

The Bellagio Initiative

Global Dialogue Summary

November 2011

INGOs: Amsterdam

In analysing the environment within which philanthropic organisations has to operate, the following factors were stressed: Creation of tax incentives where none presently exist; creation of planned giving vehicles where none presently exist; targeted tax incentives – possibly incentivizing particular causes and media; driving change in banking systems to permit electronic payments; simplifying the registration and regulation of nonprofits; removing the requirement for multiple registrations for INGOs; creation of ‘Development Zones’ for philanthropy – providing access to government incentives, fast-track to registration, access to university partners (for training and new staff) etc.; development of investment funds for philanthropy; development of central government resources (and other funds) that can be invested in fundraising to grow giving.

Education in philanthropy

Key points emerging included: Use of new media, development of teaching resources to illustrate best practices for both large and small nonprofits; development of a knowledge hub – a central location for fundraisers to access teaching and learning resources. This would possibly involve work with or a link with the Resource Alliance or www.studyfundraising.info. It might be based in academic institution to include academic research; secondments to INGOs from staff from small indigenous nonprofits; development of a fundraising ‘body of knowledge’ and development of educational – qualification programmes. Philanthropy can be grown by improving the quality of the ‘ask’; encouragement of a newer and wider pipeline of fundraising talent. This would possibly require work with education providers to create new courses in fundraising to draw talent into the profession. There are parallels here with how other professions generate their talent pool.

Research on philanthropy

Further research priorities and recommendations included: establishment of baseline giving data for emerging fundraising markets; provision of donor insight, who gives, why they give, how they give, how they view their philanthropy, factors that might encourage others to give, efficacy of different communication channels, basic figures on fundraising performance; researching attitudes of younger generations. How do they perceive aid and development needs? How do they view our current approaches to fundraising. What do they understand and not understand about our work? What case(s) for support and through what media would be likely to stimulate their engagement?; research into the psychology of giving, focusing on the use of emotion in appeals and the impact on the donor of certain approaches. Actors should seek new ways to add value in the relationship; research the diffusion of fundraising innovation – i.e. look at identifying early adopters of new forms of giving. Identify ways to reach out to these individuals, who can stimulate philanthropy among their peers; explore possible learning from how other industries have handled globalization issues; provision of evidence base to government about why growing philanthropy is desirable and what it would deliver, both for charitable beneficiaries, but also for wider society (e.g. social capital); development of a ‘toolkit’ of ideas for governments seeking to grow philanthropy

Donor-centred philanthropy

The consultation suggested that there is a need to: develop a global campaign by INGOs – to raise awareness and education of key publics in respect of development needs and enhance collaboration between organisations to promote key messages; increase understanding of what can be achieved through investment in development. Development, however, cannot be

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guaranteed as a wide range of factors can influence the outcomes; find new routes to engage emergency donors to continue their support. Is this really possible – and if so how?; focus on growing individual philanthropy rather than fundraising technique. Develop added value for donors by allowing them to have a variety of impacts on the cause.

Public trust and confidence

Issues which need to be addressed include the following: improving the quality and accessibility of impact measurement; taking steps to improve the poor image of the sector – education of the public and the realities of modern charities; education of the public in respect of what they should look for in the organisations they support (i.e. not fundraising and administration costs); development/promotion of INGO accountability charter. There is a need to educate public not only about performance, but what good performance might look like; possible development of international accreditation for development NGOs to boost public trust and confidence.

New audiences and channels

There is potential for development among youth, middle classes and, geographically, emerging markets.

The impact of the INGO approach

A number of issues requiring further empirical research were noted. There are a number of hypotheses where development of an evidence base would help to establish what is actually occurring – crowding in

versus crowding out of local philanthropy; crowding in or crowding out of local fundraising activity, and poaching of the most qualified staff – who are drawn away by higher salaries in INGOs.

Bellagio Initiative

The Future of
Philanthropy and
Development in the
Pursuit of Human
Wellbeing

Credits
'INGOs: Holland',
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The Bellagio Initiative is a series of global consultations to produce a new framework for philanthropic and international development collaboration in pursuit of human wellbeing in the 21st century. The project is led by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), the Resource Alliance and the Rockefeller Foundation.