line with the findings from CIVICUS's consultations with organizers, activists, and funders, which can be read in the special report *Shifting Power and Resources to Grassroots Movements*, available at https://www.civicus.org/documents/shifting-power-to-grassroots-movements_july2019.pdf.

⁷⁵ Civic Hall: https://civichall.org/.

⁷⁶ Youth Action Lab: https://www.civicus.org/index.php/what-we-do/strengthen/youth-action-lab.

⁷⁷ Leading Change Network: https://leadingchangenetwork.org/.

⁷⁸ A Diplomat's Handbook, 3rd edition, available at http://www.democratizationpolicy.org/pdf/3rd%20edition%20 Handbook%20complete.pdf.

⁷⁹ *Military Engagement*, available at https://www.brookings.edu/book/military-engagement-influencing-armed -forces-worldwide-to-support-democratic-transitions-complete-set-volumes-1-and-2/.

⁸⁰ Consider the CIVICUS Media Fellowship: http://www.civicus.org/documents/CIVICUS-ICSW2019-Media -Fellowship-Application.pdf.

⁸¹ Creating an Enabling Environment for Human Rights Defenders, available at https://globalhumanrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/FGHR_EE-Learning-and-Future-Directions-Feb2021.pdf.

assistance to protect the safety of organizers. Nonviolent Peaceforce⁸² and Witness for Peace⁸³ are two such organizations. Donors can also fund emergency protection grants⁸⁴ for individuals and their organizations. And they can fund digital security help-lines⁸⁵ as well as equipment, software, and training⁸⁶ to enhance digital security. Repression of organizers and movements is so common that being prepared to mitigate its effects is critical.

- vi. Donors can also support advocacy in favor of ceasefires, weapons embargos on state and non-state actors in areas where armed conflict could erupt, or even the withdrawal of foreign state support for a repressive regime. Research has demonstrated that militarization of a conflict hurts movements by reducing participation, lowering the chances that activism remains nonviolent, and decreasing the likelihood of defections from security services (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). These three factors have been shown to decrease, on average, a movement's chance of achieving its goals (Chenoweth and Stephan 2021). And a foreign state withdrawing its support from a repressive regime can weaken the regime's resolve or its ability to repress organizers. Crisis Action⁸⁷ is one example of an organization that catalyzes these types of advocacy at the United Nations, at regional bodies such as the Organization of American States, and toward specific countries.
- vii. Donors can adapt their internal regulations such that they explicitly give staff greater flexibility to support informal entities that may not have all the institutional features of a traditional NGO while still conforming to IRS rules.

Tension 2. Rapid Response, Project-Based, or General Operating Support?

This is a tension that that will be familiar to many donors. Movements require different types of support at different stages of their life cycle (see Figure 2 on page 56). While a social movement may need \$10,000 in a week's time in response to an unforeseen political opportunity (i.e., a rapid response grant), that same movement might also need six-figure support

⁸² Nonviolent Peaceforce: https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/.

⁸³ Witness for Peace: https://witnessforpeace.org/.

⁸⁴ Front Line Defenders' Protection Grants: https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/programme/protection-grants.

⁸⁵ Digital Security Helpline: https://www.accessnow.org/help/.

Front Line Defenders's Digital Protection: https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/programme/digital-protection; and USIP's Digital Authoritarianism and Nonviolent Action, available at: https://www.usip.org/publications/2021/07/digital-authoritarianism-and-nonviolent-action-challenging-digital.

⁸⁷ Crisis Action: https://crisisaction.org/.

for a three-year project to recruit and train local leadership (i.e., a project-based grant), as well as flexible, general operating support to ensure that organizers can commit full-time to the movement.

A donor's capacity, priorities, or internal structures might not permit it to offer rapid response, project-based, and core operating support. For example, a donor might not have a mechanism for offering existing grantees additional funds in a matter of weeks in response to an unexpected opportunity. Other donors might have limited or no capacity to provide multi-year general operating support to a grantee that seeks to expand.

Possible Solutions

i. Organizers have repeatedly asked donors to coordinate their grantmaking to offer complementary support and to avoid countervailing support and competition among grantees. Such donor coordination can occur on a regular basis at both in-country and headquarters levels. For example, Ploughshares Fund coordinates among funders and NGOs in the nuclear policy field. Gender Funders CoLab is a network of twelve major donors that mobilizes funders to support women's rights organizations and movements. Coordination may be easier among donors that conceive of their own grantmaking as one piece of a broader ecosystem. The Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) offers a detailed description of what the feminist funding ecosystem looks like.

Donors can also leverage their own networks by dedicating time to introduce grantees to other donors and to facilitate self-generated support or autonomous resourcing. This can reduce the amount of time movement leaders spend networking with donors and completing grant applications.

ii. Donors can create or contribute to pooled funds that can gather and process information, identify grantees, and deploy funds to organizers and movement quicker and in a more cohesive way than might be possible on their own. The Lifeline Embattled CSO Assistance Fund⁹¹ is an example of a pooled fund offering rapid

⁸⁸ See Mama Cash 2022; Miller-Dawkins 2017; Chenoweth and Stephan 2021.

⁸⁹ Gender Funders CoLab: https://www.genderfunderscolab.org/.

⁹⁰ Toward A Feminist Funding Ecosystem, available at https://www.wocan.org/resource/toward-a-feminist -funding-ecosystem/.

⁹¹ The Lifeline Embattled CSO Assistance Fund: https://www.csolifeline.org/.

response grants. FRIDA The Young Feminist Fund,⁹² the Zimbabwe Alliance,⁹³ and the Black Feminist Fund⁹⁴ are three examples of pooled funds created through collaboration between funders, activists, and advocates. Organizers and movement leaders participating in the grantmaking process can also help ensure that foreign funding does not hamper internally generated resourcing.

iii. Donors can also innovate and offer new types of support. For example, in addition to granting *liquid assets* in the form of rapid response, project-based, or general operating cash support, donors can offer *non-liquid assets* in the form of buildings or land. Buying a building or office space and granting it to an urban collective of grassroots organizers might provide long-term stability and security for their work. Similarly, buying and granting land to a farming, Indigenous, or informally settled community might allow them to become financially self-sufficient thereby giving them economic sovereignty and stability with which to organize and mobilize on their own terms for greater rights and democracy.

Tension 3. Does US Federal Tax Law Permit Us to Support Social Movements and Grassroots Organizers That Conduct Lobbying?

Many social movements and grassroots organizers undertake advocacy activities that could be considered lobbying under US federal tax law. In practice, lobbying may entail demands for legislative reform, government leaders to resign, or an entire government to change hands. Donors may feel that they are legally unable to support grantees making such demands.

Under certain conditions, institutional donors may support public charities that lobby without incurring a taxable expenditure. And in most cases, donors are not required to prohibit the use of grant funds for lobbying (Alliance for Justice 2015, 12). Following are some ways that donors can legally support movements and organizers that undertake lobbying activities ⁹⁶

The following information is not intended as legal advice. It is drawn from US federal tax law and interpretations thereof found in the Alliance for Justice / Boulder Advocacy's *Philanthropy*

⁹² The Young Feminist Fund: https://youngfeministfund.org/.

⁹³ Zimbabwe Alliance: https://www.alliancemagazine.org/feature/zimbabwe-alliance-seizing-the-moment/.

⁹⁴ Black Feminist Fund: https://www.blackfeministfund.org/.

⁹⁵ I credit Erica Kohl-Arenas (2020) with the suggestion that donors can invest in communities by buying buildings and land in ways that foster collective ownership.

⁹⁶ Public charities and private foundations are prohibited from supporting partisan electoral advocacy.

Advocacy Playbook,⁹⁷ its Investing in Change: A Funder's Guide to Supporting Advocacy,⁹⁸ and its "International Advocacy: What You Need to Know."⁹⁹ It is recommended that you contact legal counsel if you seek legal advice on these particular or related topics.

Possible Solutions

- i. For project-specific grants, if a private foundation gives less than or equal to the non-lobbying portion of the project budget, the grant is not considered a lobbying expenditure.¹⁰⁰
- ii. A private foundation can give general operating support to a 501(c)(3) public charity using a grant agreement that includes a clause stating that funds are "not earmarked for lobbying." Such a clause neither requires nor prohibits funds be used for lobbying. And it allows the grantee to lobby with the granted funds without creating a taxable expenditure for the private foundation (Alliance for Justice 2015, 15).
- iii. A public foundation can support a 501(c)(4) entity for any activity which the foundation itself can engage, including lobbying. Unless a grant agreement specifies that the funds are not to be used for lobbying, the grant counts against the foundation's lobbying limit (Alliance for Justice 2015, 37–38).
- iv. A private foundation can support a 501(c)(4) entity for any activity that a 501(c)(3) public charity can undertake except lobbying and electoral campaign intervention by following some specific oversight and reporting requirements called "expenditure responsibility" (Alliance for Justice 2015, 38).
- v. Instead of following the "insubstantial part" test, a public charity can elect to take advantage of the "501(h) expenditure" test to determine its lobbying limits. Electing to follow the 501(h) expenditure test may offer the public charity a more generous and easier-to-calculate lobbying limit while also offering clear and limited definitions of what counts as lobbying. Under the 501(h) expenditure test, the lobbying limit could be as much as 20 percent of the foundation's annual expenditures, up to a cap of \$1,000,000 per year (Alliance for Justice 2015, 13).

⁹⁷ Philanthropy Advocacy Playbook: https://bolderadvocacy.org/resource/philanthropy-advocacy-playbook/.

⁹⁸ Investing in Change, available at https://bolderadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Investing_in_Change.pdf.

⁹⁹ International Advocacy, available at https://bolderadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/International_ Advocacy.pdf.

This is possible using a "safe harbor" provision. To make use of this provision, private foundations must also receive a proposed budget from the grantee. Private foundations may only rely on the grantee's proposed budget for the project if it has no reason to doubt the budget's accuracy.

Tension 4. How Can We Build Donor Expertise in Supporting Organizing and Movements?

Donors that are considering supporting the work of grassroots organizers and social movements for the first time might find it challenging to identify, build relationships with, and vet potential grantees. Moreover, foundation senior staff or board members may have little or no understanding of how movements operate, or what they need and do not need to succeed. These disconnects might be amplified by donor staff being based in New York, Washington, or San Francisco and traveling to "the field" only on short missions. And while in country, donor staff might remain in the capital city, meeting only with local NGOs that are recognized internationally. Supporting grassroots organizing and social movements requires a different donor mindset than supporting traditional NGOs.

Possible Solutions

i. Donors can be intentional about learning from organizers and movements. Such learning can involve paying them to speak to donor staff and board members, traveling to meet them in their own context, connecting with them on secure online platforms, or recruiting and hiring headquarters and in-country staff with experience as organizers or in movements.

Institutionalizing feedback loops from organizers and movement leaders may also facilitate learning. CIVICUS's Grassroots Solidarity Revolution¹⁰¹ and the Alliance for Feminist Movements¹⁰² are two spaces designed specifically for grassroots activists, donors, and allies to learn from, cultivate trust between, and build solidarity with each other. Adding organizers or movement leaders to a foundation board, hiring committee, or strategic planning committee could help to institutionalize their expertise so that it is incorporated not only in grantmaking decisions but also in high-level strategic decisions, such as the creation of new grantmaking portfolios or when hiring new senior staff. Organizers and movement leaders may very well be able to contribute more to a board or advisory committee that oversees these types of decisions rather than a board whose primary reason for being is fundraising. Creating a formal advisory committee comprised of past grantees or members of the communities that a foundation serves is another option to promote learning.

¹⁰¹ Grassroots Solidarity Revolution: https://civicus.org/grassrootsrevolution/.

¹⁰² The Alliance for Feminist Movements: https://allianceforfeministmovements.org/.

CIVICUS¹⁰³ and RECREAR¹⁰⁴ co-created a playbook¹⁰⁵ to help donors and organizers re-think worldviews and principles around resourcing youth-led groups and movements. It includes seven stories of youth-led organizing in Latin America and Africa, and it challenges readers "to explore, to question, to change your opinion, to see something new."

The "Checklist for External Assistance to Nonviolent Movements" in *Is Authoritarianism Staging a Comeback?*¹⁰⁶ offers a set of principles that are intended to provoke discussion about whether, when, where, and how to most effectively support nonviolent activists. The Checklist also includes a sampling of pro-movement tools that donors can consider supporting.

ii. **Similarly, donors can be intentional about learning from their peers.** Both Human Rights Funders Network (HRFN)¹⁰⁷ and the EDGE Funders Alliance¹⁰⁸ offer online and in-person spaces for donors to practice peer-to-peer collaboration and learning. HRFN offers regular events specifically for donors interested in social movements,¹⁰⁹ including webinars, in-person gatherings, and an annual conference. EDGE's 2019 Annual Conference¹¹⁰ and its Global Engagement Lab¹¹¹ were designed specifically to facilitate funders learning from each other and directly from movements. Thousand Currents' executive director suggests 25 ways that donors can support social movements.¹¹² And the *HistPhil* blog¹¹³ offers accessible analysis and commentary from academics and practitioners on the history of the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors.

- 107 HRFN: https://www.hrfn.org/our-community/.
- 108 EDGE Funders: https://edgefunders.org/about-us/.
- 109 "Stronger Together" webinar series: https://www.hrfn.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Webinar-Series -Takeaways-1.pdf.
- 110 EDGE Funders' annual conference: https://edgefunders.org/2019-conference/.
- 111 Global Engagement Lab: https://www.edgefunders.org/global-engagement-lab/.
- 112 25 Powerful Ways Funders Can Support Social Movements, available at https://idronline.org/25-powerful-ways -funders-can-support-social-movements/.
- 113 HistPhil: https://histphil.org/2015/06/17/introducing-histphil-a-new-blog-on-the-history-of-philanthropy-2/.

¹⁰³ CIVICUS: https://www.civicus.org/.

¹⁰⁴ RECREAR: http://recrearinternational.org/.

¹⁰⁵ Resourcing Youth-led Groups & Movements, available at https://www.civicus.org/documents/en-Playbook -2020-march.pdf.

^{106 &}quot;Is Authoritarianism Staging a Comeback?" webinar: https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports /books/is-authoritarianism-staging-a-comeback-3/.

- iii. Donors can share their grants-level data with projects that track and analyze the evolving state of human rights, peace, and security philanthropy. Two such projects are (i) the Peace and Security Funders Group's (PSFG) Peace and Security Funding Index,¹¹⁴ and (ii) the Candid / Human Rights Funders Network–led Advancing Human Rights¹¹⁵ research conducted in partnership with Ariadne¹¹⁶ and Prospera.¹¹⁷
- iv. **Donors can participate in GlassPockets,** an initiative of Candid that champions transparency in philanthropy. It provides data, resources, examples, and action steps that foundations can use to understand the value of transparency, be more open in their own communications, and shed light on how private organizations are serving the public good.

Tension 5. How Can We Avoid Harmful Power Imbalances Between Donor and Grantee?

A power imbalance exists between donors and potential grantees. With respect to their direct relationship with each other, donors hold funds that potential grantees seek. And with respect to their place in broader systems of power, organizers and movement leaders are more likely than donor board members or staff to come from historically excluded communities that have endured intersecting systems of oppression. And so, even when donors seek consensus between the goals, strategies, and tactics that organizers and movement leaders seek to pursue, and the goals, strategies, and tactics that donors think organizers and movement leaders should pursue, donors may be reinforcing existing power imbalances (Kohl-Arenas and Ming Francis 2020).

Increasing input from the communities that grants are meant to serve in all stages of the grantmaking processes can increase local ownership over processes and outcomes. This, in turn, can increase grantee effectiveness. Increased local ownership can also improve the chances that foreign support does not replace or undermine movements' internally generated resourcing, which historically has played a more influential role than foreign support in movement success.

¹¹⁴ PSFG Reports: https://www.peaceandsecurity.org/reports.

¹¹⁵ Advancing Human Rights: https://humanrightsfunding.org/faq/?tab=what-is-the-advancing-human-rights-research.

¹¹⁶ Ariadne: https://www.ariadne-network.eu/.

¹¹⁷ Prospera: https://www.prospera-inwf.org/.

¹¹⁸ GlassPockets: https://glasspockets.org/.

Possible Solutions

- i. Donors can reduce administrative requirements that serve as obstacles for organizers and movements who might otherwise apply for funding. Donors can adapt their requests for proposals and decision-making processes such that applicants spend less time on proposals while still allowing for effective due diligence. This can include common applications for multiple donors, eliminating lengthy, required written proposals and permitting verbal, instead of written, grant reporting. The Sandler Family Foundation is an example of a donor that reduced administrative barriers for potential and actual grantees by (i) discouraging them from submitting requests and reports written specifically for the foundation and instead safely and securely sharing documents actually being used to set goals and plan work, ¹¹⁹ (ii) seeking to avoid micromanaging grantees or pushing them to conform to the foundation's five-year plan, and (iii) making long-term, general support grants that help build grantee leadership, management, and strategic planning capacity (Whitman 2019).
- ii. Donors can develop donor–grantee partnership models grounded in the concept of democratic grantmaking. Thousand Currents has developed one such model. Grantmaking in this manner includes grantees as equal partners in donor decision-making, respecting local leadership and solutions, and paying attention to the inherent power differential between donor and grantee. This model requires donors to be flexible and responsive to grantees and the particular context in which they operate. This kind of partnership challenges the traditional paradigm of who holds expertise and power in the donor–grantee relationship. As such, it requires a high level of patience, time, persistence, and relinquishing control on the part of the donor. In their 2012 Evaluation and Learning report, Thousand Currents offers reflections—from the perspective of its partners—on a decade of using a democratic donor–grantee partnership model.
- iii. Donors can dedicate time and resources to centering diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in their own policies, practices, and programs. The Peace and Security Funders Group (PSFG) is one network of philanthropists that supports its members to

¹¹⁹ Sharing internal strategy documents can pose security risks for a movement, its leaders, and its participants. In addition to using encryption or other security measures, donors can help ensure that they do no harm by deferring to grantees and potential grantees about what strategy information can be shared in the first place.

¹²⁰ Thousand Currents' 2012 Evaluation and Learning report: https://thousandcurrents.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/2012-Evaluation-and-Learning-Report.pdf.

- do exactly that.¹²¹ PSFG and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund offer a four-part resolution for funders¹²² to make the sector more equitable, more inclusive, and more diverse.
- iv. Donors can also decide to share power by engaging in participatory grantmaking with members of the communities they seek to serve. Participatory grantmaking cedes decision-making power about funding—including the strategy and criteria behind those decisions—to the very communities that funders aim to serve. The GrantCraft report titled *Deciding Together*¹²³ details benefits and challenges of participatory grantmaking and highlights insights from participatory grantmakers, including Global Greengrants Fund¹²⁴ and UHAI EASHRI.¹²⁵ Additionally, the Buen Vivir Fund¹²⁶ and FundAction¹²⁷ offer examples of how donors and grassroots organizations joined forces to create participatory approaches via an impact investing fund and a pooled fund, respectively.
- v. Donors can undertake open and honest dialogue internally, with peer institutions, and with potential grantees about the underlying and often unspoken hierarchies in donor—grantee relationships. As Ford Foundation President Darren Walker suggested, such an honest reckoning could include asking questions such as: "a) How does our [donor] privilege insulate us from engaging with the most difficult root causes of inequality and the poverty in which it ensnares people?; b) How does our work—our approach to awarding grants, our hiring and contracting policies, even our behavior toward our partners and grantees—reinforce structural inequality in our society?; and c) Why are [foundations] still necessary, and what can we do to build a world where we no longer are as necessary?" (Walker 2015). The National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy offers a suite of tools—including a philanthropy assessment guide called Power Moves—designed to assist donors in self-assessing how they can use their privilege and power to intentionally advance social justice and equity. 128

¹²¹ The PSFG mission: https://peaceandsecurity.org/mission.

^{122 &}quot;A 2020 Resolution for Peace and Security Funders," available at https://www.insidephilanthropy.com/home/2020/1/9/a-2020-resolution-for-peace-and-security-funders.

¹²³ Deciding Together, available at http://grantcraft.org/content/guides/deciding-together/#highlights.

¹²⁴ Global Greengrants Fund: https://www.greengrants.org/2018/10/24/grantcraft/.

¹²⁵ UHAI EASHRI: https://grantcraft.org/content/videos/insight-on-participatory-grantmaking-wanja-muguongo-uhai-eashri/.

¹²⁶ Buen Vivir Fund: https://thousandcurrents.org/buen-vivir-fund/.

¹²⁷ FundAction: https://fundaction.eu/.

¹²⁸ NCRP self-assessment tools: https://www.ncrp.org/initiatives/power-moves-philanthropy.

vi. Donors can imagine and undertake innovative ways of supporting organizing and movement work. One specific example is using donor funding to incentivize domestic support while contributing to long-term funding stability. In Brazil, in collaboration with leaders of the Brazilian Black Movement, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation co-created the first fund dedicated solely to promoting racial equity among the black population of Brazil, the Baobá Fund for Racial Equity. For every 1BRL/\$0.18 raised in Brazil, Kellogg matched it 3-to-1 toward the fund endowment. For every 1BRL raised internationally, Kellogg offered a 2-to-1 match for the fund (Moreira and Lopes 2020). Additionally, the Radical Flexibility Fund offers what it refers to as "From Promises to 10 Radical Actions" that donors can consider to help center local people, communities, and organizations in social change processes.¹²⁹

Box 6. Movement Learning in Serbia

Evaluating movement means and ends is particularly important because movements tend to grow in a nonlinear way. For example, Serbian students protested then-President Slobodan Milosevic in 1991-92 and 1996-97 to some success. But it was lessons learned from the latter protests that informed the creation of the Otpor movement in 1998. Students determined that building sustainable political power required that they avoid organizing only students in the capital. They needed to build a nationwide network of activists from all age groups. To protect their own leadership from government repression, they avoided having a single leader. Instead, Otpor had a horizontal organizing structure and rotated its spokespeople. To strengthen the movement's resilience, Otpor leadership decided to expand its repertoire of protest tactics and to not count on the support of opposition political parties. Less than two years after its founding, Otpor led the movement that forced Milosevic from power. A donor evaluating the 1996-97 protests based solely on whether it succeeded or failed to achieve its stated goals might miss the fact that it informed the creation of Otpor.

Tension 6. How Do We Monitor and Evaluate Organizing and Movements?

Donors require varying forms of accountability from their grantees, including annual written reports, regular conversations, or site visits. However, grassroots organizers and social movements may be more rooted in local traditions and practices than established nongovernmental

^{129 &}quot;From Promises to 10 Radical Actions," available at https://www.radicalflexibility.org/10-radical-actions.

organizations, which may have adopted Western or US organizational practices and language of monitoring and evaluation. And those grassroots traditions and practices may very well not be immediately visible to or understood by outside donors (Schaffer 2000). This could create a disconnect in determining how, when, and why monitoring and evaluation happens. Moreover, foreign-imposed monitoring and evaluation can alter accountability structures within movements by forcing movement leadership to engage in a balancing act between accountability to foreign donors and accountability to local constituents whose participation is key to movement success.

Possible Solutions

- i. Donors can focus on evaluating movement means instead of, or in addition to, movement ends. Instead of evaluating organizers and movements based on how much closer they are to achieving policy reforms or democratic elections (i.e., winning), donors can measure and evaluate organizers' and movements' ability to (i) develop movement leadership, (ii) develop and implement strategic plans to undertake nonviolent action and to mitigate the effects of repression, (iii) recruit and retain participants, (iv) build and maintain coalitions, (v) shift loyalties away from the target regime, (vi) maintain nonviolent discipline, and (vii) learn and adapt. Box 5 offers an example from Serbia for why evaluating movement means and ends matters. Such monitoring and evaluation can be done using measurable indicators co-created by donors and grantees. The Measuring What Matters 130 report offers a series of insights specially related to community philanthropy. The American Jewish World Service developed a Social Movement Assessment Tool to help movement leaders and donors assess and reflect on the state of a movement, who is participating, how the movement is led, and how it achieves its goals.¹³¹ Additionally, the Innovation Network has compiled a set of resources¹³² that offer guidance, including indicators for evaluating the strength and capacity of social movements.
- ii. Instead of requiring grantees to adhere to evaluation processes and metrics that are imported and imposed from the United States, donors can use evaluation and accountability mechanisms that are grounded in the cultural, historic, and political context of each of their grantees. This may require donors to be willing to use different evaluation processes and metrics with different grantees. This may also include creating mechanisms for grantees to evaluate their donors. Such shifts are likely to

¹³⁰ *Measuring What Matters*, available at https://globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/wp-content/uploads/2020 /10/MeasuringWhatMatters.pdf.

¹³¹ See AJWS 2022 for a detailed description of the tool.

¹³² Innovation Network resources: https://www.innonet.org/media/Social_Movements_TOC.pdf.

challenge many donors' standard practices. Yet, such shifts may facilitate more detailed and illustrative grant reporting. These shifts may build trust and strengthen donor—grantee relationships. And they may help foster democracy more broadly by ensuring that a mechanism exists for donors to be held accountable for their grantmaking by the constituencies that they support (Morey 2018). One such mechanism is GrantAdvisor,¹³³ a website created by the California Association of Nonprofits and the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, that allows (i) grant applicants, grantees, and others to share their first-hand experiences working with funders, and (ii) funders to respond on the record.

The Peery Foundation developed five core "grantee-centric practices"¹³⁴ that seek to strengthen a grantee's ability to achieve their goals while addressing the power imbalances of typical funding relationships. And Arbella Advisors created a checklist¹³⁵ for incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion in grantee reporting and evaluation.

iii. Instead of thinking of grants that support grassroots organizers and social movements as investments and evaluation of those grants as measuring a return on those investments, consider other framing devices. For example, how would your grantmaking change if you considered your grants to be a form of reparations to historically excluded communities? Alternatively, how would your grantmaking change if you considered it to be a way of sharing or ceding power?

Principles for Supporting Grassroots Organizing and Social Movements

In interviews and in survey responses, donors, organizers, movement leaders, and scholars repeated—in various forms—five principles for supporting grassroots organizing and social movements. This list of principles does not map exactly onto the tensions in the preceding section, and it is not meant to be an exhaustive list. But these principles do represent the underlying values embodied by the individuals and organizations that participated in this research and that are engaged in meaningful donor—movement relationships.¹³⁶

¹³³ GrantAdvisor: https://grantadvisor.org/.

¹³⁴ The Peery Foundation's grantee-centric practice: http://www.peeryfoundation.org/grantee-centric.

Arbella Advisors' grantmaking checklist: http://www.equityinphilanthropy.org/2016/10/04/dei-grantmaking -checklist/#eval.

These principles are inspired by the values and principles of Justice Funders, the Buen Vivir Fund, the International Funders for Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights Funders Network, Ariadne, and Gender Gunders CoLab, as well as Stephan's "Checklist for External Assistance to Nonviolent Movements" (Justice Funders 2020; Thousand Currents 2017; International Funders for Indigenous Peoples 2020; HRFN 2020b; Stephan 2015).

Principle 1. Do No Harm

Social movements in non-democracies are often accused of being foreign agents or supporting foreign agendas regardless of whether they receive foreign support. Yet direct foreign support can undermine movements in many other ways. It can sow division between those who receive support and those who do not. It can compel grantees to be accountable to foreign donors instead of to local constituents whose participation is key to movement success. And foreign support can unintentionally undermine movements' ability to self-sustain themselves by diverting leaders' energy from fostering autonomous resourcing to writing reports for foreign donors. Moreover, repression of organizers and movements is so common that being prepared to mitigate its effects is critical.¹³⁷

As a potential supporter of grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements, the principle of Do No Harm suggests six values for donors:

- Be cautious not to raise expectations of support that might not be met.
- Be wary of how grantmaking decisions can select winners and affect power dynamics within organizations and movements.
- Prepare with grantees for direct and indirect unintended negative consequences, such as anti-democratic backlash.
- Learn and respect local customs, rules, and norms of consent.
- Defer to local actors' risk assessments. Their assessments may surprise you.
- Provide support for organizers and movements to prepare for and mitigate digital and in-person attacks on them and their communities.

Principle 2. Defer to People from Historically Excluded Communities

Foreign support is always secondary to domestic support for movement success (Chenoweth and Stephan 2021; Dudouet 2015). And local actors are likely to feel the positive and negative effects of foreign support long after grants end and donors fly home. So support for the work of local actors is important. However, the "local" can be a place of exclusion where local actors have different levels of power. Grantmaking should tackle and not exacerbate inequality within local communities just as it should tackle and not exacerbate inequality across borders (Obradovic-Wochnik 2018).

¹³⁷ Research has found that foreign diplomatic pressure and punishment can increase public demonstrations of support for the incumbent government. Likewise, research has found that local presence of foreign nongovernmental organizations is associated with higher levels of both nonviolent and violent protest (Hellmeier 2020; Murdie and Bhasin 2011).

As a potential supporter of grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements, donors should:

- Get proximate to historically excluded communities, including via local staff, offices, or advisors, by meeting local actors who are not based in capital cities, and by seeking out actors from these communities who may not otherwise have access to donors.
- Take actions that do not undermine, but that foster organizers' and movements' legitimacy in the eyes of their own constituencies.
- Encourage local agency and ownership, including making space for grantees to speak for themselves in their own words.
- Practice humility and defer to local actors' expertise while being explicit about values regarding discrimination, nepotism, corruption, and democratic rule of law.
- Beware of entrenching inequality in local communities by fostering select local elites at the expense of other local leaders.
- Commit to grantmaking practices that prioritize communities' long-term self-reliance and self-determination over donors' organizational preferences. Ask, Are we pushing our agenda, or are we supporting social movements who have their own agendas, which may not correspond with ours? (Sowa 2020). Ask, Are we setting up our grantees for financial independence?

Principle 3. Practice Solidarity

Power in donor—social movement relationships is rarely shared evenly. Donors have described themselves as holding the purse strings, having expertise and a checkbook, and being blind to their own power. Organizers have described donors as being paternalistic, not respecting activist autonomy, and having preconceived, fixed demands of organizers that do not seem to consider local perspectives. Yet foreign support is neither necessary nor sufficient for movement success (Chenoweth and Stephan 2021; Dudouet 2015). This suggests that power in donor—social movement relationships ought to be rebalanced and tilted in favor of organizers and movements.

The idea of solidarity describes ways in which donors and organizers can work together as equals to enact change, reaching across differences without erasing them. Solidarity is not something one has; it is something one does. Unlike charity and some forms of philanthropy which are one-sided, solidarity is a form of reciprocity (Taylor and Hunt-Hendrix 2019).

¹³⁸ Anonymous interviewees in conversation with the author.

As a potential supporter of grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements, donors should:

- Practice exercising *trust with* instead of *control over* grantees including via flexible, long-term, or general operating support.
- Take the time to build relationships with local actors including those from historically excluded communities on their terms—when, where, and how locals want them.
- Embrace reciprocity. Donors can treat grantees not only as those who seek support but also as those with valuable expertise.
- Practice transparency with grantees at all levels of grantmaking and strategic planning processes, and expect transparency from grantees.
- Co-create monitoring and evaluation tools and metrics with grantees and their constituencies, thereby strengthening local ownership over activities and accountability.

Principle 4. Practice Courageous Learning

Social movements often seek to wield power to change governmental policy and practice. However, they also often seek to build power and expand people's sense of the kind of change that is possible. Moreover, movement leaders might come from historically excluded communities. As a result, their demands might appear *prima facie* to represent fringe or unachievable goals, and their strategies might not appear appropriate or effective to an outsider's intuition, experience, or politics.

As a potential supporter of grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements, donors should:

- Practice an ethics of listening and learning from historically excluded populations and individuals, especially those who do not have formal titles or education, but who may nonetheless hold deep expertise.
- Explicitly acknowledge differences in privilege and power between donors, potential grantees, and communities you seek to serve.
- Support demands and strategies that make sense to local actors, especially those from historically excluded communities even if they may not *prima facie* seem appropriate or effective to you.

■ Be prepared to make mistakes, to take responsibility for them, to learn from them, to share lessons learned, and to keep showing up.

Key Takeaways

This report has focused on why and how public charities and private foundations in the United States have supported grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements in non-democracies. It offers four key takeaways.

- **1. Donors that focus on a potential grantee's institutional form as a primary criterion for its legitimacy tend to be less disposed to support organizing and movements.** Movements tend to have fluid institutional forms that evolve over time. Those institutional forms often are not registered with local authorities, lack 501(c)(3) equivalency, and maintain decentralized leadership. These characteristics differ from those of traditional NGOs that donors may be used to supporting. And so, donors that are not willing or able to adapt their own structures in response to movements may be less willing and able to view those social movement organizations as viable grantees.
- 2. Public charities tend to be more likely than private foundations to adapt their grant-making in real time to changing movement needs. Private foundations are subject to additional rules that public charities are not, which creates additional considerations for private foundations when considering the changing needs of a movement. Also, private foundations tend to receive their funding from a single source, such as an endowment or a living donor, whereas public charities tend to receive their funding from a wider range of sources, including the general public, governmental sources, and private foundations. Both types of donors support organizing and movements. However, because the funding that public charities raise comes from a larger number of and often more diverse sources, those who fund public charities may have lower expectations about their ability to influence grantmaking decisions. And perhaps counterintuitively, foundation staff at public charities may have more flexibility and autonomy in their grantmaking decisions because their funders give a relatively smaller percent of their overall budget and therefore expect to have less control over grantmaking decisions.
- **3. A lack of donor coordination can be particularly harmful to the work of organizers and movements.** The main way movements win is by increasing levels of mass participation from diverse sectors of society. By contrast, the success of other social change strategies—such as litigation, technical assistance, research and documentation, and advocacy—depends primarily on a small number of experts and insiders. Collective action is central to the success of organizing and movements, and although important, it is not central to the success of these other social change strategies. And so, when donors offer conflicting support, or when

support leads to competition or rivalries among organizers, movement leaders, or organizations, donors are creating collective action problems for the movement. The very support intended to foster collective action hinders it.

4. The values and lived experiences of foundation decision makers influence why and how a foundation supports organizing and movements. Values may be held by individual decision makers and condition a foundation's structures and priorities. They often come from lived experiences. Values can also be institutionalized in a foundation's structures, which fosters a more durable expression of those values. And relationships developed over time with organizers, movement leaders, or other political actors steer donors to privilege the funding requests or political analysis from those they are familiar with.

Future Research

The research detailed in this report uncovered and provoked six additional questions that could usefully be explored in future research.

- 1. Domestic support for movements, including internally generated support or autonomous resourcing, is always a more important factor in movement success. Future research could usefully explore how movements generate support domestically.
- 2. Future research could also explore when, why, and how donor advised funds (DAFs) support grassroots organizing and social movements. A DAF is an individual investment account managed by a public charity. Donors irrevocably deposit charitable dollars into the account and then advise the account manager as to how and when to distribute the money to a charitable organization (Berman 2015). DAFs have become increasingly popular and are used by foundations such as North Star Fund and FJC – A Foundation of Philanthropic Funds to support organizing and movements in the United States (North Star Fund 2020). As of 2017, six of the top ten recipients of charitable contributions in the United States were DAFs (Reich 2018, 199). This meteoric increase in the number and size of DAFs is "the most dramatic transformation of the institutional [donor] landscape" in the past 50 years (Soskis and Katz 2016). They operate differently from public charities and private foundations in three ways: First, donors receive a tax benefit at the time they transfer funds to a DAF even if the funds are only given to a nonprofit years later, if at all. Second, unlike when donors give to public charities or private foundations, they maintain effective advisory control over their charitable dollars even after they have received tax benefits. And third, although DAFs are required to publicly report the nonprofits that eventually receive charitable gifts, they are not required to report which donors provided the funds. Does this time asymmetry, increased donor control, and decreased transparency make DAFs more or less likely than public charities and private foundations to supporting organizing and movements? (Soskis and Katz 2016). Does

DAF support for organizing and movements take different forms or have different effects than support from public charities or private foundations? These are only two of many questions about DAFs that future research could help answer.

- 3. Limited liability corporations (LLCs) such as the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative are another philanthropic vehicle used by foundations that warrants future research (Chan Zuckerberg Initiative 2020). LLCs operate under different US federal tax rules than public charities and private foundations. For example, unlike public charities and private foundations, LLCs are not required to spend a minimum of 5 percent of the value of their endowment for charitable purposes every year. LLCs also provide greater flexibility and require less transparency in supporting political causes and investing in for-profit social enterprises (Soskis and Katz 2016). Some questions that could be answered through future research include, Do these differences make LLCs more or less likely than public charities and private foundations to support the work of organizing and movements?, and, Does support from LLCs for organizing and movements take different forms or have different effects than support from public charities or private foundations?
- 4. Additional research exploring the motivations, methods, and effects of philanthropy from non-US foundations on grassroots organizing and nonviolent movements could be fruitful. For example, Indigenous and Global South philanthropic traditions may have different understandings of and relationships to informal, unregistered, and grassroots entities.¹³⁹ As this report notes, these philanthropic traditions have different norms and processes that guide accountability, monitoring, and evaluation of individual acts of giving. Such differences might lead to relatively more or different kinds of support for grassroots organizing and social movements.
- 5. Additional comparative, cross-national research could be fruitful. In its 2019 forecast of European philanthropy, Ariadne—the European network for funders—noted that "funders anticipate more support for social movements and express an interest in learning how to work with social movements more effectively" (Broome 2019). Understanding how and why such increases in support occur and the effects thereof could inform future decision-making by donors in and outside of Europe. In 2018, Ariadne and the European Community Organising Network published *Making a Way Forward: Community Organizing and the Future of Democracy in Europe* (Beckwith et al. 2018). The report is a study of organizing in Europe that also learns from the experiences of funders in the United States "who, starting about a decade ago, began a strategic conversation of why and how to better support the community organising sector." Such cross-national and cross-regional research can encourage learning across philanthropic traditions and yield new insights.

¹³⁹ Two examples of existing existing academic research are Rogers 2001 and Ilchman, Katz, and Queen 1998.

6. Finally, policy relevant scholarship on the obligations of philanthropic organizations and philanthropy more broadly to democracy would be valuable to donors, organizers, and movements alike. While it is important to consider how and why donors support pro-democracy organizing and movements, it is also important to consider how broader societal rules and norms directly and indirectly influence that donor decision-making. "Whether, when, to whom, and how much people give is partly a product of laws that govern" everything from the creation of foundations and nonprofits to the rules and tax exemptions governing their operations (Reich 2019). In this way we can think of philanthropy as not only individual acts, but also as an organized social practice embedded within a larger political economy. Scholarship on the philanthropic sector's positive and negative influence on democracy that is co-created with organizers and movement leaders would be likely to yield unique and valuable insights.

Conclusion

Philanthropy is an expression of political power. Those with money (or their designees) decide when, where, how, to whom and for what that money is spent. Although these decisions are taken by individuals or groups of individuals, they are not merely individual acts driven by the values, lived experiences, relationships, and skills of foundation leaders. These decisions are taken within the context of laws, norms, institutional structures, and systems of power in the philanthropic sector and in society at large. As such, philanthropy is not about money alone. Philanthropy is an organized social practice embedded within a larger political economy (Reich 2018). This report describes (i) why and how donors have used that power to support grassroots organizing and social movements, as well as (ii) the broader context in which institutional donor support for organizing and movements happens. In so doing, this report provokes donors to think deeply about whether, when, where, and how they can support the work of grassroots organizers and social movements.

This report finds that donors that focus on a grantee's institutional form as a primary criterion for its legitimacy tend to be less disposed to support organizing and movements. Public charities tend to be more likely than private foundations to adapt their grantmaking in real time to changing movement needs. And a lack of donor coordination can be particularly harmful to the work of organizers and movements.

This report does not provide definitive answers to why and how donors support the work of organizers and movements. It describes in-depth how two donors—American Jewish World Service and Humanity United—have considered and answered these questions. It conveys insights from donors, grantees, and others with deep experience in the donor—social movement space. It highlights common tensions in donor—social movement

relationships. And it offers actionable principles and practices that donors can adopt and adapt to their particular context.

In an era in which authoritarian governments and backsliding democracies are attacking civic space in every corner of the world, and in which traditional NGOs are finding it hard—if not impossible—to promote rights, justice, and democracy through institutional means, grass-roots organizing and social movements provide an effective alternative for peoples to achieve these same goals. Throughout history and around the world, movements have been central to shifting norms and laws about women's and LGBTQI+ rights, ending wars and securing peace, opening entire regions to democracy, expanding electorates, and provoking individuals' imaginations of what is politically possible in their societies. Today, regular people have recognized the power of organizing and movements; they are using nonviolent collective action more than ever before in recorded history. This report assists donors in deepening their understanding of whether, when, where, and how to stand in solidarity with organizers and movements, to do no harm in the process, to be transparent about and learn from mistakes, and to keep showing up in moments of failure just as in moments of success.

Appendix 1. Human Rights Grantmaking Data Collection

The human rights grantmaking data used in this report was self-reported by donors to Candid and Human Rights Funders Network, as well as their partner organizations, Ariadne and Prospera, for the *Advancing Human Rights* and *Foundation Maps* projects. The amount of grantmaking that was not reported and is therefore not captured in the data set is unknown, particularly among institutional donors not based in the United States.¹⁴⁰ To fill gaps in self-reporting, Candid collected data on the 1,000 largest US-based private and community foundations from the publicly available 990 and 990-PF forms submitted to the Internal Revenue Service. This dataset provides the most comprehensive accounting of institutional donor support in the 21st century for human rights, democracy, and social justice goals.¹⁴¹ The entire dataset accounts for US\$10.9 billion in funds given in 99,863 separate grants by 1,193 institutional donors from 2011 to 2015. The matched subset of grants included in the trends analysis accounts for US\$9.4 billion in funds given in 74,312 separate grants by over 500 institutional donors from 2011 to 2015.

¹⁴⁰ It is impossible to estimate the number of grants or amount of grant dollars that do not appear in the database.

Human rights grantmaking is defined as funding in pursuit of structural change to ensure the protection and enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent human rights treaties (Candid and HRFN 2020).

Appendix 2. Donors, Social Movements, and Grassroots Organizing Survey Instrument

This survey is meant to be completed by individuals who have worked for (or with) a grant-making institution. Your responses will be used to help explain why and how some institutional donors in the United States support nonviolent social movement building in non-democracies. Previous experience with social movements or grassroots organizing is **not** required to participate in this survey.

Your responses may be used in academic publications and a Special Report to be published by the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict, which is supporting this research.

As with many surveys, you may feel that some questions seek sensitive or confidential information. I do not anticipate any major risks to participating, and to mitigate any concerns, all responses will be anonymous unless you decide to include identifying information. And any identifying information you decide to provide will be kept strictly confidential.

For this survey, a *social movement* is defined as a widespread, voluntary, civilian-led, collective effort to bring about consequential change in a social, economic or political order. And *grassroots organizing* is defined as an activity where homegrown leadership enables a constituency to turn its resources into the power needed to achieve the change they want.

Thank you for taking the time to contribute to this research and learning.

Demographic Questions:

1.	hat is your age?	
		18-20 years old
		21-29 years old
		30-39 years old
		40-49 years old
		50-59 years old
		60-69 years old
		70 or older

2.	With what gender identity do you most identify?
	□ Female
	□ Male
	□ Other (specify)
3.	Do you consider yourself a minority?
	□ Yes
	□ No
	□ Other
4.	Do you work for a grantmaking institution?
	☐ Yes, I currently work for a public charity
	☐ Yes, I currently work for a private foundation
	☐ No, I do not work for a grantmaking institution
	☐ I work for a grantmaking support organization
	□ Other
5.	How many years have you worked in the philanthropic sector?
	□ 0-2 years
	□ 3-5 years
	□ 6-9 years
	□ 10-14 years
	☐ 15 or more years
	☐ I do not work in philanthropy
6.	What is your experience with grassroots organizing and social movements? [select al that apply]:
	☐ I have worked as a paid or unpaid grassroots organizer
	☐ I have received training as a grassroots organizer
	☐ I have served in a leadership position of a social movement

		In the past 6 months I have participated in at least one action organized by a social movement.
		I have taken academic coursework on grassroots organizing or social movements
		I regularly read academic publications about grassroots organizing and social movements
		I have had a close professional or personal relationship with a grassroots organizer
		I have other experience with grassroots organizing or social movements
		Questions about the Donor Institution Where You Work:
1.		oproximately how many paid staff people (full and part-time) work at your undation?
		0
		1-10
		11-25
		26 -49
		50 or more
		I don't know
2.	Do	oes your foundation do at least some grantmaking from an office in the United States?
		Yes
		No
		Other
3.	W	hat is your foundation's most common grant size ?
		\$0-\$5,000

		\$5,001-\$25,000
		\$25,001-\$50,000
		\$50,001-\$100,000
		\$100,001-\$250,000
		\$250,001-\$500,000
		\$500,001 and above
		I don't know
		Other
4.	W	hat is your foundation's most common grant duration ?
		0-6 months
		7-12 months
		13-23 months
		24 months or more
		I don't know
		Other
5.		hat issue areas does your foundation consider priorities in its grantmaking? [Select that apply.]
		Development
		Human Rights
		US Foreign Policy
		Social Movements
		Democracy
		Peace, Peacebuilding, or Conflict Prevention
		Social Justice
		Humanitarian / Disaster Response
		Grassroots Organizing
		Other

6.	How would you describe the likelihood that your foundation would give grants to support:						
		Grassroots organi	izing or socia	I movements	s in democr	acies	
		Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very Likely	
		Grassroots organi	izing or socia	I movements	s in democr	acies with closing c	vic
		Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very Likely	
		Grassroots organi	izing or socia	I movements	in non-de r	nocracies	
		Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very Likely	
		Grantees that are	unregistered	d or informal	entities		
		Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very Likely	
		Please add any a	dditional deta	ails here			
7.	During what time-periods has your foundation given grants to support grassroots organizing or social movements anywhere in the world ? [Select all that apply.]						
		1989 or earlier					
		1990-1999					
		2000-2005					
		2006-2010					
		2011-2015					
		2016-2019					
		None					
		I don't know					
		Other					
8.	for	•		_		t your foundation pro mocracies ? [Select a	
		Project based sup	port				
		Core operating or	flexible supp	oort			

		Long-term support (grant terms of 2 years or more)
		Rapid response funding (less than 1 month response time for grant proposals)
		Grants to individuals
		Grants to organizations
		Grants to intermediaries / sub-granting institutions
		Grants via pooled funds
		Non-financial support
		Please elaborate
		We do not support grassroots organizing or social movements.
	-	'We do not support" is selected, skip Questions 15-18. If any other answer is ected, skip Question 19.]
9.		nat types of activities related to grassroots organizing and social movements in on-democracies does your foundation tend to support? [Select all that apply.]
		Advocacy or advocacy materials
		Arts or culture
		Capacity building and/or technical assistance (e.g., trainings or workshops)
		Coalition building and/or collaboration
		Diplomacy
		Disaster relief
		Economic development
		Election related activities (e.g., voter registration or election monitoring)
		Legal aid and/or litigation
		Media and/or technology
		Public engagement and/or awareness raising
		Research and/or documentation
		Scholarships and/or travel

	□ Security and/or resilience (e.g., accompaniment or protection)
	☐ Undertaking nonviolent tactics (e.g., protests, strikes or boycotts)
	□ Urgent action / rapid response
	□ Other
	What regions do your grassroots organizing and social movements grantees work n? [Select all that apply.]
	☐ Asia & Pacific
	□ Caribbean
	□ Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Russia
	☐ Latin America and Mexico
	☐ Middle East
	□ North Africa
	□ Sub-Saharan Africa
	☐ US and Canada
	☐ Western Europe
	□ Transnational Projects
	☐ We do not support grassroots organizing or social movements.
	What goals does your foundation seek to achieve with the support it gives for grass-roots organizing and/or social movements in non-democracies ?
	Please describe your foundation's theory of change, if any that guides its support for grassroots organizing or social movements in non-democracies .
	What factors drive your foundation's decision to not support grassroots organizing or social movements? [Select all that apply.]
[My foundation supports theories of social change that do not involve grassroots organizing and social movements

	ocial movement						
	My foundation cannot f	entities					
	My foundation does not offer rapid response funding						
	My foundation does no	t offer core ope	rating or flexib	ole funding			
	My foundation's board and/or executive leadership does not prioritize grassroots organizing or social movements						
	Challenges identifying	and vetting soci	ial movement	leaders			
	Potential risk posed to	grantees					
	Potential risk posed to	the foundation					
	Social movements have	e extreme goals	3				
	Social movements are	Social movements are undemocratic					
	Other						
	ease indicate the degree to which these statements represent your personal views out your foundation's relationship to grassroots organizing and social movements non-democracies.						
ab	· ·			•	-		
at in	oout your foundation's re	elationship to gr	assroots orga	nizing and so	-		
at in	nout your foundation's renon-democracies.	elationship to gr	assroots orga	nizing and so	-		
at in	non-democracies. My foundation's level o	elationship to gr f support should Disagree	assroots orga d remain as is. Neutral	nizing and so	ocial movements		
ab in	non-democracies. My foundation's level o Strongly Disagree	elationship to gr f support should Disagree decrease suppo	assroots orga d remain as is. Neutral rt.	nizing and so	ocial movements		
ab in	non-democracies. My foundation's level o Strongly Disagree My foundation should of	elationship to gr f support should Disagree decrease suppo Disagree	assroots orga d remain as is. Neutral rt. Neutral	Agree Agree	Strongly Agree		
ab in	non-democracies. My foundation's level of Strongly Disagree My foundation should of Strongly Disagree	elationship to gr f support should Disagree decrease suppo Disagree	assroots orga d remain as is. Neutral rt. Neutral	Agree Agree	Strongly Agree		
ab in	oout your foundation's renon-democracies. My foundation's level of Strongly Disagree My foundation should of Strongly Disagree My foundation should in	elationship to gr f support should Disagree decrease suppo Disagree ncrease direct f Disagree ncrease financia	d remain as is. Neutral rt. Neutral inancial suppo	Agree Agree ort. Agree	Strongly Agree Strongly Agree		
	non-democracies. My foundation's level of Strongly Disagree My foundation should of Strongly Disagree My foundation should in Strongly Disagree My foundation should in Strongly Disagree My foundation should in Strongly Disagree	elationship to gr f support should Disagree decrease suppo Disagree ncrease direct f Disagree ncrease financia	d remain as is. Neutral rt. Neutral inancial suppo	Agree Agree ort. Agree	Strongly Agree Strongly Agree		
	non-democracies. My foundation's level of Strongly Disagree My foundation should of Strongly Disagree My foundation should in Strongly Disagree My foundation should in Strongly Disagree My foundation should in organizations or pooled	elationship to gr f support should Disagree decrease suppo Disagree ncrease direct fi Disagree ncrease financia d funds. Disagree crease non-finar	rassroots organd remain as is. Neutral rt. Neutral supportion Neutral al support via in Neutral support via in Neutral support.	Agree Agree ort. Agree ntermediarie Agree	Strongly Agree Strongly Agree Strongly Agree es, sub-granting Strongly Agree that shape the		

15. What are the primary constraint(s) that keep your foundation from giving the level and or type of support you think it should for grassroots organizing and social movements?	
16. Are there any other comments, reflections, lessons learned etc. that you think are important to this research?	Ð
17. Would you be open to having a follow-up conversation? If yes, please email	
Any follow-up conversation would not be anonymous - but if you wish - could be	5

Thank You!

confidential.

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Interviews

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