

H+S DAVIDSON TRUST



INCREASING IMPACT IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Research Report for H&S Davidson Trust

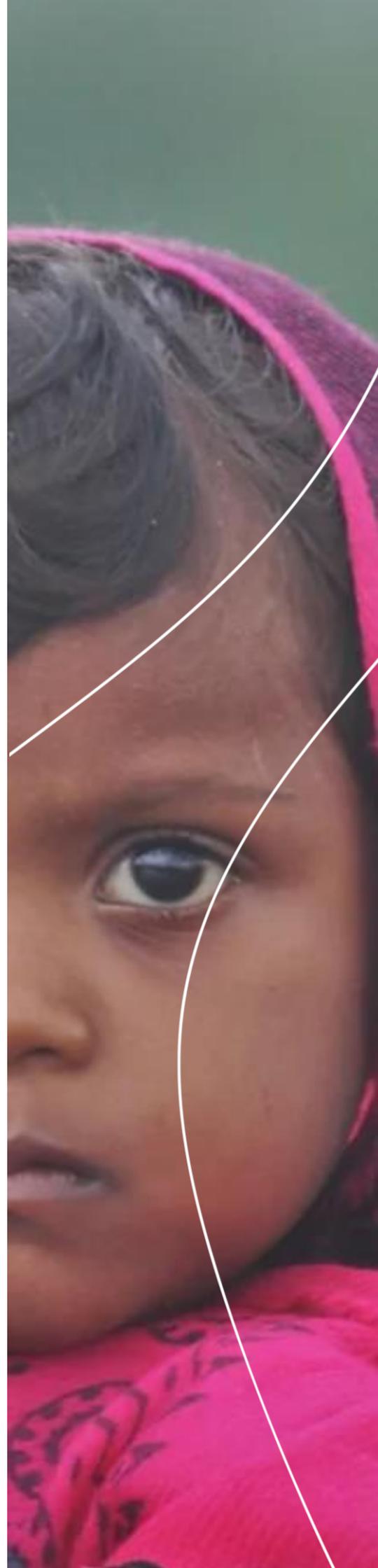
This report brings together two linked research studies:

1. A literature review conducted by Barry Knight:
Bringing Success to Scale in International Development - A History
2. Empirical research conducted by Jigsaw Research:
Increasing Impact in International Development



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1. FOREWORD

The International Development sector has already entered a period of major change. Who needs to change most? Major funders in the Global North, international organizations, local and national governments, INGO's - many of whom continue to have colonial attitudes to International Development.

Encouragingly, this Survey suggests, on an illustrative sample, that there is strong majority support among funders for significant transfer of decision making from the Global North to local organizations in the Global South. For example, 83% of those interviewed in the Global North, a majority of them funders, agreed with the statement "Too many funders develop strategies & campaigns in offices in Global North, rather than starting on the front line, by understanding local communities in the Global South."

The purpose of this Survey, to be enhanced by an organized program to involve the ideas and experiences of those involved in the International Development sector, was twofold: to identify how to raise the impact of International Development, and, in the process, to help H & S Davidson Trust (HSDT) develop a new 10 year strategy. The latter purpose has already been largely achieved (see section 10 - "Future HSDT Funding Strategy"). HSDT definitely needed to change and is actively doing so.

HSDT is a smallish & little known family Trust, established in 2004, run by its volunteer unpaid Trustees. Our partners in this program are Jigsaw Research, winner of multiple awards for market research; Alliance magazine (itself a not for profit entity, also dedicated to improving the effectiveness & efficiency of the International Development sector); and Barry Knight, highly experienced writer, activist, and innovator in the sector, as author of the Literature Review and ongoing consultant for this program.

The original program purpose was to understand how scaling worked, barriers to scaling and how to overcome them. This stemmed from the Trustees' observation, during extensive fieldwork in many countries, that successful programs - their own and others - were not often scaled up. It was therefore decided, based on Barry Knight's extensive Literature Review, and the results of the 44 wide ranging in depth individual interviews (Qualitative Stage), to widen the scope of the subsequent Quantitative Survey, to include areas with higher potential for change such as equal voices, shifting the power, collaboration & knowledge sharing.

The research Survey is the first step in our program for change. Following its emphasis on the importance of collaboration, we plan a process of consultation in which participants in the field actively shape follow - up actions from the research, through an open & inclusive co - creation process, generating a snowball effect. We will also re-engage with those interviewed at the qualitative stage, respondents to the quantitative survey, and others wishing to be involved.

A commentary on feedback received will be produced. It is hoped to build a small group of activists, and this may develop into a steering group. There will be a series of articles in Alliance magazine, setting out opportunities for engagement, leading to a draft set of practical implementation proposals, to be considered at a follow-up Conference organized with Alliance in February 2023.

In line with this approach, it would be most helpful if you could disseminate this Survey by passing it on to people likely to be interested, and we would much welcome any comments or suggestions on how best to implement the key avenues for change. I hope you will join us in helping activate this journey of change.

Many thanks to Sue van Meeteren, Luke Perry, and their colleagues at Jigsaw Research; to Barry Knight; and to my colleagues in the H & S Davidson Trust Team - Sandra, Bruce, and Ian Davidson, and Anne and Nigel Worne, for their valuable contributions to this program. And to those who were good enough to participate effectively in the Qualitative and Quantitative parts of the Survey.



Hugh Davidson, MBE,
Chair, H&S Davidson Trust

2. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

H&S Davidson Trust is a self-funding family trust run entirely by volunteers. Trustees have expertise in Vision & Values, Strategy, Marketing, Measurement, Engineering, Climate Change, and IT.

The Trust is entirely independent and has no political or personal agenda and no axe to grind.

Having funded a series of different International Development projects, some of which were more impactful and sustainable than others, the Trust commissioned a program of research to help inform their own future strategy and to identify high impact actions which would both increase effectiveness and command support among the broad International Development sector.

The original objectives of the research were to explore what are the main reason why some International Development projects are scaled, and what are the barriers to scaling. However, after the initial phase of research, the literature review, these objectives were reviewed and adjusted, with a focus on assessing:

- What are the biggest challenges facing the International Development sector that limit impact and effectiveness?
- What are the different initiatives, solutions and changes that are most likely to have a positive impact?

The research was conducted in three phases, with each phase informing the development and content of the next stage. The three phases were as follows:



LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the developments, policies, concepts, and narratives that have shaped and influenced International Development since 1945.

The aim of this review was to inform and provide context for stages 2 and 3 empirical research. This literature review was conducted by Barry Knight, statistician, and social scientist. This literature review appears in full in section 5 of this report



NOTE: the initial objectives of the Literature Review included an exploration of how effective the concept of "scaling up" has been throughout the last 70 years of international aid and the study also focused, in particular, on supporting women's empowerment. As a result of this literature review, the research objectives were adjusted so that the empirical research was based on examining how the effectiveness of the sector could be improved, without imposing a lens of "scaling" or solely focused on women's empowerment.



QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

A series of in-depth interviews were conducted with 44 participants drawn from a range of organisations including Funders (including foundations, trusts, and government organisations), Implementers¹, intermediaries, academics, consultants, and authors. 20 participants were based in the Global South², and 24 were based in the Global North. More than half the participants were women.

The aim of these interviews was to explore the different issues and challenges which impact the effectiveness of International Development initiatives and programs and to identify potential opportunities and actions for improving effectiveness within the sector.

These interviews were conducted by Jigsaw Research³, an independent international research company. Interviews were conducted over Zoom in March – June 2021



QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

Feedback from the qualitative interviews was used to design a short online questionnaire.

This online survey was publicised by Alliance Magazine, by India Development Review and Philanthropy Circuit/Africa and by individuals who had taken part in the qualitative interviews, several of whom circulated the survey among their networks.

The survey was completed by 346 participants, from 43 countries. 228 participants were based in the Global North and 118 were based in the Global South. Many different roles and types of organisations were represented in the sample (see appendix for definitions of geography and roles):

- 188 Funders including philanthropists, foundations, grant makers, NGOs and both local and state government. In this report, the word “Funders” includes all these funding organisations and individuals
- 123 Implementers including community or civil society organisations, NGOs, practitioner organisations, co-operatives, and also some intermediary organisations (based in Global South). In this report, the word “Implementers” is used to represent organisations and individuals working in local communities to implement campaigns, projects, programs, and initiatives
- 35 participants from other roles such as academics, writers, journalists
- 201 were men, 128 were women, 17 self-described or did not specify gender

The purpose of the quantitative research was to provide an indicative measure of opinions across the International Aid sector concerning the biggest challenges the sector is facing and the priorities for action.

The survey was conducted and analysed by Jigsaw Research³ and ran from October – December 2021.

Section 8 of this report represents a summary of the empirical research, both qualitative and quantitative data, collected and analysed by Jigsaw Research³.

¹ Funders defined as: any participant working in funding, philanthropy, foundation, or NGO based in Global North or State/National Government. Implementers defined as: any participant working for a community or civil society organisation, an NGO based in Global South, a practitioner organisation or co-operative or a consultancy or intermediary. Whilst recognising that these definitions are far from perfect, they do allow us to compare opinions between different types of organisations in the sector. Limited sample size does not allow for more granular analysis. ² Definition of Global North is anyone based in Europe, North America, Definition of Global South is anyone based in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Middle East. Whilst recognising that these definitions are far from perfect, they do allow us to compare opinions between participants in different geographical locations. Limited sample size does not allow for more granular analysis.

³ Jigsaw Research is an independent research agency, conducting international research from offices in UK and US. Jigsaw is a member of/affiliated with research professional bodies in UK (MRS), Europe (ESOMAR) and US (Insights Association).

3. CONCLUSIONS

The Survey has identified a number of practical opportunities for increasing the impact of International Development with strong support for change among both funders and implementers, and those in both Global North and Global South.

This is hopeful, since while change is difficult to achieve in the International Development sector, the conditions for achieving it now seem to be present.

The most promising areas for change include a move to Equal Voices; designing and developing programs with local groups in the Global South on the front line, rather than in expensive offices in the Global North; unrestricted funding; and much greater collaboration, partnership, and knowledge sharing.

Scaling appears to be a lower priority for change since it generates mixed views and does not present a clear path to implementation. The future of INGOs is linked to the topics in the previous paragraph.

Conclusions relating to the actionable areas identified by the Survey are as follows:

1. MOVE TO EQUAL VOICES

81% agreed with Statement: *“The movement to decolonize the aid industry & philanthropy is a prerequisite of progress towards equality in the world”*, including 78% of funders. Key ingredients in this were equal voices in decisions on programs; co-designing solutions; constructing strategies; and upfront consultation.

Linked to this, there was strong support for moving the location of decision making to the Global South – 85% of all interviewees agreed with: *“Too many funders develop strategies & campaigns in offices in Global North, rather than starting on the front line, by understanding needs of local communities in the Global South”*. And 87% agreed that co-designing solutions around community needs first would be likely to have an extremely or very positive impact.

2. IMPROVE COLLABORATION & KNOWLEDGE SHARING

A huge 93% agreed: *“International Development is too siloed, & needs to be better at both horizontal & vertical integration”*. And 79% agreed *“Quality & spread of Knowledge Management in ID sector is poor, with enormous wastage. Knowledge is dispersed across many different players”*.

Factors driving this seem to include significant turnover of people & job rotation; silos & fragmentation; too much competition, too little cooperation; and the time limited project system, which 78% of interviewees said was ineffective & unsustainable. It encourages a mindset of *“Get funds, do project, move on”*, so much knowledge is left behind. Result is constant re-invention of the wheel, & repetition of the same mistakes is built into the system. The sector appears to recognize this since 82% agreed that: *“insufficient priority is given to building relationships, improving collaboration, and working in co-partnership with other organizations”*.

3. INGOs NEED TO CHANGE THEIR ROLE

78% agreed: *“Large international NGOs should change their role, with program decision makers located on front line in Global South, and focus on fund raising and advocacy in Global North”*. A few are already doing this and others are considering it. As an INGO executive observed: *“INGOs need to take on the long term work of moving decision making to country offices”*.

Other opportunities for INGOs, through their local country offices, include training and capacity building of local NGOs & community foundations, some of which they already work with, since there appears to be a gap to be filled: 82% of interviewees in the Global South said that *“increased support for local NGOs with preparing proposals, designing metrics, & governance”* would have an extremely or very positive impact.

4. MORE UNRESTRICTED FUNDING

This question was not asked directly, but there was majority support for a related question: 70% agreed that a *“campaign to educate governments and target donors on fewer restrictions on funding & benefits of moving towards unrestricted funding”* would be likely to have an extremely or very positive impact. Framing the details of how this could be implemented is addressed in the next brief Section on *“Avenues for Increasing Impact”*.

SUMMARY

While the Survey is illustrative rather than representative, and would benefit by being extended to a larger global sample, the magnitude of support for change in specific areas adds to its credibility. This offers promise that the change needed can be implemented over time. In the fragmented ID sector, joining up the pieces can have a dynamic impact, and ripple effects can become waves. But it is not a quick fix and we recognise will take time & patience.

4. AVENUES FOR INCREASING IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SECTOR

In the spirit of collaboration, our Team is keen to hear from others with new or different perspectives, and to disseminate these and the Survey widely. We view the Survey as a platform to stimulate co-creation, welcoming all contributions, and sharing information and ideas as a lead-in to our February 2023 Global Conference, organized with Alliance magazine. We have no axes to grind, or fixed agendas, except the desire to help improve the impact of International Development.

The Survey appears to have identified a number of opportunities for effective change which, on an illustrative basis, command broad support across the ID sector. This is a complex and fragmented sector, segmented by type of organisation, activity area, location, and area of expertise. It is easier to identify opportunities in this context, than to get sector agreement to practical solutions which capitalize on the opportunities.

Here are some questions and ideas, offered with some humility, for you to consider and add to.

1. MOVE TO EQUAL VOICES

Essential practical moves include shifting power from funders in the Global North to local people on the front line in the Global South, in line with the #ShiftThePower movement. This is already happening, though slowly. The biggest spenders on International Development are national governments and multi-country organizations like the EU, World Bank, IMF, and the UN.

The currency of governments is votes and some countries are becoming more right wing, prescriptive and hostile to minorities or those with little voice. What are the best levers for encouraging major funders to change? How can collaboration and partnership be used to increase the power of local organizations - community foundations, local NGOs, activists, even local government itself?

One first step could be to focus on establishing it is best practice to initiate & design every new program in the location it is designed to benefit, giving a strong voice to people living on the front line. How could this be best progressed?

2. IMPROVE COLLABORATION & KNOWLEDGE SHARING

A big reason for the poor quality of knowledge management is the fragmentation of the sector, where information is dispersed across many different players. Do the latter define where they will compete, as in funding, and how they will cooperate more with others? Can the Sector move away from time limited projects? Can measurement be done on a more continuous basis, so that ongoing improvement is energised, rather than at the start and finish of projects? Can open publication and sharing of knowledge become the norm and how?

3. INGO'S NEED TO CHANGE THEIR ROLE

INGO's are both funders and implementers. Should they confine their role in future to fund raising and advocacy in their home countries? Should they change from funding time limited projects to funding local organizations in the Global South? If so, how do INGO's change the prescriptive attitudes & preference for time limited projects among their own major funders such as governments and international organizations? If they can't do that, should they reduce the percent of funding drawn from these major donors? How can they shift the power & the expertise from country headquarters in the Global North to countries and local organizations in the Global South? In doing this, how best can they use their skills to build capacity & transfer decision making to local organizations in the global South?

4. MORE UNRESTRICTED FUNDING

The word 'unrestricted' may be misleading, since it implies that funders are expected to say : "Here is the money. Spend it in the way you think will be most effective". This would seem difficult for Governments, exposed to a sometimes hostile media, or for Foundations whose Trustees face increasing regulation.

How can unrestricted funding be made more palatable to major funders? Are international organizations like the World Bank and the UN best placed to take the lead on this? Can more be done to develop "Less Restricted Funding" ? For example, 67% of interviewees agreed that placing more emphasis on due diligence and building trust would have a significant impact.

How far could activities like co-designing solutions around community needs first, and increasing support for local NGOs in preparing proposals & designing metrics, help build trust? They commanded strong support among interviewees in both the Global North & South. Can the frequency and detail of reporting be dramatically reduced? Could two page Reports focusing on activities, impact and cost become the norm? Why not - in my experience most Reports provide too much detail, so detracting from focus on the essentials.

5. SCALING: IS THERE A CLEAR WAY FORWARD FOR THE SECTOR?

Based on Barry Knight's Literature Review and responses to the Survey, the answer seems to be "Not Yet". Barry's Review of the history of scaling since 1945 traces why it has failed to make a major impact so far, and the Survey confirms that there appears to be little consensus on a clear way forward. What do you think? Would greater collaboration and better management of information - likely future trends in the Sector - make a difference to scaling?

SUMMARY

I hope that others with more talent and knowledge than me, especially those living and working on the front line in the Global South, will find the best way to turn the opportunities identified in this Survey into more effective impact in the field.

Hugh Davidson, June 2022

5. BRINGING SUCCESS TO SCALE IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – A HISTORY

Literature review

SUMMARY

The literature study examined the history of international development, paying particular attention to 'scaling up' successful local projects designed to reduce poverty among women.

Efforts to bring successful results to scale have, for the most part, fallen on stony ground. Rather than consolidating gains and developing assets further, donors shift from one 'magic solution' to another with no reliable mechanism to learn from their failures. Unevaluated fashion determines the 'next big thing' until it disappoints and is quietly dropped only to be replaced with the 'next big thing'.

At heart, the problem has structural roots. Public and private funders have almost always driven change from the top-down without involving the communities they want to help. In so doing, well-meaning initiatives have reinforced the very inequalities they were designed to change.

Alternatives to top-down approaches have been ever-present. From the 'Third World Community Development Movement' of the 1950s, to the 'Associational Revolution' of the 1990s, through to current efforts to '#ShiftThePower', such initiatives find it difficult to take root because they threaten the hegemony of elite organisations and interests. Despite being out of step with what civil society wants and needs, together with a powerful feminist critique of the dominant approach to women's empowerment, funders continue their ineffective approach.

These considerations led to a more nuanced goal for the study. While still taking into account the issue of scale, and most particularly understanding that there are times when 'big is best' and others when 'small is beautiful', the study decided to address the wider challenges to effectiveness in the field.

The study was conducted in the time of Covid-19. The pandemic has exposed the full extent of the weaknesses of the system.

As INGOs and funders have withdrawn in many countries of the Global South, community organizations have stepped up and taken leadership positions.

There is now demand from people in the Global South that public aid and private philanthropy decolonizes its ways of working so that local people play a leading part in shaping their societies.

The global turbulence wrought by the poly-crisis (the pandemic, the climate emergency, populism, inequality, racism, persistent violent conflict and the threat of world war) require a collective metamorphosis in the behaviour of humanity. The challenge is to organize, mobilize and engage people to reignite a sense of shared purpose and possibility to build new leadership for our societies.

Barry Knight, June 2022



6. BRINGING SUCCESS TO SCALE IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – A HISTORY

Literature review

FULL REPORT

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All in all, the literature of scaling-up is reminiscent of the Loch Ness monster. It has been sighted enough to make even the most skeptical give it a measure of respectability; and its description is as varied as the people who have written about it¹

Peter Uvin and David Miller
Scaling Up: Thinking Through the Issues
Global Policy Forum 1994

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Introduction

This study examines what would make the field of international development more effective. Funded by the H & S Davidson Trust, the research is in two volumes. Volume 1 is a literature review designed to shape empirical research conducted by Jigsaw Ltd, the findings of which are included in Volume 2.

The research stemmed from a puzzle arising from the work of the H & S Davidson Trust. Having funded successful pilot projects to improve the lives of very poor women in South Asia, the Trust observed that the International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) had no systematic strategy to 'scale up' the projects to benefit more people, or to harvest lessons to improve policy and practice. The consequence was that new development initiatives failed to take account of the assets already created and failed to communicate tested methods to reduce poverty.

Trustees asked themselves 'why is this so?' and 'what can be done about it?' They decided to commission research to find out. This report gives the findings.

The report of the study is in two volumes. Volume 1 is a study of the literature of scaling up success in international development. Volume 2 is an empirical study involving in-depth interviews and a survey of a sample of people active in the field.

Volume 1 has four chapters. Chapter 1 examines the history of international development. Chapter 2 looks at women's empowerment. Chapter 3 sets out what can be learned from the first two chapters about scaling up success. Chapter 4 sets the scene for empirical research conducted by Jigsaw on what would make international development more successful.

The literature review not only demonstrates the difficulty of 'scaling up' success in international development, but also reveals the chequered history of the field in achieving any kind of lasting change. A common expression in the literature is *'the failure of aid'*.

As a result of these findings, the Trust widened its enquiry to examine factors of structure and ways of working in the field that prevent the emergence of good practice in reducing poverty among women. The results of this enquiry, which was conducted by Jigsaw Ltd, form Volume 2.

Goals

The original objectives of the study for the H & S Davidson Trust were to:

1. To gain a greater understanding of the attitudes of INGOs and major funders towards scaling up successful projects, and to gauge the priority they give to this.
2. To determine whether INGOs and major funders have processes for identifying successful new projects - their own and those of others; which processes work best; and whether they agree there are thousands of 'rusting successful pilot projects' around the world, and much re-invention of the wheel.

¹Uvin, P. and Miller, D. (1994) 'Scaling up: thinking through the issues', Global Policy Forum, available from <https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/177-un/31630.html>.

3. To identify the main barriers to successful scale up and to generate suggestions for how they might best be surmounted.
4. To understand who are the main potential 'scale uppers' for INGO's, how far they involve them from the beginning of innovative new projects, and what are the most successful tools/techniques they use to get scale up. For large funders like governments, do they develop their own innovative pilot tests and scale them up, and if so, do they have best practice 'playbooks' for this?

The results of the study will inform the future work of the Trust and will be available to the field.

Review of the literature

The literature review was undertaken with four purposes in mind:

1. To obtain a tutored understanding of the context for empirical work
2. To suggest how to frame the empirical work so that it has clear relevance to the field of international development
3. To recommend modifications to the original objectives if necessary
4. To develop key questions for the empirical work.

It is clear that the literature is diffuse. There is, so far as I can see, no central text that brings together the experience of scaling up in international development.

While there have been attempts to be comprehensive in some fields (e.g., health or social investment), people have tended to write in silos for particular audiences, and I can find no overall synthesis. While in some senses this is problematic, there is also an opportunity for the current study to increase understanding in the field.

Much of the writing has been undertaken by academics and researchers from universities or development agencies. Almost all the literature has been produced through the lens of a northern perspective. It follows that many voices and perspectives – particularly from the global south – are not represented. The study examines the problem of power imbalances within the field of international development in which NGOs and other organizations typically look upwards to funding agencies, rather than building the power of people that are meant to benefit from the work.

There is another important source of bias in the literature. This is illustrated by a statement from a 2016 report from the World Health Organization:

In a lecture given in 2012, Lucas Meijs noted: *'While the scientific debate about the diffusion, dissemination and implementation of innovation has gone on for decades, a narrative literature review shows that the number of publications on scaling up has only recently grown'*²

In a lecture given in 2012, Lucas Meijs noted: *'Although scaling up is not new to non-profit practitioners, we academics have been surprisingly sluggish in understanding these practices'*³

This is perhaps a reason why a report by UNDP called Guidance Note: Scaling Up Development Programmes includes no reference dated before the year 2000.⁴

It follows that looking only at the readily available literature invites serious bias. In the literature, there has been little attempt to learn from the 20th century hey-day of international development.

To treat scaling solely as a modern phenomenon misses highly salient facts about the phenomenon and ignores the centrality of the ever-changing context that determines what is being scaled, how it is done, and whether there is a coherent view of scaling that covers the territory.

²Gravesen, N. (2016) 'Scaling up projects and initiatives for better health: from concepts to practice', World Health Organization, Available from https://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/318982/Scaling-up-reports-projects-concepts-practice.pdf. P.7. ³Meijs, L.C.P.M. (2012) 'Development Challenges: Scaling up Non-profit Initiatives for Societal Impact', Nite Management Review, Volume 6, Issue 2, December 2012 ⁴UNDP Guidance Note Guidance Note (2016) Scaling Up Development Programmes, available from <https://www.undp.org/publications/guidance-note-scaling-development-programmes>.

The lack of understanding of history is symptomatic of a serious problem in international development. Gerry Salole, who has spent four decades in senior positions in INGOs and philanthropy notes the *'...razor-slim bandwidths for learning in international development and philanthropy'*.

He says:

*'...that both sectors seem to possess an inability to learn and retain lessons has been growing over the last (almost) four decades that I've spent working between the two. I have watched as lessons are learned, then forgotten over a few years—each generation convinced that they need to sweep away the 'old' and bring in the 'new.' I have watched these 'new' ideas and trends arrive, with donors dutifully getting in line to be the first to test shiny new magic bullets, and to stake their claim as a leader (even worse, expert) in whatever fad has captured the zeitgeist in a particular moment. What's most frustrating is watching the cyclical nature by which this oblivious learning and forgetting is happening, and happening again, and then happening again. To borrow Yogi Berra's famous quote: 'It's déjà vu all over again.'*⁵

A quarter of a century earlier, Ian Smillie made a similar point in his influential book *The Alms Bazaar: Altruism Under Fire - Non-profit organizations and international development*.⁶ Quoting a line from the song *The Circle Game* by Joni Mitchell - *'The painted ponies they go round and round'* - he drew attention to the cycle of unevaluated fashion in international development. This title was used for a special of Alliance feature in 2008. The lead article showed international development is swayed by fads that constantly repeat themselves making the same mistakes endlessly.⁷

In an effort to combat these biases, the literature study has gone back to the early days of international development, examining its roots and its subsequent phases of development up to the present day. This is necessary because, as Marcus Garvey put it, *'a people without knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots'*.⁸

History shows the importance of context in relation to the concept of scaling. The study reveals that there is no simple model or text that captures the complexity of the idea. The idea of scaling depends on what is being scaled, how it is done and to what purpose.

The meaning of the term differs markedly from one historical phase to another, and a jigsaw approach is necessary to bring disparate trends together. This review brings together strands that have not - so far - been connected together.

Organization of Volume 1

There are four chapters:

Chapter 1 examines the history of international development, tracing how scaling up has been used during different phases up to the present day

Chapter 2 investigates how the idea of 'scaling up' has been applied in the field of women's empowerment

Chapter 3 analyses the meaning and use of the scaling up and related concepts

Chapter 4 discusses the implications are there for scaling up in the future and how a study might contribute to the field.

⁵Salole, G. (2011) *Déjà vu all over again*, Grantcraft, available from <https://grantcraft.org/content/blog/deja-vu-all-over-again/>. ⁶Smillie, I. (1995) *The Alms Bazaar: Altruism Under Fire - Non-profit organizations and international development*, London: Intermediate Technology Publications ⁷Knight, B. and Hartnell, C. (2008) *'They go round and round'*, Alliance, 1 September 2008 ⁸Cited in Black History Month at <https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/article/section/bhm-intros/marcus-garvey-famously-wrote-a-people-without-knowledge-of-their-past-history-origin-and-culture-is-like-a-tree-without-roots/>.

Chapter 1: History

The literature study in the following pages sets out the key milestones in the history of international development that began following the Bretton Woods Conference of 1944 and takes us to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The economies of scale

It is perhaps no accident that the first recorded use of 'scaling up' was in 1945.⁹ The end of the Second World War heralded the age of 'Fordism', the triumph of mass production and mass consumerism. The application of thorough-going economies of scale produced new markets and rapid economic growth.

Big was definitely best, not only in economic development but in social action too. State policies designed to bring full employment were combined with welfare safety nets to protect citizens from the ups and downs of the economy. The result was thirty years of social progress in the West. French demographer Jean Fourastié described the immediate post-war years as *Les Trente Glorieuses*.¹⁰

Bretton Woods

The age saw the beginnings of international aid. In July 1944, international leaders came together at Bretton Woods to plan the post-war world, displaying immense confidence that the world could be ruled from the top down through a combination of goodwill, international cooperation, and new financial institutions.

The main goal of the meeting was to create international security by creating an efficient foreign exchange system, preventing competitive devaluations of currencies, and promoting international economic growth. The Bretton Woods Agreement also created two important organizations—the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.¹¹

The Marshall Plan

One of the greatest development projects to follow Bretton Woods was the Marshall Plan. Championed by then-U.S. Secretary of State George C. Marshall, the plan was for the United States to provide economic assistance to restore the economic infrastructure of Europe.

Beginning in 1948, this delivered over \$13 billions of aid to Europe.¹² Results were positive, with the output of European economies of more than 35 per cent over pre-World War II rates by the mid-1950's.¹³

The success of the Marshall Plan appeared to vindicate the approach to planning deriving originally from the Fabian socialism of Beatrice and Sydney Webb and involving robust state action to develop economies and welfare systems. Such ideas rapidly spread around the world not only in Europe but also in much of Africa and the newly independent India.¹⁴

President Truman and development

These early successes shaped how international development would work. In the context of the cold war, President Truman's Inaugural Address on 20 January 1949 set out the agenda:

'I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life. And, in cooperation with other nations, we should foster capital investment in areas needing development.

Our aim should be to help the free peoples of the world, through their own efforts, to produce more food, more clothing, more materials for housing, and more mechanical power to lighten their burdens.

⁹Definition given by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary at <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/scale-up>. ¹⁰Gordon, D. A. (28 October 2016). 'Full Speed Ahead? The Trente Glorieuses in a Rear View Mirror', *Contemporary European History*, 26 (1): 189-199. doi:10.1017/S0960777316000461. ¹¹Ghizoni, S.K. (2013) 'Creation of the Bretton Woods System', Federal Reserve History. Available from <https://www.federalreservehistory.org/essays/bretton-woods-created>

¹²Milward, A. S. (1984) *The Reconstruction of Western Europe 1945-51*, London: Methuen. ¹³Eichengreen, B. (2008) *The European Economy since 1945: Coordinated Capitalism and Beyond*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

We invite other countries to pool their technological resources in this undertaking. Their contributions will be warmly welcomed. This should be a cooperative enterprise in which all nations work together through the United Nations and its specialized agencies whenever practicable. It must be a worldwide effort for the achievement of peace, plenty, and freedom.

*With the cooperation of business, private capital, agriculture, and labour in this country, this program can greatly increase the industrial activity in other nations and can raise substantially their standards of living.*¹⁵

Top-down efforts

This speech defined the terms of development, dividing the world into three (with the First World as the West, the Second World as the Communist Bloc, and the Third World as the Global South). The idea of 'Overseas Development Assistance' (ODA) was born and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) such as Oxfam and Save the Children built themselves up to deliver it.

Bolstered by the success of the Marshall Plan, development organizations, led by the World Bank and the IMF, began to distribute huge sums of money into developing countries in the form of large development projects and poverty reduction strategies. Again, programmes were administered from the top-down with development agencies working with national governments.

However, this approach contained grave weaknesses. It was based on the premise that direct cash injections into countries would be all that would be needed to get a developing country's economy off and running. Arrangements for overseeing what happened to the money or assessing its impact were weak. The disbursement of aid without the necessary institutions to deliver it led to mass inefficiencies and waste, mostly due to corruption and mismanagement.

Many countries had little in the way of adequate judicial systems, functional health and delivery systems, or a culture of democratic accountability.¹⁶

The failure of aid

These early failures set the tone for what was to follow. Numerous scholars have used the phrase 'the failure of aid'. In the 1992 Development Dictionary, Wolfgang Sachs said; *'The idea of development stands today like a ruin in the intellectual landscape.'*¹⁷

More recently, Hilary Gilbert has reviewed the evidence on this and reached an identical conclusion.¹⁸

It is striking that the failure of aid has been known for decades. Yet, the problem has not been addressed. Despite mounting evidence that projects were not helping to improve poverty and inequality in any significant way, development organizations continued their ineffective aid donations unabated.

Many reasons have been given for this resistance to change. Easterly (2007) argues that it is due to the feeling that the Western countries have a duty to 'develop' countries in poverty through the use of grandiose plans.¹⁹

Cochrane (2009) attributes it to development organizations believing that poverty is the same throughout the world, and so one large, 'one size fits all' plan should be able to alleviate poverty equally.²⁰ Kessler and Van Dorp (1997) concur with this theory, adding that aid is used to liberalize markets for the sake of resource extraction by Western multi-national corporations.²¹

¹⁴Cowen, M. I. and Shenton, R. (2006) 'The Origin and Course of Fabian Colonialism in Africa'. *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 4, 143 - 174. 10.1111/j.1467-6443.1991.tb00101.x; Smith, A.W. M. and Jeppesen, C. (2017) Britain, France and the Decolonization of Africa Future Imperfect? UCL Press. Available from <https://www.ucldigitalpress.co.uk/Book/Article/43/68/3307/>. ¹⁵ The full text of the speech is available here: https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/truman.asp. ¹⁶Ezekilov, J. (2011) 'Correcting 60 Years of Development Failure: The Potential of Scaling Up in Addressing Development Ineffectiveness', Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection. 1083. https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/1083. ¹⁷Sachs, W (ed) (1992) *The Development Dictionary: A guide to knowledge as power*, London and New Jersey: Zed Books ¹⁸Gilbert, H. (op.cit.) ¹⁹Easterly, W. (2007) 'Was Development Assistance a Mistake?' *American Economic Review*, 97, 2 Mapp, pp.328-332. ²⁰Cochrane, G. (2009). *Festival Elephants and the Myth of Global Poverty*. Boston: Pearson Education Inc. ²¹Kessler, J.J. and Van Dorp, M. (1997) *Structural adjustment and the environment: The need for an analytical methodology*, *Ecological Economics*, 27, 257-281

Recognition of the problem of the failure of aid has recently been highlighted by Jonathon Glennie. His 2021 book *The Future of Aid* states:

*'International cooperation has never been more needed, but the current system of 'aid' is outdated and ineffective.'*²²

Reviewing the book in the Guardian, Larry Elliot points out that the top-down approach does not work:

*'As Jonathan Glennie writes in his new book, The Future of Aid, it would be a good idea to rethink the idea of aid as global public investment for the common good. Instead of dividing the world into donor and recipient countries, Glennie's idea is a system where everybody contributes something and everybody gets something out.'*²³

Third world community development

It could have been so different. In the 1950s, this top-down approach of official development assistance was challenged by the Third World Community Development Movement.

This was driven by 'populist theory' in which virtue resides in the simplest people who are in the overwhelming majority in their collective traditions' and who know best what they want and need.²⁴ Such a perspective led to a range of different approaches, though common to all of them was the idea that ordinary folk are badly done to.

Although populist theory owes much to the self-organizing perspective deriving from the ideas of 19th century anarchists such as Peter Kropotkin and the practice of political activists such as Mahatma Gandhi, many of the first active proponents of participatory approaches were missionaries and colonists. Indeed, the British Colonial Office set up an Advisory Committee on Native Education, and its 1944 report, *Mass Education in the Colonies*, promoted self-help as a means of delivering agriculture, health and social services.²⁵

A married couple, Reg, and Madge Batten, were critical pioneers of the new discipline of community development. Working in Africa during the 1930s, they provided much of the intellectual energy for the movement. They articulated and developed its philosophy and principles 'to promote all forms of betterment through active participation' (Batten, 1948, pp. 78-91).²⁶

While participation was familiar ground, it was when he came to consider how to achieve such developments that they broke entirely new ground by coming up with an original concept, which he called 'non-directive' (Batten, 1967²⁷). This concept involves inner commitment to self-directivity in others and the skilful use of approaches and methods to help people to decide for themselves what their needs are in contradistinction to their wants, what they are prepared to do to meet them, and what action they are going to take. The ideas were fully developed in their much-acclaimed definitive work on the concept, *The Non-Directive Approach in Group and Community Work*.²⁸

By the 1950s, the idea of community development figured prominently in United Nations documents and academic recognition was given to the community development approach by Kuenstler (1960)²⁹. These ideas gained favour in the UK and were integrated with development policies being cast as a more 'moral' way to run an empire, which fitted into broader Fabian conceptions of how Britain should exist in the world.³⁰

Piloting the 'great society'

The concepts of community development were imported from Africa into the United States in the 1960s. In response to the civil rights movement, the government began a 'War on Poverty'. The leitmotif of the approach, set out in the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act, was 'maximum feasible participation'.

²²Glennie, J. (2021) *The Future of Aid*, London: Routledge ²³Elliot, L. (2020) Cutting UK overseas aid in the name of Covid fiscal prudence is pure nonsense, *The Guardian*, 29 November <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/nov/29/cutting-uk-overseas-aid-in-the-name-of-covid-fiscal-prudence-is-pure-nonsense> ²⁴Wiles, P. (1969) 'A Syndrome, Not a Doctrine' in Ionescu, G. and Gellner, E. (eds) *Populism: Its Meanings and National Characteristics*. New York: Macmillan ²⁵Midgely, J (1986) *Community Participation, Social Development and the State*, London: Methuen ²⁶Batten, T. R. (1948) *Problems of African Development: Part II: Government and People*, London: Oxford University Press ²⁷Batten, T. R. and Batten M. (1967) *The Non-Directive Approach in Group and Community Work*, London: Oxford University Press. Now out of print. ²⁸Batten, T. R. and M. Batten (1988) *The Non-Directive Approach*, An Avec Publication. ²⁹Kuenstler, P. (1960) *New Community Organization*. London: Faber and Faber ³⁰Smith, A.W.M, and Jeppesen, C. (2017) *Britain, France and the Decolonization of Africa*, UCL Press. Available from: <https://www.ucldigitalpress.co.uk/Book/Article/43/68/3307/>

This was part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's vision for a great society. This was based on: *'...abundance and liberty for all. It demands an end to poverty and racial injustice, to which we are totally committed in our time.'*³¹

The programmes associated with the War on Poverty were orchestrated from the top-down approaches typically employed in traditional aid while seeking to harness the bottom up approaches of community development.

To describe this approach, former Johnson White House advisor Michael March coined the term 'creative federalism'. In March 1967, he said: *'The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, with its sweeping commitment to a social goal with very broad implications, represents a new departure in public administration. It has far reaching significance for coordination of public and private nationwide action to achieve the major national goal of eradicating poverty.'*³²

In combining the top-down resources of federal finance with the bottom up resources of local action, the hypothesis was local participation would create opportunity through 'New Careers for the Poor', which would reduce poverty, which would in turn lead to the Great Society.³³ In this way, progress would be shaped from the ground up.

This theory of change relied on scaling up learning from 'local experiments', 'pilot projects' or 'demonstration projects', which if successful would be applied more widely. Part of the design involved an 'action-research' methodology in which scientific evaluation of local efforts would detect projects worthy of wider application.

However, scaling up rarely happened. Mike Miller wrote an influential article in 1966 in which he noted that demonstration projects had little influence of long-term and large-scale policy, and that the results of projects were often interred in research reports.³⁴

The classic study of the War on Poverty was undertaken by Peter Marris and Martin Rein and published as *Dilemmas of Social Reform*.³⁵ This enumerated obstacles to change encountered in community development programs of the Ford Foundation and by the President's Commission on Juvenile delinquency. By demonstrating the many ways in which well-meaning and generously funded programs fail because of the complexity of human organizations and the challenges of urban environments, Marris and Rein were among the first authors developing what has become one of the major themes of policy analysis.

The failure to scale up projects was largely due to resistance from key stakeholders. Many African American communities disliked the programmes because they felt that the slogan 'maximum feasible participation' was tokenistic and patronizing, enabling funders to escape from the very real issues of structural disadvantage and discrimination. City Hall didn't like the programmes because they felt that they enabled community organizations to usurp their rightful powers. Professional workers didn't like them because they felt that the 'New Careers for the Poor' programme threatened their jobs. The mass of the population cared little for the issue of poverty and the programme.

The programme was widely deemed to have been a failure. On March 3, 2014, as Chairman of the Budget Committee of the House of Representatives, Paul Ryan released his *The War on Poverty: 50 Years Later* report, asserting that the 92 federal programs designed to help lower-income Americans did not provided the relief intended and that there was little evidence that these efforts were successful.³⁶

The lessons from the American War on Poverty suggest that anyone trying to create change, whether from the top down or from the bottom up, has to deal with the realities of life on the ground. That is why no simple formula or magic bullet will work.

³¹Smith, A.W.M. and Jeppesen, C. (2017) Britain, France and the Decolonization of Africa, UCL Press. Available from: <https://www.ucldigitalpress.co.uk/Book/Article/43/68/3307/> ³²Cited by Serena. D. Lowe A (2014) Transformative Era: Lyndon Baines Johnson and the development of the American Administrative state, p 24 . <https://dra.american.edu/islandora/object/thesesdissertations%3A365/datastream/PDF/view>. ³³Pearl, A. and Weissman, F. (eds) (1965) New Careers for the Poor. New York: Free Press ³⁴Miller, S. M. (1966) 'The demonstration as a strategy of change', Trans-action, January/February ³⁵Marris, P. and Rein, M. (1972) Dilemmas of Social Reform. Harmondsworth Penguin, Second Edition ³⁶The War on Poverty: 50 Years Later'. Budget Committee of the House of Representatives. Retrieved March

Both funders and funded have to deal with vested interests, established working practices, agency muscle, entrenched attitudes, and different cultures if they are to succeed in their ambitions.

Britain joins in

Just as the American dream of a 'great society' was fading, the UK government sought a similar, but cheaper, scaling up initiative. The result was the Community Development Projects programme, launched in 1969. This was the largest series of pilot projects ever funded by the British government. A key component, as in the US, was self-help and resident participation. These were seen as key for the improvement of inner city situations. The avowed intention was to gather information about the impact of existing social policies and services and to encourage innovation and coordination.

From 1970-1978 the British government funded 12 Community Development Projects (CDP) in some of the most impoverished neighbourhoods in England, Scotland and Wales. The CDPs were given resources to hire researchers and community workers to work alongside community residents toward the goal of ameliorating deleterious local conditions. The projects began in a spirit of great optimism, but by 1978, all twelve projects had been shut down, some amidst a great deal of acrimony. In a few cases a successor project, scaled back and with a more modest brief, continued. The programme as a national anti-poverty initiative, however, ended.

The projects had a strong and explicit research focus and an emphasis on social action '*as a means of creating more responsive local services and of encouraging self-help*' (Loney 1983: 3).³⁷ The projects were initially based in 12 areas of social deprivation. These were neighbourhoods of 3,000 to 15,000 people. Each project involved a small group of professional workers and researchers.

The emphasis in CDPs on research meant that they produced a range of important material both about the nature of community work and about the social, political, and economic condition of particular areas (a full listing can be found in Loney, 1983).³⁸

Workers in many of the projects came to reject the analysis and strategies of the original project proposals. They sought to organise and research around larger questions of inequality and deindustrialisation, rather than more localized concerns around community organization. There was often a desire to bring about a much stronger link between the struggles of the workplace and those of the neighbourhood and community; and to develop means by which groups could join together in federations to influence decision making on a city-wide, regional, and national basis. As Loney (1983: 23) comments, the community workers who entered the field in the late 1960s and early 1970s frequently rejected the traditional (educational) models of community work. They replaced the process-orientated 'non-directiveness' of Batten and Batten (1967) with a commitment to organizing and a readiness to take up oppositional positions (Baldock 1977).³⁹

One influential CDP perspective regarded 'community' as an ideological mask for the predictable social consequences of the class relations of capitalism, expressed in publications like *Gilding the Ghetto* and *The costs of industrial change*. A contemporaneous publication posed the question bluntly: 'community or class struggle'?⁴⁰ The Home Office was embarrassed by this Marxist analysis, and by 1974 had largely given up on the projects and they were wound up in 1976.

³⁷Loney, M. (1983) *Community Against Government. The British Community Development Project 1968-78: a study of government incompetence*. Heinemann. This is the definitive study of the Initiative and how the twelve local projects variously developed a radical critique (and came to a sticky end). Chapters deal with the context for the Initiative; the development of the CDP proposal; establishing local CDPs; the first four projects; issues of practice; developing difficulties in the central administration; the emergence of the radical CDP; CDPs and the politics of urban change and conflict; and the decline and fall of rational incrementalism. There is an extensive bibliography. ³⁸Ibid. ³⁹Baldock, P. (1977) 'Why community action? The historical origins of the radical trend in British community work', *Community Development Journal* 12(2) also reprinted in P. Henderson and D. N. Thomas (eds.) (1981) *Readings in Community Work*, London: George Allen and Unwin. ⁴⁰Baldock, P. (1977) 'Why community action? The historical origins of the radical trend in British community work', *Community Development Journal* 12(2) also reprinted in P. Henderson and D. N. Thomas (eds.) (1981) *Readings in Community Work*, London: George Allen and Unwin. ⁴⁰Cowley, J., Kaye, A. Mayo, M, and Thompson, M. (1977). *Community or class struggle?* London: Stage 1.

Europe follows

Just as experiments in scaling up were losing ground in Britain and America, Europe started its first anti-poverty programme. In 1974 the EEC Council of Ministers launched a Social Action Programme which included 60 pilot schemes

to combat poverty in nine countries.⁴¹ The new interest in social programmes was intended to provide the Community with a 'human face', perhaps in the hope that this might divert attention from the more avowedly commercial functions of the EEC that led to accusations of it being 'a rich man's club'.

The programme demonstrated yet another failure to scale up local projects. Martin Loney reviewed the programme in 1983, some three years after its closure.⁴² He notes that the programmes were intended to be innovative but in many respects resembled a European attempt to leap onto a community action bandwagon already becalmed in the USA and running into serious opposition in the UK. Projects were intended to provide for the participation of the poor themselves, a central aspect of the early American War on Poverty, and to develop initiatives which could be more broadly replicated. There was a strong research and evaluation focus with research taking up over 20 per cent of the total budget.

Loney suggests that a programme developed in the mid-1970s should have assumed that research and local innovation based on pilot projects could play a significant role in tackling poverty is a testimony to institutional resilience in the face of contrary evidence. He claims that there was already ample evidence, both from American and British anti-poverty programmes, to suggest that small-scale local projects could have only marginal impact, and that research and evaluation served more to legitimate small-scale, tentative, and experimental projects than to pave the way for the development of redistributive government policies or to produce the changes in mainstream social programmes which were needed.

Graham Room, the formal evaluator of the programme, noted the lack of political will within the EEC to continue an anti-poverty policy or to make social policy a priority item of expenditure in the community. Once more, the programme closed without having achieved its objectives and the pilot projects were left high and dry.⁴³

Yet again, it appears that pilot projects had failed to make a breakthrough despite the fact that this was an explicit goal. Joan Higgins, who reviewed anti-poverty programmes in Britain and America, suggested that there was little participation of the poor in the programmes, save for the early days of the US Community Action Program.⁴⁴ Here, community groups could spend money as they saw fit and could control programme content. However, these powers were gradually clawed back by the authorities. Too often, Higgins points out, government institutions wanted co-option, not liberation. She concludes, '*...the portrayal of mass participation in the programmes is largely mythical*' and she suggests that the programmes were a '*cruel hoax*'. Far from scaling up successful initiatives, authorities typically resisted success, preferring to keep power for themselves.

It is evident from these three case studies – in the US, UK and Europe – that the ideal of scaling up was not only never realised but rarely even attempted. All programmes ended in failure.

The demise of community development

Following these experiments, the optimism and enthusiasm for community development waned. As participation declined in the West, a similar fate occurred in the East and the South. In some countries, expectations were too high, leaving too much room for disappointment, even among those who were actively involved (Smillie, 1995).⁴⁵ In other countries, corruption, maladministration, and inefficiency meant that resources designed to foster the participation of ordinary people never reached them (Midgely, 1986).⁴⁶

⁴¹Dennett, J., James, E., Room, G., & Watson, P. (1982). *Europe against poverty: The European poverty programme 1975-80*. London: Bedford Square Press. ⁴²Loney, M. (1983) 'Europe Against Poverty, The European Poverty Programme, 1975-80', *Community Development Journal*, Volume 18, Issue 1, January 1983, Pages 83-84, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/18.1.83>. ⁴³Room, G (2010) *The Path to Lisbon: The European Anti-Poverty Programmes from the 1970s to the 1990s*, *Kurswechsel* 3: 9-18. Available at: <http://www.beigewum.at/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Path-to-Lisbon.pdf>. ⁴⁴Higgins, J (1980) *The Poverty Business: Britain and America*, Oxford and London: Basil Blackwell and Martin Robertson ⁴⁵Smillie, J (1995) *The Alms Bazaar: Altruism Under Fire - Non-profit organizations and international development*, London: Intermediate Technology Publications. ⁴⁶Midgely, J (1986) *Community Participation, Social Development and the State*, London: Methuen

The main beneficiaries of programmes tended to be the officials running them (Hancock, 1989).⁴⁷

The result was that during the 1970s, the issue of participation went into decline, replaced by emphasis on growth, transfer of capital industry, heavy industry, and economic modernization. In Africa, many governments continued to use the rhetoric of participation, yet failed to provide resources to make this a reality, while in India, the government abandoned its community development programme in 1978 (Midgely, 1986).⁴⁸

The end of Bretton Woods

Meanwhile seismic shifts were taking place in the way the world was organised. Earlier, we saw how Bretton Woods arrangements provided a framework for post-war social and economic development. The premise of these arrangements was that nation states should be free to plan their domestic economies. To prevent external disturbance, capital from one country would not cross the border into another without the agreement of the governments concerned. The two key words here were 'planning' and 'domestic'. A famous post-war dictum was, *'We are all planners now'* (Durbin, 1949).⁴⁹ Previously, the laissez faire doctrine of 19th Century philosopher John Stuart Mill had held sway over the minds of economists. The essence of his view was:

*'Laissez faire should be the general practice: every departure from it, unless required by some great good, is a certain evil.'*⁵⁰

For thirty years after the war, Keynes and Marx walked in step. Then, in the mid 1970s the West broke with Keynes and a decade later the East broke with Marx. Mill had mounted a posthumous rear-guard action through a right wing disciple, Friedrich von Hayek, who suggested that the market is the ultimate arbiter of virtue.

He argued that capitalist society is the highest society because it has evolved and survived, while other societies lacking the traditions, habits and structures of the capitalist order have failed in the competition between human groups (Hayek, 1988).⁵¹

The ideas of Hayek were quoted approvingly both by Ronald Reagan when he was US President and by Margaret Thatcher when she was UK Prime Minister. Through these means, the ideas of Hayek have had a huge effect on the economic organization of the world.

Why did this happen? The answer has as much to do with pragmatic action as with political philosophy. In 1971, the United States had heavy debts, partly because of the expense of the Vietnam War. This meant that the United States could no longer meet its commitment to translate its dollar obligations into gold. From there, it was a short step to abandoning the fixed exchange rate mechanisms under Bretton Woods, and this happened in 1973. This opened the door to international currency speculation and led to huge fluctuations in currency prices and commodity values. Oil price inflation as a result of the Arab-Israeli war meant that some nations built up huge dollar reserves while others built up debts. The world's economy was out of balance (Leys, 1996).⁵²

Nation state economics could not hold up against this pressure. In 1979-80 the OECD, led by Britain and the United States, abandoned Keynes. They opted instead for deregulation and privatization. For a time, France stood against this, but had to capitulate in 1983. This was a symbolic moment. The era of Bretton Woods was over and, as one commentator put it, *'the world was turned upside down'* (Helleiner, 1994).⁵³

By the end of the 1980s, financiers were dealing not only in conventional transactions needed for trade and investment, but a wide range of currency and commodity futures and derivatives.

⁴⁷Hancock, G (1989) *Lords of Poverty*, London: Macmillan ⁴⁸Midgely, J (1986) *Community Participation, Social Development and the State*, London: Methuen ⁴⁹Durbin, E (1949) *Problems of Economic Planning*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul ⁵⁰Mill, J S (1948) *Principles of Political Economy*, London: Longman ⁵¹Hayek, F von (1988) *The Fatal Conceit: The Errors of socialism*, The Collected Works of Friederich August von Hayek, ed W Bartlett, London: Routledge ⁵²Leys, C (1996), *The Rise and Fall of Development Theory*, Oxford: James Currey ⁵³Helleiner, E (1994) 'From Bretton Woods to Global Finance: A world turned upside down' in Stubbs, R and Underhill, G (eds) *Political Economy and the Changing Global Order*, McLelland and Stewart, Toronto

It was ironic that financial instruments, such as futures, which were originally designed to create stability in the global market, later created instability because of the tendency for speculators to gamble on whether they would rise or fall.

In 1993, the 'Uruguay Round' of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) extended global free trade to the formerly sacrosanct agricultural sector. At the same time, the Maastricht Treaty of the European Union and the North American Free Trade Agreement further reduced the regulatory powers of nation states in the global economy.

These developments matter for the idea of 'scaling up' because, whereas Bretton Woods gave prime responsibility for this to states and publicly funded institutions, the world without Bretton Woods relied on the market. The nature of transactions was changed. In the non-profit world grants were replaced by contracts.⁵⁴ The end of Bretton Woods brought a commercial set of criteria to financial transactions, with value for money and accountability coming to the fore. This change, as we will see later, had a dramatic effect on the power dynamics of the sector, so that donors were to become firmly in charge.

Meanwhile, other changes were afoot that would ultimately magnify these trends, by revivifying the idea of 'civil society' and ushering in the 'new public management' and resulting in a new Washington Consensus (Edwards, 1999).⁵⁵ But first, let us examine the seismic shift that few people saw coming.

The fall of the Berlin Wall

While the capitalist world was liberalizing itself, the Communist bloc began its first faltering steps along the same route. Perestroika (economic restructuring) in the Soviet Union began as a means of altering the balance between three forms of ownership in the economy: state enterprises, state cooperatives and household economies (the family plot of land).

At first, the idea was to strengthen state cooperatives and household economies. Gradually, Perestroika widened into a programme to deregulate the economy and to enable individuals to set up small businesses (Andrusz, 1999).⁵⁶ This programme, combined with its close political relative Glasnost (openness), set in train a series of events that was to bring an end to communism as a viable form of social and economic organization.

During the 1980s, the world was converging in the direction of greater freedom, both economically and politically. In 1989, the year that the Berlin Wall came down, Francis Fukuyama wrote an influential article called the '*End of History?*', followed by a very influential book, *The End of History, and the Last Man*. He suggested that the idea of liberal democracy had triumphed, replacing competitors, including hereditary monarchy, fascism and, most significantly, communism (Fukuyama, 1989, 1992).⁵⁷ Hegel, not Marx, had got the upper hand.

At the Malta Summit in December 1989, Presidents Bush and Gorbachev announced the end of the Cold War. There followed a brief period when it seemed as if a new and positive world was opening up. The collapse of the Berlin Wall, the ending of Apartheid in South Africa, the liberalization of regimes in South America, and the spread of 'just and honest' government following the 1991 Harare Declaration by Commonwealth Heads of Government, created a new agenda. Democracy was in prospect in many parts of the world. The market place based on consumer choice would create prosperity. There would be no war because the democratic market economies would have few ideological differences to fight about.

The rise of civil society

Civil society was at the heart of the struggles for freedom in Central and Eastern Europe. In the 1970s and 1980s, democracy seekers in oppressive régimes in Central and Eastern Europe had organized a space to express themselves and plan for change. They called this space civil society.

⁵⁴Knight, B. (1993) *Voluntary Action*, London: Home Office; Edwards, M. and Hulme, D. (1995) *Non-Governmental Organizations - Performance and Accountability Beyond the Magic Bullet*, London: Earthscan ⁵⁵Edwards, M (1999) *Future Positive: International co-operation in the 21st century*, London: Earthscan ⁵⁶Andrusz, G (1999) *The Cooperative Alternative in Europe: The case of housing*, Aldershot: Ashgate ⁵⁷Fukuyama, F (1989) '*The End of History?*', *The National Interest*, no 16 (Summer), pp 3-18; Fukuyama, F (1992) *The End of History and the Last Man*, London: Penguin Books

In doing this, they drew on the ideas of the 18th Century Enlightenment. Philosophers, such as John Locke, had described how civil society conferred natural rights for ordinary men and women to create communities for themselves without excessive interference from state or church.

The power of civil society showed itself in mass demonstrations in cities across Central and Eastern Europe in 1989, leading to the Velvet Revolutions. On 9 November of that year, amidst scenes of triumphant rejoicing, a mass of people committed an act of dramatic symbolism. They dismantled the Berlin Wall. A month later, in Romania, 100,000 people in Timisoara faced down the armed guards of the Ceausescu regime, and 111 of them gave their lives to bring down Communism's most repressive state. In Africa, dictatorial regimes in Malawi, Benin, former Zaire, Zambia, and South Africa gave in to the pressure from opposition groups backed by civil society organizations.

Stimulated by these developments in the East and the South, the idea of civil society caught on quickly in the West and the North. By the mid 1990s, there was much literature reminding us of our mutual responsibilities as citizens. Amitai Etzioni (1995) put forward 'communitarianism'⁵⁸, Robert Putnam (1993, 1995) stressed the importance of 'social capital'⁵⁹, Francis Fukuyama (1995) noted the value of 'trust'⁶⁰, David Selbourne (1994) the virtues of 'duty'⁶¹, and a variety of writers analysed different forms of 'civil society' (Knight and Stokes, 1996).⁶²

We also saw the opening up of South America, South Africa, and Central and Eastern Europe, and the focus changed all over again. A clear victor of the 1989 revolutions and the dismantling of Apartheid in South Africa was 'civil society'. People power was seen to play a key part in the changes, and the idea was given formal shape by the 'associational revolution'.⁶³

The Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, which studied many countries of the world in the biggest study of civil society ever undertaken, suggested that the growth of non-profits at the end of the 20th century was of similar political significance to the growth of the nation state at the end of the 19th century.⁶⁴ Foundations, non-profits, university departments and government departments swiftly changed the language of their non-profit programmes to pursue this new secular ideology of supporting people in their own institutions.

The recognition of the idea of civil society was due in part to the fall of secular ideology caused by the collapse of communism and its perceived role in bringing about that collapse, and the failure of mere capitalism to supply an alternative which will at once have moral weight, inspire loyalty, and satisfy social needs. Civil society provided a replacement ideology. At its best, it can provide one of the building blocks for a good society which values people, regardless of age, gender, sexuality, race, disability or other aspects of social background or identity. Civil society could create a capacity for leadership within communities which, if harnessed and nurtured, could transform democracy and reshape the balance of power in favour of greater social inclusion, justice, dignity, equality of opportunity and respect. Civil society might balance the excesses of the market, creating 'social capital' - the glue that binds people together in relationships - and add a meaning to people's lives over and above their role as economic producers or consumers.

However, civil society in practice at times ran counter to the idealized view of it as component of democratic and participatory governance. It can be the product of extremely conservative and hierarchical societies that institutionalize grave inequalities, the more so as, in those societies where autochthonous culture has been driven underground by foreign overlordship, they are self-consciously custodians of tradition.

⁵⁸Etzioni, A (1995) *The Spirit of Community: Rights, responsibilities and the communitarian agenda*, London: Fontana ⁵⁹Putnam, R (1993) *Making Democracy Work: Civic traditions in modern Italy*, Princeton University Press; Putnam, R (1995) 'Bowling alone, revisited', *The Responsive Community*, Spring ⁶⁰Fukuyama, F (1995) *Trust: The social virtues and the creation of prosperity*, London: Free Press ⁶¹Selbourne, D (1994) *The Principle of Duty: An essay on the foundations of the civic order*, London: Sinclair-Stevenson ⁶²Knight, B and Stokes, P (1996) *The Deficit in Civil Society in the United Kingdom*, Birmingham: Foundation for Civil Society ⁶³Salamon, L (1994) 'The Rise of the Nonprofit Sector', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol 74 No 3, July/August, 1994 ⁶⁴Books and articles emerging from the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project can be found here: https://www.academia.edu/20919357/Global_Civil_Society_Dimensions_of_the_Nonprofit_Sector_Baltimore_The_Johns_Hopkins_University_xix_511pp_34_95_ISBN_1_886333_42_4.

These fora can often be the preserve of the more powerful or influential families and be dominated by clientage and deference, rather than by collective decision making. The best and worst of civil society was found in Kosovo before the 1999 war with Serbia, where impressive self-help and self-organizing were combined with amoral familism and terrorist activity (Knight, 1999).⁶⁵

The Washington Consensus

Emerging from the new emphasis on markets, civil society and democracy, there emerged during the 1990s a new consensus among the world's elites, including major international donors, government leaders and think tanks, about how to develop societies across the world.⁶⁶ The model, called the 'Washington Consensus', had three components.

First, democracy was regarded as the best form of government. With ever more countries adopting democracy (Fukuyama, 1992;⁶⁷ Mbogori and Chigudu, 1999;⁶⁸ Myers, 1999⁶⁹), the state was expected to devolve some of its powers and resources to local bodies and to shed some of its functions in the direct management of economic and social activities (World Bank, 1996)⁷⁰. In short, governments were expected to move to a type of governance, defined as '*collective decision making in which government acts as one stakeholder among many*' (Hague et al, 1998;⁷¹ World Bank, 1997).⁷² In an influential article called Power shift, Jessica Matthews showed how national governments were increasingly sharing power with businesses, international organizations, and a range of citizens groups, known as NGOs.⁷³

Second, the model identified private enterprise in the free market as the primary engine of economic development, involving the acceptance of capitalism and measures to promote it, such as enhancing the role of foreign investment in developing countries and the deregulation of trade (World Bank, 1996).⁷⁴

Third, the model emphasized the role of civil society. As we have seen, the last years of the 20th Century saw the rebirth of the idea of civil society (Cohen and Arato, 1992)⁷⁵. In turn, this led to an explosion of interest in non-governmental organizations (NGOs), women's organizations, cooperatives, self-help groups, and other types of civil society organization, both secular and religious (Salamon et al, 1999;⁷⁶ Civicus, 1999;⁷⁷ McCarthy et al, 1991;⁷⁸ D'Olivera and Tandon, 1995).⁷⁹

Civil society was expected to play a greater role in the development process in many parts of the world. Among countries taking this line were the Philippines (Serrano, 1994,⁸⁰ Diokno, 1997),⁸¹ Japan (Tadashi, 1999),⁸² Bangladesh (Mammoon and Ray, 1998),⁸³ India (Indian Social Institute, 1997;⁸⁴ Gulhati and Gulhati, 1999;⁸⁵ Nagaraja and Bhat, 2000),⁸⁶ Sri Lanka (Abeysekera, and Weerakoon, 1996)⁸⁷ and New Zealand (Davenport and Low, 1999).⁸⁸ Civil society was also seen as an important regional development strategy and was proposed across the Asia Pacific Region (Yamamoto, 1995),⁸⁹ in Africa (Civicus, 1999;⁹⁰ Olin, 1995;⁹¹ Mutunga, 1999;⁹² Nyang'oro 1999)⁹³ and Central and Eastern Europe (Toepler and Salomon, 2003).⁹⁴ Official agencies have also encouraged NGOs to become involved in development (World Bank, 1990;⁹⁵ World Bank, 1991;⁹⁶ Sherma, 1990;⁹⁷ UNDP, 1997).⁹⁸

⁶⁵Knight, B. (1999) 'Towards a perfect civil society', Alliance, Vol.4, no 2 ⁶⁶The World Bank's World Development Reports from 1990 to 2000 are a good source of material for how this consensus is articulated in practice and in advice to governments across the world. ⁶⁷Fukuyama, F. (1992) The End of History and the Last Man, London: Penguin Books ⁶⁸Mbogori, E. and Chigudu, H. (1999) 'Civil Society and Government: A continuum of possibilities' in CIVICUS, Civil Society at the Millennium, West Hartford Connecticut: Kumarian Press ⁶⁹Myers, S. (ed) (1999) Democracy Is a Discussion II, New London, CT Connecticut College ⁷⁰World Bank (1996) From Plan to Market: World Bank Development Report, New York: Oxford University Press ⁷¹Hague, R., Harrop, M. and Breslin, S. (1998) Comparative Government and Politics, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 4th Edition ⁷²World Bank (1997) The State in a Changing World: World Development Report, New York: Oxford University Press ⁷³Matthews, J. (1997) 'Power Shift', Foreign Affairs, 76:1, 1997, pp. 50-66 ⁷⁴World Bank (1996) From Plan to Market: World Bank Development Report, New York: Oxford University Press ⁷⁵Cohen, J. and Arato, A. (1992) Civil Society and Political Theory, Cambridge Massachusetts: MIT Press ⁷⁶Salamon, L., Anheier, H., List, R., Toepler, S., Wojciech Sokolowski, S., and associates (1999) Global Civil Society: Dimensions of the nonprofit sector, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies ⁷⁷CIVICUS Africa Regional Assembly (1999) 'Civil society and the eradication of poverty in Africa', Report of Proceedings at Kenya College of Communications, 15 to 17 June 1999 ⁷⁸McCarthy, K., Hodgkinson, V., and Associates (1991) (eds) Nonprofit Sector in the Global Community: Voices from many nations, Washington, DC: Independent Sector, ⁷⁹D'Olivera, M. and Tandon, R. (1995) Strengthening Global Civil Society, Washington DC: CIVICUS ⁸⁰Serrano, I. (1994) Civil Society in the Asia Pacific Region, Washington DC: CIVICUS ⁸¹Diokno, M. (ed) (1997) Democracy and Citizenship in Filipino Political Culture, Quezon City: University of the Philippines ⁸²Tadashi, Y. (ed) (1999) Deciding the Public Good: Governance and civil society in Japan, Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange ⁸³Mammoon, M. and Ray, J. (1998) Civil Society in Bangladesh: Resilience and retreat, Dhaka: Ahmed Mahfuzul Haq ⁸⁴Indian Social Institute (1997) Fifty Years After Freedom: New opportunities for voluntary action in India, New Delhi: Indian Social Institute ⁸⁵Gulhati, R. and Gulhati, K. (1999) Anatomy of Voluntarism: The case of Madhya Pradesh, New Delhi: Konark Publishers ⁸⁶Nagaraja, B. and Bhat, M. (eds) (2000) Building Civil Society: Bangalore, New Delhi: India Civil Society Collective ⁸⁷Abeysekera, C. and Weerakoon, B. (1996) Civil Society in Sri Lanka, Colombo: International Centre for Ethnic Studies ⁸⁸Davenport, E. and Low, W. (1999) Partners in a Common Future: Development for poverty eradication, Wellington Council for International Development ⁸⁹Yamamoto, T. (ed) (1995) Emerging Civil Society in the Asia Pacific, Singapore: Community Institute for Southeast Asian Studies ⁹⁰CIVICUS (1999) Civil Society at the Millennium, West Hartford, Connecticut: Kumarian Press ⁹¹Olin, A. (1995) Civil Society in the Transition: Local level associational life in Zambia, Stockholm: SIDA ⁹²Mutunga, W. (1999) Constitution Making from the Middle: Civil society and transition politics in Kenya 1992- 1997. Harare: MWENGO ⁹³Nyang'oro, J. (ed) (1999) Civil Society and Democracy in Eastern and Southern Africa, Harare: MWENGO ⁹⁴Toepler, S. and Salomon, L. (2003) NGO development in Central and Eastern Europe: An empirical overview. East European Quarterly 37(3): 365-378 ⁹⁵World Bank (1990) Cooperation between the World Bank and NGOs, Progress Report, Washington DC, 8 March ⁹⁶World Bank (1991) The Challenge of Development: World Development Report, New York: Oxford University Press ⁹⁷Sherma, C. (1990) A Look Inside the World Bank, Sydney: Envirobook ⁹⁸UNDP (1997) Management Development and Governance, Division Bureau for Policy and Programme Support Unit UNDP, April

The Washington Consensus relied on new governance arrangements. These were called 'the new public management'.⁹⁹ The term was first introduced by academics in the UK and Australia to describe approaches that were developed during the 1980s as part of an effort to make the public service more 'business-like' and to improve its efficiency by using private sector management models.¹⁰⁰ New public management encourages private sector companies to deliver what were formerly public services.

The model spread rapidly across the world. Starting in New Zealand, it swiftly influenced practice in Australia and Sweden.

At the same time, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) established its Public Management Committee and Secretariat (PUMA), conferring to public management the status normally accorded more conventional domains of policy. In the 1990s, public management was a major item on President Clinton's agenda. Early policy actions of the Clinton administration included launching the National Partnership and signing into law the Government Performance and Results Act.

A key feature of the approach is to assess the value of public management by its results.¹⁰¹ Key themes in the new public management were financial control, value for money, increasing efficiency, identifying, and setting targets and continuance monitoring of performance. Performance is assessed with audits, benchmarks, and performance evaluations.

So, the question arises, how did the new public management deal with the issue of scaling up? We have seen that in the early part of the 1990s, there was a flowering of civil society with citizens stepping forward to take responsibility of their localities. A raft of funders provided support for this emerging civil society as part of a way of supporting transitions from authoritarian regimes to democratic ones.

Jenny Hyatt led a study of the transition in Central and Eastern Europe and Russia that described the rationale and the methods for doing this.¹⁰²

This study showed that support for civil society focussed on seeding the emergence of new initiatives, as opposed to making existing ones bigger. For this reason, scaling up was less of a factor than supporting the field to begin in the first place. A variety of mechanisms were employed but a key one was to support the development of local support organizations and local funding mechanisms, such as the development of community foundations.

Barry Gaberman, who as senior vice president of the Ford Foundation was a highly influential funder of this process, has recently completed a retrospective evaluation of the process.¹⁰³

The report shows that a critical factor in the long-term survival of the initiatives was the ability to raise money locally because, following an initial flood of money from outside sources, within a decade investments from western funders into Central and Eastern European civil society turned into a trickle.

The new dirigisme

At the turn of the millennium, this new optimism about the value of civil society started to fade.¹⁰⁴ It was not clear what civil society was delivering, and a number of key funders pulled back from it. One of these was Atlantic Philanthropies, which, following a decision to spend down its endowment in a period of 12-15 years, decided to focus its grantmaking in just four highly focused and 'strategic' programmes where it was felt it could have maximum impact and achieve a visible 'legacy'. A series of books and articles drew attention to the woolliness of civil society and the difficulty of harnessing it to develop a funding strategy to deliver measurable outcomes.

In 2001, the Bertelsmann Foundation began the International Network on Strategic Philanthropy. Although this programme was short-lived, the idea that funders should be strategic as opposed to reactive gained ground.

⁹⁹Andrews, R. and Van de Walle, S. (2013). 'New Public Management and Citizens' Perceptions of Local Service Efficiency, Responsiveness, Equity and Effectiveness.' *Public Management Review*. ¹⁰⁰Hood, C. (1991). 'A Public Management for all Seasons?'. *Public Administration*. 69 (1): 3-19. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9299.1991.tb00779.x ¹⁰¹Marozzi, M. and Bolzan, M. (2015). 'Skills and training requirements of municipal directors: A statistical assessment'. *Quality and Quantity*. 50 (3): 1093-1115. doi:10.1007/s11135-015-0192-2. ¹⁰²Hyatt, J. (1998) *From Transition to Development: The Non-profit Sectors of Central and Eastern Europe*, London: Charities Evaluation Services ¹⁰³Gaberman, B., Sovner, M. and Moody, W.S. (2019) *Sustaining Civil Society: Lessons from Five Pooled Funds in Eastern Europe*, New York: Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society, City University of New York. Available from <https://www.gc.cuny.edu/center-philanthropy-and-civil-society/publications-and-research/report-civil-society-eastern-europe>. ¹⁰⁴Knight, B. and Hartnell, C. (2008) *They go round and round*, Alliance, 1 September 2008. <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/feature/they-go-round-and-round/> 5

The rise of 'new' philanthropy, with its concomitant features of top-down planning, has completed the circle that started with Durbin's 1949 maxim of *'we are all planners now'*.

For philanthropists of the past, charity was often a matter of simply giving money away to improve people's lives. For a new generation of billionaires, it was like business. Largely trained in the corporate world, these 'social investors' used big-business-style strategies and expecting results and accountability to match. In Philanthrocapitalism,¹⁰⁵ Matthew Bishop and Michael Green examined this movement and its implications.¹⁰⁶ Proceeding from interviews with some of the most powerful people on the planet - including Bill Gates, Bill Clinton, George Soros, Angelina Jolie, and Bono, among others - they showed how a web of wealthy donors set out to change the world.

An extreme form of strategic philanthropy, philanthropocapitalism had three main characteristics. First, it involved the expenditure of very large sums of money derived largely from profits earned in the finance and IT sectors. Second, it relied on a belief that business methods can solve social problems since these are claimed to be superior to other methods in use in public sector or civil society. Third, it claimed that these methods can achieve social transformation as well as increased access to socially beneficial goods and services.

The approach taken by philanthrocapitalists was immediately challenged in *Just Another Emperor? The Myths and Realities of Philanthrocapitalism*. Ford Foundation executive, Michael Edwards, argued that the concentration of wealth and power among philanthrocapitalists was a symptom of unhealthy wealth distribution and gave too much power to too few people. Moreover, a business approach would damage civil society, because as the crucible of democratic politics and social transformation, it is not a place where people buy and sell, so market solutions are not relevant.

While Edwards criticised philanthrocapitalism on its unsuitability for creating long-term social change, an immediate short-term effect was to cast civil society organizations as agents of the donor whose perspectives on the world counted for little. As Sheela Patel, founding director of the Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC), an advocacy group for the pavement dwellers of Mumbai, put it: *'Although the development industry apparently champions the rights of the poor to choose their own ways of escaping from poverty, they continue to follow their own vision through prescribed strategies, with NGOs functioning as their contractors. Our challenge to the development industry, both governmental and non-governmental, is to rethink this approach and to consider whose vision is being financed.'*¹⁰⁷

This quotation raises a key issue about scaling up. The issue of who controls what is vital in society. It matters because people who are oppressed or marginalized want to be in control of their own destiny and do not want to be treated as objects of charity or pawns in a grand chess game of solving the world's problems.

How compatible is local control with the goal-driven, focused, 'strategic' philanthropy? *'Not very'*, according to Tade Aina, Ford Foundation Representative in East Africa, speaking at a meeting in Nairobi in May 2008, where he outlined some characteristics of what he called the 'new aid architecture'.¹⁰⁸ Under these arrangements grants would tend to go only to the larger, more formal, and better resourced institutions that possess structures acceptable to donor consortia, while funds are mostly project- or programme-related. *'They do not support investment in endowments or property of local institutions.'* This also meant *'less flexible support for issues that are determined and adopted autonomously by local institutions'*, as they *'have to fit either the national development agenda or the increasingly narrow focus of the big private donors'*.

¹⁰⁵Bishop, M. and Green, M. (2010) *Philanthrocapitalism: How giving can save the world*, London; Bloomsbury ¹⁰⁶Edwards, M. (2008) *Just Another Emperor? The Myths and Realities of Philanthrocapitalism*. Demos: A Network for Ideas & Action and The Young Foundation. ¹⁰⁷Patel, S. (2008) 'Subcontractors or visionaries?', *Alliance*, 1 September 2008 <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/feature/subcontractors-or-visionaries/> ¹⁰⁸Knight, B. and Hartnell, C. (2008) op. cit.

He spoke of an:

'...emerging consensus on procedures and methodologies, predominantly business and market driven and led by the philanthrocapitalists, who are being joined by the old philanthropies such as the Rockefeller Foundation in their insistence on narrow focus, high impact, clear and measurable results.'

The new aid architecture

New ways of delivering aid were set out in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).¹⁰⁹ These were eight goals to be achieved by 2015. They were established following the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000 and the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) succeeded the MDGs in 2016.

All 191 United Nations member states, and at least 22 international organizations, committed:

1. To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. To achieve universal primary education
3. To promote gender equality and empower women
4. To reduce child mortality
5. To improve maternal health
6. To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. To ensure environmental sustainability
8. To develop a global partnership for development

Preparations for the 2000 Millennium Summit launched with the report of the Secretary-General *We the Peoples: The Role of the United Nations in the Twenty-First Century*. Additional input was prepared by the Millennium Forum, which brought together representatives of over 1,000 non-governmental and civil society organizations from more than 100 countries.

The Forum met in May to conclude a two-year consultation process covering issues such as poverty eradication, environmental protection, human rights, and protection of vulnerable people

The MDGs originated from the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The Declaration asserted that every individual has dignity; and hence, the right to freedom, equality, a basic standard of living to include freedom from hunger and violence, while encouraging tolerance and solidarity. The MDGs were accompanied by concrete targets and indicators for poverty reduction.

The MDGs produced mixed results. While it is clear that while much was accomplished – with more than a billion people having been lifted out of poverty – many of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were only partial successes, and some failed outright.¹¹⁰

One of the major problems was that success was not experienced equally across the globe. Consider the variations in the reduction of the extreme poverty rate between different countries:

1. South-eastern Asia exceeded the goal for extreme poverty reduction by 16 percent
2. Southern Asia exceeded the goal by 12.5 percent
3. Northern Africa scraped by at about 1.2 percent
4. Sub-Saharan Africa was by far the most behind, with extreme poverty reduction 12.5 percent away from its target.¹¹¹

While performance of the MDGs was widely regarded as disappointing, global leaders regrouped and set new goals for 2030, called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said: *'The emerging post-2015 development agenda, including the set of Sustainable Development Goals, strives to build on our successes and put all countries, together, firmly on track towards a more prosperous, sustainable and equitable world.'*¹¹²

¹⁰⁹The Millennium Development Goals can be found here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Millennium_Development_Goals. ¹¹⁰Abernethy, P. (2015) 'Millennium Development Goals 15 Years Later: How Did We Do?', Global Citizen, 6 July. Available from https://www.globalcitizen.org/fr/content/millennium-development-goals-the-final-report/?utm_source=paidsearch&utm_medium=ukgrant&utm_campaign=genericbrandname&gclid=Cj0KCQjw6J-SBhCrARIsAH0yMZgC9k3caHAB0cMqvvejVeOX7J4LKaTSMqf1-rCuKNXi0u0BkivrWAaAtXaEALw_wcB ¹¹¹The variations can be found here: <https://borgenproject.org/mdg-failures/>. ¹¹²Extracts from the speech can be found here: <https://borgenproject.org/mdg-failures/>

Impact investing

The new aid architecture that took root in the late 20th and early 21st century ushered in a new meaning to the idea of scaling up. The dirigiste approach meant that what was being scaled up was business investment in a top-down initiative, rather than learning from the success of a local pilot project and making it bigger. It was all about taking market solutions to scale, and a particularly influential variant of this was called 'impact investing'.

In 2015, Alliance magazine ran a special feature on scaling up through impact investing. In *Impact investment: time for scale-up*, Vineet Rai explained that the core belief underlying impact investing was that many of the problems faced by people living on low-incomes can be resolved by using a business approach.

Impact investors provide capital to support the spawning of social businesses that have a sustainable impact on people's lives.¹¹³

The following section draws heavily on Vineet Rai's article. He describes how the enterprises or businesses are expected to be sustainable and to create a surplus. The argument is that if sustainability, scale of returns, and impact are convincingly developed, it will unlock commercial capital to support impact investing: that has the potential to change the world.

Rai shows how impact investing captured the imagination of the philanthropy world, where it was often viewed as a panacea for development challenges. Impact investing also, to some extent, filled the void left by the rapid fall of microfinance from its position as the global solution for poverty reduction. Microfinance - the idea of providing credit to the poorest of the poor in a revolving loan fund - was pioneered by the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. It quickly became 'the magic answer' to poverty and scaled up across the world.

However, a series of disreputable companies who made excessive profits and an investigation into the Grameen Bank knocked microfinance off its perch, while demonstrating the foolishness of seeking a single solution to the problem of poverty. The experience of this failure pointed the way to understanding the importance of multiple and intersecting approaches to addressing poverty, which is commonly called 'an ecosystem approach'.¹¹⁴

Like venture capital, impact investing involves the art and science of building an ecosystem that encourages the best talent and ideas to come together to solve some of the most difficult problems using a business approach. Rai says:

'Running an ordinary business is difficult; running an impact enterprise much more so. The business you are building will be serving customers with a small wallet and little ability to pay; they have little risk appetite, meaning they will be slow to adapt to new ideas. You will need to provide the best solution at the lowest price.'

The conclusion that Rai draws from this is that impact investing involves a long gestation period, many failures and slow progress towards scale. Hence, the need for a strong ecosystem, involving good staff and advisers, along with capital investors who accept a high level of risk, with the patience and maturity to deal with the vagaries of a start-up company.

What differentiates impact investing from commercial investing is the 'intent' of the capital investor. The impact investor focuses on a specific demographic - low-income and poor seeks a lower risk-adjusted return - the return an investment will provide in comparison with the level of associated risk agrees to be locked in for a longer period is willing to balance returns and impact. While most venture capitalists have a high-risk appetite, the difference is they seek a high risk-adjusted return, while for impact investing, the returns would necessarily be lower on a risk-adjusted basis, if not in absolute terms. an interesting proxy accepted by most investors.

¹¹³Rai, V. (2015) 'Impact investing: time for a scale up', Alliance, 1 September ¹¹⁴A special report on 'Why the microfinance model won't solve the global poverty crisis' can be found here <https://www.worldfinance.com/special-reports/why-the-microfinance-model-wont-solve-the-global-poverty-crisis>

Rai is also sceptical whether impact investing is indeed a credible way to bring about development. Greater clarity is needed about how its impact differs from that being generated by commercial investing. One of the problems is 'vanity metrics' – the tendency to use output data showing how many people are reached by a programme, rather than focussing on the differences made to their lives.¹¹⁵ Rai notes:

'The more we have tried to justify our impact thesis by looking at outputs such as lives touched, the more hollow our claims about definitive change sound.'

Commenting on this point on the Alliance Website, Anton Simanowitz noted:

*'The discussion of "vanity metrics" highlights a blind spot in impact investing. The warmers may be a good product, but are they being used as intended, are they being used at the appropriate time - are they in fact saving lives? Too often investors assume that a product is doing good, rather than understanding what needs to happen for the product to be delivered and used in the way it is intended, and how it can be made more effective. Simple quality management and outcomes measurement are essential for delivering impact. It's not just about numbers. In microfinance for example the consensus for most was that "if a client takes a loan, repays and comes back for another what more do we need to know". Based on this most investors focused scaling the model. Now we know that much harm has been done along the way, and there is a much greater focus on how loans are used and not just if loans are accessed. Impact cannot be assumed and needs to be managed.'*¹¹⁶

There were comments from readers on the Alliance site questioning the principles and practice of impact investing, some suggesting that it represented a 'wolf in sheep's clothing' because business methods and social value are antinomies.

Moreover, there have been serious critiques of the role of privilege in such intentions.

For example, as philanthropy has become larger and more vocal, a series of books have criticized its privileged position and claimed that philanthropy has a deleterious effect on democracy and equality. Relevant books here are by Edgar Villanueva, Robert Reich, and Annand Giridharadas. Following the famous intervention at the recent Davos meeting saying that taxing the rich is more important than philanthropy, a discussion hosted by the Guardian between Rutger Bregman, author of *Utopia for Realists*, Winnie Byanyima from Oxfam International, and *Winners Take All* author Anand Giridharada referred to philanthropy's 'bullshit narrative'.¹¹⁷ Here is an extract from their discussion:

'Another instance is "doing well by doing good": it sounds positive but it really is about putting the people who are trying to make money in charge of changing a status quo they have no interest in changing. And then there are terms such as "social impact" and "social venture capital" and "impact investing". They are ways of encouraging us not to use words like "power" and "justice" and "dignity". They are an attempt to make us not speak about unions and taxes.'

Such views are growing. Interviews for Ariadne's 2020 Forecast Series revealed that there is increasing scepticism from the public regarding the value of philanthropy.¹¹⁸ People increasingly ask whether it is in the public interest to give rich philanthropists tax breaks.

Whatever one thinks about the politics of philanthropy, it is clear that impact investing has not so far achieved its early promise and there is much scepticism about it. A careful collection of essays brought together by the Brookings Institute takes a realistic look at this.¹¹⁹

Stressing the importance of scaling up if the scores of good ideas are to be harnessed to solve world poverty, *Getting to Scale* explores what it takes to expand the reach of development solutions beyond an individual village or pilot program so they serve poor people everywhere. Each chapter documents one or more contemporary case studies, which together provide a body of evidence on how scale can be pursued.

¹¹⁵Alliance conducted a series of articles in September 2013 on the GSBI® Accelerator program at Santa Clara University GSBI Accelerator program. One of these focused on an interview in which Mark Straub and Aparna Surendra from Khosla Impact talked about called 'Vanity metrics and the difference between finding 'fit' and finding scale'. See <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/blog/vanity-metrics-and-the-difference-between-finding-fit-and-finding-scale/> ¹¹⁶These comments can be found here: <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/blog/vanity-metrics-and-the-difference-between-finding-fit-and-finding-scale/> ¹¹⁷The conversation can be found here: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/feb/07/rutger-bregman-winnie-byanyima-anand-giridharadas> ¹¹⁸Ariadne's 2020 forecast is here: <https://www.ariadne-network.eu/its-here-ariadnes-2020-forecast-for-european-social-change-human-rights-funders/> ¹¹⁹Chandy, L., Hosono, A., Kharas, H. and Linn, J. (2013) *Getting to Scale: How to Bring Development Solutions to Millions of Poor People*. Washington: Brookings Institution Press. Available from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7864/j.ctt4cg7sg>

The book suggests that the challenge of scaling up can be divided into two solutions: financing interventions at scale and managing delivery to large numbers of beneficiaries. Neither governments, donors, charities, nor corporations are usually capable of overcoming these twin challenges alone, indicating that partnerships are key to success. The book examines a range of business solutions. At the time of writing, the idea of making markets work to reduce poverty is a work-in-progress with much to do to prove itself as an effective method. Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace (PSJP) is undertaking a study to examine this.¹²⁰

The financial crash

Scepticism about the value of private approaches to international development was increased by the financial crisis of 2007–2008. Excessive risk-taking by banks combined with the bursting of the United States housing bubble caused the values of securities tied to U.S. real estate to plummet, damaging financial institutions globally, culminating with the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers on September 15, 2008, which in turn produced an international banking crisis.

The result was the most severe global recession since the Great Depression. It was also followed by the European debt crisis, which began with a deficit in Greece in late 2009, and the 2008–2011 Icelandic financial crisis, which involved the bank failure of all three of the major banks in Iceland. Relative to the size of its economy, the meltdown in Iceland was the largest economic collapse suffered by any country in economic history. It was among the five worst financial crises the world had experienced and led to a loss of more than \$2 trillion from the global economy.

The definitive work on the global financial crisis and its aftermath has been provided by Adam Tooze in *Crashed: How a Decade of Financial Crises Changed the World*.¹²¹ Tooze shows how the effects on the world have been long-lasting and are very much with us today.

Fears that the crash would lead to dramatic reductions in the amount of aid given by donor countries, however, were not realised.¹²² Similarly, philanthropy weathered the storm fairly well and community philanthropy (giving by local people to local institutions) gained ground as a result.¹²³

The rise of resilience

At the same time, the effects on the world of international aid were profound, resulting on a new set of principles about the normative purpose of the field. The old paradigm of 'transition', which had governed international aid in post-communist settings over the 20 years since the collapse of the Berlin Wall, was based on a linear approach to understanding social change in which a results chain of inputs, processes, and outputs leading to desirable outcomes would drive a model of societal improvement. This model would yield failed to explain abrupt systemic changes and crises. Enter the 'resilience paradigm'.

Efforts to address this weakness led to the borrowing of intellectual tools from other disciplines. Inspired by vulnerability studies in the mid-1970s, humanitarian officials increasingly turned their attention to longer-term solutions. This led to the creation of the disaster risk reduction (DRR) approach. The Hyogo Framework for Action – the first internationally accepted framework on DRR, adopted in 2005 – led to what Margareta Wahlström, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction described as the '*first comprehensive attempt to detail the ingredients of resilience*'.¹²⁴

These efforts led the 'transition paradigm' being replaced by a 'resilience paradigm'. In *Resilience, Development and Global Change*, Katrina Brown (2016) notes that resilience is widely promoted as a normative goal in fields as diverse as the economy, national security, personal development, and well-being.¹²⁵

¹²⁰Milner, A., Jordan, L. and van Dogen, S. (2020) 'Making markets work for the common good', Rethinking Poverty. Available from: <https://www.rethinkingpoverty.org.uk/rethinking-poverty/making-markets-work-for-the-common-good/>
¹²¹Tooze, A. (2018) *Crashed: How a decade of financial crises changed the world*, London: Allen Lane
¹²²Dabla-Norris, E., Minoiu, C. and Zanna, L. (2011) 'Will the recent economic downturn, large shocks and debt strains in donor countries have a ripple effect on bilateral aid?' Available from <https://voxeu.org/article/impact-global-crisis-aid-flows-it-over-yet>
¹²³McGill, L. (2020) Foundations and the Great Recession: context for our current crises, Candid. Available from <https://blog.candid.org/post/foundations-and-the-great-recession-context-for-our-current-crises/>
¹²⁴Kindra, J. (2013) 'Understanding resilience', in *The New Humanitarian*. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/understanding-resilience>
¹²⁵Brown, K. (2016) *Resilience, Development and Global Change*. London: Routledge.

The term 'resilience' is an old idea, deriving from the Latin 'resiliens' meaning to 'bounce back'. It was established in English in 1620 and through time has come to mean 'the ability of an ecosystem to respond to a shock or disturbance by resisting damage and recovering quickly'.¹²⁶ The concept of resilience has been used extensively in disciplines as wide-ranging as ecology, psychology, economics, architecture, and genetics. Following the financial crisis of 2008, the term has been increasingly used by development professionals searching for new approaches to tackling poverty.¹²⁷

The British government's *Humanitarian Emergency Response Review* in March 2011 placed resilience 'at the heart of the approach both to longer term development and emergency response', catapulting the word squarely into the mainstream development agenda. By 2012, 'Building resilience' had been invoked as 'a new principle by the UN, donors and NGOs as a way of preventing unacceptable human fatalities and suffering, reducing the costs of emergency responses and developing the abilities to adapt to climate change'.¹²⁸ In 2014, the Montpellier Resilience Conference described resilience as 'a new paradigm for development'. Since then, many donors and implementing agencies have presented resilience as a new standard for development assistance to the public.¹²⁹ The concept of resilience in action in various international settings has recently been reviewed by PSJP.¹³⁰

The SDGs and the rise of systems thinking

By 2015, the philosophy of resilience assumed pride of place in the new UN framework for international development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) used the concept extensively.¹³¹ Goals 9 and 11 specifically called for infrastructure and cities to be made resilient. Goals 1 (eradicating poverty) and 13 (climate action) both identified resilience as a strategic element of achieving them.

According to the study by Katrina Brown, resilience thinking provides a framework for understanding the dynamics of complex, interconnected social, ecological, and economic systems.¹³² The approach is particularly helpful in situations characterized by high uncertainty, globalized and interconnected systems, increasing disparities and limited choices. That means acknowledging that social processes are inherently dynamic, involving historical and societal interactions which produce synergetic results that will always have some unexpected dimensions. This very 'expecting the unexpected' may help to realize trade-offs between different courses of action.¹³³

In this way, a resilience approach overturns orthodox thinking about international development which hitherto had been dominated by modernization, aid dependency, and economic growth. By contrast, resilience uses a systems approach, embracing complexity, to transform responses to climate change, by managing forests and ecosystems, and by addressing rural and urban poverty in the developing world in culturally appropriate ways, driven by the self-determined solutions of communities.

From projects to systems

The resilience paradigm requires a new way operating for funders. Rather than supporting an individual project in the hope that it would uncover a new method for reducing poverty and then be scaled up to deal with this more extensively, the key unit of intervention became to be seen as the system. A 2019 report by the OECD and UNDP demonstrates this view in action:

'At the Osaka Summit, G20 Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the timely implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and helping to ensure that 'no one is left behind.' The 2020 G20 will focus on accelerating the 2030 Agenda implementation and promoting regional connectivity to facilitate employment growth, expedite the flow of goods and services, and improve communication between people.

¹²⁶https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecological_resilience ¹²⁷Hussain, M. (2013) 'Resilience: meaningless jargon or development solution?', in *The Guardian*. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2013/mar/05/resilience-development-buzzwords> ¹²⁸Levine, S., Pain, A., Bailey, S. and Fan, L. (2012) 'The relevance of 'resilience?'. Overseas Development Institute (ODI). Available at: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/Resilience%20-%20HPG%20Policy%20Brief%2049%20Sept%202012.pdf> ¹²⁹Gahramanova, A. (2018) 'Resilience approach - a new paradigm in international development?'. Around the Caspian. Available at: caspianet.eu/2018/11/22/resilience-approach-a-new-paradigm-in-international-development/ ¹³⁰The review can be found here: <https://www.greengrants.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Building-resilience-in-international-development-Jan-2021.pdf>. ¹³¹The Sustainable Development Goals can be found here https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals?utm_source=EN&utm_medium=GSR&utm_content=US_UNDP_PaidSearch_Brand_English&utm_campaign=CENTRAL&c_src=CENTRAL&c_src2=GSR&gclid=CjwKCAjwi6WSBhA-EiwA6Niok3QXfuRQyZjwih_zL7PsoevW6lgPg5EVz9SGvOcG4eZPkxPkAmyMChoC4vQQAvD_BwE ¹³²Brown (2016) op. cit. ¹³³Gahramanova (2018) op. cit.

G20 members will also be encouraged to scale up their efforts in sharing good practices on SDGs implementation and strengthening accountability mechanisms. The contribution of health to the overall goal of creating a stable and prosperous economy has been firmly acknowledged by the G20. Effective and resilient health systems underpin human capital and long-term prosperity of countries. G20 members face multiple, often-interacting challenges such as rapidly changing demographics, surges in costs and sub-optimal health system effectiveness and responsiveness while striving to develop sustainable person-centered health systems that deliver universal health coverage...

...Addressing this often requires innovation and transformative change in systems, thus the Saudi G20 Presidency will work with members to scale and enable innovative approaches, focusing on value-based health care and digital health solutions.¹³⁴

The priority given to systems showed a new maturity in the field that recognizes the key cybernetic principle of 'requisite variety', namely that the solutions to any given problem must be greater than the complexity of the problem itself. This means that the unit of analysis must include the field of concern, rather than just one simple component of it – such as a pilot project. A common expression in the field is 'field building for systems change'.

Organizations that have pioneered field building for systems change include Ariadne,¹³⁵ the Lankelly Chase Foundation¹³⁶ and Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors.¹³⁷ There is also a growing literature on philanthropic collaboration, which has been summarized by Collaborate.¹³⁸ More recently, WINGS has taken the lead in pioneering a systems approach, and in 2021 completed a major project called Acting together to lift up philanthropy, which sets out how philanthropy support organizations can use systems theory to deliver effective philanthropy.¹³⁹

A helpful guide called *Systems change: What it is and how to do it* is based on the ideas of systems theory, ecology, and field building produced by NPC with support from Lankelly Chase.¹⁴⁰ This is full of useful principles and practical advice about: understanding needs and assets; engaging multiple actors; mapping systems; working together; distributive leadership; and fostering a learning culture.

At the same time, the guide points out: *'There is no blueprint for how to bring about systems change, and it certainly is not an easy thing to do. Changing the way systems operate requires vision, persistence and, in some cases, luck. At its core, systems change is about maximising social impact with the resources available and thinking strategically about problems and solutions while setting aside personal and institutional interests.'*

The conclusion from the NPC guide is that there is no 'right way' of doing systems change and the appropriate methodology will depend on the situation. Unfortunately, there are few current examples of how this is being done, though promising work is being undertaken by the RSA and New Economics Foundations on Health as a social movement: Theory into practice¹⁴¹ and the Near Network on Transforming the humanitarian financing landscape.¹⁴²

As the NPC work shows, most literature on systems change is aspirational rather than empirical. While there is a wealth of material that says, 'we need to address systems change', there is little that says, 'we have addressed systems change'. More recently, the Lankelly Chase Foundation has laid greater stress on what it calls 'system behaviours', suggesting that there are three broad categories to be considered when seeking positive and healthy change in any organization, community or system: *'perspective, participation and power'*.¹⁴³

Notwithstanding the indeterminacy of systems thinking, it is clear that this approach has the attention of much of the field.

¹³⁴The report can be found here: <https://www.oecd.org/g20/topics/agenda-2030-development/G20-SDG-Report.pdf> ¹³⁵Ariadne's work can be found here: <https://www.ariadne-network.eu> ¹³⁶The Lankelly Chase Foundation can be found here: <https://lankellychase.org.uk> ¹³⁷The work of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors on systems change can be found here: <https://www.rockpa.org/project/shifting-systems/> ¹³⁸Kippin, H. and Swinson Reid, R. (2016) A new funding ecology – A blueprint for action, London: Collaborate, Big Lottery Fund and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation ¹³⁹The WINGS guide, which is the most comprehensive document so far produced can be accessed here: <https://buildingthepse.wingsweb.org> ¹⁴⁰The guide can be found here: <https://www.thinknpc.org/resource-hub/systems-change-a-guide-to-what-it-is-and-how-to-do-it/> ¹⁴¹The RSA and New Economics Foundation can be found here: <https://neweconomics.org/2018/05/health-social-movement-theory-practice/> ¹⁴²The NEAR Network's work can be found here: https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/sites/default/files/publications/near_network_financial_strategy.pdf ¹⁴³The system behaviours can be seen here: <https://lankellychase.org.uk/system-behaviours/>

In a podcast, Alliance editor, Charles Keidan discussed what it means to conduct philanthropy 'at scale' with Rakesh Rajani of Co-Impact¹⁴⁴ and Donzelina Barroso of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors.¹⁴⁵ The discussion showed that, not content to simply fund projects, activities or organizations, some of today's philanthropists have much bolder ambitions. They want to shift the systems which cause social problems to exist in the first place.

Systems-change philanthropy, as it is known, is linked to a more strategic or catalytic approach associated with building partnerships across sectors and leveraging resources with the aim of creating maximum social impact.

Donzelina Barroso and Naamah Paley Rose suggest that issues that have classically been addressed through public policy – issues such as ocean warming, migration, and the increased pressure on urban areas – are now more global and interconnected in nature.¹⁴⁶ They require different solutions and for foundations and high-profile individual donors to take on these challenges.

In recent years, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (RPA), has partnered with the Skoll Foundation and other funders to facilitate research, learning events and discussions between grantees and donors around the topic of Scaling Solutions.¹⁴⁷ The initiative, launched in 2016, points to a clear need for holistic, systems-based approaches that look at the totality of social problems, not just discrete issues to be solved with a specific grant programme. Moreover, it also recognizes grantees, donors, and communities should serve as equal partners.

Systems thinking has overtaken philanthro-capitalism, which is now widely seen as a failure.

As Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors put it: *'Strategic philanthropy's prescriptive and frequently onerous requirements of grantees has not generated desired results.'*¹⁴⁸

And so, enter 'Co-Impact'.¹⁴⁹ Some of the philanthro-capitalists re-invented themselves in a humbler and more Global South oriented posture, which pools funds to support system change. Partners in Co-Impact include the Rockefeller Foundation, Richard Chandler, Bill and Melinda Gates, Jeff Skoll and Romesh and Kathy Wadhvani. Co-Impact is a \$500 million collaboration to bring *'large-scale, sustainable change to underserved populations across the developing world in the critical areas of health, education, and economic opportunity'*.

The EkStep Foundation, co-founded by Indian philanthropists, Rohini and Nandan Nilekani, serves as technical partner. Described by Fortune as a new way for billionaires 'to give their money away', Co-Impact promises systems change grants of 'up to \$50 million over several years' to 'initiatives with proven leaders and results which are poised to scale even further'.

Even though these are early days, Nancy MacPherson, Advisor, South to South Evaluation Initiative (S2SE), offers:

*'Congratulations to Rakesh Rajani and the Co-impact team at the Rockefeller Foundation for their commitment to a listening and learning, collaborative, user-driven approach to monitoring and evaluation, instead of the usual top-down accountability metrics imposed on grantees, partners and constituents. If Co-Impact succeeds in resourcing and genuinely implementing this approach (with field partners, grantees and constituents) they will be among a handful of Foundation leaders who actually 'walk the talk' in reversing the asymmetries of power, voice and agency in learning what works. We should do everything possible to help them succeed in stepping up to this long overdue leadership role in philanthropy and development.'*¹⁵⁰

Shilpa Jain, coordinator of the Global Youth Leadership Conference, contributes a different but highly important perspective on the matter of scaling up systems.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁴For more on Co-Impact, visit <http://www.co-impact.io/> ¹⁴⁵The podcast is here: <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/analysis/systems-change-at-scale/> ¹⁴⁶Barroso, D. and Paley Rose, N (2018) New approaches to scale: make sure the talk turns to action, Alliance, March. Available at <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/analysis/new-approaches-scale-le-make-sure-talk-turns-action/> ¹⁴⁷For details of this initiative, see: <https://www.rockpa.org/scaling-considerations-european-donors/> ¹⁴⁸This quotation can be found at: <https://www.rockpa.org/scaling-considerations-european-donors/> ¹⁴⁹<https://www.co-impact.org> ¹⁵⁰This was a comment written on the Alliance website in response to the podcast on what it means to conduct philanthropy at scale. This can be found here: <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/analysis/systems-change-at-scale/> ¹⁵¹The response by Shilpa Jain can be found here: <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/analysis/rethinking-scale-a-response/>

She writes:

'For most, the concept of going to scale invokes a sense of the large, the systemic, the external. It brings to mind replication, expansion and spread – like tentacles, ever-reaching, ever-growing. But taking a single project, or a concept, and trying to make it "work" for everyone leads to forced, false constructs and a single vision of "success" or "the good life". It negates the beauty of the diversity of human existence...

...Instead, we at the Global Youth Leadership Collaborative (GC) invite a different perspective on scale – inviting a billion flowers to bloom into many possibilities of human life. As the Zapatistas say, "we want a world that embraces many worlds". Going to scale for us means linking the personal, the interpersonal and the systemic levels of change. We have to look at who we are as people today, what is happening in our relationships, and what is happening in the communities and world we live in, then try to bring each level into alignment with our deepest values.

The GC formed about three years ago. We are a group of 15 activists from 13 countries, including Peru, Brazil, Bolivia, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, India, Thailand, Senegal, Kenya, Aotearoa/New Zealand, Canada and the US. We work on environmental justice, building learning communities, healthy food systems, indigenous sovereignty, cultural articulation, sustainability, health and healing, and more. Our community grew out of the World Youth Leadership Jams, events co-organized by YES! (www.yesworld.org) and a number of other organizations. Jams pull together a diverse community for a week based on community building, personal reflection, and commitment to social change.

Together, we at the GC administer a flow fund, in which a pool of money is divided up equally among all our members, who are connected deeply to the work and context of communities.

We believe people on the ground understand the needs of our times and are able to use our rootedness and nimbleness to affect transformative change. We have hosted many different gatherings for young activists in our regions and countries, supported media projects that link diverse and divided communities, and numerous other efforts. We believe in getting a "big bang for the buck", which can happen only when resources are in the right hands. In the process of having conversations that matter, we have realized that one size does not fit all – and 'scaling up' doesn't work.

So, we find ourselves committed to greater sovereignty and freedom from the control, hierarchies, destruction and inequalities that come with extraction-based and techno-industrial development. It means asking ourselves if our actions (1) promote appreciation of each individual's passion and contributions; (2) build community and interdependence, especially across difference; (3) challenge injustices and system breakdowns; (4) replenish nature; and (5) lead to greater local sovereignty and decision-making in peoples' hands. We want measurements that matter (like Jacques Ellul's "76 reasonable questions to ask of any technology").

For us, scale is about connections, among self, community, nature, and the divine. It's about building communities across deep divides, understanding the interdependence of all issues and contexts, and recognizing that each of us has something unique and valuable to contribute in this web of change. Making space for, and supporting the flow of, these connections is a crucial element of going to scale.'

This account gives a quite different approach to scaling up. Rather than conceiving it as a technocratic exercise, it is an organic one. An organic approach is used by the emerging field of community philanthropy.

Jenny Hodgson explains how an organic approach works:

'At face value, the approach may appear simple - even simplistic - when contrasted with the more traditional development paradigm, with its planned interventions that are linear, time-bound, scalable, and must be able to be replicated in any number of contexts. But change here is navigated and negotiated through multiple non-linear actions, interactions and relationships, through seeding and nurturing, rather than controlling and through the development of new norms and behaviours which, cumulatively, can shift the dynamics of the wider system. In community philanthropy, noted one practitioner, "We may look like we are supporting projects, but we are supporting processes of change."

¹⁵²

The difference between the Co-Impact approach to systems change that of community philanthropy rests on the difference between two adjectives that are commonly confused yet are very different - 'complicated' and 'complex'.¹⁵³

Complicated problems originate from causes that can be individually distinguished; they can be addressed piece by piece; for each input to the system there is a proportionate output; the relevant systems can be controlled and the problems they present admit specific and lasting solutions.

Complex problems, on the other hand, result from networks of multiple interacting causes that cannot be individually distinguished. They must be addressed as entire systems, and individual components cannot be addressed in a piecemeal way, because small inputs may result in disproportionate effects. The problems they present cannot be solved once and for all, but require to be systematically managed, since any intervention often merges into new problems as a result of those interventions. Such systems cannot be controlled – the best one can do is to influence them, or – in the words of Donella Meadows, lead author of the classic study of systems theory *Limits to Growth*, - 'learn to dance with them'.¹⁵⁴

In an insightful article, Chris Allen and A. Scott Dupree show that community philanthropy embraces the complexity of systems theory to understand engagement with, between and beyond communities.¹⁵⁵ This is an appropriate perspective because the field of international development engages with problems that grow ever more complex by the day.

#ShiftThePower and the rise of community philanthropy

The organic examples of development cited above, particularly Shilpa Jain's reference to the desire for 'greater sovereignty and freedom from the control, hierarchies, destruction and inequalities that come with extraction-based and techno-industrial development', brings us to a central issue - power.

What is striking is the extent to which what happens in international aid is driven by the supply side of the industry. Consider the following story told by Warren Feek from the Communication Initiative. It shows that well-meaning external interventions into communities commonly yield results that local people don't want: *'Every day, for generation after generation, women in one particular village walked down the hill to the river, filled vessels with fresh water, and carried them up the hill to serve their families and communities throughout the coming day. A large, major development organization installed pumps, pipes, and taps in order to alleviate the burden of this exhausting and demanding activity. However, the women of the village were disgruntled, complained, and worked against this technological intervention.*

*Getting the water every morning was the one process through which women themselves could gather safely as women. They could connect, share, and discuss issues from their own perspectives. They could organize on areas of common interest. They could provide support for their friends experiencing problems - for example, domestic violence. They could have a bit of fun together. The new water system would take all of that away.'*¹⁵⁶

¹⁵² Hodgson, J. (2020) 'Disrupting and democratising development: community philanthropy as theory and practice', *Gender & Development*, 28:1, 99-116, DOI: 10.1080/13552074.2020.1717214 ¹⁵³ Blignaut, S (2019) "Seven differences between complex and complicated", Medium, 19 August, available from: <https://sonjablignaut.medium.com/7-differences-between-complex-and-complicated-fa44e0844606> ¹⁵⁴ Meadows, D.H., Meadows, D.I., Randers, J. and Behrens, W.W. (1972) *The Limits to Growth*, A Report to the Club of Rome. A helpful summary can be found here: <http://www.ask-force.org/web/Global-Warming/Meadows-Limits-to-Growth-Short-1972.pdf>. The classic study and its lasting resonance are described here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Limits_to_Growth ¹⁵⁵ Allen, C. and Dupree, A.S. (2018) 'Resilient funders: How funders are responding to the closing space for civil society', *Foundation Review*, 10, 2. ¹⁵⁶ Feek, W. (2019) 'Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality: An evidence-based strategy and investment paper for consideration by the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)', The Communication Initiative Network. Available from: <https://www.comminit.com/content/empowering-people-and-ensuring-inclusiveness-and-equality-evidence-based-strategy-and-in>

Warren Feek says that he has heard hundreds of similar stories in his time at the Communications Initiative. Moreover, this anecdote is backed up by survey data that suggest that people on the receiving end of aid don't want what the organizations deliver. In their report *Time to listen: hearing people on the receiving end of international aid*, Mary Anderson, Dayna Brown and Isabella Jean assembled the views of almost 6,000 people.¹⁵⁷ Their work suggests widespread dissatisfaction. Three complaints are commonplace. First, aid creates dependency; second, it reinforces existing hierarchies of power; and third, it has little respect for local people.

Gerry Salole, in a hard-hitting article called *The development set and its role in perpetuating poverty*, shows how conferences to discuss poverty in five-star hotels have, over 70 years failed to solve the problem in part because local needs are not taken seriously enough. He says:

*'...despite the work of people like Robert Chambers ('Putting the Last First'), organizations have become masters at packaging their interventions to make them look like people have asked for precisely the support they happen to offer - as Andrew Milner points out in his recent article 'The Enigma of Kaspar Hauser', which laments the ever-widening gap between foundations and the people they claim to serve: "Most of us are not poor, but we write and talk about poverty ... When we invite them [people living in poverty] to our gatherings, we either yammer at them uncritically or give them ten minutes on the microphone, applaud effusively ... then go back to talking to each other." Which leads me to wonder: is the development set guilty of having a need to feel needed (indispensable even)? Along with the assumption that people need and want our help, this is a dangerous cocktail...'*¹⁵⁸

Considerations such as these have led to a growing recognition that we can no longer ignore what Hilary Gilbert calls the *'open secret of development'*, namely that unless power is shared with local people in developing policies, programmes and projects,

development aid will continue to fail, because local people will be at the same place at the end of the programme as they were at the beginning.¹⁵⁹

This is a structural problem for international aid and one of the reasons for its persistent failure.

The response of the field has been what has become known as 'localization'. This idea gained attention at the time of the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit. The International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) defines localization as a process where international humanitarian actors shift power and responsibilities of development and humanitarian aid efforts toward local and national actors while fully supporting humanitarian needs.¹⁶⁰

Both the Charter for Change and the Grand Bargain agreements attempt to engage INGOs with their local and national counterparts to create actionable agendas towards localization. The six core components of localization are partnerships, funding, capacity, coordination and complementarity, policy, influence and visibility, and participation.

A common weakness has emerged among INGOs looking to localize. The focus is often narrowly on funding rather than exploring other elements such as partnership and capacity building. And here, a serious difficulty emerges. Nearly all humanitarian financial resources end up in the budgets of international actors.

COVID-19 has brought the asymmetries of power into sharp relief, exposing the deep-rooted vulnerabilities of southern civil society, which are the product of systematic under-resourcing of institutions and tight restrictions on how any funding is used. Early indications suggest that only a tiny proportion of donor funding for COVID-19 is reaching local and national civil society.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁷ Anderson, M., Brown, D. and Jean, I. (2012) Time to listen: hearing people on the receiving end of international aid, CDA. Available from <http://cdacollaborative.org/publications/listening-program/lp-books-and-major-reports/time-to-listen-hearing-people-on-the-receiving-end-of-international-aid/> ¹⁵⁸Salole, G. (2018) The development set and its role in perpetuating poverty', Rethinking Poverty. Available from: <https://www.rethinkingpoverty.org.uk/response-to-rethinking-poverty/development-set-role-perpetuating-poverty/>. ¹⁵⁹ Gilbert, H. (2018) Time to #ShiftThePower? Community philanthropy and durable development, Johannesburg: Global Fund for Community Foundations ¹⁶⁰ICVA (2019) Unpacking localization, The Humanitarian Leadership Academy. Available at: <https://www.humanitarianleadershipacademy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Whitepaper-Localisation-Online.pdf> ¹⁶¹ United Nations (2020) A UN framework for the immediate response to COVID-19. Available from: <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/UN-framework-for-the-immediate-socio-economic-response-to-COVID-19.pdf>

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This is not a new problem. For example, a 2016 Lund University study of humanitarian aid in Syria showed that while 'Syrian humanitarian actors were responsible for delivering 75 per cent of humanitarian assistance in 2014, they received only 0.3 per cent of the direct and 9.3 per cent of the indirect cash funding available for the Syrian response'.¹⁶³

The Grand Bargain has not made this better. Nils Carstensen has studied the figures and concluded that Grand Bargain signatory governments have not increased direct funding flows to local and national organizations since signing the agreement.¹⁶⁴

Given these findings, it is unsurprising that local and national NGOs fail to see sincere progress toward localization since the 2016 Humanitarian Summit. In a letter published in Open Democracy during the early phases of COVID-19, over 100 Global South-based organizations called for a stronger and more collaborative effort to strengthen localization efforts.¹⁶⁵ In particular, it asked INGO leaders to:

- Ensure local organizations have an equal role in the creation and monitoring of projects and budgets.
- Evaluate progress on localization not merely on the project level but on the ability to support local organizations.
- Create opportunities for local and national NGOs to directly access donor funding.

- Explore the use of national pooled funds where local organizations control donor funds to a designated country.
- Create a budget line item that allocates funds directly to local organizations or a national pooled fund.
- Create long-term plans with local organizations that support their strategic mission and assist them with needed organizational and technical resources.
- Enable global development and humanitarian systems to adapt to the current crisis means providing resources to local organizations because they are on the front-line
- Overcome language barriers by translating documents into local languages. As long as INGOs operate primarily using English, local organizations' ability to communicate to the international community will remain limited.
- Include the work of local organizations in promotional materials.
- Avoid the use of 'poverty porn'—exploitative imagery that advances negative stereotypes about the Global South.

This letter is tangible evidence that, over the past two decades, a new force has been steadily growing from the communities that have been subject to international aid. There has been a flowering of local funders that put the principle of subsidiarity into practice.¹⁶⁶ A 2011 report for the Ford Foundation noted:

*'The immense challenges of climate change, world recession, retreat of the state and mounting inequality, not only threaten the future of the world, but are also breeding a cadre of interesting organizations working from the bottom up of our societies. There is a raft of social enterprises, community philanthropies, social movements, protest groups, women's funds, and hybrid forms that defy easy categorization.'*¹⁶⁷

¹⁶¹Konyndyk, J. (2020) Humanitarian financing is failing the frontlines, Center for Global Development. Available at: <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/humanitarian-financing-failing-covid-19-frontlines> ¹⁶²Els, C., Kholoud, M. and Carstensen, N. (2016) Funding to Syrian humanitarian actors: Between sub-contracting and partnership. Local to Global Protection. Available from: https://lucris.lub.lu.se/ws/portalfiles/portal/61904068/Publication5_L2GP_funding_Syria_May_2016.pdf ¹⁶³Carstensen, N. (2019) Funding to local actors still far from Grand Bargain commitments, Local to Global Protection. Available from: https://www.local2global.info/wp-content/uploads/GB_funding_flows_2019.pdf ¹⁶⁴The letter is available here: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/transformation/an-open-letter-to-international-ngos-who-are-looking-to-localise-their-operations/> ¹⁶⁵The principle of subsidiarity, which was developed as part of Catholic Social Teaching, states: What individuals can accomplish by their own initiative and efforts should not be taken from them by a higher authority. It is interpreted in the social sphere as meaning that decisions should be taken by those closest to the situation for which the decision has immediate consequences, since they are most likely to find the best answer. ¹⁶⁶Knight, B. (2011) Supporting Democratic Philanthropy: Lessons from Ford Foundation Programs, New York: Ford Foundation

The report charted the rise of a 'new democratic movement in philanthropy' through the growth of: *'... community foundations, women's funds, human rights funds, and peace funds. Such funds play important interstitial roles in society, harness the power of small grants, build constituencies among people who are oppressed and marginalized, and negotiate the territory between such marginalized groups and governments.'*

The emergence of such initiatives challenges the paradigm of development aid being delivered from the top-down. Echoing the desires of the Third World Community Development Movement of 70 years ago, people classed as beneficiaries wish to take control of their communities and to reshape the aid architecture so that they are equal partners in development. As philanthropy adviser Jon Edwards has put it: *'Local people are coming together in order to take back control of their own communities, of their own destinies: fighting not just against the often vengeful ineptitude of local and national politics and business but also against agencies previously assumed to be allies in the struggles against poverty, marginalization and vulnerability – the international development sector itself.'*¹⁶⁸

These developments have led to a social movement. Jenny Hodgson and her colleagues at the Global Fund for Community Organizations developed the #ShiftThePower campaign.¹⁶⁹ Based on years of careful grantmaking to develop community philanthropy, the campaign aims to tip the balance of power towards local people and away from external agencies in resource allocation in development aid and philanthropy. It suggests that organizations in the development space to become small at the centre and transfer power to the edges. Resources should be allocated based on the principle of 'subsidiarity' – a principle that requires that social and political issues are dealt with at the most immediate (or local) level that is consistent with their resolution. As well as putting power where it belongs, this model has fewer transaction costs.¹⁷⁰

The #ShiftThePower Summit

A turning point in the campaign was the Global Summit on Community Philanthropy held in Johannesburg in December 2016.¹⁷¹ The summit brought together some 350 people from more than 60 different countries. Its aim was not only to recognise and celebrate a growing global community philanthropy movement, but also to invite a broader range of people and organizations working in different parts of the development system to join forces and work together towards a new paradigm of people-led development.

The meeting was extraordinarily successful and tweets from the meeting trended in many countries as a result. Follow-up evaluations of this meeting, one after a few months and the second after two years, showed that the gathering had not only validated the appetite to #ShiftThePower, but had also produced a social movement, welding together activist funders in the Global South and Central Eastern Europe and Russia as well as parts of the US and Canada.

According to a recent article by Jenny Hodgson, *Disrupting and democratising development: community philanthropy as theory and practice*, community philanthropy has the potential both to revivify a sclerotic aid system from the bottom up.¹⁷² She writes: *'We define community philanthropy as a value-driven development practice that builds assets, capacities, and trust. In particular, it focuses on the role that local resources can play in community development, and how their presence can help influence power dynamics associated with international development. Ultimately, we show that community philanthropy is not merely emerging as a useful support structure on which mainstream development can build, but that it is far more radical than this. Community philanthropy practised by organizations with their roots in civil society and social justice movements can disrupt and democratise the system and create an alternative to 'development' as we know it.'*

¹⁶⁸Edwards, J. (2019) '45° Change shows the way', Rethinking Poverty, available from <https://www.rethinkingpoverty.org.uk/45-degree-change/45-change-shows-the-way/> ¹⁶⁹Hodgson, J. and Knight, B. (2016) '#ShiftThePower: the rise of community philanthropy', Alliance, <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/feature/shiftthepower-rise-community-philanthropy/>. Hodgson, J. and Pond, A. (2018) 'How community philanthropy shifts power: what donors can do to help make that happen', Grantcraft. Available from: https://learningforfunders.candid.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/12/Community_Philanthropy_paper.pdf ¹⁷⁰Hodgson, J. and Knight, B. (2010) 'More than the Poor Cousin? The emergence of community foundations as a new paradigm', Global Fund for Community Foundations, <https://www.issuelab.org/resource/more-than-the-poor-cousin-the-emergence-of-community-foundations-as-a-new-development-paradigm.html> ¹⁷¹Hodgson, J. and Knight, B. (2016) '#ShiftThePower: The rise of community philanthropy', Alliance, Vol. 21 No 4, December, pp 31-5 ¹⁷²Hodgson, J. (2020) 'Disrupting and democratising development: community philanthropy as theory and practice', Gender & Development, 28:1, 99-116, DOI: 10.1080/13552074.2020.1717214

A problem inhibiting the growth of community philanthropy is its invisibility to most external funders.¹⁷³ This reflects a wider problem that changemakers working in are often invisible to the outside world and so receive little external support. As we have seen from the statistics coming from the Grant Bargain, very little money from funders reaches the grassroots. Jessica Neuwirth of Donor Direct Action has recently noted: *'When governments in the global north provide aid to the global south, they rarely invest directly in the organizations that are already making a difference on the ground.'*¹⁷⁴

Stephen Pittam, Trustee of the Polden Puckham Foundation, agrees. At an Alliance breakfast meeting discussing a special issue of philanthropy and peacebuilding in June 2019, he noted: *'The role of philanthropy should be to strengthen civil society in an adventurous way, particularly at community level and to support community institutions...'*¹⁷⁵

In Black Lives Matter is also a reckoning for foreign aid and international NGOs, Degan Ali and Marie Rose Romaine Murphy point out: *'The ultimate barriers to moving our communities from passive 'recipients' of aid to equal partners are rooted in failed systems that we need to break down and reconstruct.'*

They also comment: *'A reckoning also requires us to settle the history of the foundation of the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions - the IMF, World Bank and World Trade Organization - that maintain the economic and political hegemony of the US empire and former colonizers. The ultimate barriers to moving our communities from passive 'recipients' of aid to equal partners are rooted in failed systems that we need to break down and reconstruct.'*¹⁷⁶

In a Guardian article with a similar title *Aid spending in Africa must be African-led - it needs a Black Lives Matter reckoning*, Dedo Baranshamaje, director of innovation

at the Segal Family Foundation and Katie Bunten-Wamaru, executive director of the African Visionary Fund:

*'Worldwide, more than 99 per cent of humanitarian and philanthropic funding goes to predominantly white-led international NGOs. Despite Africa's growing and dynamic social sector, only 5.2 per cent of US foundation giving to Africa goes to African-led organizations.'*¹⁷⁷

Discussions underway in the field, inspired by Black Lives Matter, focus on the 'white saviour' myth. For example, Comic Relief has decided to stop sending white celebrities to Africa for photo- opportunities.¹⁷⁸

This matters because the legacy of colonialism remains strong and its association with development aid is a problem that needs to be addressed. In an article called *Colonialism had never really ended: my life in the shadow of Cecil Rhodes*, Oxford professor Simukai Chigudu shows its long term effects on the way that Africans are treated in Britain.¹⁷⁹

He shows that the deleterious consequences of how Colonialism and its sense of progress not only brought a new and unsympathetic world view to traditional communities but the consequences are still evident.¹⁸⁰

Colonialism involved the centralization of political power, the development of cultural homogeneity based on a white supremacist paradigm, and the forging of large economic units for the purposes of capital accumulation, market coherence and productive capacity.¹⁸¹ The purpose of this was to give primacy to political and economic interests in the Global North. New political administrations, particularly of the colonial variety, rode roughshod over local tribal or community divisions. In many parts of Africa, for example, nation states were fashioned out of arbitrary divisions of territory by colonial powers. It was common to use lines of latitude and longitude, rather than the perceptions of local people.

¹⁷³Hodgson, J. and Knight, B. (2010) More than the poor cousin: Community foundations as a new development paradigm, Johannesburg: Global Fund for Community Foundations. Available from <https://globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/morethanthe poorcousin.pdf> ¹⁷⁴Neuwirth, J. (2017) 'Too little money is reaching grassroots women's organizations', The New Humanitarian, 31 July. Available from <https://deeply.thenewhumanitarian.org/womensadvancement/community/2017/07/31/too-little-aid-money-is-reaching-grassroots-womens-organizations> ¹⁷⁵These comments were made at an Alliance Breakfast Meeting on 26 June 2019. See <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/blog/watch-the-alliance-breakfast-club-live-on-facebook-26-june-2019/> ¹⁷⁶Ali, D. and Murphy, R.M. (2020) 'Black Lives Matter is also a reckoning for foreign aid and international NGOs', Open Democracy, 19 July. Available from: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/transformation/black-lives-matter-also-reckoning-foreign-aid-and-international-ngos/> ¹⁷⁷Baranshamaje, D. and Bunten-Wamaru, K. (2021) 'Aid spending in Africa must be African-led - it needs a Black Lives Matter reckoning', The Guardian, 11 January, Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/jan/11/aid-spending-in-africa-must-be-african-led-it-needs-a-black-lives-matter-reckoning> ¹⁷⁸<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-54716750> ¹⁷⁹Chigudu, S. (2021) 'Colonialism had never really ended': my life in the shadow of Cecil Rhodes, The Guardian, 14 January. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2021/jan/14/rhodes-must-fall-oxford-colonialism-zimbabwe-simukai-chigudu> ¹⁸⁰Chigudu, S. (2021) 'Colonialism had never really ended': my life in the shadow of Cecil Rhodes, The Guardian, 14 January ¹⁸¹Knight, B., Chigudu, H. and Tandon, R. (2002) Reviving democracy, London: Earthscan

Moreover, these imposed arrangements involved forcible unification, as well as forcible division. Most existing African polities were smaller than the European colonies that replaced them so that different political units were often treated as one by their colonial rulers without regard for their differences. To develop the economies of the new states, colonial powers usually effected a transition from the subsistence to the market economy, a process which tended to make local communities poorer because the market system filtered wealth up and out of the local economy into the hands of the local and international elites who pocketed surplus value from the efforts of primary producers in villages. Political elites often managed the resulting economic distress among local communities through a policy of divide and rule, setting one local community against another and unleashing the psychic forces that produce communal violence (Gurr, 1993).¹⁸²

INGOs in retreat

The #ShiftThePower campaign demands changed behaviour from INGOs because they are seen as emblematic of a colonial approach. They face growing calls to shift their considerable power – much of which still tends to be concentrated in global headquarters – towards civil society in the global South (Doane 2019).¹⁸³

Recent safeguarding scandals, accelerated by the #AidToo and #MeToo movements, have both dented public trust and raised questions around accountability and institutional cultures within many INGOs. Scandals at Save the Children and Oxfam UK show, in the words of the International Development Committee of MPs, an *'object failure'* to deal with longstanding concerns about sexual exploitation. In addressing the issue, the organizations showed more concern for their reputations than for the victims.¹⁸⁴

While the scandal first broke in 2018, the problem has still not gone away. In January 2021, a report by the International Development Committee of the House

of Commons found that the sexual abuse and exploitation of local women by international aid workers remains 'rife', and the sector is the 'last safe haven' for perpetrators. A parliamentary inquiry found evidence of widespread abuse of beneficiaries, ineffective investigations, and whistle-blowers forced out of jobs, despite a series of recent scandals that had prompted some reforms.¹⁸⁵

The business model used by INGOs is out of date. As Michael Edwards points out, many INGOs were first designed in the 1950s and *'have become a comfortable part of the furniture of foreign aid'*, while continuing to use the same business model despite the dramatic changes in context that have taken place since (Edwards 2016).¹⁸⁶ While progressive INGOs may understand poverty as the outcome of marginalisation and inequality, this does not necessarily always translate into practice when it comes to day-to-day operations.

At times, northern institutions stand accused of undermining southern civil society peers by co-opting the rhetoric of, say, gender equality and women's rights, in order to access funding from donors in the global North to deliver programmes which are based on business principles and hard financial calculations (Al-Karib 2018).¹⁸⁷

At the same time, the closing space for civil society, in which dictators across the world have cracked down on human rights activism, is causing INGOs to back away from engaging in overtly political work in partnership with local activists around issues of rights, particularly if it might jeopardise their ability to implement more neutral service delivery programmes in the same country (Hodgson, 2020).¹⁸⁸ Finally, as INGOs 'localise' their structures and register as local organizations, many are actively involved in fundraising in those countries too, with all the advantages of a global communications support structure. This can have the effect of undermining and even crowding out the efforts of local civil society organizations that are looking to build public support for their work, often in the face of limited access to other funding sources.

¹⁸² Gurr, T. (1993) *Minorities at Risk: A global View of ethno-political conflicts*, Institute of Peace Press, Washington DC ¹⁸³ Doane, D. (2019) *Are INGOs ready to give up power?*, Open Democracy, 10 December. Available from: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/transformation/are-ingos-ready-give-power/> ¹⁸⁴ Ratcliffe, R. (2018) *MPs accuse aid groups of "object failure" in tackling sexual abuse*, The Guardian, 31 July. Available from <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/jul/31/mps-accuse-aid-groups-of-object-failure-in-tackling-sexual-abuse> ¹⁸⁵ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5801/cmselect/cmintdev/605/60502.htm> ¹⁸⁶ Edwards, M. (2016) *What is to be done with Oxfam?* Open Democracy, 1 August. Available from: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/transformation/what-is-to-be-done-with-oxfam/> ¹⁸⁷ Al-Karib, H. (2018) *The dangers of NGO-isation of women's rights in Africa*, Aljazeera, 13 December. Available from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2018/12/13/the-dangers-of-ngo-isation-of-womens-rights-in-africa/> ¹⁸⁸ Hodgson, J. (2020) *'Disrupting and democratising development: Community philanthropy theory and practice'*, Gender and Development, 28, 1, March. Available from: <https://www.genderanddevelopment.org/281-reimagining-international-development/>

Increasingly, INGOs are being asked to consider their future role in the global civil society eco-system, as sources of solidarity rather than as competitors, extractors, or resource-holders. Moreover, some argue that competition among INGOs for funding and a general bureaucratisation of the aid industry have also had the effect of diverting many away from their original values and purpose (Glennie 2018¹⁸⁹; Steets and Derzi-Horvath 2016¹⁹⁰). The more that charities seek growth, market share and influence, the factors behind the ambition tend to subvert the noble charitable goals of the institutions. According to former staff member Jonathan Glennie, one of the goals of Save the Children was to *'take down Oxfam'*¹⁹¹. The desire for growth and influence have led to falls from grace of other charities, including Silicon Valley Community Foundation whose relentless search for growth led to a culture of 'bullying and harassment'.¹⁹² These developments have been the last in a long line of events that have reduced trust in charities, which has hit an 'all-time low'.¹⁹³

At the Pathways to Power Symposium in London in November 2019¹⁹⁴, one participant suggested that, in their current form, INGOs are not needed unless they are prepared to ask, *'How do international civic organizations empower and support the local?'* The symposium concluded that community philanthropy has much to offer conversations around participation in and ownership over 'development', civil society legitimacy, and power that can help inform in this process of 'right-sizing' of INGOs and re-configuration within the global civil society space.

Although the organised field of community philanthropy is still relatively young, it constitutes an increasingly well-documented and theorised field of practice, which can offer insights and examples for development actors (including INGOs and funders) who are looking to re-think their roles within the larger effort to achieve economic and social justice for people in the global South. To date, however, community philanthropy does

not form part of the INGO 'playbook' of alternative strategies worth exploring. This is not only unfortunate, but culturally inappropriate because community philanthropy is deeply embedded in the societies in the Global South. Systems of community giving and self-help have always existed within different cultures and traditions around the world. Throughout history, people have found ways to organise their resources collectively to fulfil specific needs. Examples include the minga, or community work day, in Latin America; harambee in Kenya; bayanihan in the Philippines; qogolela in Zimbabwe; stokvels in South Africa; and hometown associations in Mexico, as well as other types of burial societies, merry-go-rounds, and co-operatives.

All these ways of organising are based on pooled contributions to create a shared resource that community members can gain access to. In contexts where government delivery of basic services continues to be inadequate, these practices have continued to exist, serving as an important community-based social safety net that helps communities respond to day-to-day and emergency household needs such as medical costs, school fees, funerals, and so on. These member-based groupings also play an important social role in strengthening bonds of kinship and social ties and, in some cases (such as stokvels in South Africa), they provide opportunities for collective asset management and growth (Mutuku and Kaseke 2014).¹⁹⁵

'Are INGOs ready to give up power?' This is a question on the lips of the ever-growing #ShiftThePower community. An important contribution to answering this question is being pioneered by 'RINGO' which is: '...convening a unique "Social Lab" of global innovators who represent 'the system' of INGOs (including southern partners, funders and INGO leaders) to rapidly develop and launch prototypes that can transform INGO institutions and the systems in which they function.

¹⁸⁹ Glennie, J (2018) 'At what cost? A reflection on the crisis at Save the Children UK', Open Democracy, 27 May. Available from: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/transformation/at-what-cost-reflection-on-crisis-at-save-children-uk/> ¹⁹⁰ Steets, J. and Derzi-Horvath, A. (2016) 'We need less paperwork and more aid in humanitarian work', The Guardian, 25 May, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2016/may/25/less-paperwork-bureaucracy-more-aid-in-humanitarian-work> ¹⁹¹ Glennie, J (2018) 'At what cost? A reflection on the crisis at Save the Children UK', Open Democracy, 27 May. Available from: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/transformation/at-what-cost-reflection-on-crisis-at-save-children-uk/> ¹⁹² Pender, K. (2018) 'Emmett Carson ousted as CEO of Silicon Valley Community Foundation', The San Francisco Chronicle, 27 June. Available from: <https://www.sfchronicle.com/business/network/article/Emmett-Carson-ousted-as-CEO-of-Silicon-Valley-13031197.php> ¹⁹³ Bennet, O. (2020) Why we've lost faith in charities, Management Today, updated 20 August. Available from: <https://www.managementtoday.co.uk/why-weve-lost-faith-charities/reputation-matters/article/1369094> ¹⁹⁴ Details of the Pathways to Power Symposium in London in November 2019 can be found here: <https://icf-fri.org/pathways-to-power-symposium-new-ways-of-deciding-and-doing-taking-shift-the-power-to-the-next-level/> And here: <https://globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/what-we-stand-for/shiftthepower/a-symposium-on-people-led-development-pathways-to-power-new-ways-of-deciding-and-doing/> ¹⁹⁵ Mutuku, S. and Kaseke, E. (2014) 'The role of stokvels in improving people's lives: The case in Orange Farm, Johannesburg, South Africa', Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk, 50, 4. Available from <https://doi.org/10.15270/50-4-388>

RINGO is the first globally-coordinated cross-sectoral effort to revolutionize the sector by interrogating the purpose, structures, power, and positioning of INGOs.¹⁹⁶ An influential article by one of RINGO's founders, Deborah Doane, was published in Open Democracy in 2019.¹⁹⁷

The next part of this report relies heavily on the article in which Deborah Doane interviewed a range of influential people in the global south. One of these was Degan Ali, Executive Director of Adeso, who said:
'For those in comfortable NGO positions in the North, imagine leading a Southern NGO serving your local community and beyond. You might help many thousands of people every year. You've won awards and accolades for your work; stood on platforms in conferences in London, New York and Geneva; and been asked to join numerous boards and profiled in leading newspapers around the world. Except that the reality is never as good as the Instagram image. You also have no core funding for your organization; you're spending your time begging so-called 'partners' for funding scraps from their stockpiles; and quite often, your voice on the platforms of power is little more than a diversity tick box. International NGOs or the UN act as your mediator and ally at best, and your gatekeeper and saboteur at worst. You are marginalised into the category of 'local' organization by people with white faces and authoritative titles, like the 'African expert' who spends two years living in the capital of a single country.'

Deborah Doane comments that she has heard many such testimonies over the years. They reached a crescendo in 2017 when #MeToo for the Aid sector – also known as #Aidtoo – bubbled over into the public domain. She writes:
'Suddenly it was common to talk openly about sexual exploitation, healing, colonialism and racism in international development. Airing these concerns makes for challenging listening, especially when good intentions which aim at address these concerns – like 'localisation' – come in for serious scrutiny.'

In a second interview, Amitabh Behar, the CEO of Oxfam India, said:

'I just don't understand why INGOs need hundreds of people sitting in the North with huge teams to support Southern NGOs on the ground. Most of the resources get tied to these headquarters and little goes to the South. Real decision-making about what needs to be done and how is still decided by HQ-based Northern experts.'

In a third, Barbara Nöst, Director of the Zambian Governance Foundation for Civil Society, complained about INGOs who register locally in order to be considered for funding that's meant for indigenous organizations, but then continue to benefit from their INGO status and privileges, which means that real local organizations get side-lined entirely. She noted that colonialism is alive and well in international development.

For all the lofty words about 'shifting the power,' many INGO staff and board members still seem unable to let go of a model that values technocrats over movement builders, and which places a higher value on their own Northern white role.

Deborah Doane commented as follows:

'This is where Degan Ali's statement about 'dignity' is so vital. In practice, genuine lived experience seems less important than my articulate, English-speaking, Northern-educated voice. Shifting power – which would rightly include devolving decision making and handing more resources to Southern organizations with no strings attached – still feels too risky, especially given the attitudes of Daily Mail readers in a political climate that is hostile to aid generally. In this scenario, INGOs have reacted in a perversely schizophrenic fashion by exerting more control, not less.'

An interview with Stephanie Draper, CEO of BOND, an organization that 'connects, strengthens and champions a dynamic network of civil society organizations to eradicate global poverty, inequality and injustice'¹⁹⁸, explained why this might be so:
'There's still a massive flow of funding coming from North to South. That holds uncomfortable power dynamics.'

¹⁹⁶Details about Ringo can be found here: <https://rightscolab.org/ringo/> ¹⁹⁷Doane, D. (2019) 'Are INGOs ready to give up power?', Open Democracy, 10 December. Available from: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/transformation/are-ingos-ready-give-power/> ¹⁹⁸Information about Bond can be found here: <https://www.bond.org.uk>

So that's a challenge and has been exacerbated by some of the rules and regulations that have been put in place in terms of a risk-averse funding environment. INGOs in the UK right now just feel totally embattled so it is more difficult to take risks. We need to find ways to de-risk the shift in power.'

An interview with Irungu Houghton, Executive Director of Amnesty International in Kenya, asked whether we need INGOs in their current form:

'How do international civic organizations empower and support the local? That is the main question that needs to be asked.'

The work of RINGO suggests that, as civic space comes under attack, and as universal human rights values are being gradually eroded, INGOs need to bring solidarity to the task of defending and uniting this space, rather than technocratic, project-based endeavours. But that involves serious risks for INGOs and the wider international aid system, moving away from log frames and projects. It may also include a loss of income, staff and power, and that's an uncomfortable truth that most boards don't want to hear.

The #ShiftthePower movement has come up with an initial manifesto to articulate exactly what is needed from INGOs to take this process forward.¹⁹⁹ While funding is an important dimension of this, the main motivation is to foster genuine solidarity to combat the dark forces that threaten us globally – from climate change to inequality. A recent Foresight exercise overseen by Bond looked at the future of the British INGO sector and considered that ten years down the line, we'll likely see far less programmatic delivery and much more advocacy and solidarity work emerging from Northern INGOs.²⁰⁰

That means smaller teams in the North focused on connecting, mobilising and enabling, rather than the delivery models that grew exponentially in the 1990s and 2000s.

However, INGOs have been slow to respond. As a result, Deborah Doane concluded:

'I've come to realise more recently is that Southern organizations need to find ways to take the power, rather than wait for it to be shifted. No matter what the intent, there are just too many vested interests in the current system among donors, philanthropy and INGOs themselves to give up power easily. I don't know how exactly how this shift will happen, but I do know that there's an inspiring and emergent movement wanting to disrupt the system by supplanting the top-down organizational models of the past with something far more trans-formational. The #ShiftthePower movement is confronting some very difficult challenges, and it will undoubtedly be beset with failures along the way. But it's a necessary road to travel to restore dignity to those with whom we work. Have we finally turned a corner now that everything is out in the open? Are INGOs ready to let go of their power? Not yet, but at least the right questions are being asked, and the right people are finding ways to take back control.'

To some extent, this power-shift is already happening. The Near Network is a movement of Local and National Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) from the Global South that are rooted in local communities who share a common goal of a fair, equitable and dignified Aid system.²⁰¹ So far, 30 African organizations, 21 from Asia and 5 from Middle East have committed to join the network.

NEAR's work is based on the premise that local people and organizations are often the fastest to react in a crisis – their local knowledge and ingenuity can save lives in an emergency or find effective solutions to longer-term challenges. But local people are rarely given the attention they deserve – large international organizations often take priority over smaller local groups.

NEAR aims to close this widening gap by putting people at the centre of delivery and by strengthening local organizations and communities.

¹⁹⁹The #ShiftThePower Manifesto is here: <https://www.greengrants.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/ShiftthePower-A-Manifesto-for-Change.pdf> ²⁰⁰Information about the Foresight exercise can be found here: <https://www.bond.org.uk/sector/futures?page=13> ²⁰¹The work of the NEAR Network can be found here: <https://www.near.ngo/who-we-are-copied>. Their strategic plan for 2021 to 2023 is here: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5fc4fd249698b02c7f3ac1e9/t/610ac88e48fa1121ea5ef72c/1628096671914/NEAR+Strategic+Plan+-+final.pdf>

Adeso's Degan Ali admits NEAR does not have all the answers – but, she says:
'What we have is proximity and intimate understanding of our communities, along with local credibility and trust. We're creating an environment that enables innovation and great ideas.'

All the members of the NEAR network are united by a vision of a future where local communities are empowered as agents of change, with the capacity to effectively address the challenges that impact their own communities. The leitmotif for the work is 'local people solving local problems'.

COVID-19

As 2019 turned into 2020, the aid industry was in for another exogenous series of shocks that changed everything. Former UK prime minister, Gordon Brown, wrote an article in which he quoted Lenin:
*'There are decades when nothing happens, and there are weeks when decades happen.'*²⁰²

The year 2020 was a year of chaos across the globe. The world faced a multiplicity of crises: the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting economic turmoil, the ever-gathering climate catastrophe, and the global reverberations of calls against structural racism. These developments occurred against the constant drum beat of rising inequality that erodes the capacity of states to manage the combined effects of these crises.²⁰³

In 2020, humanity has entered the 'limen'. A term first used in 1909 by Arnold van Gennep, a French anthropologist, in *The rites of passage*, the limen denotes an ambiguous zone of change in which time feels elongated and all outcomes are unpredictable.²⁰⁴ The limen destroys our frameworks, causing feelings of panic, fear, loss and confusion; it is scary because it threatens our identity, our living patterns and the social order.

We fear total collapse of everything we know and hold dear, and we just want to go back to the security of the way it was.

Yet, the limen has an upside. It is the source of all radical change. Piecemeal reform never gets to the roots of a system – no matter how rotten it is. The limen uproots everything and forces us into new assumptions.²⁰⁵

In his 'crisis theory', Gerald Chapman suggests that when we meet a hazard that is bigger and more complicated than we have ever met before, we cannot use our customary method of problem solving.²⁰⁶ A period of disorganization ensues during which many abortive attempts at a solution are tried. Eventually, some kind of adaptation is achieved, and this can lead to an entirely new way of seeing. In their book *Guard the Chaos*, Hannah Ward and Jennifer Wild extol the virtue of the limen because it can be the threshold to a new world order.²⁰⁷ Since the limen opens up new possibilities for humanity, they suggest that the wilderness it creates is both a dangerous place and a sacred one. As poet W H Auden put it, *'the distresses of choice are our chance to be blessed'*.

So, how do we navigate the chaos? Again, there are no easy answers, but once again we can turn to the experience of previous disasters. While each disaster is different, Melissa Crutchfield suggests that there are recognisable stages in the process towards recovery: *survival, resilience and reconstruction.*²⁰⁸

Different parts of the world are at different stages of the pandemic and it is far from clear whether a sustained recovery has begun.²⁰⁹ What is clear so far, however, is that across the world, the pandemic has reversed years of socioeconomic progress, disproportionately harming poor people, with most countries struggling more than ever to find the resources to support their citizens' health and wellbeing.

So far, there is no definitive account of the effects on international development. However, some trends have clearly emerged. First, the pandemic has subverted North-South hierarchies.

²⁰²Brown, G. (2020) 'In the coronavirus crisis, our leaders are failing us', *The Guardian*, 13 March. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/mar/13/coronavirus-crisis-leaders-failing-gordon-brown> ²⁰³Pressman, S. (2016) 'Why inequality is the most important economic challenge facing the next president', *The Conversation*, 17 October. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/why-inequality-is-the-most-important-economic-challenge-facing-the-next-president-66806>. For a two-hundred year history of inequality in the UK, see: Lansley, S. (2021) *For richer for poorer*, Bristol University Policy Press ²⁰⁴van Gennep, A. (1909) *The rites of passage*, London: Taylor-Francis, 2013 ²⁰⁵Knight, B. (2020) *#BuildBackBetter, Rethinking Poverty*, 7 April 2020. Available from <https://www.rethinkingpoverty.org.uk/rethinking-poverty/building-back-better/> ²⁰⁶Chapman, G. (1964) *An approach to community mental health and principles of preventative psychiatry*, London: Tavistock ²⁰⁷Hannah Ward, H. and Wild, J. (1995) *Guard the chaos: finding meaning in change*, London: Darton, Longman and Todd ²⁰⁸Crutchfield, M. (2013) 'Phases of disaster recovery: Emergency response for the long term', *reliefweb*, 30 April. Available from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/phases-disaster-recovery-emergency-response-long-term>. ²⁰⁹Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs' COVID Behaviors Dashboard presents data from a global survey of knowledge, attitudes and practices around COVID-19. Analysis and content on the COVID Behaviors Dashboard is developed by Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs and the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN). The dashboard can be seen here: <https://covidbehaviors.org/>.

The United States and European countries have proved the least able to prevent COVID transmission at home. Much pandemic assistance, from protective equipment to medical assistance and vaccines, has flowed not from the Global North to the Global South, but from Southern countries such as China, India and Cuba to other countries in the South and, in some cases, in the North.²¹⁰ Second, the interruption of international travel has also increasingly forced Northern aid actors, both in government and NGOs, to put into place the 'localisation' of foreign aid. COVID.²¹¹ Third, the crisis has revealed the critical role that local responders play in relation to Covid-19 given their ability to act fast, engage communities and maintain delivery.²¹²

These factors, among others, have led to a sense of crisis among development agencies in the Global North. Writing on Bond's website, Graham Mackay noted the extent of the problems for INGOs:

*'Currently, the UK's international development sector is experiencing a perfect storm: dropping public fundraising, continuing lack of clarity over Brexit, the UK's economic downturn, challenges to international NGOs' operating models and the UK government's latest round of harsh cuts to development programmes across the sector.'*²¹³

In another post, Bond identified five serious challenges to INGOs':

- Funding during and beyond Covid-19 public fundraising is dropping
- Uncertainty over Brexit
- The UK's economic downturn
- The DFID-FCO merger
- Cuts to the UK aid budget due to Covid-19's impact on the UK's Gross National Income²¹⁴

While the finances of INGOs have suffered badly,²¹⁵ an investigation by AP News demonstrated that the lack of resources at local level is even more worrying.²¹⁶ The following assessment draws heavily on this investigation.

The investigation revealed how the pandemic has exposed the uncomfortable inequality in the billion-dollar system that delivers life-saving aid for countries in crisis. Since most money that flows from the U.S. and other donors goes to international aid groups instead of local ones, local aid workers are exposed on the pandemic's front lines with painfully few means to help the vulnerable communities they know so well.²¹⁷

Often lacking protective equipment, local groups are carrying a bigger burden than ever as COVID-19 adds to the already vast challenges of conflict, drought and hunger in places like Somalia and Afghanistan. At times, they tell communities they have nothing to give. 'Our hands are tied,' a South Sudanese aid leader, Gloriah Soma, told an online event in July 2020.²¹⁸ She described foreign aid workers being evacuated early in the pandemic or working from home as many feared infection. *'Is this a humanitarian response?'* she asked, saying she hopes the crisis will spark more help 'at this critical moment.' Her country can hardly bear another disaster: A five-year civil war killed nearly 400,000 people, and hunger stalks half the population.

The world's most precarious regions are long accustomed to the sight of international aid organizations, often managed by expats. Now some of those foreign workers are questioning their roles amid the reckoning over racial injustice in the U.S. and elsewhere. At times criticized as 'white saviours,' some say local partners should be given more responsibility – and money. A local group can do more with it, Soma said. She asserted that \$100,000 could help over 10,000 people, while the same amount to an international group will only pay one or two staff, 'and that's it.'

Recognizing the problem, major global donors including the U.S., Germany and Japan and humanitarian groups had pledged to give at least one-quarter of international aid money to local partners as directly as possible by this year.

²¹⁰Brown, S. (2021) 'The impact of COVID-19 on foreign aid', DevPolicy Blog, 1 April. Available from: <https://devpolicy.org/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-foreign-aid-20210401-2/> ²¹¹Blum, J. (2020) 'Localisation in the Covid era', Interaction, 21 August, Available from: <https://www.interaction.org/blog/localization-in-the-covid-19-era/> ²¹²Gilmore B, Ndejjo R, Tchetchia A, et al (2020) 'Community engagement for COVID-19 prevention and control: a rapid evidence synthesis', BMJ Global Health; 5:e003188 ²¹³Mackay, G. (2021) 'Building financial reserves as we recover from the financial crisis', Bond, 6 May. Available from: <https://www.bond.org.uk/news/2021/05/building-financial-reserves-as-we-recover-from-the-current-financial-crisis> ²¹⁴Abramson, Z. (2020) '5 challenges to INGOs' funding during and beyond Covid-19', Bond. Available from: <https://www.bond.org.uk/news/2020/04/how-is-covid-19-affecting-ngos-finances-and-operations> ²¹⁵Anna, C. (2020) 'Our hands are tied: Local aid workers exposed in pandemic', abc News, 26 August, Available from: <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/hands-tied-local-aid-workers-exposed-pandemic-72617416> ²¹⁶Anna, C. (2020) 'Our hands are tied: Local aid workers exposed in pandemic', abc News, 26 August, Available from: <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/hands-tied-local-aid-workers-exposed-pandemic-72617416> ²¹⁷https://apnews.com/article/69065514b085ab7821422925a24faf5c

But just over 2 per cent reached them directly last year, according to a report by Development Initiatives last month. *'COVID is a horrible tragedy, but it's going to force us to work differently,'* the United Nations humanitarian agency's director of humanitarian financing, Lisa Carty, has said. U.N. leaders are discussing *'how to make sure money moves more quickly'* to frontline responders. One-quarter of the \$1 billion allocated by U.N. country-based funds went to local aid organizations last year, Carty said, *'but I think we all agree that we want to do better.'* And those funds manage just a small fraction of overall aid money.

Most goes to U.N. agencies, while local aid groups are often seen as subcontractors of those agencies and international organizations. Tracking where the money goes remains a challenge. Now some pandemic-hit donor countries are reducing humanitarian aid – meaning even less money is trickling down to people on the front lines. In Somalia, where the al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab extremist group remains a deadly threat, local aid groups *'are able to reach and deliver aid in places where access is difficult. Unfortunately, very little COVID-19 funding has been directly allocated'* to them,' said Amy Croome, Oxfam's communications manager there.

In South Sudan, a survey of 19 local organizations found 58 per cent had lost at least half their funding because of the pandemic. Many were ill-prepared for COVID-19. *'People believe the disease is widespread across the country, but there's very limited testing capacity,'* said Jeff Okello, who leads The Health Support Organization in South Sudan. The group's limited supply of personal protective equipment is left over from the recent Ebola outbreak in neighbouring eastern Congo, he said. Most parts of South Sudan are reached only by local organizations, he said.

Now the pandemic has worsened everything. *'I think we have over 30 letters written by different communities across the country asking us to help them,'* Okello said. His response: *'If we get the resources, we will come.'* He pointed out that international aid groups have the benefit of medical evacuation if workers get infected, while local aid groups must *'survive on their own.'* Several other South Sudanese local aid leaders said they've cut staff or restricted work in communities where they're often the only source of help.

'We always say 'Thank God' for the little we get, but it's not what we used to get,' said James Keah, who leads UNIDO South Sudan. His group received \$400,000 this year from the U.N.'s South Sudan Humanitarian Fund for health services. With few other means of substantial support, some 100 field staffers have left and services in several regions have stopped. Local communities are told, *'You just have to cope with it,'* Keah said. Moses Poloya with Health Link South Sudan said his group received about \$400,000 less than last year. It now struggles to serve more than 1 million people at over 100 health centres, some lacking protective gear. He believes donors think local aid partners aren't ready to handle larger amounts of money, a source of frustration. Groups like his are *'resilient and always present,'* he said.

The U.N. humanitarian agency said nearly half, or 44 per cent, of the \$34 million in the South Sudan Humanitarian Fund has gone to local organizations this year. Forty-four such groups received money, down from 120 last year, reflecting changes meant to make projects more sustainable. But with the unprecedented global crisis, the U.N. said it and others *'simply do not have enough to meet the growing humanitarian needs.'* More than 300 local aid groups are registered in South Sudan, meaning nearly all must scramble for support, said Angelina Nyajima. Her Hope Restoration group has added the production of face masks and soap to its women-focused services to meet soaring demand.

Groups like hers are at a disadvantage because international aid groups have the backing of richer home countries, she said. *'For us, we have no mother country.'* South Sudan's government limps along two years after its civil war ended, with humanitarian groups providing most basic services. But Nyajima said COVID-19 is forcing donors to take notice as South Sudanese find ways to serve desperate communities on very little. *'I think it's high time, with the corona incident,'* she said. *'It has shown exactly what the locals can do.'*

Conclusion

This history has sketched out the history of international development from the end of the Second World War to the Covid pandemic. Following many twists and turns, we can see that the failure to scale up success is partly due to the fact that there have been few successes over that period.

The idea, stemming from the Bretton Woods conference in 1944, that the world could be developed from the top-down has been shown to be an illusion. The fact that many people are asking the question *'how can we survive?'* is a sure sign of the failure. More than 70 years since President Truman coined the term 'development' in his 1949 speech, southern civil society is weak and the northern architecture supposedly supporting it is in a parlous condition.

As it stands, the situation is unsustainable. The aid industry is being attacked both from the inside, for example through the decolonisation movement that is exposing the 'white saviour' myth, and from the outside by increasingly authoritarian states in which the space for civil society is closing.²¹⁹

The sphere of international development has been exposed as dysfunctional at a time when problems we have ignored for too long are landing one by one - the COVID-19 pandemic, the resulting economic turmoil, the ever-gathering climate catastrophe, and the imperative to address structural racism.

These problems are occurring against the constant drum beat of rising inequality that erodes the capacity of states to manage the combined effects of these crises.²²⁰ Many predict that the current problems the dress-rehearsal for the full force of the climate emergency.

The way that international development has been organised over the past 70 years cannot meet these challenges without a complete redesign. The research conducted by Jigsaw during 2021 and the early part of 2022 will test the appetite for structural reform.

But first, we move to Chapter 2 of this report. This will test the evidence so far collected through the lens of the literature on 'women's empowerment', which is a theme of special interest to the H & S Davidson Trust.



²¹⁹A map of 'closing space' across the world is shown by the Civicus Monitor. This can be accessed here: <https://www.civicus.org/index.php/what-we-do/innovate/civicus-monitor> 220Pressman, S. (2016) 'Why inequality is the most important economic challenge facing the next president', The Conversation. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/why-inequality-is-the-most-important-economic-challenge-facing-the-next-president-66806>

Chapter 2: Scaling up Women's Empowerment

This chapter looks at scaling up through the lens of the literature on 'women's empowerment'. This is a theme of the work of the H & S Davidson Trust.

We begin with the official policy and practice of development agencies. From there, we move to a discussion of the methods of scaling up. We then record some of the criticisms of the approach made by leading feminist practitioners. We conclude the chapter by identifying the pathways that would enable women to take their rightful place as equals in society.

Importance of women's empowerment

The empowerment of women has been an explicit goal of the development aid industry since the 1990s. It is a central part of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with their overarching ambition 'to leave no one behind'.

The empowerment of women and girls is the specific focus of SDG 5, Achieving Gender Equality - *'to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.'* It is also a thread that stitches all the SDGs together. In particular, it underpins the SDGs that aim to improve access to skills and employment and the resulting economic empowerment this brings.

Ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls is not only a basic human right, but also a requirement for sustainable development. It has been shown time and again that empowering women and girls has a multiplier effect, supporting development across the board by enhancing the health and social development of families, communities and countries.¹

Created in a collaboration between the UN Global Compact and UN Women, the Women's Empowerment Principles are used to empower women in the marketplace, workplace and community.²

The seven principles are designed to:

1. Create high-level corporate leadership for gender equality
2. Treat all people fairly at work, respecting and supporting non-discrimination and human rights
3. Ensure the health, wellbeing and safety of all workers, whether male or female
4. Promote education, training and professional development for women
5. Implement supply chain, marketing practices and enterprise development that empower women
6. Champion equality through community initiatives and advocacy
7. Measure and report publicly on progress to create gender equality

Almost every international development agency speaks the language of women's empowerment.

According to USAID:

'Women make up half the human population – and can act as key drivers of global growth and national security. At USAID, we believe that investing in gender equality and women's empowerment can help eradicate extreme poverty, build vibrant economies, and unlock human potential on a transformational scale.'

*USAID will continue to fund efforts to support women who want to start and scale up their businesses, which creates prosperity and stability for their families and communities.'*³

¹An overview of women's empowerment is given by World Vision in 'Understanding women's empowerment: Meaning, quotes and how to empower women'. This is available at: www.worldvision.com.au/womens-empowerment. ²The UN document on the women's empowerment principles can be found here: <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/take-action/action/womens-principles> ³An overview of USAID's view of women's empowerment can be accessed here: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment/womens-economic-empowerment>

Leading companies in the private sector have also signed up to women's empowerment. For example, Unilever states:

*'Our business, too, will be transformed by achieving gender equality and empowering women. Women are over 70 per cent of our consumer base, and 50 per cent of the talent pool from whom we recruit our workforce. We benefit from empowering women as discerning consumers with rising incomes and full freedom to choose how they spend. We already depend on women as creative, engaged employees and leaders, and as essential partners in our supply chain and route to market. By creating and supporting opportunities for women in society and the economy, we have the possibility to grow our markets, brands and business. In the same way that women's empowerment connects all the SDGs, enhancing opportunities for women is a theme which runs across our entire Unilever Sustainable Living Plan'*⁴

Efforts to scale up

There have been recent attempts to scale up initiatives for women's empowerment. In 2017, a high-level event organized by UN Women in the context of the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly, Melinda Gates, Co-Chair and Trustee of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Jack Ma, Executive Chair of the Alibaba Group; and Nirvana Chaudhary, President of the Chaudhary Group and Chair of the Foundation, joined Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women for a strategic conversation on how collective action can scale-up opportunities for women and girls.⁵

In May 2019, the Scaling UP Nutrition Movement (SUN) lead group - in collaboration with Global Affairs Canada, Nutrition International and Save the Children - have issued a call to action outlining how to scale up gender equality and empowerment for maximum impact.⁶

Progress towards the empowerment of women

According to monitoring by the United Nations, there has been progress over the last decades despite resistance to gender issues in some parts of the development community.⁷ More girls are going to school, fewer girls are forced into early marriage, more women are serving in parliament and positions of leadership, and laws are being reformed to advance gender equality.⁸

Despite these gains, the United Nations report reveals many challenges. Discriminatory laws and social norms remain pervasive, women continue to be underrepresented at all levels of political leadership, and one-in-five women and girls between the ages of 15 and 49 report physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner within a 12-month period.

Moreover, COVID-19 has reversed much of the progress made on gender equality and women's rights.⁹ The coronavirus outbreak has accentuated inequalities for women and girls across every sphere - from health and the economy to security and social protection.¹⁰

Women have played a disproportionate role in responding to the virus - as frontline healthcare workers and carers at home. Women's unpaid care work has increased significantly as a result of school closures and the increased needs of older people. Women have also been hit harder by the economic impacts of COVID-19, as they tend to be more likely to work in insecure labour markets. Nearly 60 per cent of women work in the informal economy, which puts them at greater risk of falling into poverty.¹¹

The pandemic has also led to a steep increase in violence against women and girls. With lockdown measures in place, many women have been trapped at home with their abusers, struggling to access services that are suffering from cuts and restrictions.¹²

⁴The report on the event can be accessed here: https://www.unilever.com/Images/unilever-opportunities-for-women_tcm244-500987_en.pdf. ⁵Mitchel, S. (2017) 'Business and philanthropy leaders scale up initiatives for women's empowerment', Ethical Marketing News, 23 September. Available from: www.ethicalmarketingnews.com/business-philanthropy-leaders-scale-initiatives-womens-empowerment ⁶The Scaling Up Nutrition movement (SUN) can be accessed here: www.scalingupnutrition.org/nutrition/gender-equality-empowerment-women-girls ⁷The European Institute for Gender Equality has guidance for dealing with resistance to gender equality. This can be accessed here: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gender-institutional-transformation/dealing-resistance>. ⁸Progress towards SDG Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls can be found here: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/> ⁹A UN Policy Brief showing the impact of COVID-19 on Women (2020) can be accessed here: https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/policy_brief_on_covid_impact_on_women_9_apr_2020_updated.pdf ¹⁰A UN document Covid-19: A Gender Lens (2020) can be accessed here: https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/COVID-19_A_Gender_Lens_Guidance_Note.pdf ¹¹Progress towards SDG Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls can be found here: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/> ¹²UN Women Policy Briefing No. 17 Covid-19 and Violence against Women and Girls: Addressing the Shadow Pandemic. Available from <https://www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/policy-brief-covid-19-and-violence-against-women-and-girls-en.pdf>

Half-hearted support for women's empowerment

Feminists worldwide have, over many years, made a sustained critique of the dominant approach to women's empowerment.¹³

Criticism began in earnest following disappointment about how the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing was implemented (Eyben, 2008¹⁴; Molyneux, 2004¹⁵). The most prominent legacy of the conference was an agreement that 'gender mainstreaming', in which women's empowerment would be at the heart of development, would be implemented in all policies and programmes. However, this quickly became a tick-box exercise with no serious attempt to address issues of power and politics that lie at the heart of women's empowerment (Eyben, 2008¹⁶; Cornwall, 1997¹⁷).

These criticisms have force. In practice, donors have relegated substantive gender issues to their social development sections and paid insufficient attention to the gender dimensions of other areas of development, particularly at the macro level. Some feminists have argued that their co-optation by a neo-liberal agenda has discredited international efforts to empower women (Abdullah and Fofana-Ibrahim, 2010¹⁸; Razavi and Miller, 1995¹⁹; Batliwala, 2007²⁰; Cornwall, 2014²¹).

Turning to matters of funding flows, Jamie Holton has analysed the ten-year trends on spending on women's empowerment based on the release of official development assistance (ODA) data for 2018 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC).²² Development Initiatives created a useful fact sheet analysis of the 29 donor governments' aid spending for 2018, including how much of their bilateral ODA went to projects that aim to primarily or partially target gender inequality.

Jamie Holton writes:

'The data, as self-reported by donors, tells us that for the last ten years: Most aid still does not aim to address gender inequality... There has been an increase in aid with a primary focus on gender equality, but this type of aid remains relatively small... Consistently little aid goes towards women's equality organisations and institutions.'

'While these donors' self-reported gender equality funding figures have increased, Oxfam's recent report calls into question whether the actual funding for gender equality work has increased, as it finds that many donors inconsistently assess their funds against gender markers. It is also likely that the increasing awareness of the importance of gender programming and the increasing scrutiny of aid globally has increased the pressure on agencies to assess their work on gender equality - even when it does not meet all the OECD-DAC conditions to qualify as gender equality programming.'

Francoise Girard cites notes the paradox of how today's philanthropists are 'increasingly quite vocal about achieving gender equality', many foundations have 'actually decreased their general operating support for these kinds of women's rights organizations', preferring time-bound, project-specific funding aimed at 'women's empowerment'.²³

The numbers she cites are stark. According to a study by the Women's Philanthropy Institute and Indiana University's Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, women's and girls' groups received only 1.6 percent of US-based charitable giving by individuals, foundations, and corporations in 2016.²⁴ Moreover, Jill Irvine and Nicholas Halterman have documented that the share of US foundation funding for general operating support to foreign groups that engage in broad-based advocacy for gender equality dropped dramatically between 2002 and 2013, from 30 percent to 15 percent.²⁵

¹³Schwabenland, C., Lange, C., Onyx, J. and Nakagawa, S. (2016) 'Women's Emancipation and Civil Society Organisations: Challenging or Maintaining the Status Quo?', Policy Press Scholarship Online, May 2017. DOI: 10.1332/policypress/9781447324775.001.0001 ¹⁴Eyben, R., Kabeer, N. and Cornwall, A. (2008) Conceptualising empowerment and the implications for pro-poor growth: a paper for the DAC Poverty Network. Brighton: IDS. Available from: <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/7203> ¹⁵Molyneux, M. (2004) 'The Chimera of Success', IDS Bulletin, 35.4: 112-6. Available from: <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/8512> ¹⁶Eyben, R. et al. (op.cit.) <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1759-5436.2007.tb00353.x> ¹⁷Cornwall, C. (2009) 'Revisiting the "Gender Agenda"', IDS Bulletin, 38, 2, February. Available from: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1759-5436.2007.tb00353.x> ¹⁸Abdullah, H.J. and Fofana-Ibrahim, A. (2010) 'The meaning and practice of women's empowerment in post-conflict Sierra Leone', DfID, 1 January. doi:10.1057/dev.2010.14. Available from <https://www.gov.uk/research-for-development-outputs/the-meaning-and-practice-of-women-s-empowerment-in-post-conflict-sierra-leone> ¹⁹Razavi, S. and Miller, C. (1995) 'Gender Mainstreaming: A Study of Efforts by the UNDP, the World Bank and the ILO to Institutionalize Gender Issues', Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development. Available from: <https://www.unrisd.org/en/library/publications/gender-mainstreaming-a-study-of-efforts-by-the-undp-the-world-bank-and-the-ilo-to-institutionalize-g> ²⁰Batliwala, S. (2007) 'Taking the Power out of Empowerment: An Experiential Account', Development in Practice, Vol. 17, No. 4/5, pp. 557-565. Available from: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25548253> ²¹Cornwall, A. (2014) Women's empowerment: What works and why? WIDER Working Paper 2014/104 Available from: https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/184489/WIDER%20Working%20Paper%202014_104%20Women's%20Empowerment_%20what%20works%20and%20why.pdf ²²Holton, J. (2020) 'Aid for gender equality: ten-year trends the development community should know', Publish What You Find, 7 July. Available from: <https://www.publishwhatyoufound.org/2020/07/aid-for-gender-equality-ten-year-trends-the-development-community-should-know/> ²³Girard, F. (2019). 'Philanthropy for the Women's Movement, Not Just 'Empowerment'', Stanford Social Innovation Review. <https://doi.org/10.48558/1DGG-3N22> ²⁴The Lilly Family School of Philanthropy Women and Girls Index 'Measuring giving to women's and girls' causes' can be accessed here: https://philanthropy.iupui.edu/institutes/womens-philanthropy-institute/research/wgi.html?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=influencer&utm_campaign=women%26girlsIndex ²⁵Irvine, J., & Halterman, N. (2019) 'Funding Empowerment: U.S. Foundations and Global Gender Equality', Politics & Gender, 15(1), 34-61. doi:10.1017/S1743923X18000314

Moreover, Jill Irvine and Nicholas Halterman have documented that the share of US foundation funding for general operating support to foreign groups that engage in broad-based advocacy for gender equality dropped dramatically between 2002 and 2013, from 30 percent to 15 percent. This trend has severe consequences. Funding for individual projects that 'empower women' can actually be counterproductive, as project-based service delivery grants can leave activists without the time and resources to push for broader systemic change.

So, while women are increasingly seen as an important part of the international development agenda, the question of how development interventions can contribute to progress in enabling women to make more choices about their own lives is a contentious and debated area.²⁶

Women's empowerment depends on a holistic approach

There is no universally agreed definition of women's empowerment. Women's ability to succeed and advance economically and the power to make and act on economic decisions is core to the understanding of a number of development institutions (Golla et al., 2011²⁷). Others emphasise the need to examine the terms on which poor women enter the labour market, the way women's contributions are valued and women's ability to negotiate a fairer deal for themselves, including in relation to the benefits of growth (Eyben et al., 2008 cited in OECD, 2012a; Eyben, 2011²⁸).

However, a solely economic understanding is too narrow and restrictive. Based on the assumptions that women differ from men in their social positions and that those differences consist of asymmetric, unequal power relations between the genders, 'women's empowerment' is generally understood broadly, referring to the process of increasing women's access to control over the strategic life choices that affect them and access to the opportunities that allow them fully to realize their capacities.

Women's empowerment as an economic, political, and sociocultural process challenges the system of sexual stratification that has resulted in women's subordination and marginalization in order to improve women's quality of life.²⁹

A broad view of women's empowerment is as a process of personal and social change, taking place over interlinked and mutually reinforcing psychological, political, social and economic domains, and through which women individually and collectively gain power, meaningful choices and control over their lives (Cornwall and Edwards, 2016).³⁰

It is not a linear, uncontested process but instead a journey characterised by negotiation and compromise, and uncertain outcomes.

While definitions vary, there appears to be a central principle at play in the field of women's empowerment that defines how a whole segment of society needs to advance to find parity with others. This is the treatment of 'power'. Any intervention that disregards this is doomed to failure. The issue of power is particularly pertinent to a study of 'scaling up'.

Early feminist writer, Mary Parker Follett distinguished between two models of power - 'power over' and 'power with'.³¹ 'Power over' means that power is finite and becomes part of a zero sum game in which 'either I have the power or you do'. On this model of power, relationships are a matter of binary choices which can lead to a tussle for control.

'Power with', on the other hand, sees power as a self-developing capacity, rather than a fixed asset or possession that can be divided, shared, transferred or conferred. This means that power is something developed between people rather than possessed by an individual, organisation or government. In this model, power is constantly reconstructed in the relationships between people. It is about 'being in the world' and, when it works well, fulfils the African philosophy of 'Ubuntu' - which means *'I am because you are'*.

²⁶UNU-WIDER (2012) Female Empowerment and Extreme Poverty Reduction: Progressing on One Without the Other?. Helsinki: UNU-WIDER. Available from: <https://www.wider.unu.edu/publication/female-empowerment-and-extreme-poverty-reduction-0>.
²⁷Golla, A., Malhotra, A., Nanda, P. and Mehra, R. (2011) Understanding and Measuring Women's Economic Empowerment: Definition, Framework and Indicators, International Center for Research on Women (ICRW). Available from: <https://www.icrw.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Understanding-measuring-womens-economic-empowerment.pdf>.
²⁸Eyben, R. (2011) Supporting Pathways of Women's Empowerment: A Brief Guide for International Development Organisations, Pathways Policy Paper, Brighton: Pathways of Women's Empowerment, IDS. Available from: <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/5847>.
²⁹Chen YZ. and Tanaka H. (2014) Women's Empowerment. In: Michalos A.C. (eds) Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research. Springer, Dordrecht. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_3252.
³⁰Cornwall, A. (2016) Women's empowerment: What works, Journal of International Development, 28 March <https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.3210>.
³¹Follett, M.P. (1995) 'Power', in P. Graham (ed), Mary Parker Follett: Prophet of management: A celebration of writings from the 1920s, Washington DC: Beard Books, pp97-120. Mary Parker Follett was an early feminist writer whose 1918 book has inspired feminists everywhere

Such an approach is designed to overcome what 13th-century poet Rumi called *the 'thieves of the heart'* – greed, ego, anger and insecurity. There are many social movements that have used this approach. Feminism has led the way here. A book - *Paradigm Found* - written by Anne Firth Murray, founder of the Global Fund for Women, puts these principles into practice and has inspired feminists everywhere.³²

This defines the centrality of a holistic approach, which includes being the change you want to see in the world.

Economic power matters because it *'a process whereby women's and girls' lives are transformed from a situation where they have limited power and access to economic assets to a situation where they experience economic advancement'* (Taylor and Perezniето, 2014).³³

But in itself, this is not enough. Drawing on Rowlands' typology (1997)³⁴, VeneKlasen and Miller (2002) what matters is women's increased power and agency in the following areas:

- Power from within: the knowledge, individual capabilities, sense of entitlement, self-esteem and self-belief to make changes in their lives, including learning skills for jobs or to start an enterprise
- Power to economic decision-making power within their household, community and local economy (including markets) not just in areas that are traditionally regarded as women's realm but extending to areas that are traditionally regarded as men's realm
- Power over: access to and control over financial, physical and knowledge-based assets, including access to employment and income generation activities
- Power with: the ability to organise with others to enhance economic activity and rights³⁵

As can be seen, this framework is concerned not just with increasing women's access to income and assets but also with their control over them and how they use that control to improve other aspects of their lives (Taylor and Perezniето, 2014).³⁶

Women's empowerment is a movement

Delivering this broad understanding of women's empowerment, is not a question of setting up 'a project'. It requires a process of transformation of society. And this requires a movement.

In an article called *Philanthropy for the Women's Movement, Not Just 'Empowerment'*, Françoise Girard, president of the International Women's Health Coalition argues:

*'Funding for individual projects that 'empower women' can actually be counterproductive, as project-based service delivery grants can leave activists without the time and resources to push for broader systemic change.'*³⁷

Françoise Girard cites the:

'...abundant data [that] shows that the most effective way for philanthropists to advance women's rights worldwide is to directly invest in the women's movement. This means the provision of long-term, general operating support to women's rights organizations that work collaboratively to transform social, legal, and political systems of patriarchal oppression.'

A similar conclusion is reached by leading feminist activist, Hope Chigudu, who points out that women's movements demonstrate:

*'... the importance of strengthening our voices and building trust, our collective organizing power, assets and capacities with or without external funding. And the existence of this us is proof of ordinary people's agency, our refusal to be nothing more than the outcome of our pasts; we carve the paths that make sense for our existence.'*³⁸

³²Murray, A. (2006) *Paradigm Found: Leading and Managing for Positive Change*, Novato, New World Library ³³Perezniето, P. & Taylor, G. (2014) 'A review of approaches and methods to measure economic empowerment of women and girls', *Gender & Development*, 22:2, 233-251, DOI: 10.1080/13552074.2014.920976 ³⁴Rowlands, J. (1997) *Questioning Empowerment: Working with Women in Honduras*, Oxford, Oxfam ³⁵VeneKlasen, L. and Miller, V. (2002) *Power and empowerment*, PLA Notes, 43, 39-41. Available from: <https://pubs.iied.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/migrate/G01985.pdf> ³⁶Perezniето, P. & Taylor, G. (2014) 'A review of approaches and methods to measure economic empowerment of women and girls', *Gender & Development*, 22:2, 233-251, DOI:10.1080/13552074.2014.920976 To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2014.920976> ³⁷Girard, F. (2019) 'Philanthropy for the Women's Movement, Not Just 'Empowerment'', *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. <https://doi.org/10.48558/1DGG-3N22> ³⁸Chigudu, H. (2021) 'Beyond us and them', *PSJP*. Available from <http://www.psjp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Beyond-us-and-them-by-H-Chigudu-January-2021.docx.pdf>

She contrasts this with the behaviour of 'dictatorial philanthropic institutions':

'As NGOs wiggled out of the grip of authoritarian state leadership they moved firmly into the grasp of equally dictatorial philanthropic institutions who made their financial support conditional on set ideas of what NGOs must do and how they must do it. Once outside institutions are conducting research and generating 'best practices' for groups on the ground to implement, then something is clearly unravelling.'

She suggests that, if we are serious about women's rights, we must directly support the women's organizations that are pushing forward legislation and policy that guarantees sexual and reproductive rights, codifies fair pay, ensures payment of alimony, and tackles domestic violence. We must support the women's movement, not just 'empowerment.'

Why 'Women's Empowerment' Projects are not enough

Despite views that empowering women should be a movement, billions of dollars are spent annually on projects that aim to empower women. These projects are premised on a simple business case, forcefully made by international financial institutions such as the World Bank and its regional counterparts: that investing in the individual capacities of women delivers economic growth, boosts the national GDP, and works to end poverty.

Examining these projects today, one would be hard pressed to recognize the original vision at the core of women's empowerment. Over the past 30 years, feminist academics and activists from the Global South have repeatedly expressed their dissatisfaction with top-down development models that reinforce patriarchal and colonial-era systems. They have highlighted a different approach to improving welfare, recognizing and emphasizing the potential and capacity of women to change their communities and countries from the ground up, and supporting women's groups to organize, to transform gender roles, and to redistribute power.

Today's focus on investing in individual women, however—whether through microloans, entrepreneurship training, livestock, or scholarships—has little to do with the kind of collective action to transform power relations that these Global South feminists had envisioned. By investing in the individual, the burden remains on women to lift themselves and their children out of poverty, while leaving in place the systems of oppression that cause or contribute to this poverty in this first place.

This perspective is illustrated by the experience of 'The Community for Understanding Scale Up (CUSP³⁹)' which has used case studies of scaling up local pilot projects to prevent gender based violence. Describing itself, CUSP: *'...represents a unique perspective of evidence-based methodologies from organizations that have worked both autonomously and with a variety of partners to implement, adapt, and/or scale their interventions. Based on the growing demand for social norms change programming from donors, CUSP reflects critically on what it takes to adapt and scale their methodologies effectively and ethically.'*

While a sophisticated evaluation of the projects demonstrated gains in gender based violence at local level, scaling up the results proved challenging.⁴⁰ As the evaluation report put it:

'There have been at least 20 instances of scale up that have been claimed... The issue is that we still do not know enough about what, when, why, where, how, and with whom, to work for scale-up. If they commit at all, governments (and donors) will always try to go to scale as cheaply as possible. But, we need to set strong ethical boundaries and to ensure that we fully understand how to scale up initiatives that have worked well with smaller constituencies. We cannot make compromises that may endanger people's rights and safety. Some things are easier to scale than others (though none are easy).'

While the work of CUSP is useful and valuable, it has not led to the kind of breakthroughs that are necessary.

³⁹Details about CUSP can be found here: https://www.alignplatform.org/sites/default/files/2019-01/cusp_summaryoverview_final.pdf ⁴⁰Crawford, S. with Lloyd-Laney, M., Bradley, T, Atherton, L., and Byrne, G. (2020), 'Final Performance Evaluation of DFID's What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls Programme', DFID's What Works to Prevent VAWG Programme, IMC Worldwide: Surrey. (p.20)

Local projects, even if successfully scaled up, normally fail to effect the large-scale transformation needed to give women authentic power as equals.

A study by Thomas de Hoop and Stuti Tripathi called *Empowering women through Self-Help Groups: Evidence of effectiveness*, questions of scale looked at women's SHGs in India and elsewhere.⁴¹ The Nigeria for Women project aims to reach 324,000 women across six states using Women's Affinity Groups. In Uganda, the sustainable livelihood sub-component of the Northern Ugandan Social Action Fund (NUSAF 3) was piloted in 9 districts.

Research on the results of the scaling of self-help groups (SHGs) presents mixed results. In particular, an impact evaluation of the Bihar state NRLM (JEEViKA) programme suggests a trade-off between depth and breadth of the programme. The midline results of this evaluation showed some positive effects on women's empowerment, but the endline results – from after the program had expanded – show much smaller impacts. Qualitative research suggests that these reductions in effectiveness may have been caused by reduced programme intensity after the pace and scale of implementation expanded. Other factors may also have contributed to dissipation of effects. Evidence from other types of interventions also shows that smaller effects of programmes moving to scale are not unique to SHGs. For example, a systematic review of farmer field schools showed that programmes delivered at national scale did not show positive effects two years after they started, despite positive impacts on agricultural yields and income for pilot programmes.

In another study, published in 2019, Sophia Friedson-Ridenour and her colleagues describe how the crop yields of women in Northern Ghana's farming communities continue to be lower than men's, despite the US government's 'Feed the Future' project, which provides women access to seeds, technology, and training.⁴²

The project relies on the assumption that placing more resources in women's hands will be transformative, in and of itself.

The study shows that this assumption is flawed. Patriarchal bias is systemic in communities where men control ploughing services and the kinds of crops that women can grow. The project did not, however, provide support to women to recognize and challenge traditional power dynamics. The study suggests we must avoid instrumentalist approaches to women's empowerment that simply deepen their integration within economic and social systems that continue to subordinate them.

The conclusion supports Françoise Girard's conclusion that:

*'We must go farther and find ways of linking empowerment efforts with wider changes to gendered power relations which both structure access to resources and opportunities, and shape what women imagine as possible and desirable for themselves.'*⁴³

True empowerment is political

How can we meet this challenge? Real empowerment begins when women come together and reflect on the social norms that keep them as second-class citizens, a political process grounded in acknowledgement of systemic subordination, and leading to the recognition that women have the power to act together for change. This process of consciousness-raising and mobilization happens within women's movements the world over.

In fact, women's movements are the key, and often the only, factor driving change on women's rights. In a 2012 study, Mala Htun and Laurel Weldon analysed a 70-country dataset from 1975 to 2005 and found that the autonomous mobilization of women was the crucial factor accounting for domestic policy change on violence against women. A strong women's movement outweighed all other factors that one might otherwise assume to be more statistically predictive, such as national wealth or the political program of government.⁴⁴

⁴¹de Hoop, T. and Tripathi, S. (2020) Empowering women through Self-Help Groups: Evidence of effectiveness, questions of scale, International Initiative for Impact Evaluation, 8 March. Available from: <https://www.3ieimpact.org/blogs/empowering-women-through-self-help-groups-evidence-effectiveness-questions-scale> ⁴²Friedson-Ridenour, S., Clark-Barol, M., Wilson, K., Shrestha, S. and Ofori, C. (2019) The limitations of market-based approaches to empowerment: lessons from a case study in Northern Ghana, *Development in Practice*, 29:6, 774-785, DOI: 10.1093/09614524.2019.1577802 ⁴³Girard, F. (2019). *Philanthropy for the Women's Movement, Not Just 'Empowerment.'* Stanford Social Innovation Review. <https://doi.org/10.48558/1DGG-3N22> ⁴⁴Htun, M. and Laurel Weldon, S. (2012) *The Civic Origins of Progressive Policy Change: Combating Violence against Women in Global Perspective, 1975-2005*, *American Political Science Review* Vol. 106, No. 3 August. doi:10.1017/S0003055412000226. Available from http://ncdsv.org/images/APS_R_CivicOriginsProgressivePolicyChangeCombatingVAWinGlobalPerspective-1975-2005_8-2012.pdf.

Similarly, a 2018 study by Alice Kang and Aili Mari Tripp analysing data from 50 African countries found that legislative reform on women's rights was significantly less likely without action by domestic women's coalitions.⁴⁵

The impact of women's movements is far reaching. Feminist coalitions have produced a seismic shift in how the world thinks about and prioritizes gender equality. From the creation of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in 1946 to the negotiations that led to the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, it has always been the mass mobilization of the global women's movement that has pushed governments to include gender equality and women's rights in international agreements and norms, whether in health, education, water and sanitation, or criminal justice reform. Françoise Girard concludes:

'As president of the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), I've participated with feminists from around the world in many of these diplomatic negotiations, and I've seen how easily gender equality falls off the agenda without the women's movement's constant pressure.'

Avoiding the iatrogenic approach

Despite such evidence, many US foundations fund women's groups in ways that actually undermine their work, breeding divisions and decreasing opportunities for coalition building. Funders often balk at supporting a movement whose long and complex struggles seem difficult to measure and quantify. The philanthropic community's increasing preoccupation with demonstrating impact often translates into funding only short-term projects that can deliver quick results and easily measurable outcomes.

However, a variety of studies have shown that short-term project funding harms the women's movement. For example, a field study conducted in 2009 by Dean Chahim and Aseem Prakash demonstrated how project support and stringent reporting requirements had the effect of fracturing,

depoliticizing, and ultimately, de-legitimizing Nicaragua's women's movement. By forcing women's organizations to compete with each other for the same project-based funding—rather than encouraging grantees to use the money to collaborate and strategize with fellow movement members—funders actually disincentivized collective action and ruptured partnerships.⁴⁶ Moreover, service delivery projects took time away from broader activism, consciousness-raising, and community organizing, thus weakening the movement as a whole. Numerous other researchers have found the same effect, describing how time-bound funding for specific projects has weakened grassroots women's movements in Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Colombia,⁴⁷ in Ghana,⁴⁸ and in Palestine and Egypt.⁴⁹

When funding is tied to discrete project outcomes, recipients are unable to use that funding for essential 'indirect' expenses like rent, accounting software, recruitment, or meetings. The 'nonprofit starvation cycle,' a now ubiquitous term coined in the mid-2000s, describes the vicious feedback loop associated with this kind of project-only funding.⁵⁰ Nonprofits without the money for indirect expenses are unable to effectively implement their programs, making them less attractive to future potential funders. Women's rights organizations are particularly vulnerable to 'starvation' because essential movement-building activities like hosting convenings or forming advocacy coalitions tend to fall outside the parameters of such project grants.

⁴⁵Kang, A., & Tripp, A. (2018). Coalitions Matter: Citizenship, Women, and Quota Adoption in Africa. *Perspectives on Politics*, 16(1), 73-91. doi:10.1017/S1537592717002225 ⁴⁶Chahim, D., Prakash, A. (2014) NGOization, Foreign Funding, and the Nicaraguan Civil Society. *Voluntas* 25, 487-513 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-012-9348-z> ⁴⁷Sonia E. Alvarez (1999): Advocating feminism: The Latin American Feminist NGO 'Boom', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 1:2, 181-209 ⁴⁸Dzodzi Tsikata, 2009. "Women's Organizing in Ghana since the 1990s: From individual organizations to three coalitions," *Development*, Palgrave Macmillan/Society for International Development, vol. 52(2), pages 185-192, June. ⁴⁹Jad, I. (2009) The NGO-ization of Arab Women's Movements, *IDS Bulletin*, February, 35, 5. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1759-5436.2004.tb00153.x> ⁵⁰Gregory, A. G., & Howard, D. (2009). The Nonprofit Starvation Cycle. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 7(4), 49-53. <https://doi.org/10.48558/6K3V-0C70>

Funding for the Long-Term

Social change takes time. Women are rarely granted control over their own lives, sexuality, and reproduction without a fight, and setbacks abound. To support true change, funders must accept that the process is gradual, and support it over the long haul. This means providing grassroots and national women's organizations with flexible long-term operating support, and refraining from harmful stipulations, such as those that prohibit the use of funds for conference participation or convenings.

Spaces where women can collaborate, strategize, and build solidarity across diverse movements are critical for organizations and activists seeking to mobilize and form long-term coalitions on a mass scale.⁵¹ One of IWHC's first grants to the Argentine women's movement was to pay rent for an apartment in Buenos Aires to allow activists from across the country to meet each other and engage directly with policymakers on a daily basis. This is exactly the kind of request that many donors would scoff at as unnecessary indirect expenses and operating costs, yet it was this investment that helped lay the foundation for 2019's 'green wave' demonstrations that produced a watershed moment for reproductive rights. Without spaces for women's groups to collaborate, strategize, and build coalitions, the women's movement remains fractured and unable to effectively mobilize for change. Yet a 2019 study by Jill A. Irvine and Nicholas Halterman found that US foundation funding for activities that create solidarity and identify issues is low and in decline, with funding for grassroots organizing never reaching more than 5 percent.⁵²

The identity of the funder also matters. Support for social movements is most successful when the donor is part of the movement.⁵³ Women's funds—philanthropic organizations that fund women's rights organizations and movements—can effectively play that role.

Organizations like IWHC, Mama Cash, MADRE, and the Global Fund for Women foster longstanding relationships with a variety of women's organizations by supporting them through cycles of defeat and victory toward lasting change. Since the mid-1990s, for example, IWHC has supported Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR), whose human rights and consciousness-raising trainings across Turkey laid the ground work for grassroots mobilization, as was the case when thousands of women took to the streets in 2012 to protest the Turkish government's proposed abortion ban, successfully forcing it to back down.

IWHC employs a long-term, flexible grant strategy based on the Whitman Institute's trust-based philanthropy model—a model that provides flexible, multi-year core funding and support 'beyond the check' through leadership development, advocacy training, and other forms of capacity-building.⁵⁴ Trust-based grantmaking relies on long-term relationships and the belief that change must be driven by the community. This high touch model is grounded in mutual trust and allows both the funder and grantee to quickly react to changing political dynamics. This—and the wealth of evidence that points to the unique role of women's movements—is why we trust our grantees to set their own priorities and agenda, and to develop the strategies that will be most effective for them, their partners, and their communities.

A widespread view is that if a fraction of foundations acknowledged the critical role of consciousness-raising, coalition-building, and advocacy—and funded accordingly—we could be exponentially closer to achieving women's rights. Robust evidence and experience from around the world point us in the right direction. Now, it's time to follow the path.

⁵¹Irvine, J., & Halterman, N. (2019). Funding Empowerment: U.S. Foundations and Global Gender Equality. *Politics & Gender*, 15(1), 34-61. doi:10.1017/S1743923X18000314 ⁵²Irvine, J., & Halterman, N. (2019). Funding Empowerment: U.S. Foundations and Global Gender Equality. *Politics & Gender*, 15(1), 34-61. doi:10.1017/S1743923X18000314 ⁵³Two Case Studies of Grantmaking and Extractive Industries in Ghana and Peru by the Global Greengrants Fund show the power of small grants and social movements. Available from: <http://www.chrisallan.info/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/Chris-Allan-Mining-Study-Ghana-and-Peru-final.pdf>. ⁵⁴The Whitman Institute's trust based philanthropy model can be seen here; <https://thewhitmaninstitute.org/about/trust-based-philanthropy/>

Chapter 3: What have we learned about 'scaling up'?

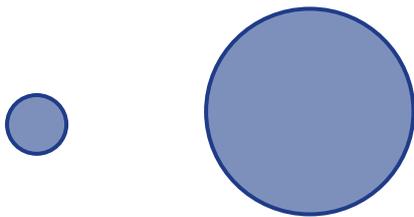
History shows that the term 'scaling up' has been used in different senses. In this chapter, we examine these meanings and review their implications for international development.

The original meaning

The dictionary definition of scale-up is *'an increase according to a fixed ratio'*.¹ This means that it is a mathematical concept in which: as X grows bigger, the proportions of X remain the same.

To understand this concept further, it is important to ask if there are any differences between an object of one size and the same object that has been scaled up where the proportions are the same?

Consider the following circles.



What determines the difference between the small circle on the left and the bigger one on the right is the 'scale factor'. The scale factor is defined in mathematics as the number (or the conversion factor) which is used to change the size of a figure without changing its shape. If the scale factor is positive, it will increase the size of the object; if negative, it will decrease it.

So, how do we find the scale factor? The best way to understand this is by using an example. Consider a rectangle that has a length of 5 units and a width of 2 units. Now, if we increase the size of this rectangle by a scale factor of 2, the sides will become 10 units and 4 units, respectively. Hence, we can use the scale factor to get the dimensions of the changed figures.

In mathematics, scaling up (or down) is therefore an easy matter. However, when we attempt to apply this approach to real-life situations, it becomes more difficult.

While the mathematics works well in tasks such as architecture or joinery where geometry is a central part of the process, it cannot be used in spheres such as biology or social organisation because the concept of 'complexity' intervenes so that there is no longer a singular scale factor.

To take an example of this complexity, if the left hand circle is a single cell in a human being and the right hand one is a whole human being, the amoeba-like single cell would need to grow multiple organs and complex flows in order to become a human being. What starts as simple has to become multiple and interconnected - or in other words - complex.

Again, if the size of left-hand circle represents the size of Britain's GDP in 1900 and the same a century later in 2000. The growth in GDP is matched by an increase in the complexity of society and its underlying economic systems.

These findings determine that an ecological approach must be taken towards development because all societies are multi-dimensional systems that can only be understood through a holistic lens. This is the reasoning behind the cybernetic principle of requisite variety.

It follows that the term 'scaling up', when applied to international development, is not being used in its true mathematical sense, but as a metaphorical variation of it. Furthermore, the only way to assess whether scaling up takes place 'in a fixed proportion' is to do so empirically. Given that many different factors are involved in scaling up, it is a near certainty that there will be much variance among assessments of different places, which must mean that proportions are far from fixed. In considering 'scaling up' then we are dealing not with a scientific term but a much vaguer one, meaning little more than 'getting bigger' in one way or another. The definition of scaling up used by Alliance magazine demonstrates this: *'The ability to expand programmes, projects or ideas.'*²

¹The definition of 'scaling up' is given by the Merriam-Webster dictionary here: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/scale-up#h1> ²Milner, A. (2018) Foundations at scale, Alliance, 6 March. Available at: <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/analysis/foundations-at-scale/>

Since the term 'scaling-up' lacks precise meaning, it is no wonder that it is polysemic. There are at least two aspects to this. One is that scaling-up – like love, friendship, hope and faith – is a 'cluster concept' philosophically. A cluster concept is one that is made up of many different interacting components. Wittgenstein suggested that 'game' was such a concept.

The other that it is a 'thick concept' anthropologically is a 'thick concept' (sometimes: thick normative concept, or thick evaluative concept).

This means that it is a concept with a significant degree of descriptive and evaluative content. Paradigmatic examples are various virtues and vices such as courage, cruelty, truthfulness and kindness. Another is 'democracy' which is often described in descriptive terms such as 'elections', 'parliaments', 'suffrage' and so on, but also in evaluatively loaded terms such as 'freedom', 'sovereignty', and 'participation'. The premise behind the current study was scaling up was a good thing, but as we will see, many disagree.

These two features mean that scaling up is a difficult concept to pin down, let alone implement as a strategy or envision as a goal.

As Peter Uvin, puts it
*'... beyond the feeling that scaling up is a nice and probably good thing, there is little unanimity or knowledge about its real implications - or even its precise meaning. Indeed, the term has been employed very ambiguously, to describe a large variety of processes, often signifying anything that happens to a community-based organization apart from its destruction.'*³

A variety of definitions

The literature on scaling up yields a variety of definitions. Gavin Yamey notes:

*'The term 'scaling up' is now widely used in the public health literature, but there is no agreed definition.'*⁴

Scaling up is most commonly used in businesses where it is often used as maximizing operational scale of the product.⁵ In development aid, the desired impact is the point of departure and whatever leads to more impact is scaled (usually in the form of a range of innovations).⁶ However, some authors recognize that the public sector often uses the business way of scaling to reach impact, leading to disillusionment and doing more harm than good.⁷ Sometimes, scaling is seen as a process towards sustainable systems change at scale, where sustainability, systems change and responsible scaling are just as important as 'reaching many'.⁸

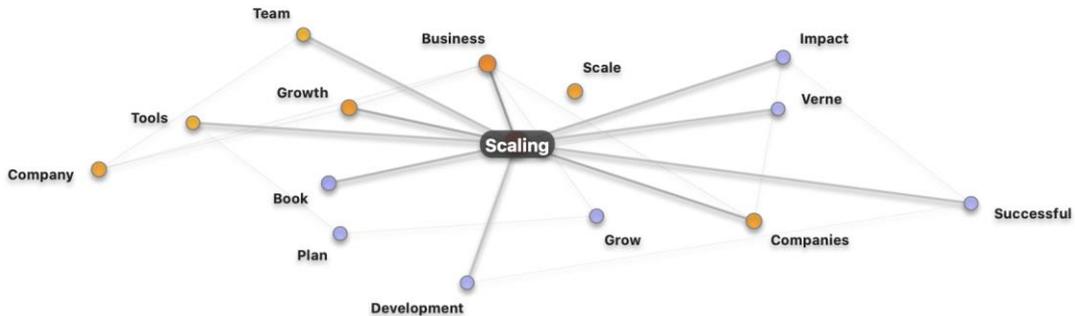
Although scaling is often associated only with 'more, better, bigger' it is important to consider that it has three dimensions: scaling out involves expanding the geographical spread, or reach, of a technology or practice over time.⁹ It is associated with qualitative processes like transition, institutionalizations, transformation, integration, evolution, and development.¹⁰

Scaling deep deals with the notion that sustainable and transformative impact is achieved only *'when people's hearts and minds, their values and cultural practices and the quality of relationships they have are transformed'*,¹¹ to make the use of the innovation the new routine.

³Uvin, P. (1995) Fighting Hunger at the Grassroots: Paths to ScalingUp, World Development, Vol. 23, No. 6, pp. 927-939. ⁴Yamey, G (2011) Scaling up global health interventions: a proposed framework for success, PLoS Medicine, Vol. 8, Issue 6. Available from: <https://go.gale.com/ps/anonymous?id=GALE%7CA260691736&sid=googleScholar&v=2.1&it=r&linkaccess=abs&issn=15491277&p=AONE&sw=w> ⁵McLean, R. and Gargani, J. (2019). Scaling impact: innovation for the public good. Oxon/NY: Routledge. ISBN 9780429468025 ⁶Wigboldus, Seerp; Leewis, Cees. 'Towards responsible scaling up and out in agricultural development. An exploration of concepts and principles'. Discussion Paper. Centre for Development Innovation. ⁷Woltering, L.; Fehlenberg, K.; Gerard, B.; Ubels, J.; Cooley, L. (2019). 'Scaling - from 'reaching many' to sustainable systems change at scale: A critical shift in mindset'. Agricultural Systems. 176: 102652. doi:10.1016/j.agsy.2019.102652. ⁸Woltering, L.; Fehlenberg, K.; Gerard, B.; Ubels, J.; Cooley, L. (2019). 'Scaling - from 'reaching many' to sustainable systems change at scale: A critical shift in mindset'. Agricultural Systems. 176: 102652. doi:10.1016/j.agsy.2019.102652. ⁹Woltering, L.; Fehlenberg, K.; Gerard, B.; Ubels, J.; Cooley, L. (2019). 'Scaling - from 'reaching many' to sustainable systems change at scale: A critical shift in mindset'. Agricultural Systems. 176: 102652. doi:10.1016/j.agsy.2019.102652 ¹⁰Wigboldus, Seerp; Leewis, Cees. 'Towards responsible scaling up and out in agricultural development. An exploration of concepts and principles'. Discussion Paper. Centre for Development Innovation.

¹¹Riddell, D; Moore, M (2015). 'Scaling out, scaling up, scaling deep: advancing systemic social innovation and the learning processes to support it' (PDF), J.W McConnell Family foundation and Tamarack Institute.

The following relational map shows the most commonly used words in association with 'scaling' on the Internet.



To take this further, we need to look at how the terms are applied in different development situations. Drawing on the work of Peter Uvin, in a USAID evaluation of two innovative 'Freedom from Hunger' credit projects in Africa, the term scaling-up - the focus of the study which is explicitly mentioned in its title - is equated with 'expansion', or, more precisely, the need to 'reach several times the actual number of members' in the countries concerned. This definition of scaling-up as expansion of membership or target group is probably the most commonly used one.¹²

Social scientists tend to propose more complicated definitions. Robert Berg, for example, talks about scaling-up organizationally, management-wise and financially,¹³ while Goran Hyden differentiates between scaling-up organizationally and functionally or activity-wise.¹⁴ 'Organizationally' is defined by both authors as serving larger constituencies, meaning that the same organization, keeping the same goals, grows in size. This, then, is the same meaning of the term as 'expansion.' 'Functionally' means that the same organization increases or diversifies its range of activities, regardless of size. Howes and Sattar talk about intensification', referring to the addition of new activities to existing programs.¹⁵

Clark, in his book on NGOs,¹⁶ makes a different distinction among three types of scaling-up: project replication, building grassroots movements and influencing policy reform.

The first two are linked to expansion,¹⁷ but the latter is new. Fisher also defines scaling up as the process of influencing policy; she uses the term 'scaling out' to describe expansion. Although he does not use the term scaling-up in this context, Korten clearly discusses a similar type of scaling-up where he advocates so-called 'third generation' NGOs.¹⁸ The latter are distinct from first and second generation ones by their concerns for 'bridging the gap between micro and macro' (i.e. quitting the local level) and their desire to attack the (political) root causes of underdevelopment, and not its manifestations. This involves the development of relationships with governments as well as international partnerships. Therefore, for Korten, Clark, Fisher and many others, influencing politics is considered to be an important form of scaling-up. Finally, coming from a different tradition, Bernard Lecomte, a French grassroots specialist with decades of field experience in Africa (and co-founder of the 'Six-S' movement) writes about different phases in the maturing of self-help organizations -- phases mainly characterized by increased capacity to innovate, generate local resources and improved organizational capacity.¹⁹ His scaling-up is a matter of autonomy, self-reliance, and independence.

¹²Uvin (op.cit.) ¹³Berg, R. (1987) Non-Governmental Organizations: New Force in Third World Development and Politics. East Lansing, MI: Center for Advanced Study of International Development. ¹⁴Hyden, G. (1992) Some Notes on Scaling-up. Gainesville, FL: unpublished paper. Conference on Hunger and Poverty, November ¹⁵Howes, M. and M.G. Sattar (1992) Bigger and better? Scaling-up strategies pursued by BRAC 1972-1991. In Making a Difference: NGOs and Development in a Changing World. Michael Edwards and David Hulme, eds. London: Earthscan. ¹⁶Clark, J. (?1991) Democratizing Development: The Role of Voluntary Organizations. West Hartford: Kumarian Press. ¹⁷Fisher, J (1993) The Road from Rio: Sustainable Development and the Nongovernmental Movement in the Third World, Westport CT: Praeger. 1993 ¹⁸Korten, D.C. (1987) Third Generation NGO Strategies: A Key to People-centered Development World Development, Vol. 15, Supplement. pp. 145-159 ¹⁹Lecomte, B., 'Processus d'autopromotion et formes d'apui adaptees.' in Kwan Kai Hong (Ed.), 'Jelrx et enjeux de l'crlrto-prnolotiortV. ers d'rrrtres,for,?lesde cooperation au developpement. (Geneva, Paris: Institut Universitaire d'Etudes du Developpement, Presses Universitaires de France, 199 I).

This brief review of the literature brings us to the epigraph for this report:

'All in all the literature of scaling-up is reminiscent of the Loch Ness monster. It has been sighted enough to make even the most skeptical give it a measure of respectability; and its description is as varied as the people who have written about it.'

A taxonomy of scaling up

Uvin tries to develop some clarity by developing clear definitions and taxonomies of scaling up, focussing on the processes by which grassroots organizations expand their impact.²⁰ The work is based on:

'...25 Third World organizations that were nominated for the Alan Shawn Feinstein Hunger Awards, a yearly set of three awards given by Brown University to organizations that have been especially meritorious in combating or preventing hunger.'

The taxonomy has four key dimensions:

Quantitative scaling up

This is the most evident kind of scaling-up, equalling 'growth' or 'expansion' in their basic meanings. It happens when participatory organizations draw increasing numbers of people into their realm. It has the following characteristics:

- Spread increasing numbers of people spontaneously adhere to the organization and its programs, perceiving them to serve their interest/preferences
- Replication a successful program (methodology and mode of organisation) is repeated elsewhere
- Nurture; a well-staffed and well-funded outside agency, using a specific incentive-based methodology, nurtures local initiatives on an increasingly large scale
- Integration: a program is integrated into existing structures and systems and in particular government structures after it has demonstrated its potential

Functional scaling up

- A second type of scaling-up is where a community-based program or a grassroots organization expands the number and the type of its activities.
- Horizontal integration: unrelated new activities are added to existing programs, or new programs are undertaken by the same organization
- Vertical integration: other activities related to the same chain of activities as the original one are added to an existing program

Political scaling up

The third type of scaling-up refers to the extent to which participatory organizations move beyond service delivery and towards empowerment and change in the structural causes of underdevelopment -- its contextual factors and its socio-political-economic environment:

- Information and mobilization: an organization's members or local communities are stimulated to participate in the body politic
- Aggregation: federative structures designed to influence policy making are created
- Direct entry into politics: grassroots organizations, or their leaders, either create a political party or join an existing one

Organizational scaling up

Finally, community-based programs or grassroots organizations can increase their organizational strength so as to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their activities. It can be done financially, by diversifying their sources of subvention, increasing the degree of self-financing, creating activities that generate income (cooperative enterprises, consultancy), or by assuring the enactment of public legislation earmarking entitlements within the annual budgets for the program.

- Diversification of donors
- Increase the degree of self-financing, through subcontracting, consultancy, or fees-for-service
- Create institutional variety, both internally and externally

²⁰Uvin, P. (1995) Fighting Hunger at the Grassroots: Paths to Scaling Up, World Development, Vol. 23, No. 6, pp. 927-939.

Uvin suggests that this taxonomy allows us to look at scaling up in a number of different ways, reflecting the complexity of the associative sector itself. It also suggests that there are different types of scaling-up, which often go together but are not identical.

Uvin’s work has proved highly influential and is used as the basis of many ODA documents in different spheres of activity. However, there is another view that the ‘scaling up’ literature pays little heed to, and this challenges the basic premises of the argument. It is based on the question ‘shouldn’t we scale down?’

Small is beautiful

The 1973 book by Fritz Schumacher, with its subtitle of ‘Economics as if people mattered’.²¹ questions the entire premise of the scaling up perspective.

He suggested that this perspective will not solve the underlying problem of an unsustainable economy. Schumacher’s philosophy is one of ‘having and being enough’, rather than depending on exogenous economic factors. His approach, appreciating both human needs and limitations, depends on the appropriate use of technology. His thesis grew out of his study of village-based economics.

Schumacher argues that the modern economy is unsustainable. Natural resources (like fossil fuels), are treated as expendable income, when in fact they should be treated as capital, since they are not renewable, and thus subject to eventual depletion. He further argues that nature’s resistance to pollution is limited as well. He concludes that government effort must be concentrated on sustainable development.

Schumacher’s book has been immensely influential and brought ecological thinking to bear on development. He refutes the orthodoxy is that ‘big is best’ when it comes to achieving results. Despite generations of experience that large-scale top-down interventions do not work, because they encourage passivity, produce moral blindness and encourage a culture of dependency,²² the aid industry believes that only big organizations developing scale can deliver change.

In a paper that examines possibilities for a changed perspective, Mary Fifield highlights the ‘myths and misperceptions of scalability’, showing the limitations of an ill-defined approach to develop the ‘capacity to create a large positive impact... through budget size, numbers of constituents, number of regions, and other quantitative benchmarks’.²³

High rates of failure tend to occur because size and systems get in the way. In *Small is beautiful*, E.F. Schumacher shows that in social organization, diseconomies of scale set in at a very early stage.²⁴ In any organization, while the number of people increases in an arithmetic progression, the number of relationships increases in a geometric progression. This is shown in the following table:

People and relationships in an organization

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS	NUMBER OF RELATIONSHIPS
4	6
10	45
100	4,950
500	124,750
1,000	499,500

As organizations grow bigger, they become more difficult to manage. Psychological research repeatedly shows the importance of the number seven (plus or minus two) in the way we process information.²⁵ For example, while we can typically remember a list seven items in our short-term memory, this becomes almost impossible if there are nine or more items, at which point we have to write a list.

²¹Schumacher, E.F. (1973) *Small is beautiful: A study of economics as if people mattered*, London: Bond and Briggs ²²Wright, C. (2000) *A community manifesto*, London: Routledge. ²³Fifield, Mary. ‘Thinking Big: Community Philanthropy and Management of Large-Scale Assets.’ *The Foundation Review*, vol. 9, no. 3, July 2017, pp. 9+. Gale Academic OneFile ²⁴Schumacher, E.F. (1973) *Small is beautiful: A study of economics as if people mattered*, London: Bond and Briggs. This is the ‘network effect’ in which the formula is #relationships = #people x (#people - 1)/2 ²⁵Miller, G. A. (1956) ‘The magical number seven, plus or minus two: Some limits on our capacity for processing information’. *Psychological Review*. 63 (2): 81-97.

Applying this rule to how we manage relationships in organizations, once a group increases beyond seven people, it needs to split into smaller groups to manage the complexity of the relationships involved (while we can manage 21 simultaneous relationships, it is hard to manage 28). As numbers increase, we begin to get the information blockages.

This explains why large organizations need to split into departments or working teams. Alongside such specialization comes the need for the centralization of authority, financial control and accountability. Sociologist Max Weber described this process as the 'iron cage' that traps individuals in systems based on teleological efficiency, rational calculation and control, leading to the bureaucratization of social order as *'the polar night of icy darkness'*.²⁶ The damaging consequences of bureaucratic society were highlighted by Ivan Illich in *Tools for Conviviality*, who wrote that beyond a certain point, scale frustrates the end for which an organization was originally designed, and so becomes a threat to society itself:

*'Society can be destroyed when further growth of mass production renders the milieu hostile, when it extinguishes the free use of the natural abilities of society's members, when it isolates people from each other and locks them into a man-made shell, when it undermines the texture of community by promoting extreme social polarization and splintering specialization, or when cancerous acceleration enforces social change at a rate that rules out legal, cultural, and political precedents as formal guidelines to present behavior... at this point it becomes irrelevant whether an enterprise is nominally owned by individuals, corporations, or the state, because no form of management can make such fundamental destruction serve a social purpose.'*²⁷

We can see therefore that a vision of a good society based on large institutions may be a flawed idea. Earlier, we cited examples of how charities that seek growth can sometimes lose sight of their goals.

Not only that, but scaling-up often fails in its own terms. In their review of research on state capability, Andrews, Pritchett and Woolcock have shown the processes of scaling up what works in one location and transposing it to another is mere isomorphic mimicry and commonly fails to take root in the new place because the cultural factors that made it work in the first case are absent in the second.²⁸ This leads to a lack of implementation capacity among governments, which tends to produce failed programmes. That large institutions are not addressing the problems for which they are set up is a prime reason why people are losing faith in establishment institutions,²⁹ and there is now a global crisis of trust.³⁰

Although scaling up can reduce trust because organizations that do so, lose intimacy as they develop bureaucratic systems, some organizations are better at building trust while getting bigger than others. Root Change distinguishes between two forms of capacity building that make a critical difference.³¹ The 'Capacity 1.0' organization has strong systems in place, is well managed, and can respond consistently to the everyday challenges it faces. It operates with high efficiency and accountability. However, Capacity 1.0 organizations are not necessarily good at creating and maintaining a 'can-do culture' of committed volunteers and staff who collectively achieve fundamental, far-reaching, and sustainable social change--particularly in response to challenges arising from new contexts.

While the 'Capacity 2.0' organization has highly evolved systems, processes and procedures (the core Capacity 1.0 attributes), it also is extraordinarily adaptive and well prepared to function in a world of rapid change and complexity. The Capacity 2.0 organization focuses outwardly and cultivates extensive stakeholder involvement. It emphasizes impact through innovation, entrepreneurship, brokering, leveraging resources, partnering, advocacy, and networking.

²⁶Weber, M. (1994) *Political Writings* (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought), Ed. Peter Lassman. Trans. Ronald Speirs. Cambridge UP, 1994 ²⁷Illich, I. (1973) *Tools for conviviality*, New York: Harper Row, p. Xxiii ²⁸Andrews, A., Pritchett, L. and Woolcock, M. (2017) *Building state capacity: Evidence, analysis, action*, Oxford: Oxford University Press ²⁹Crewe, I. and King, A. (2013) *The blunders of our governments*, London, Oneworld ³⁰Stanley, I. and Dowler, R. (2019) 'The deep roots of the trust crisis', London School of Economics, 28 January. Available from: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/businessreview/2019/01/28/the-deep-roots-of-the-trust-crisis/> ³¹Root change's approach to organizational development can be accessed here: <https://www.rootchange.org/rethinking-organizations/>

The goal of the Capacity 2.0 organization is to work on the priorities of poor or vulnerable populations, finding innovative solutions that include them as partners in the process.

Capacity 2.0 organizations understand the importance of trust. To build trust requires a degree of intimacy. In a study of economic development, Neil McInroy showed that trust is more likely to flourish at local level, where people know each other and engage with one other frequently.³² He shows, for example, that business-people care little about campaigns to end poverty at national level but are more likely to become involved at local level because they care more about what happens on their patch. Intimacy is easier too in small scale structures with team-work, conviviality and shared interests. Such arrangements make sharing power easier.

There remains the challenge of how small-scale structures can manage large scale programmes. Mary Fifield explores the potential of community ownership through three key organizational elements –governance structure; collective asset management; and strategic programme impact. Her findings are positive. She challenges ‘the assumption that communities don’t have large-scale assets with which to drive their own development’. She takes the example of community foundations and suggests:

‘... when large-scale assets are involved, community foundations are more likely to effect a paradigm shift rather than a simple transposition of actors if they cultivate an atmosphere of transparency and cooperation, strengthen capacities and build new skills among all stakeholders, and encourage proactive iteration.’³³

The right size

‘Big is best’ and ‘small is beautiful’ appear to be antinomies. They are not. Society needs both, and the critical question is how to resolve them. David Fleming’s does so in the following way:

‘Large-scale problems do not require large-scale solutions; they require small-scale solutions within a large-scale framework.’³⁴

This perspective fits well with the Catholic principle of subsidiarity. This states that decisions should always be taken at the lowest possible level or closest to where they will have their effect. This is the argument behind devolution arrangements and is the core principle of #ShiftThePower. Scaling up or down is not the question; it is at what level in the system are tasks performed?

To find the answers to this quandary, we should perhaps see that size is a by-product of deeper forces. It is these deeper forces that determine the optimum size. So what are these forces? To find the answer, we need to examine the physics of ecosystems. According to physicist Fritjof Capra, ecosystems work through the intersection of two forces: emergence and design.

When the instability of the existing ecosystem demands a new order, the result is ‘emergence’. This relies emergent structures based on collective creativity:

‘Emergent structures... provide novelty, creativity, and flexibility. Emergent structures are adaptive, capable of changing and evolving.’³⁵

Emergent structures are a force for change and arise from informal networks and communities of practice. These contrast with ‘design structures’, which provide the formal rules and routines that are necessary for effective functioning and are a force for stability, but do not have the necessary responsiveness and learning capability to make progress.

These forces push in opposite directions, but combine to bring about of the system advance.

‘In every human organization there is a tension between its designed structures, which embody relationships of power, and its emergent structures, which represent the organization’s aliveness and creativity. Skillful managers understand the interdependence of design and emergence.’

³²McInroy, N. (2016) *Fostering a good local society*, Manchester: Centre for Local Economic Strategies. ³³Fifield (op.cit.) ³⁴Fleming, D. (2007) *Energy and the Common Purpose*, The Lean Economy Connection 3rd ed., p. 39 ³⁵Capra, F. and Luisi, P.L. (2014) *The Systems View of Life*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.319-320.

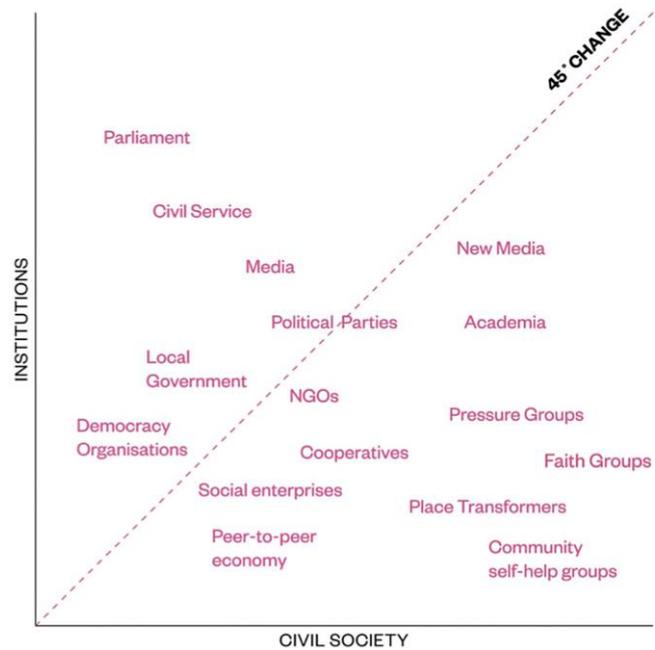
The framing of emergence and design allows us to get away from the tired jargon of 'bottom up' and 'top down' and begin to see that both are important and one should not dominate the other. For example, Peter Uvin's taxonomy is dominated by top-down thinking and Fritz Schumacher gives priority to bottom-up thinking.

In a paper, called *45° Change Transforming Society from Above and Below*, Neal Lawson suggests that it is the intersection of the forces of emergence and design that matter.³⁶ Based on a study in the UK, he explains that there is much energy and innovation going on in civil society, public services, and the new economy. People and organizations are pioneering new forms of collaborative action - much of it accelerated by new digital technologies and social media. Local authorities are experimenting with citizens' assemblies and participatory budget making; communities are setting up self-help groups for pressing needs like adult social care;



people are combining to provide for their energy needs or to share their resources and/or time. Initiatives light up the sky like fireworks and we see a glimpse of the good society ahead of us.

The theory of change can be represented schematically as follows:



The expression '45° Change' refers to the meeting point between the vertical state and these horizontal emerging social, economic, and political practices. According to Lawson, this is the fault-line through which a new society can be born. Organizations on both sides of the 45° line need to amend their behaviour.

³⁶Lawson, N. (2019) *45° Change: Transforming Society from Below and Above*, London: Compass. Available from : <https://www.compassonline.org.uk/publications/45o-change-transforming-society-from-below-and-above/>

Two models

So, the key question about scaling is not about whether to assign the adverb 'up' or 'down', but by considering the interaction between the two forces – emergence and design. It is not a question of 'either/or but 'both/and'. We must see social advance as a function of the messiness of the interaction of two different forces that push in opposite directions. Emergence is about freedom and design about order.

The emergent principles are those expressed through the non-directivity of community development. These principles are found in existing positive social movements, such as those to improve the environment, to raise the status of women, to increase the power of indigenous peoples and to counter racism and other forms of oppression.

Part of what is important about such movements is that they challenge the status quo with 'feminine' ways of going with the flow, reciprocity, cooperation, subjectivity, and inclusivity. This is exemplary of Mary Parker Follett's philosophy of 'power with'. If the world is to make progress, then many people suggest that this type of organizing is necessary. Part of the agenda is to build a new consciousness about this.

These emergent forces are different from the design features, which typically rely on 'masculine' ways of organizing through order, hierarchy, competition, objectivity and compartmentalization. The techniques used are quantitative processes like replication, expansion, extension, adoption, dissemination, transfer of technology, mainstreaming, and multiplication. These processes are closer to Mary Parker Follett's notion of 'power over'.

Finding the balance

The question is how to balance these quite different forces – giving appropriate weight to freedom and control, while recognizing them as antinomies. Groups on both sides of the 45° line need to be willing to change.

An important starting point is the one we have already cited by David Fleming:

'Large-scale problems do not require large-scale solutions; they require small-scale solutions within a large-scale framework.'

Size matters but the context determines at what scale any intervention should aim for and there is no algorithm that can decide that in advance. The key question is not 'how do we scale up success?' It is 'how do we find the appropriate scale that will bring success?' There are many answers to this question depending on the context and what success entails. Complex systems rule and there are no magic bullets.

Chapter 4: Framing the empirical study

The starting point

The first three chapters suggest that for inter-national development to live up to its expectations requires a big shift in the behaviour of the field.

In Chapter 1, we saw that despite more than 70 years of development, civil society in the Global South was in a weak position when Covid-19 hit. Moreover, many INGOs in the Global North were facing an existential threat. In Chapter 2, we saw that the classic methods employed by development agencies to 'empower women' were ineffective and rejected by many leading feminist activists in the field. In Chapter 3, we exposed the myths of scale and showed the wasted efforts of trying to transpose success in one place to success in another.

The study shows that the premise of the study, namely that international development could be made more effective through scaling up successful initiatives, is flawed. The dysfunctionality of the system means that this is not part of the playbook of international agencies and would anyway face considerable technical, logistical and political problems were it taken seriously by relevant development agencies.

The top-down architecture of the field produces endless projects but little sustainable development. The linear approaches in which a results chain from inputs to processes to outputs to outcomes to impact offers an attractive model of change, but in practice ignores the complexity of deep-seated social, economic and political problems. The simplicity of the model is, all too often, simplistic. While the model may produce surface changes but does not get to the root of problems. We saw this most vividly in income generation projects for women which may lift women out of poverty but fail to empower them because the patriarchal structures remain.

Moreover, the restrictions of narrowly targeted funding leave no room for creative solutions to problems as they define them rather than those defined by the funder.

More than 70 years after President Truman's speech that defined 'development', it is time to acknowledge that the restless energy in the field that produces a constant stream of new magic bullet solutions can mask the overall failure of the field.

Despite endless projects over many decades, we have failed to prepare for the poly-crisis we now face. Global turbulence wrought by the pandemic, the climate emergency, populism, inequality, racism, persistent violent conflict and the threat of world war) require a collective metamorphosis in the behaviour of humanity. The challenge is to organize, mobilize and engage people to reignite a sense of shared purpose and possibility to build new leadership for our societies. Funders of all kinds have failed to grasp this and continue to fund the symptoms of our troubles, rather than go deep and consider what it would take to build a new system, rather than merely trying to compensate for the failures of the old one.

We begin this chapter by dealing with some of the false understandings that have dogged the field of development.

We start with the main one that informed this study, namely by rejecting the hypothesis that scaling up successful pilot projects would enhance the effectiveness of international development. Following this, we open up the space for what might be useful to examine in the empirical work to be conducted by Jigsaw Ltd.

Scaling is the wrong framing

The literature on scaling up is distributed through many disparate sources clustered into different silos, and there has been little attempt to link them together. Thinking about scaling has not been subjected to systematic and comprehensive scrutiny. The more I looked at the literature, the more complex the issue became.

A common theme in the literature was 'failure to scale up'. Because the field so poor in the organisation of its knowledge, it would be easy to repeat the methods of the past. Many of the guidance notes are based on wishful thinking about how agencies in the development space should behave, rather than how they actually behave. The rhetoric about collaboration is not matched by the reality. Lofty claims about the of 'participation of people in communities' are made by funders and development agencies, when the reality is that people on the frontlines of communities are strangled by a lack of resources. The field is already top-heavy and the case for scaling up still further is of doubtful value.

The conclusion of the literature study suggests that 'scaling up' is an unhelpful way of thinking about improving the added value of the field.

There are at least two ways to explain this. The first relates to the meaning of the term; the second to its application.

Taking meaning first, it is important to split this into two: denotation and connotation. Taking denotation first, the literature study shows that 'scaling up' is a vague term whose use is subject to wide variation - indeed what philosophers call 'radical ambiguity' in which some uses have nothing in common with one another.

This means that to find a single statistical model of scaling up would be virtually impossible. There would be no chance of repeating my work on creating a coherent model of peacebuilding based on items developed by the Peace and Security Funders group, which were tested by 823 respondents in a survey, that showed a single underlying dimension revealed by factor analysis. This could be used as a dependent variable in the model, knowing that it had some empirical validation.¹

Turning to the connotation of the term, many people in the field suggest that it is a mechanical process imposed from the top-down, where resources are controlled by the supply side of development aid – funders and INGOs.

This suggests a model of what Mary Parker Follet called ‘power over’ and conflicts with the liberation implicit in women’s empowerment – sisters doing it or themselves. The women’s movement stresses agency by people who have been oppressed. This is in contradistinction to the ‘doing to’ redolent of a bygone age of white saviours rescuing black people from their poverty. In the age of Black Lives Matter, a movement which is spreading through the field, this is not acceptable.

This means that a study of scaling up would be opposed by many groups because it scales power upwards without accountability. It would doubtless be contested by key groups and study would run into serious opposition with little chance of support from the grassroots – who would see it as yet another example of colonialism.

As I suggested in chapter 3, the appropriate theoretical framing for scaling is not ‘up’ or ‘down’ but by asking the question:

How do you find large-scale impact within a framework of small-scale structures?

Turning from the concept to the application, the study has found important contextual issues that prevent the model of ‘scaling up’ from working. A key one is the history of failure. Scaling up has been tried in different ways in different periods and gained little traction. Despite the rhetoric of programmes such as the War

on Poverty, experience suggests that the field of development and philanthropy has little ability or interest in learning from what happens at the grassroots. Agencies in the field look upwards to their funders and the rules and regulations of funding regimes mean that there is little energy to do much else.

Mary Ann Clements of the Healing Solidarity Collective puts the issue starkly.² She notes that grassroots initiatives are starved of resources by the very institutions established to support them. However, this is not necessarily the fault of the people working in development.

She says they:

‘...experience a value rift between what they are committed to and the climate in which they work.’

Consumed by what she calls ‘the bureaucracy of aid’, and sometimes working in ‘a toxic culture’,³ people working from the top-down tend to be both stressed and unhappy. As Mary Ann Clements puts it:

‘Buried in the development sector as it currently exists are many, many, frustrated people with very little time to think, whose days are consumed by log frames and budget details and who currently have very little time to be in the practice of building the relationships and actions that will enable us to do things differently.’

The consequences are that:

‘The great majority of us are exhausted, staring at never ending to-do-lists, staying busy with the tasks in hand rather than taking time and space to think a new paradigm into being.’

Part of the problem is that the development aid industry is subject to politics and its purpose may not always be what it seems. This was brought home to me in an interview I conducted in 2011 with a former senior staff member of USAID who was sent to Indonesia:

‘On leaving for the mission, I was told “it doesn’t matter how you spend the budget, so long as you keep Suharto in power”.’

¹Knight, B., Bradford, L., Ingulfsen, I. and Sato, G. (2020) *Philanthropy for a safe, healthy, and just world*, New York: Candid. Available from: <https://candid.issuelab.org/resource/philanthropy-for-a-safe-healthy-and-just-world.html> ²Clement, M.A. (2019) *Change is in the air - but transformation in the development sector will require radically new ways of working together*, Global Fund for Community Foundations, 24 June. Available from: <https://globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/blog/change-is-in-the-air-but-transformation-in-the-development-sector-will-require-radically-new-ways-of-working-together/> ³An inquiry into Amnesty International uncovered a toxic workplace culture. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/feb/06/amnesty-international-has-toxic-working-culture-report-finds>

Since development aid is in the control of politicians, it can be cut from on high without regard to local consequences. This has been made clear by the 70 per cent cuts to aid announced by the British government.⁴ Moreover, the fact that development aid by governments is a political act is shown through the lens of the rise of the problem of 'closing space' for civil society.⁵ Right-wing governments across the world prevent finance flows into their countries because they feel such aid is a way of exerting control over them. A glimpse at the map produced by Civicus shows the extent of this problem – with few countries having an 'open' approach to civil society.⁶ The best account of political developments behind the growing problem of oppressive governments is Paul Mason's *Clear Bright Future: A Radical Defence of the Human Being*.⁷

Governments that support programmes to end poverty can and do end them or amend them at will. During the 1960s and 1970s, this led to many pilot programmes that were abandoned without being applied more widely. Such an outcome is regarded by governments – even enlightened ones – as collateral damage for which they feel little responsibility. The lack of constant application and the pursuit of fashion in development means that the chances of permanent scaling up for sustainability is not a realistic goal of the system.

The consequence is persistent reinvention of the broken wheel.

'Pilot Project' is the wrong framing

Following multiple failures catalogued earlier in this report, the idea of the 'pilot project' as a strategy for change has fallen from grace. The field has come to see the limits of the single intervention – be it a grant to a single organisation or a programme developed by a single funder.

Linear models of change fail because they ignore (a) system complexity, (b) vested interests, (c) holistic solutions, (d) difficulty of organising (e) and resistance from key stakeholders.

The idea of the pilot project is not much used now, with the key unit of analysis in the field being 'the system'. The reason for this can be illustrated by what has become known as 'the Cobra Effect'. Bush Foundation President Jen Ford Reedy in her TEDx talk on ecosystem philanthropy highlights the potential pitfalls of a quick-fix approach to problem solving through a single project because it disrupts an ecosystem in ways that cannot be predicted.⁸

She describes how the Cobra Effect shows how well thought-through interventions commonly produce the opposite effect of what was intended. During British rule of colonial India, the government became concerned about the number of venomous cobra snakes in Delhi. The government therefore offered bounty for every dead cobra. Initially this was a successful strategy as large numbers of snakes were killed for the reward. Eventually, however, enterprising people began to breed cobras for the income. When the government became aware of this, the programme was scrapped, causing the cobra breeders to set the now-worthless snakes free. This resulted in an increase in the wild cobra population. The apparent solution for the problem made the situation worse.

The field held onto the idea of the single intervention that would end poverty for a long time and has driven the mythology of scaling up. The weakness of this type of thinking was exposed by Michael Edwards and David Hulme in 1995 in which they said it was important, as they put it, to go '*beyond the magic bullet*'.⁹

The zeitgeist of the field is now Systems to #ShiftThePower with a key suggestion to concentrate of the interaction of different forces to produce good outcomes in which 'ego, logo and silo' are seen as enemies of progress. Joining up is everything.¹⁰

This leads to the #ShiftThePower movement on the demand-side of development aid and the \$500m programme of Co-Impact on the supply-side. A key empirical question is the extent to which these forces match. This is a useful starting point for our study.

⁴Cuts to the aid budget are described here: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/jan/26/uk-cut-overseas-aid-budget-costs> ⁵A series of articles on closing space in civil society published by a can be accessed here: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/tagged/closing-space-for-civil-society/> ⁶The CIVICUS Monitor: Tracking civil society space can be found here: <https://www.civicus.org/index.php/what-we-do/innovate/civicus-monitor> ⁷Mason, P. (2019) *Clear bright future: A radical defence of the human being*, London Allen Lane ⁸A Ted talk by Jen Ford Reedy can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3X7ixUfrhE&feature=youtu.be&noredirect=1 ⁹Edwards, M., & Hulme, D. (1995). Non-governmental organisations - performance and accountability. *Beyond the magic bullet: NGO Performance and Accountability in the Post-Cold-War World*. London: Earthscan. ¹⁰Knight, B. (2019) *Systems to #ShiftThePower*, Global Fund for Community Foundations, November, Available from: <https://globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/SystemsToShiftThePower.pdf>

A better framing is emergence and design

I introduced the importance of the ideas of emergence and design in Part 3. This is central to the issues lying behind the failures of scaling approaches to international development.

This is not a new idea. During the Second World War, when William Beveridge and others were wrestling with plans for social security, socialist historian G.D.H. Cole drew attention to the *'tensions between traditionally run organisations and those run on community participation and self-help'*. Cole called these two types *'bad mixers'*.¹¹ I suggest that the failure of aid is partly due to the failure to recognise, acknowledge and plan for the fact that these two forces are – of necessity – conflictual yet vital if progress is to be made,¹² bringing the conflict out into the open and dealing with it would enable the field to face itself and come to a new understanding.

This is not easy because of our unconscious patterns of thinking mean that, if we favour one approach over the other, we tend to be blind to the importance of the other side.

This was brought home to me in a direct and personal way to me 20 years ago. I had been asked by the Commonwealth Foundation to be part of a multicultural writing team to produce reports on their 'Civil Society in the New Millennium' programme. This was an impressive participatory research project involving teams of researchers in 47 countries.

As part of the process, I negotiated a book deal with a publisher and set about the first draft. My co-authors and an international advisory committee were due to meet in Dublin in July 2000. I produced material for that meeting in advance and was quite pleased by what I had written.

At the meeting, I was – metaphorically speaking – slaughtered. My draft was written entirely from the perspective of a North European middle class male. I had adopted a western model of progress drawing on the 18th century Enlightenment as the inspiration.

All my references were to western thinkers and my observations paid scant attention to competing views. This was a key moment in my life and I realised I needed to absorb some of the cultures of the Global South into my psyche before I could possibly write about them. I made immediate plans to travel and to do so. This humbling moment was one of the best things that happened to the way I understand things. My skills in statistical and text analysis count for nothing if my unconscious bias – framed through years of epistemological conditioning – prevent me from seeing what matters.

Here is an extract of what I wrote as a result of understanding more about what matters to people in the Global South. This text is taken from the final version of the study, which was well received by the field.¹³

'The argument so far takes an entirely Western and, most particularly, a European view of the debate. From the South, particularly from Africa, Asia, and the Pacific, the issues are entirely different. Here, the debate on a good society tends to focus on the conflict between tradition and modernity. Indeed, the essence of a good society is often seen in conserving tradition and in warding off modernity. Far from being the essence of a good society, progress is here seen as an enemy.

In considering traditional culture, it is important to beware of falling into the trap of stereotypes (Pandey, 1993), or believing that traditional cultures have remained static for many centuries up to the present one (Dietrich, 1989), or believing that traditional culture is homogeneous (Kapen, 1994).

Indeed, it is important to speak of cultures in the plural, since, as Kapen (1994) points out, traditional culture: '...is anything but a homogeneous whole, containing as it does, varied and conflicting tendencies - the Vedic and the Tantric, the patriarchal and the matriarchal, the Saivite and the Vaishnavite, the Orthodox and the heterodox, the indigenous and the exogenous.'

¹¹G D H Cole (1945), 'Mutual Aid Movements, in relation to voluntary social service', in A F C Bourdillon (ed) *Voluntary Social Services. Their place in the modern state*, London: Methuen, p 118. Quoted by Alison Penn, (2011) 'Social history and organizational development: revisiting Beveridge's Voluntary Action' in *Understanding the Roots of Voluntary Action: Historical perspectives on current social policy*, Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, pp17-31. ¹²Karahan, H. (2021) *It is time to rethink international development cooperation*, Aljazeera, 21 January. Available from <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2021/1/23/its-time-to-rethink-international-development-cooperation> ¹³Knight, B., Chigudu, H. and Tandon, R. (200) *Reviving Democracy*, London: Earthscan

Moreover, these remarks are restricted solely to Asian cultures. Variations would be even greater if traditional cultures from other parts of the world were included. The empirical data, reported later, consider a variety of traditional cultures from many parts of the world.

Regardless of location, there appear to be six factors that are commonly present in traditional cultures that distinguish their ways of life from those in the North and West. These are as follows:

1. Primacy of community versus primacy of the individual. In traditional cultures, individuals are subservient to the needs of the family, clan, caste or tribe, rather than being free to pursue their own destiny which tends to be the norm in modern societies.
2. Hierarchy of birth versus hierarchy of merit. In traditional cultures, aspirations are determined largely by the family, clan, caste or tribe, rather than through competition or meritorious performance which tends to be the norm in modern societies.
3. Work as worship versus work as profit. In traditional cultures, work is conducted because it is useful and meaningful in its own right, rather than because of its commercial value which tends to be the motivation in modern societies.
4. Simplicity versus complexity. In traditional cultures, needs are met in a holistic and simple way, rather than through the modern consumer market and its attendant complexity.
5. Myth versus logos. In traditional cultures, part of the story of human existence is spiritual, transcending every day experience, so that one walks with God, gods, or goddesses, whereas modern societies tend to use analytical procedures based on a logical positivist frame of reference deriving from the tradition of Ayer (1937).
6. Cyclical versus linear. In traditional cultures, life follows the rhythm of natural cycles of day and night, growth and decay, life and death, rather than the linear models of progress that tend to be used in modern societies.

Taken together, these characteristics are thought by many to indicate a good society. At the same time, people who advocate this view are not so naïve as to consider that all elements of a traditional society are good. Take, for example, Ponna Wignaraja and Akmal Hussein (1989) who have written a lucid account of some of the traditional communities of South Asia. They suggest that the best features of traditional societies involve a deep-rooted posture of tolerance, a highly evolved humanism, and an ethos in which linguistic, religious or ethnic groups can tolerate and appreciate the creative elements of another. These humanist traits find expression in a rich folk tradition and artistic ritual, through which fundamental well-springs of love and creativity spill over, finding expression in unity through diversity. Wignaraja and Hussein cite Barba Farid, a 13th century poet, who expresses this idea:

*'In every form I see my beloved
My heart is lost in my beloved.'*¹⁴

Grassroots movements in the Global South tend to bubble below the surface and are hard to see through an official development lens. Such movements act a bit like Mycelium, a fungus network that grows. People in civil society are driven by processes that are not mechanical but inclusive and organic. They are in search of harmony between people and nature. This runs counter to instrumental views of progress which have been adopted as part of modernisation. Yet, they contain immensely valuable components that are easily disturbed and destroyed – just like the Amazonian Rain Forest.

What the study could contribute

It has been argued that the failure to connect the top-down agendas of elites in places like London and Washington with the bottom-up concerns has driven the regressive populism that has produced the new dangerous political leaders in the world with the concomitant threats to democracy.¹⁵

The study could begin to help to find a new vision and model for international development by addressing the fault line of 45° Change.

¹⁴Knight, B., Chigudu, H. and Tandon, R. (2002) *Reviving Democracy*, London: Earthscan ¹⁵Peston, R. (2017) *WTF?*, London: Hodder & Stoughton

This would give the study a niche in what is a crowded and contested space where there is presently very little clarity or understanding – leading to the high prevalence of distress and anger in the field of international development. This would take place at a key moment for the world where it is evident that systems are broken and we need a new way.

The pandemic means that a big change is underway – perhaps an epoch changing moment. We must embrace paradigm change. The premises of the world’s argument were exposed in 2008, problems were patched, but the underlying problems are still with us. The world is now falling over as the air is thick with chickens coming home to roost. We have to face up to the fact that we need a new vision for humanity and cannot retain the illusion that persistent economic growth will not the ecosystem.

As visionary Buckminster Fuller put it:
‘You never change something by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.’

The H & S Davidson Trust could assist this. It cannot be done alone but there needs to be an initial catalyst that stimulates others to join in and find a new way. At the very least the study should approach the field with a new question for it to answer and to encourage them to begin to work on it, putting old jealousies aside and driven by a humility and vulnerability in search of a new path. The work of Brenée Brown is immensely helpful here for she shows that such a perspective is the birthplace of creativity.

There are signs that this approach might well take root. An Oxfam initiative has made a promising staff. One of the participants says:
*‘The Emergent Agency in a Time of Covid project is definitely the most fun thing in my work at Oxfam right now.’*¹⁶

And a method to match

Such creative developments require new methods. Rather than conducting a study on the field it is vital to conduct a study with the field.

Rather than seeking ‘objective detachment’ we must embrace ‘disciplined subjectivity.’ This does not mean we cannot use the tools of surveys, interviews, mathematics and text analysis. Rather, we must harness the power of key actors as part of a people-based enquiry. As anthropologist, Tim Ingold puts it: *‘All study calls for observation, but in anthropology we observe not by objectifying others but by paying attention to them, watching what they do and listening to what they say. We study with people, rather than making studies of them.’*¹⁷

Nevertheless, working *with* people still presents problems of power, including decisions over what is important to measure, whose voices matter, and ownership of the resulting data. Critical theory (e.g. race theory, feminist theory, post-colonial theory) requires that any research acknowledge power and take steps to minimize power dynamics. In their introduction to critical methods and indigenous inquiry, Denzin and Lincoln (2008) offer the following criteria for research: *‘It must be ethical, performative, healing; transformative, decolonizing, participatory. It must be committed to dialogue, community, self-determination, and cultural autonomy. It must meet people’s perceived needs. It must resist efforts to confine inquiry to a single paradigm or interpretive strategy. It must be unruly, disruptive, critical, and dedicated to the goal of justice and equity.’*¹⁸

This means extending the methodology beyond the logical positivist approach of logic and empiricism.

¹⁶Information about Oxfam’s work on ‘Evidence Gathering, Learning & Knowledge Exchange: How it works and how you can get involved’ is here: <https://sway.office.com/zsaKG4z8EAI9IB06?ref=email> ¹⁷Ingold, T. (2018) *Anthropology: Why it matters*, London: Wiley ¹⁸Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (2008). “Introduction: Critical methodologies and indigenous inquiry.” In N. Denzin, Y. Lincoln, & L.T. Smith (Eds.), *Handbook of critical and indigenous methodologies*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

In *Cosmos and Psyche*, Richard Tarnas sets out how to approach this task:

*'Humanity's 'progress of knowledge' and the 'evolution of consciousness' have too often been characterized as if our task were simply to ascend a very tall cognitive ladder with graded hierarchical steps that represent successive developmental stages in which we solve increasingly challenging mental riddles, like advanced problems in a graduate exam in biochemistry or logic. But to understand life and the cosmos better, perhaps we are required to transform not only our minds but our hearts. For the whole being, body and soul, mind and spirit, is implicated. Perhaps we must go not only high and far but down and deep. Our world view and cosmology, which defines the context for everything else, is profoundly affected by the degree to which all our faculties - intellectual, imaginative, aesthetic, moral, emotional, somatic, spiritual, relational - enter the process of knowing. How we approach 'the other', and how we approach each other, will shape everything, including our own evolving self and the cosmos in which we participate.'*¹⁹

It follows that we can have a scientific understanding of philanthropy and development so long as we take account of the evidence from epistemology. And the evidence from epistemology calls for multiple methods to understand complex phenomena. The frequently cited *'hierarchy of evidence'* is badly out of date. We need to learn from authors such as Michael Quinn Patton on Developmental Evaluation and the field of emergent learning.²⁰

Practically this means that to increase the understanding of emergence and design, and to begin to bring together a new fusion, it will be necessary qualitative interviews and quantitative analysis may be necessary, but they are certainly insufficient. The risk of this approach is that it will be hard to get attention. Why should a \$500 million programme such as Co-Impact bother with the study? Why should a feminist in Zimbabwe consent to an interview?

The framing of the study must involve them in a meaningful way and not merely in the tokenistic approach that casts people as 'respondents' rather than 'agents of change'. The method of dialogue developed by physicist David Bohm is the kind of technique that will be needed.

He says:

'Dialogue comes from the Greek word dialogos . Logos means "the word", or in our case we would think of 'the meaning of the word'. And dia means through'-it doesn't mean "two".... The picture or image that this derivation suggests is of a stream of meaning flowing among and through and between us. This will make possible a flow of meaning in the whole group, out of which may emerge some new understanding. It's something new, which may not have been in the starting point at all. It's something creative. And this shared meaning is the "glue" or "cement" that holds people and societies together.

The object of a dialogue is not to analyze things, or to win an argument, or to exchange opinions. Rather, it is to suspend your opinions and to look at the opinions—to listen to everybody's opinions, to suspend them, and to see what all that means.... We can just simply share the appreciation of the meanings, and out of this whole thing, truth emerges unannounced—not that we have chosen it.

*Everything can move between us. Each person is participating, is partaking of the whole meaning of the group and also taking part in it. We can call that a true dialogue. Dialogue is the collective way of opening up judgments and assumption.'*²¹

Ultimately, the success of this venture will depend on co-creation. My judgement is that in the absence of that, the research will fail to gain traction and the venture will fail - like so many before it.

The key issue here is the legitimacy of the research project. It will be questioned - and rightly so. We must avoid the kind of mistake that I made in Dublin all those years ago.

Barry Knight, March 2022

¹⁹Tarnas, R. (2006) *Cosmos and Psyche: Intimations of a New World View*, New York: Viking Press, p.487. ²⁰A useful guide to emergent learning and developmental evaluation can be found here: <https://www.optimisticanthro.com/blog/2018/2/8/what-the-heck-is-emergent-learning> ²¹Bohm, D. (1996) *On Dialogue*, London and New York: Routledge

7. INCREASING THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Empirical research

SUMMARY

The empirical research undertaken by Jigsaw Research shows there is a strong consensus of opinion across the international development sector.

Both Global North and Global South, and both Funders and Implementers (see appendix for full definitions of these categories) broadly share the same opinions on the main challenges the sector is facing, and the changes to mindsets, systems and behaviours that are needed to bring about an improvement in effectiveness.

A key challenge facing the sector, universally recognised by participants in this research, is the need to rebalance relationships between Global North and South.



A number of interlinked issues were identified:

- Strategies and campaigns are designed with insufficient understanding of the needs of local communities
- Need to decolonise and decentralise the sector
- Need to review and change the role of International NGOs
- Need to build stronger relationships and improve collaboration

Despite these challenges, there is a high degree of optimism around the potential positive impact of implementing changes and action that could:

- Ensure equal voice for local communities in all decision making
- Encourage more unrestricted and longer-term funding
- Incentivise collaboration and partnerships and reduce competition for funding

The pandemic has exacerbated some of the issues and challenges in the sector, and it has also exposed the fragility of many communities.

This has prompted a sharper focus on the increased need for localisation and a widespread recognition that change is needed:

“

The priority now is to rethink international development in every dimension. New systems and mindsets are needed to meet the future.

NGO | Global North

”

Jigsaw Research, June 2022

8. INCREASING IMPACT IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Empirical research

FULL REPORT

See appendix for details of sample, methodology and significance testing used in this research. Quantitative data should be treated as indicative rather than representative of the sector, due to limited sample size.

8.1 Challenges & Opportunities for International Aid

There is strong consensus about the key challenges facing the International Development sector. The challenges identified by research participants relate to three themes:

1. Imbalance in relationships between Global North and Global South
2. Restricted funding
3. Insufficient collaboration among the different players involved.

Each of these issues is explored next in more detail.

8.1.1 Need to rebalance relationships

This research found that a large majority of research participants (84%) agree that the International Development system needs to reform, with local communities having equal voice with Funders in the Global North in making decisions (fig 1).



Fig 1

% agree

International Development system needs reform, with local people having equal voice to funders in Global North in making decisions



This point of view was clearly expressed throughout the research by participants in the Global North and the Global South and by both Funders and Implementers. The current imbalance in power and decision-making results in many aid programmes being designed by

Funders, with insufficient input from people in the local community who have a much better understanding of the local community needs and can also provide a valuable perspective on the practicality, sustainability, and likely impact of potential solutions.

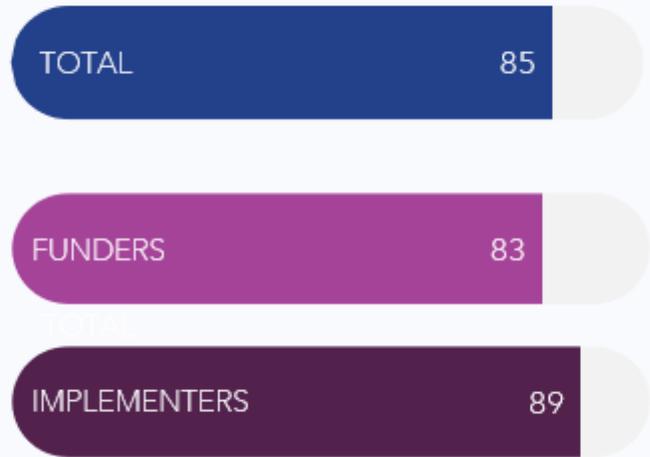
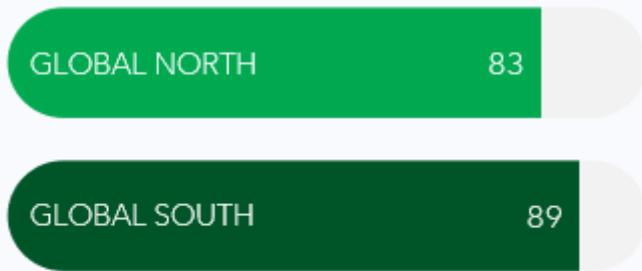
The research found that 85% of participants feel that too many Funders develop strategies and campaigns from offices in the Global North, rather than starting with truly understanding the needs of communities in the Global South. (fig 2)

This sentiment had widespread support (89%) among survey participants from the Global South, and among Implementers, and it was also supported by a majority of participants from the Global North (83%) and by Funders (83%).

Fig 2

% agree

Too many funders develop strategies and campaigns in offices in Global North, rather than starting on the front line by understanding needs of local communities in Global South



//

Local organisations should be the lead, rather than large INGOs based in the Global North

INGO | Global North

//

Many Funders and Implementers had first-hand experience of the problems resulting from well-meaning initiatives that had been developed without a real understanding of the underlying causes of a particular issue, and without consulting on the feasibility of a programme designed to address the challenge.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROOT CAUSES - A CASE STUDY



Our organisation aims to reduce the number of women who are sex-trafficked to Europe. But when we are seeking funding, many suggestions are that we should use the funding to increase security along the borders to ensure that the women are not taken out of the country.

Sex trafficking is an economic issue not a security issue. If we can improve the economies of the local villages, then families will want their daughters to stay there and work, and women will not want to

travel abroad in the hope of making more money and so you reduce the risk of women being exploited by sex traffickers.

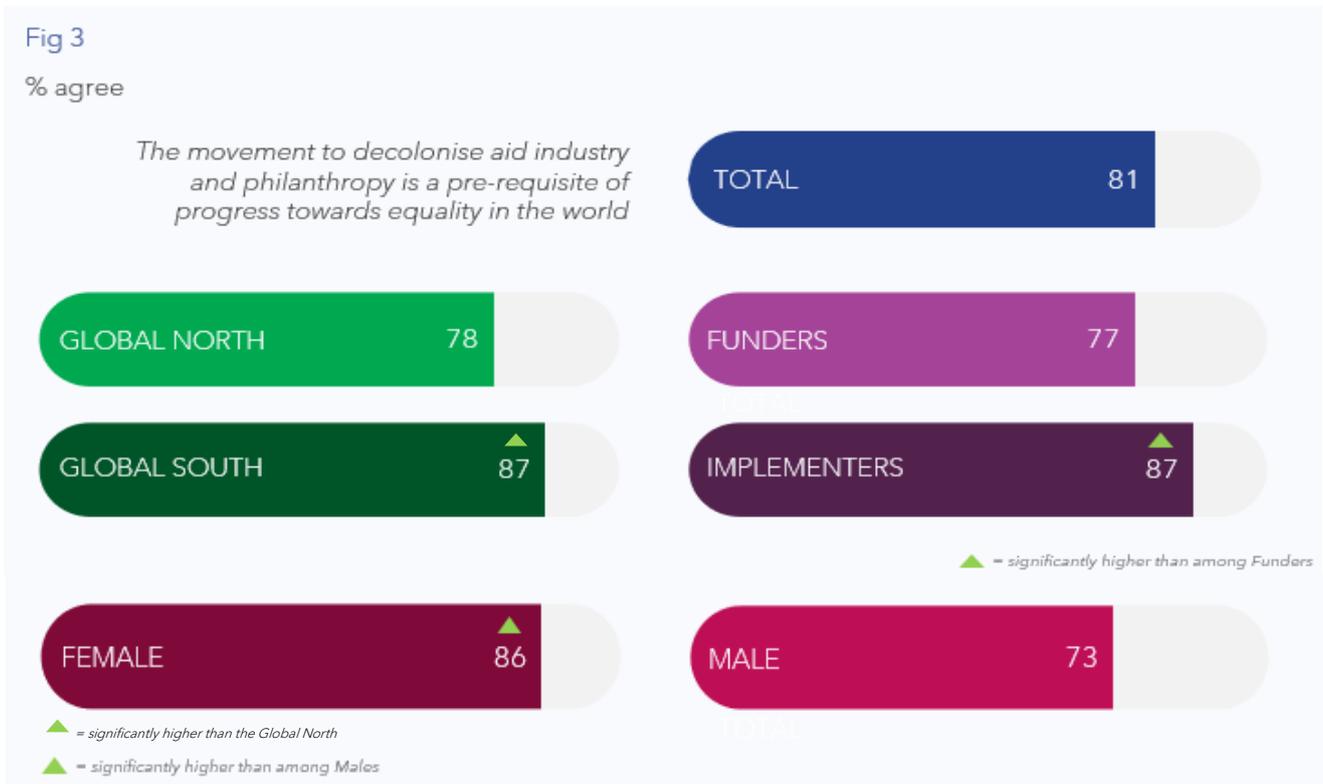
Instead of funding tighter border controls, we set up businesses and co-operatives in the villages which are run by women.

Sometimes they are managed by women who have been involved in sex-trafficking in the past. This has a much higher impact in tackling sex-trafficking



The echoes of colonialism do not sit well with many in the sector. There is an acknowledged movement to decolonise the aid industry, which is well-received.

Most participants (81%) agree this movement is needed and a prerequisite of the progress towards equality in the world (fig 3).



There is slightly stronger support for this movement in the Global South (87%) and among Implementers (87%) but it is also supported by more than three-quarters of survey participants who are based in the Global North and by Funders.

This statement is also more strongly supported by women (86%) than men (73%).

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Decolonising the aid funding will have the greatest impact. Too much power to make decisions, allocate resources sits in the Global North and erases local knowledge and expertise

NGO | Global South

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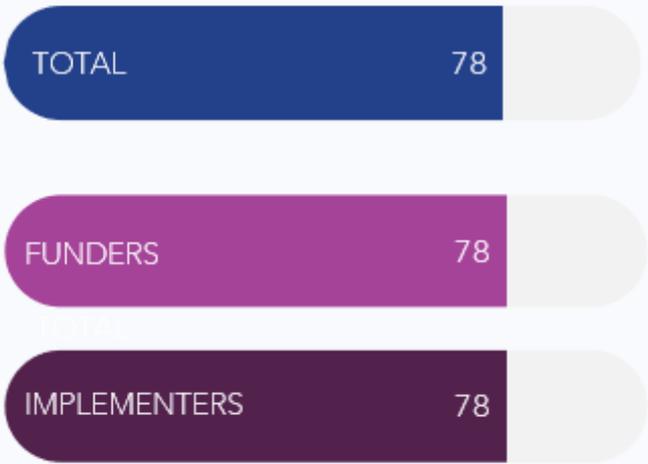
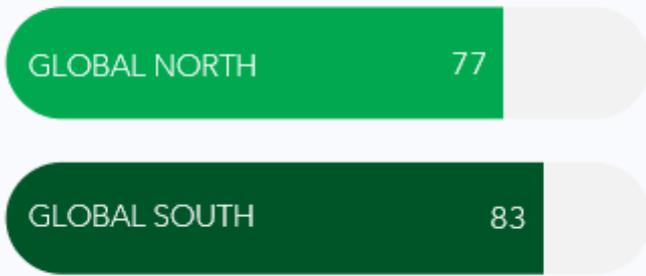
There is a growing discussion about the role of International NGOs. 78% of survey participants felt that INGOs should change their roles with program decision makers located "on the front line" in the Global South and focus on fundraising and advocacy in the Global North.

Interestingly, there is almost equal agreement among Global North and Global South that this change to the roles of INGOs is needed. (fig 4)

Fig 4

% agree

Large international NGOs should change their role, with program decision-makers located on front line in Global South, and focus on fundraising and advocacy in Global North



//

There should be more power in the hands of local community organizations with INGOs as flexible donors, not Implementers

Implementer | Global South

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The priority is to shift the power to local organisations - small grassroots organisations not local offshoots of larger INGOs and work with them to develop internal systems and processes

Funder | Global North

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INGOs participating in the survey also agreed that they would need to reconsider their roles:

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We need to challenge INGOs to re-think what roles sit in the North. INGOs need to take on the long-term work of moving decision making to country offices

INGO | Global North

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The need to move to a more localised structure was a theme that was familiar to all. Yet there was also a significant level of frustration that despite "localisation" becoming part of the sector's common narrative, to date (and prior to the pandemic) there had been only limited action.

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Localisation is a big mantra, but I don't know how well it is put into place. There is a big policy shift, but the implementation is limited.

Intermediary | Global North

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Overall, there is widespread agreement that transformation of the aid system is needed, especially change that can lead to:

- Local communities having an equal voice in decision making
- A greater understanding of the needs of local communities
- A change in the focus of INGOs

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True power lies in devolving money, discourse and decision-making power

Consultant | Global South

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PANDEMIC – A CATALYST FOR CHANGE?

At the time this research was conducted, the global Covid pandemic was having an enormous impact on local communities, beyond the health crisis which had exposed the fragility of some local communities in terms of their access to healthcare.

Many local NGOs had experienced a significant reduction or removal of funding partly due to funding being redirected to cope with the immediate crisis rather than being targeted at long term development, but also because funding from Global North organisations had been cut.

Representatives of INGOs in local communities had often returned to their home countries leaving locals to implement programs.

This has accelerated localisation and forced local organisations to rely more on local resources, seek local funding and collaborate with other organisations working to achieve the same goals.

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The localisation agenda is even more important in Covid because we can't travel so the local NGOs should be at the heart of everything

INGO | Global North

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8.1.2 Restricted funding

Throughout the research, participants raised issues of funding being both a key obstacle in terms of supporting sustainable impact but also a key opportunity for change and improvement.

Many concerns were raised about the way funding is directed and controlled. Donor policy is seen as the key determinant of what happens in the field and there are clearly different types of Funders and funding policies.

Some Funders want to fund their own projects and initiatives: they tend to want tight control over how the money is spent and expect to see a short-term impact within 1 or 2 years. Other Funders want to fund existing programs or organisations and tend to make a longer-term commitment to funding – at least 5 years. These Funders tend to allow local organisations more flexibility over how the money is spent.

Many participants made a distinction between restricted and unrestricted or flexible funding. Restricted funding – where funding is allocated only to pre-specified activities and/or is conditional on specific criteria being met - is seen as a potential barrier to effectiveness.

Restricted funding is criticised by many for encouraging conservatism and driving risk aversion:

- It encourages conservatism in approaches – stick to what you have done previously, just do what you’re paid for, don’t take risks

- It imposes a prohibitive compliance burden which is challenging and can act as a barrier, especially for smaller NGOs that are less able to cope with the additional layers of bureaucracy and registration required.

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Restrictions on funding can mean organisations get stuck in a rut and think ‘this is where our competencies are, and this is what we get paid for and what our funding depends upon so this is what we will deliver’ If we don’t have more freedom of funding then we don’t have the freedom to move to a different model

Funder | Global North

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Funders insist on groups being registered but these organisations are often working out of camps or in other locations on the [Burma] border, where it is both impossible to register as well as a potential threat to their work. Removing these restrictions would have a major impact

Author | Global North

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- It can discourage innovations and new ideas/ initiatives – local organisations feel unable to trial potential improvements either because terms of funding prohibits this or from fear of being unable to demonstrate a positive impact within a short period of time

- Funding restrictions may inhibit collaboration between organisations and can lead to organisations competing for the same funds, which leads to siloing and duplication of resource.

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There is tight restriction on how that money can be used and consequent risk aversion – people tend to fund things that they are already familiar with and that have proven results. The calculus is stacked against new ideas that are unproven and there are multiple veto points before something can get off the ground

Government Organisation | Global North

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A lot of funding is siloed and reporting and accountability is siloed, so whilst organisations might buy into the theory of collaboration and working together it is harder to move towards this until Funders start to do so and support that kind of thinking

Funder | Global North

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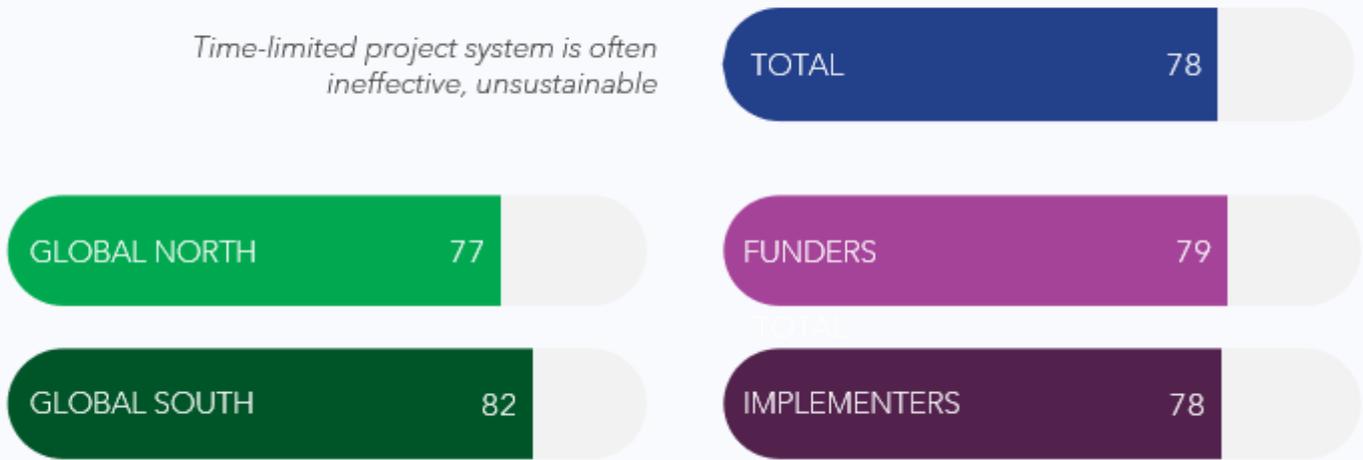
Securing long term, sustainable funding is a major challenge for maximising the impact of any program. Programs and campaigns are vulnerable to the changing, often short-term, priorities of Funders, and the reduction or removal of funding undermines trust between partners and among the local community.

Restricted funding was felt to be closely related with a short-term project mindset and approach. This research found that time-limited projects are widely recognised as being ineffective and unsustainable (78% agree) – a point of view shared by both Funders and Implementers (fig 5)

Fig 5

% agree

Time-limited project system is often ineffective, unsustainable



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The project mindset and restricted funding go hand in hand. Lay out what you did, show me how you did it, and maybe we can go onto another project. It is just designed for failure

Intermediary/Consultant | Global North

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The criticism of time-limited project was less strongly voiced by participants from governmental organisations – where only 59% agreed with the statement – but still a majority, nonetheless.

Many participants voiced a concern that a project-based approach could be too static, linear and limited in scope. Projects tend to be too narrowly defined and focus on a single intervention or solution with an expectation of short-term tangible results. This narrow definition can drive a silo-based mentality and can mean that the project is not dynamic or adaptive enough - unable to respond to changes in circumstances. Projects can often be time-bound and shorter term, designed with little notion of sustainability. When funding is linked to projects, there is often an expectation of very tightly defined, tangible results within a short time frame. There is a widely shared view that effective change is rarely achieved via such an approach.

Despite the widespread agreement around the shortcomings of time-limited projects, there is less consensus about better alternatives.

Just under half the survey participants feel that Funders should focus on supporting existing, successful projects rather than starting new ones (46%) (fig 6).

//

All the players in a project-based system have incentives that encourage them to be conservative and short term, yet we are grappling with huge problems. Even the largest programs - the problems are a hundred times what they can achieve so we are not moving the needle on many of the problems we are trying to address

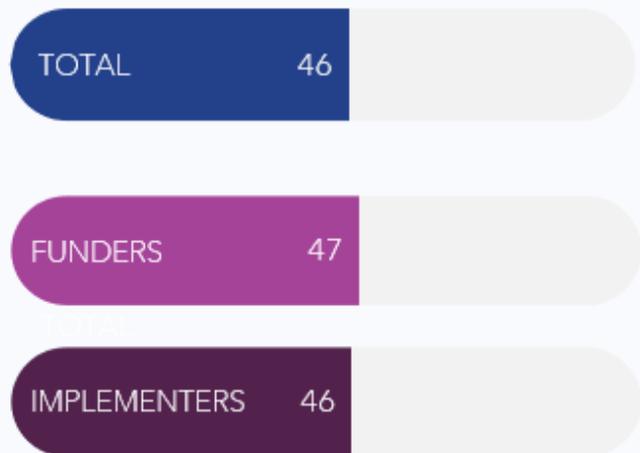
Consultant | Global South

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Fig 6

% agree

It would be better for funders to support scaling of existing successful projects, rather than fund new initiatives



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The number one issue is the design of funding and both funders and NGOs are really looking not to scale beyond the duration of the program. Funders fund that way, NGOs design programs that way, and the vast majority of global welfare programs I see are really intended to take donor dollars and not really scale results beyond the initial program

Consultant | Global South

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Some commenters in the qualitative research felt that funding should be used to support existing organisations, others suggested funding should be directed at strengthening local infrastructures and building skills, rather than specific causes and campaigns.

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The priority is to move away from project funding and invest in empowering people and organisations - to take risks and allow for experiments and failures. We need to get more funding directly into the hands of grassroots groups, while providing them with assistance (if they ask for it) on things like strategy, effectiveness, measurement - and NOT pushing them to scale

Consultant | Global North

My main challenge is pressure from bilateral donors to account for every penny. The philanthropy sector is different, they allow you to fail, but the bilaterals like you to hide the negatives

NGO | Global South

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8.1.3 Insufficient collaboration

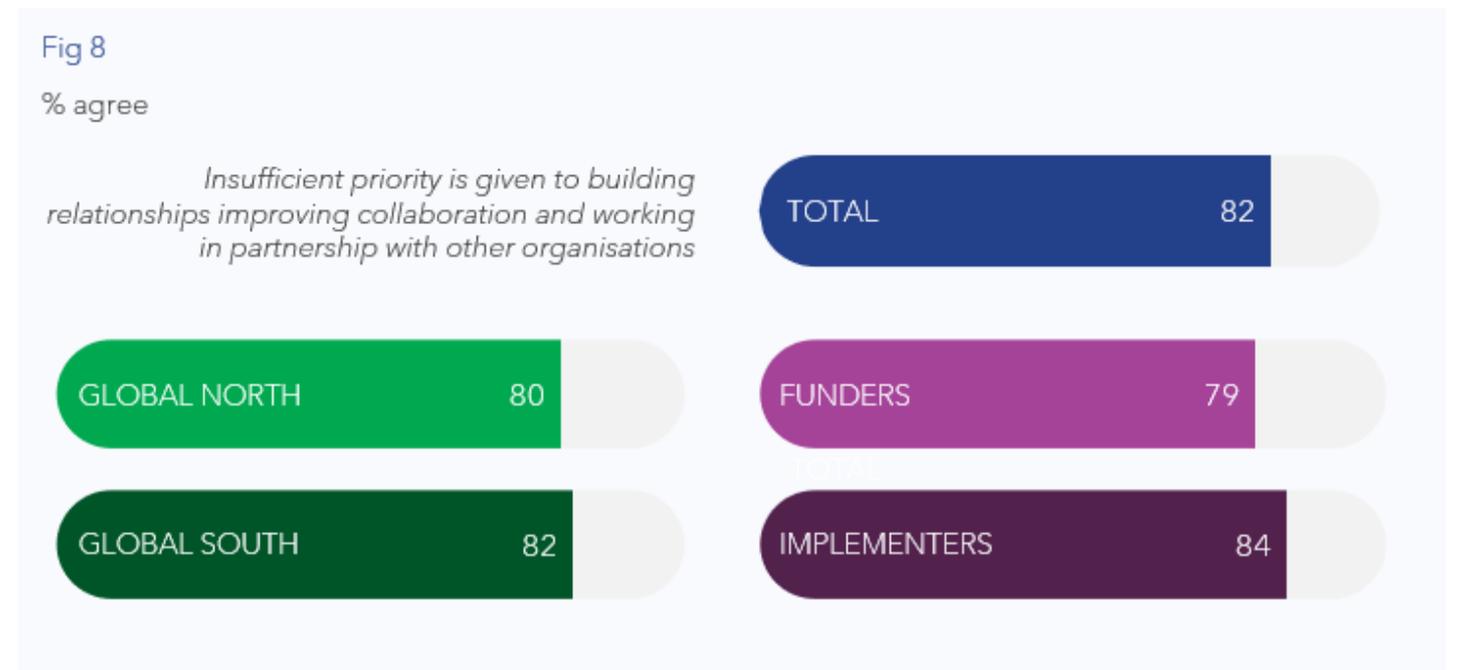
The importance of collaboration and building trust was voiced loudly throughout this research study.

There was almost unanimous agreement that the sector is siloed, and needs better at both horizontal and vertical integration. (fig 7)

//
 We need to build stronger relationships, built on trust, mutual respect, and collaboration
 Funder | Global North
 //



Many agree that insufficient priority is given to building relationships and partnerships (82%) (fig 8)



Government survey participants are less likely to agree that improving relationships and collaboration are a priority (59%); although a majority agree, this shows a

different overall perspective compared to survey participants from other types of organisations.

The need for greater collaboration and trust was highlighted across multiple relationships:

- Between Funders and Implementers - to ensure open and honest dialogue about every aspect of an initiative from design through to implementation and particularly the way funds will be deployed and how success will be measured and evaluated
- Between NGOs - to enable more collaboration and partnering on programs to tackle shared concerns and establish communities of practice, and reduce silos
- Between Funders - to encourage more co-funding of programs to enable more sustainable, longer-term funding and reduced risk.

There is widespread recognition that no one entity is able to achieve audacious goals and therefore the need for collaboration and building relationships with other organisations is essential. Trust is seen as a critical enabler to effective collaboration, and for many, building trust is seen as the cornerstone to increased effectiveness across the sector.

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Collaboration and co-operation across the sector will create synergies and reduce repetition in solving common problems

NGO | Global South

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NGOs are encouraged to promote their own solutions rather than be focused on what the best solution is, and therefore to partner with others and that is a fundamental flaw in the sector. So partner more, adopt other's solutions more, and also look at when there can be mergers. There are too many NGOs doing their own thing that are ego driven and not driven by trying to get economies of scale, and trying to come up with the best solution, so there are some fundamental issues that mean they do not always do the best for the people that they serve

Consultant | Global South

Every single NGO will say they have the best solution and that can't be the case, so we need to be honest where we have the best in class or not, so we can collaborate with others, and working out what is the best way so we all crowd in around that. Where are they best in class and where are they not

Consultant | Global South

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A lack of trust was felt to be driving Funders to keep a tight control of how money is spent and to demand tangible evidence of impact in the short term. A lack of trust was causing a risk averse approach and also encouraging Implementers to avoid or even cover-up mistakes or program short-comings.

Some research participants observed the differences between the international aid sector, where a fear of failure was pervasive, and the commercial sector, where failure is an accepted step in progression.

Closely linked to transparency about both successes and failures is greater knowledge sharing across the sector as a whole. There was widespread agreement (79%) that the quality and spread of knowledge management in the sector is poor, with enormous wastage. (fig 9)

Participants from the Global South and Implementers were even more likely to agree that knowledge management is a challenge in the International Development sector.

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Trust is the biggest challenge and the biggest opportunity. It is the answer to everything

NGO | Global South

Relationship and trust comes first, and once that is there then there is more introspection on how you can develop

Funder | Global North

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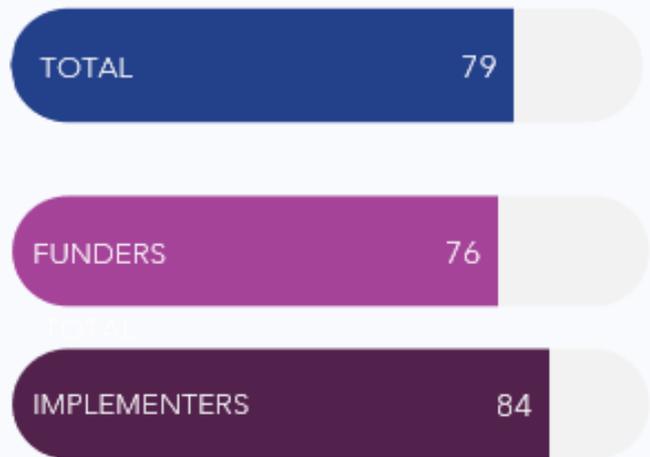
Fig 9

% agree

Quality and spread of Knowledge Management in International Development sector is poor, with enormous wastage. Knowledge is dispersed across many different players



▲ = significantly higher than the Global North





Co-operation and knowledge sharing are vital for improving effectiveness but there is clear room for improvement in the sector as it currently stands.

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The sector is good at selling solutions, but not getting rigorous knowledge and data and evidence of what works. They are good at selling stories and case studies, but not so good at sharing the evidence and the right source material

Consultant | Global South

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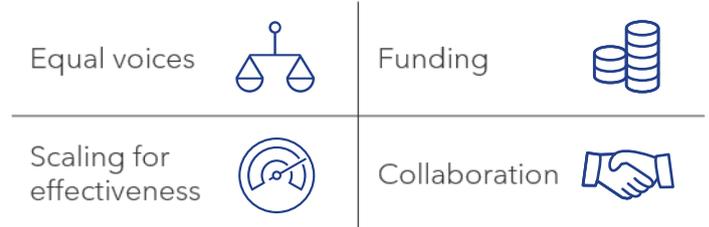
8.2 Potential solutions

During the qualitative interviews, ideas, suggestions and plans for improving the effectiveness of the sector were put forward by all the participants.

A summary of these suggestions were then incorporated into the quantitative survey to assess the level of support each one attracted across the sector.

Survey participants were asked to evaluate a range of different initiatives in terms of the *degree of positive impact* each one might have on the International Development sector if it were implemented.

Potential initiatives and solutions covered four broad themes:



The next few sections examine each of these in turn.

8.2.1 Equal voices

There is almost unanimous agreement that listening more to the local community and co-designing solutions with them would have a positive impact. Whilst this is seen as a growing trend in the field, there is a sense that much more needs to be done and the shift needs to be genuine, going beyond rhetoric.

A large majority of research participants advocate increasing localisation and decentralisation, to bring power and decision making as close as possible to the community where they are trying to make an impact.

As Figure 10 shows (on next page), nearly nine out of ten (87%) agree that co-designing solutions around 'community needs first' and ensuring the local community has an equal voice in decision making is likely to have an extremely or very positive impact.

With such a high degree of support overall, it is not surprising to see that participants from the Global North (85%) and the Global South (92%), and both Funders (86%) and Implementers (89%) are all in agreement about the importance and positive impact of this action (fig 11 on next page).

There is also strong support for any solution that amplifies the 'voice of the community', not only in decision-making but also in any communications or fundraising activities.

//

The top priority is develop an authentic, listening mindset among Funders - and to transfer resources and decision-making to local communities and organisations. Fast and at scale

Funder | Global North

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This is seen as a good principle in its own right - reflecting person-centred development, and it also ensures that the needs of the local communities are listened to, and solutions are designed to address these needs. Nearly four out of five (79%) survey participants feel channelling the voice of the community into advocacy and campaigning would have an extremely or very positive effect. (fig 10 on next page).

Fig 10

% saying solution is likely to have an extremely or very positive impact



Fig 11

% saying solution is likely to have an extremely or very positive impact



▲ = significantly higher than the Global North

▲ = significantly higher than Funders

Those in the Global South are slightly more likely than those in the Global North to see positive potential in amplification of the voices of local communities in advocacy and campaigning (fig 11: 87% versus 75% respectively).

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People respond to people. Hearing the voices of the women we are supporting engages the Funders and also helps them understand – much more powerful than us telling their stories

NGO | Global South

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NGOs in the Global South stress how compelling it can be for Funders and policy makers to hear directly from the communities they are working to support. Politicians and Governments are more likely to take notice if they hear local voices talking about personal experiences and this can act as a catalyst for change. In addition, this helps develop a sense of agency amongst the local community.

In pre-pandemic times some local NGOs suggested that holding face to face meetings between the Funders and the community representatives was the single most important activity to help bring about a real understanding of needs and to build a stronger relationship between Funders and communities. Videos and Zoom calls are used by some NGOs and Community groups to bring the voice of the local community directly into meetings with Funders.

Strongly aligned with initiatives to involve local communities in more decision making, is a move to devolve financial management to local NGOs at the point of implementation, within an agreed budget.



Overall, 64% of research participants felt this was likely to have a positive impact on effectiveness (fig 10) with support for this significantly higher in the Global South (75% vs 59% in Global North) and significantly higher among Implementers (77% vs 54% of Funders) (fig 11). The topic of devolved financial management is closely linked to less restricted funding which is covered in more detail in section 8.2.2.

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The priority is to give local organisations the power to make decisions, allocate resources, localise grant processes. Trust us to know the best way to allocate funds and manage budgets

NGO | Global South

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Many participants in the qualitative interviews raised the issue that small but highly effective local NGOs and Community Organisations can be excluded from funding opportunities because they can struggle to prepare proposals which meet the exact requirements of international Funders. They may lack the infrastructure or resources to comply with governance requirements and metrics. Funding organisations have differing requirements in terms of evidence of compliance, metrics, governance – usually all in English language – which can be a barrier.

78% of survey participants (fig 10) felt that providing support for local NGOs with preparing proposals, designing metrics and governance was likely to have a positive impact on the effectiveness of the sector. Implementers were especially likely to agree that this support would be impactful (83% agree it would have a positive impact compared with 76% of Funders) (fig 11).



Smaller organisations can be over-burdened with the demands of compliance and technology and human resources. These are areas where they need to support – so they can share the cost with other organisations and don't have to try and take on these additional skills

CSO | Global South



Despite strong support for devolution and increased localisation, there is concern that local organisations need to have the capacity, both skills and resources, to take on the operations previously handled by large entities.

One potential solution to this challenge, raised by some participants in the qualitative interviews, was the suggestion that 3rd party organisations could be set up as local centres of excellence for services such as HR, technology support, compliance, and governance. This would allow smaller NGOs and CSOs to outsource these services to the 3rd party organisations, instead of having to resource up and develop all the specialist skills needed. The financial burden of building all these services in-house can be crippling for Implementers who want to focus their resources on supporting their communities.

The idea of introducing shared support services so NGOs can outsource generic operations (eg HR and IT) and compliance burdens had the support of 61% of participants in the survey (fig 10). Perhaps not surprisingly, a higher proportion of Implementers felt this would have a positive impact (72%) and a significantly lower proportion of Funders (54%) (fig 11); a slightly higher proportion of participants from the Global South (69%) felt this would have a positive impact compared with participants from the Global North (57%) (fig 11).



8.2.2 Funding

As discussed in section 8.1.2, tight restrictions on the way funding is managed and controlled is felt to be inhibiting the effectiveness of some programs and campaigns. For many research participants, a move towards less restricted funding is key to improving the effectiveness of international aid programs.

Figure 12 highlights that 70% of survey participants feel there could be an extremely or very positive impact from campaigns to educate governments and target donors concerning the advantages of placing fewer restrictions on funding and the benefits of moving towards more unrestricted funding. This move towards more unrestricted funder was strongly supported Implementers (80%), compared with (64% of Funders (fig 13).

Some participants in the qualitative research highlighted the contrast between the way businesses are funded and the way in which international aid programs are funded - often by exactly the same organisations or individuals.

When funding a business, an investor will typically go through a rigorous due diligence process prior to investing and will have a clear sight of the business plan, but having made a commitment, the investor usually trusts the business to make its own decisions on a day to day basis.

There may be key reviews, perhaps on an annual basis, but a business investor does not usually expect to approve every expenditure or every decision and the business is given the freedom to operate as it thinks best. There is an expectation and a trust that the business leaders know their markets and their products. Yet that trust is seldom extended to NGOs or CSOs and, in contrast to a business investor, Funders in the international aid sector can expect to be involved in the minutiae, especially when it comes to how money is spent.

Investors in business will typically allow a business more than a year to succeed - such investments are usually longer term - at least 5 years and sometimes longer. There is a recognition that it can take years to bring about success and there may be mistakes along the way, from which a business can learn and adapt. Yet that long-term view is often missing when it comes to funding aid programs when some Funders can expect to see a demonstrable impact with a year or two, and mistakes can be seen as a sign of poor management rather than a

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Unrestricted funding is the preferred approach and philosophy - you have to do a lot of work upfront and due diligence to understand the model, the organisation, and to come to trust them, and think that we can't spend the money any better than they can, and if that is not the case then you shouldn't fund them at all

Intermediary/Consultant | Global North

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In the business world people understand you need to understand the sector and you need to take a long-term view. A business investor says 'I am here to partner with you to allow you to take risks, to be on your board, to bring all my networks and capital to bear, and allow you to do whatever it takes to let that profit grow'. What is still shocking to us is that those same individuals who have built up their capital that way are still very hesitant to give that level of commitment to the Not for Profit organisations they support. To create an effective business, investors know it can take 10 or 20 years. But Funders don't have that same patience with these NGOs, nor that flexibility and trust that they would give a business entrepreneur

Consultant | Global South

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The most effective type of funding is long term flexible funding that allows you to change and adapt what you do as the circumstances change

NGO | Global North

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Fig 12

% saying solution is likely to have an extremely or very positive impact

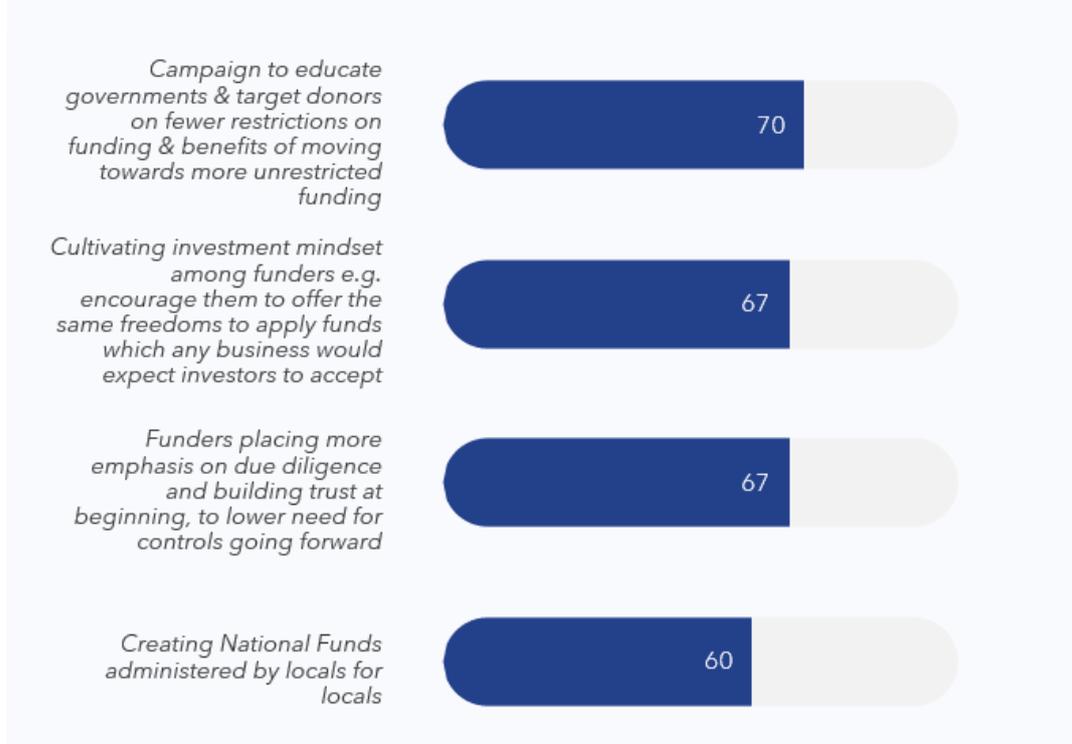
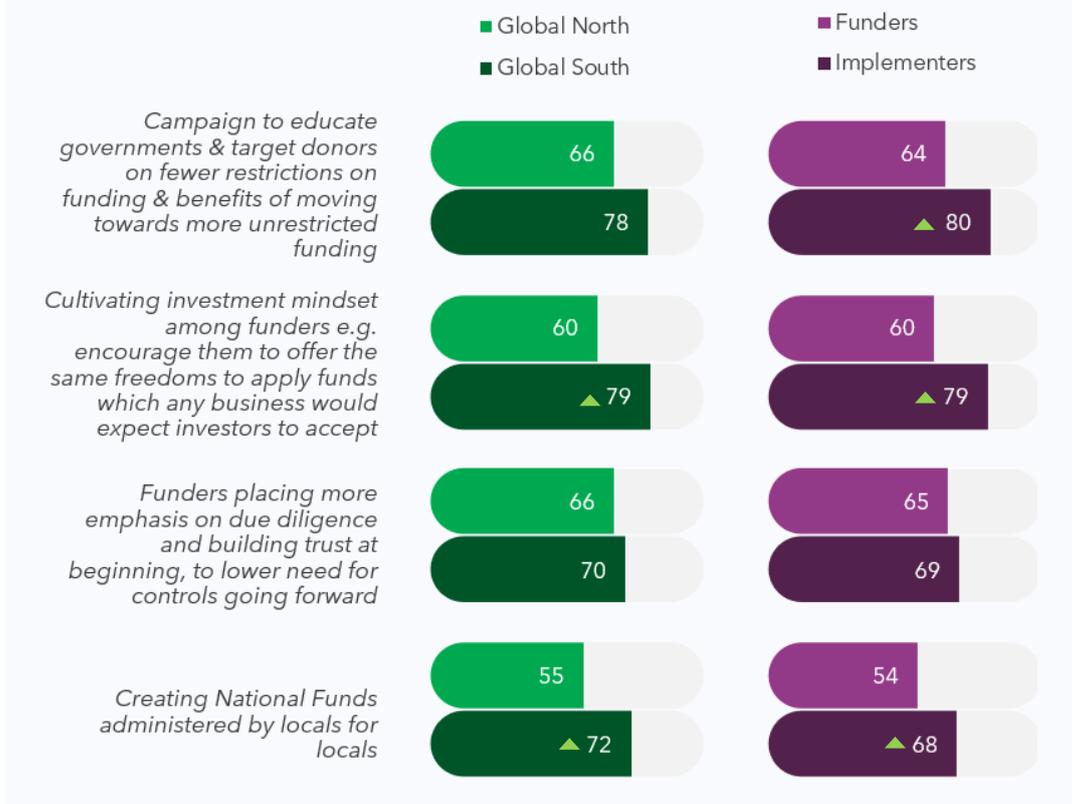


Fig 13

% saying solution is likely to have an extremely or very positive impact



▲ = significantly higher than the Global North ▲ = significantly higher than Funders

//

Funders should share their failure stories and still have faith in local NGOs. You're not allowed to fail in international development and to be able to learn from it and get better - it is a privilege to be able to fail. Smaller organisations aren't allowed the same privilege - it's not a level playing field

Funder | Global North

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The view that cultivating an investment mindset among Funders would result in a positive impact on the effectiveness of the international aid sector is shared by 67% of participants in this research (fig 12). This would mean offering the same freedoms a business might expect investors to accept. There is higher level support for this concept among those in the Global South (79%) and among Implementers (79%) and a clear majority of Funders (60%) also agree that this would have an extremely or very positive impact (fig 13).

There is considerable support for Funders placing more emphasis on up-front due diligence and building trust at the start of a program, in order to lower the need for on-going tight controls as the program progresses. 67% of survey participants felt that this would have a positive impact on effectiveness (fig 12) and fairly consistent levels of support across Global North and Global South, and Funders and Implementers (fig 13).

//

The essential design of the program was to fundraise locally, to help reassert that we could run sustainable structures and get away from the notion of donor dependency. This also helps build communities and makes philanthropy more relevant to present times and needs. And in the process help restore human dignity to some extent

NGO | Global South

The strongest campaigns are self-sustaining with local NGOs working in partnership and long-term co-funding

Consultant | Global North

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Achieving sustainable funding - funding that endures for more than one or two years - is the aim of all program leaders, yet it is challenging to secure. Funding is often secured on a relatively short-term basis, for example for the life of 1 or 2 year project, and it is also prone to being cut or reduced by any number of factors such as changes of government policy, changes to Funders' priorities and unforeseen circumstances such as the pandemic. Participants in this research advocated a number of different ways of achieving more secure, longer-term funding

- **Co-funding** - A blended approach with multiple Funders working together to share the funding of a program. This can reduce the risks for both Funders and Implementers, but inevitably it can be challenging to establish. Intermediary organisations are playing a key role in enabling different donors to align in terms of goals, schedules, priorities and metrics
- **Funding for organisations...rather than projects.** This can ensure a longer-term commitment and can also allow more flexible funding
- **Local funding** - some NGOs have a goal to be funded in full or to a significant degree by local philanthropists, businesses, and governments. Local Funders can be more likely to make long-term commitments and have a real understanding of local community needs. This can also reduce the risk of funding being cut by more remote international Funders.
- **Self-funding** - Seen as the ideal solution, this is where the program itself is able to generate revenue that can then be used to sustain the program.

The creation of National Funds was recognised as a desirable move forward by several participants in the qualitative interviews. This could be a national organisation in each country, staffed by local people, which would be able to advocate, organise advise and support local communities and local NGOs and determine how to respond to the needs of the local communities.

- The creation of National Funds was supported by 60% of survey participants who felt this would make a positive impact on effectiveness (fig 12).
- There was a significantly higher level of support for National Funds among participants from the Global South (72%) compared with the Global North (55%) and among Implementers (68%) compared with Funders (54%) (fig 13).



8.2.3 Scaling for effectiveness

One of the initial objectives of the research was to explore how programs could be scaled more effectively to maximise impact. The concept of scaling can be problematic in terms of its definition and what it implies. In the private sector, scaling means growth, whereas, in the international aid sector, growth is not the objective of many campaigns, and this can mislead.



A challenge is that we don't know whether we are talking about the same things when we talk about scaling. Scale can be outreach, it can be going deeper into the communities, it can even be sustainable leadership and succession planning, and it can even be exiting the community, so we are very open as to what scale looks like depending upon the solution or intervention that you are backing, things can be very different

Consultant | Global South



The concept of 'scale' can also feel linked to an over-reliance on reaching defined milestones and criteria, when many want projects to be more open and experimental, especially in the initial stages. Scaling can be a positive objective when interpreted as achieving sustainability and maximising impact or replication of a successful initiative in another location or country. Given the various interpretations, it may be more useful for the industry to substitute the word 'scale' with the more generic, and positive, concept of 'maximising impact' or to use the term with care and some clarification. Hence the focus of this research was changed from *"how to scale effectively"* to *"how to maximise impact"*.



We need to think about investing for impact in the same sense that the commercial world invests for profit. Industry is set up to maximise profit, we need to be set up to maximise impact. If you substitute the word profit for the word impact there are a lot of useful and rigorous practices you can learn from the business world that could make a real difference in the sector, and not seeing business as the 'root of all evil'

Consultant | Global North



There is a high degree of consensus concerning some of the actions required to scale and maximise the effectiveness of solutions.

Once again, and throughout this research, there is widespread agreement on the benefits in having a greater focus on upfront consultation, ensuring the root causes of a challenge are fully understood before designing a solution. Almost nine out of ten participants (87%) (fig 14) say this is likely to have an extremely or very positive impact, with support slightly stronger in the Global South (92%) and Implementers (90%) (fig 15).

There is also strong agreement around the need to plan for the scaling and sustainability of a program, right from the start, including the need to identify potential partners for scaling, right from the start. 66% of survey participants say this would have a positive impact (fig 14), a figure that rises to 75% among those from the Global South and 71% among Implementers (fig 15).

Local NGOs gave examples of how some of their most impactful and long-term programs were those where government had stepped in to run the program once it had been tested and trialled. Government is often the scaler of choice having resources and the responsibility to bring about lasting change, especially in education and health. In several cases, local NGOs had specifically positioned the stated aims of their programs to demonstrate that they were directly aligned with stated government priorities eg in terms of health or education and were therefore able to secure government funding and integration with national and/or local government social programs.

But Governments are also identified as the most challenging to work with due to changing priorities, changing personnel and large-scale bureaucracy.

Fig 14

% saying solution is likely to have an extremely or very positive impact

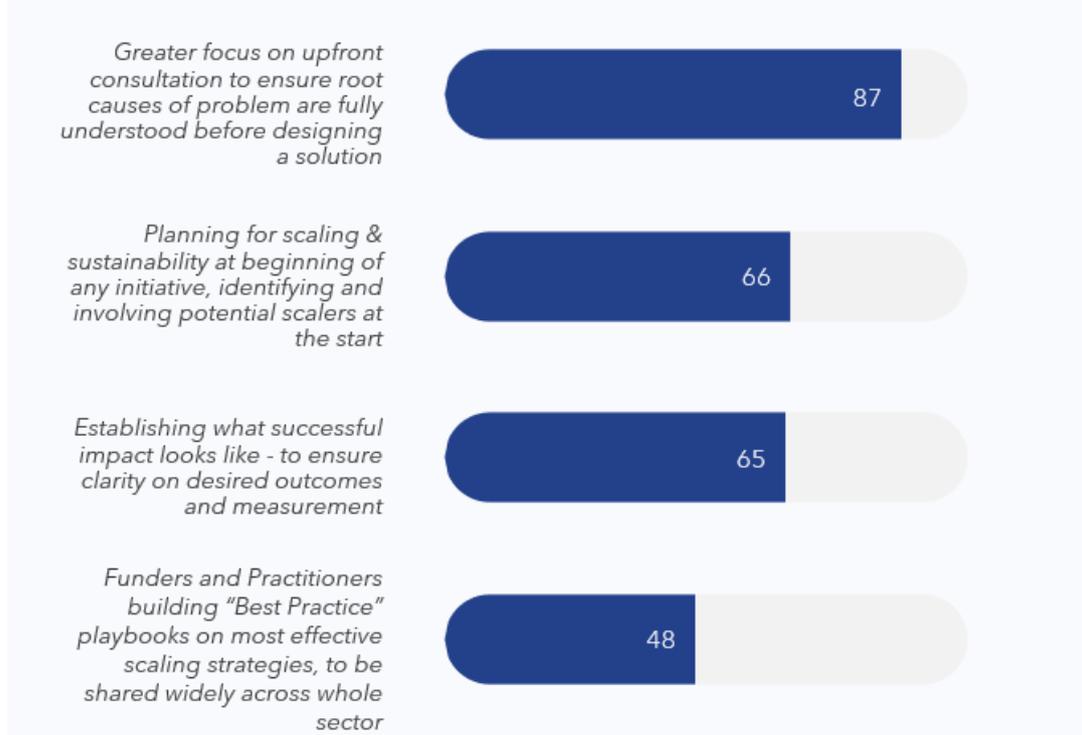
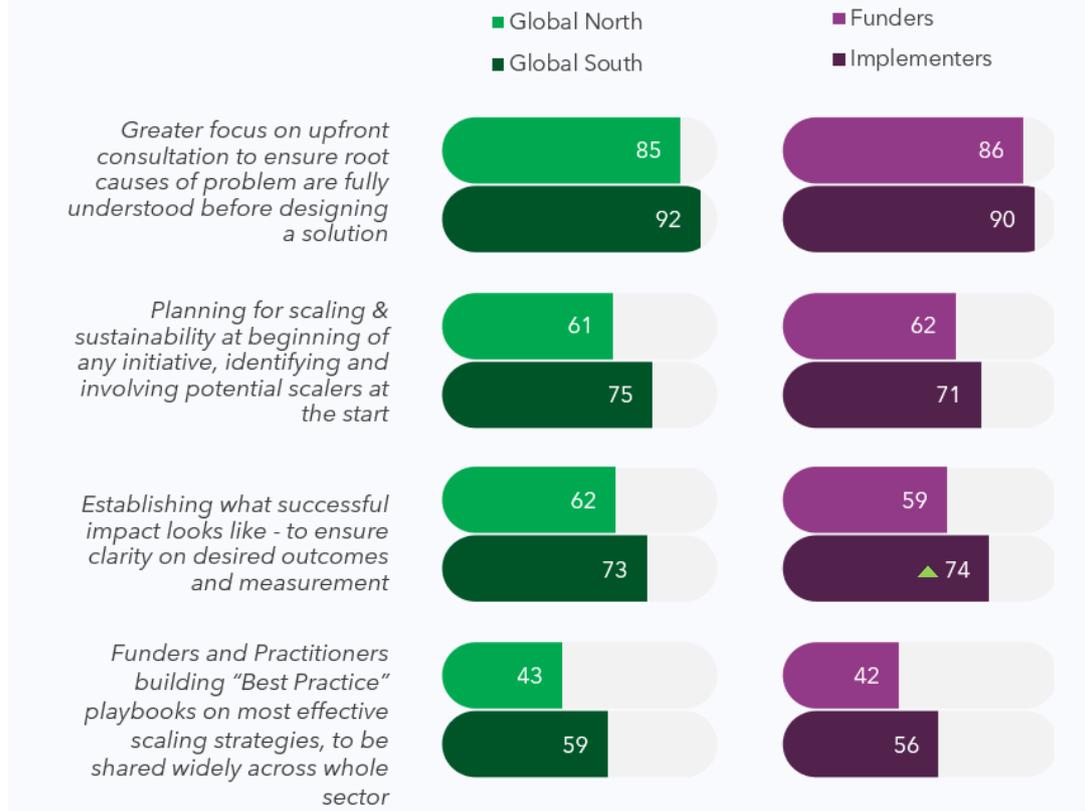


Fig 15

% saying solution is likely to have an extremely or very positive impact



▲ = significantly higher than Funders

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For social services...if you want impact at scale it has to be the Government. But foundations do not like working with them. You have less power, it is far more bureaucratic, you have to change your systems and do a different type of due diligence. And you have to build relationships with multiple people - all very senior and busy officials

Funder | Global North

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Other NGOs gave examples where businesses have been identified as potential key partners from the start eg to help fund infrastructures such as energy sources or transport systems which can be vital for delivering a program to remote communities.

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We should be identifying root causes and seeking to identify sustainable solutions that can be scaled up and embedded within government and the private sector

NGO | Global South

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Closely aligned with the need to have a clear vision about how a program can be sustained and have impact is the need to establish exactly what successful impact actually looks like. This is critical in setting the right goals and objectives to be achieved and in determining how that impact will be measured.

It is essential to ensure there is alignment, from the start, between Funders and Implementers concerning desired outcomes and metrics. Almost two thirds of survey participants (65%) (fig 14) agree on the importance of this upfront agreement with, again, higher levels of agreement among participants from Global South (73%) and Implementers (74%) that this would have a positive impact (fig 15).

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It's essential to ensure that all the stakeholders involved are in agreement about the root causes and what you are setting out to address and what you are going to measure. Otherwise you are going to fail. If you want to solve homelessness, the answer is not to just build more homes. It is likely better to also address the issue of PTSD in army veterans who end up on the streets, to give childcare to parents who want to work and get them housing

Funder | Global North

There's an absolute lack of data that's comparable across organisations and across interventions and across time. I don't think as a sector we've done a very good job of articulating how change happens. So donors are then left to judge us by really superficial metrics like overhead ratios and headcount, and it's because we haven't given them better ways to evaluate us

Academic | Global South

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Putting the right metrics in place can be expensive and some NGOs experience challenges persuading donors that measurement requires funding too.

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There is this challenge with demanding evidence of impact but not being willing to divert any funding to pay for that

Funder/consultant | Global South

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The Literature Review and survey participants both observed the difficulties the sector has experienced in documenting and sharing knowledge and best practice and learning from the mistakes of others. There was some support for developing 'Best Practice' playbooks on effective strategies and 48% of survey participants felt this would have a positive impact. (fig 14)

Once again there was more support for this idea among those from the Global South and Implementers, but it had less support than some other solutions and initiatives explored in this research.

Participants in the qualitative interviews highlighted the particular challenges faced by smaller organisations, trying to expand or increase the impact of a successful initiative. Expansion can require considerable organisational change: the organisation is likely to need to change focus and require a different set of skills. Founders or leaders may be focused on the central idea or innovation making organisational change harder to accept or drive.

Intermediary organisations were felt to play a vital role in supporting smaller NGOs along their developmental journey, including introducing additional skills, resources and potential partners to facilitate growth.

Some of the issues with long-term success are seen as systemic rather than relating to one type of funder or organisation. This means collaboration and partnership are crucial, and how these are facilitated is an important driver of success. The importance of collaboration is discussed more in the next section.

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We should be shifting the focus from supporting organisations to strengthening systems. Organisations do not produce results at scale, systems do

Government | Global North

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8.2.4 Collaboration

Collaboration is considered absolutely vital for effective impact - it is sometimes identified as the foundation upon which every other initiative depends.

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Collaboration, relationships, trust. Those are the priorities. Sometimes, I feel they are the only priorities. Everything stems from personal connections

NGO | Global South

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As highlighted in Figure 16, almost eight in ten (78%) think prioritising direct connections and relationships between Funders and community partners would have an extremely or very positive impact.

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If you can get people in a room together, then relationships are created, and trust can build - that's the answer to most issues

NGO | Global South

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Some Funders are trying to incentivise greater collaboration by making working a partnerships a condition of funding - thereby incentivising local organisations and NGOs to work together rather than compete with each other for funding. Just over three quarters of participants in this research (76%) felt that using funding to incentivise collaborative behaviours, encouraging strategic alliances and partnerships would have a positive impact.

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Some Funders now insist on local organisations working in partnership as a condition of funding

Consultant | Global North

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There is strong agreement (76%) that more collaboration among local NGOs and organisations could help create communities of practise around a specific challenge and this would enable greater efficiencies and shared learning (fig 16).

Collaboration between Funders would also reduce competition and could enable more sustainable, co-funded programs.

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We need to move away from models based on competition and resource scarcity to one based on shared resources, solidarity, equity

Funder | Global North

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What we have realised, competition exists, but once you set an audacious goal that no one can do on their own, but is aligned with their vision and you bring each other together and you build trust through in person meetings spending 3-5 days a quarter together, colleagues are as close a friends as their college formed. Having conversations openly with strangers they stop worrying about competitors, but it takes time for donors to come out of monopolistic ways, and it takes the NGOs to realise this is for my sector and we have to work together

Consultant/intermediary | Global South

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One barrier to increased collaboration is lack of access to information about different NGOs or organisations working in a specific area or seeking funding.

One idea suggested by participants in the qualitative interviews was for the sector to develop its own digital platform - enabling organisations to connect with each other and raise the profile of smaller NGOs and community organisations. This would be like a "LinkedIn" style collaborative platform for the sector. It could also contain information about the levels of governance and compliance demanded by different Funders and accommodated by different Implementers.

This idea met with a degree of support in the quantitative survey: 40% of participants felt it would have a positive impact of the effectiveness of the sector (fig 16).

One of the challenges local organisations face when trying to attract funding is the complexity of the sector and lack of common standards and approaches. The language often used (and demanded) by funding organisations can be complex and there are a multitude of different compliance and governance requirements which Implementers have to understand and accommodate.

In addition, there are a myriad of different ways in which impact is measured, making standard metrics almost impossible to apply. There is some support for more standardisation: just over half the survey participants (51%) felt that there would be increased understanding throughout the sector if there was more consistency in terminology, using simpler language of offering common measurement metrics (fig 16).

Fig 16

% saying solution is likely to have an extremely or very positive impact

Greater priority given to building direct connections and relationships between funders and community partners



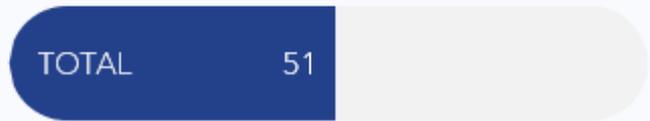
Using funding to incentivise collaboration via strategic alliances & partnerships, rather than increasing competition for funding between NGOs



More collaboration amongst locals, NGOs and organisations to create communities of practice around a given challenge



Increasing shared understanding in Sector through consistency in terminology, using simpler language and offering common measurement metrics



Enabling collaboration by technology e.g. a 'LinkedIn' for the Social Sector to raise profile of local organisations and allow funders and potential partners to connect directly



9. CALL TO ACTION: GLOBAL CONFERENCE

[1st September 2022 – Feb 2023 Global Conference](#)

We hope you have found this Survey useful, and would value your help in adding views and ideas, especially on how to turn the findings into actions.

It would also be really helpful if you could disseminate this Survey more widely to colleagues and contacts, and encourage others to participate in our campaign for change.

We think the Survey demonstrates strong consensus for effective actions and changes in attitudes among both funders and implementers, and people in Global South and Global North.

We would like to collaborate with others to co-create the necessary change in the six months leading up to our February 2023 London Global Conference and beyond.

The Survey is therefore only the start of this process for change which would benefit from your support and involvement.

Co-working with others over the next few months to continually improve and activate the Survey's findings, and collaborating with others interested in change, collating blogs, views, and ideas from you and others, we will co-create a supplementary Report, focusing on actions for change, to be presented to the London Global Conference in February 2023. Key topic areas for change include Equal Voices, #ShiftThePower, Collaboration, and Scaling, but contributions on any other topics are welcome, especially those designed to enhance the prospects of women and girls.

Please make your voice heard in helping increase impact in International Development by sending your views to Barry Knight at <mailto:barryknight@cranehouse.uk>, also letting us know if you would like an invite to the London Global Conference, which is free to all.

Hugh Davidson



10. FUTURE HSDT FUNDING STRATEGY

As a result of the literature review and the empirical research, HSDT trustees agreed to make significant changes to their funding strategy:

TOPIC/ISSUE	PREVIOUS APPROACH	NEW APPROACH
1. Main Objective	Double or treble income and empowerment of very poor women and their families	Could broaden within Women & Girls sector. Ideal but not essential to stay in sub sectors where we have prior experience.
2. Type of Funding	Time-limited projects; eg up to 5 or 6 years.	Fund local organisations rather than projects. Be prepared to fund people costs/capacity. Encourage local partnerships
3. Main point of contact	Oxfam or other INGOs based in UK.	Locally based organisations located on front line. Might use INGOs or intermediaries for due diligence.
4. Design & origin of all programs	Mainly done in UK or by UK based people.	Designed with local organisations and people on the front line
5. Mode of Operation	Work with implementation partners like Oxfam. Alliance Magazine & Jigsaw Research.	Stay linked with current partners. Wherever possible, collaborate with like-minded funders, eg TPW Apoka Team.
6. Restricted or unrestricted funding	Agree brief. Focus on objectives, deliverables, measurement, and budget.	Same broad principles, but less restricted, lighter touch. More focus on initial due diligence on local organisations.
7. Strategy on scaling	Complete project, then seek scaler.	Identify potential scalers at outset, involve from beginning as partners.
8. Funder knowledge/skills input	More hands-on with forensic fieldwork. Many group discussions, work sessions on front line.	Less Trustee time availability in future, so less hands on. Offer skills where required in strategy, structure, marketing, operations, measurement, climate change.
9. Method of Measurement	Significant funding level. Fieldwork, Continuous measurement for improvement. Reports.	Less fieldwork. Fewer Reports. Half yearly zoom meetings - Trustees and implementers. - or when requested.

11. APPENDIX

Survey sample

The survey findings are based on an online survey of 346 participants. Results should therefore be treated as indicative rather than representative of views in the sector. Over half of those taking part in the survey (54%) work for Funders, a third (35%) are Implementers, with the remaining minority (11%) working in other types of organisations involved in the international aid sector.

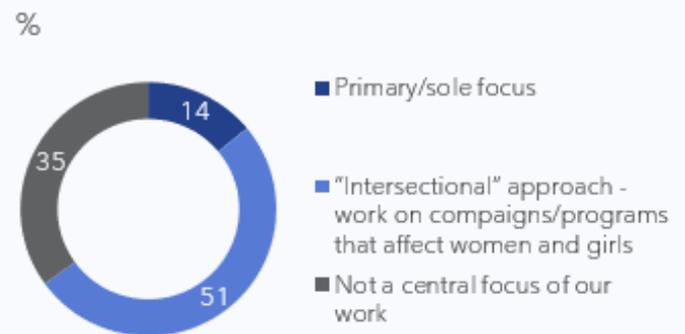
Most work in organisations with programs that affect women and girls.

For 14% this type of program is a sole or primary focus and 51% worked in this area though this was not their only focus; others did not have dedicated programs. Almost three fifths (58%) of respondents were women.

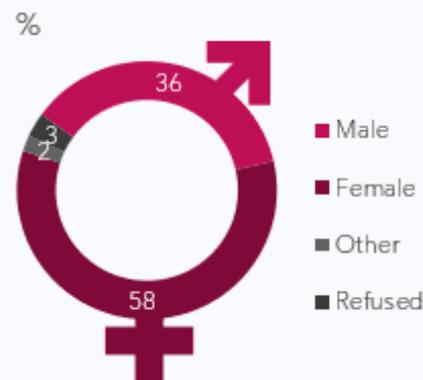
Type of organisation



How Women & Girls fit in organisation's activities



Respondents' gender

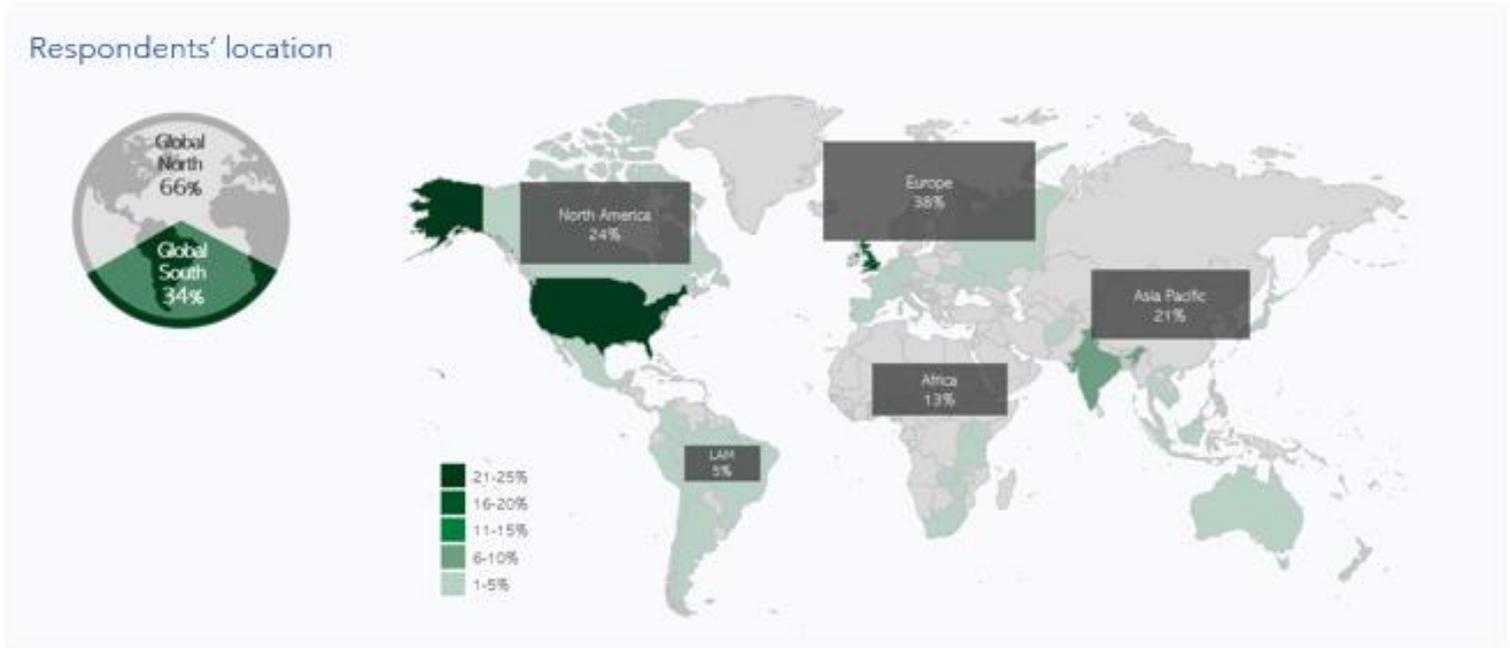


Definitions: Throughout this report, reference is made to Funders and Implementers. Limited sample sizes do not allow us to call out results of specific types of organisations within these two groupings, so responses have been grouped together to allow analysis at this broader level. Funders are defined as anyone who self-selected their organisation as being a Funder, philanthropy, foundation/grantmaker, or an NGO based in the Global North, or State or National government.

Implementers are defined as anyone who self-selected their organisation as being a Community or Civil Society organisation, Practitioner organisation or Cooperative, an NGO based in the Global South, or a Consultant or Intermediary.

Definitions of Global North and Global South are shown overleaf.

Survey participants came from 43 different countries.



Definitions: Throughout this report, reference is made to Global North and Global South. We recognise that these are blunt definitions but limited sample sizes do not allow us to call out results of specific countries, so responses have been grouped together to allow analysis at this broader level. Global North is defined as any country in Europe or North America plus Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan, Israel, Japan, Republic of Korea, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan.

Global South is defined as any country in Asia & Pacific, South/Latin America, South/Central America, Africa, Middle East or Arab States (except those countries listed under Global North).

11. APPENDIX

Qualitative Research Participants

The qualitative research was based on interviews with 44 participants. These participants kindly agreed to take part in either one-on-one interviews or in paired interviews with Jigsaw moderators. Their names were suggested by members of the HSDT team and its partners, principally Hugh Davidson, Barry Knight, David Drewery of Alliance magazine and The Philanthropy Workshop.

Each interview lasted around one hour and took place over Zoom. Participants covered a range of geographic locations and also a mix of philanthropists, foundations, Government organisations, NGOs, local #community organisations, intermediaries, consultants, academics, and journalists. Participants included:

Ingrid Srinath	Centre for Social Impact & Philanthropy, Ashoka University
Jenny Hodgson	Global Fund for Community Foundations
David Jacobstein	USAID
Shaheen Anam	Manusher Jonno Foundation
Rita Thapa	TEWA
Michael Feigelson	van Leer Group
John Plastow	Oxfam
Kevin Starr	Mulago Foundation
Kathy Vizas	Spring Impact
Lynne & Peter Smitham	Kiawah Trust
Sylvia Brown	Smart Donors
Clare Mathias	The Hummingbird Foundation
Deval Sanghavi & Anant Bhagwati	DASRA
R.Evon Benson-Idahosa	Pathfinders Justice Initiative
Rose Caldwell	Plan International UK
Girish Menon	STiR Educations
Hope Chigudu	Open Democracy
Degan Ali	Adeso
Florencia Roitstein	ELLAS: Women & Philanthropy
Olivia Leland	Co-Impact
Nadya Hernández	WINGS
Barbara Nöst	ZGF
Jeffrey C Walker	Chairman of New Profit
Nanie Ratsifandrihamanana	WWF
Anuradha Rajan	Sawfindia, South Asia Women's Foundation
ss	Consultants & authors
Rahul Mehta	Bhupat & Jyoti Mehta Family Foundation
Sapphira Goradia	The Goradia Foundation
Katherine Lorenz	Cynthia & George Mitchell Foundation
Williams Abrams & Barbara Jackson	Trickle Up
English Sall	Sall Family Foundation
Renee Kaplan & Jennifer Davis	The Philanthropy Workshop

11. APPENDIX

Research sponsors and partners

H&S Davidson Trust

H&S Davidson Trust is a self-funding family trust run entirely by volunteers. Trustees have expertise in Vision & Values, Strategy, Marketing, Measurement, Engineering, Climate Change and IT.

The trust is entirely independent and has no political or personal agenda and no axe to grind.

Having funded a series of different International Aid projects, some of which were more impactful and sustainable than others, the Trust commissioned a program of research to help inform their own future strategy and to identify high impact actions which would both increase effectiveness and command support among the broad International Aid sector.



Hugh Davidson, MBE, is an author, marketer & social entrepreneur.

Born to a family with strong social commitment. His Aunt Nessie spent four decades in India, Bangladesh, founding three schools, and knew Mother Teresa.

Hugh graduated from Cambridge University in Economics & Law, then qualified as barrister in top 1%. He joined Marketing Dept of Procter & Gamble (P & G), managing two major brands. Later, he was President of Canada & Europe for market-leading international company, then Co-Founder of Oxford Strategic Marketing (OSM). He sold his majority share of OSM to management, used all proceeds to partly fund H & S Davidson Trust (HSDT). OSM now flourishing in third generation of employee ownership.

Business focus was always 'Customer First'. Among books were "Even More Offensive Marketing", Finalist in Financial Times Global Business Book Awards in New York, and "The Committed Enterprise - Making Vision and Values Work". For this he travelled 55,000 miles for one-hour interviews with 130 global CEOs & leaders in education, healthcare, business, police, and international aid.

He has been involved in voluntary sector for many decades, first as Prison Visitor at Durham Prison, then as Chair of Trading at Save the Children UK, & worked in 21 countries.

Since 2004 he has been full time unpaid volunteer, mainly through HSDT, involved with India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, & Ghana (see Appendix -), and Rushen Heritage Trust.

Sandra Davidson

Sandra was brought up in the North East of England and educated at Gateshead Grammar School.

Her first employer was Procter & Gamble, where she met Hugh.

Then Hugh left P&G and the North East to be Marketing Manager at McVities, and Sandra became PA to the Principal of Charles Trevelyan Technical College. Despite distance, marriage and two children followed at discrete intervals.

Sandra enjoys creative writing, started up a Writers Group in Beaconsfield and has had stories published on BBC Radio and in magazines. She became a mature student at Oxford Brookes University gaining a degree in Publishing and English. She also edited and improved all of Hugh's books and articles and over 3 years completed a biography of her mother Joyce, entitled 'Open House'.

Volunteering has always featured: Samaritans, Hospital Visitor, School Reading Program, and currently Save the Children shop, as well as the Rushen Heritage Centre.

She has accompanied Hugh on enlightening field trips to projects in Ghana, West Bengal, Odisha, North Bangladesh, Vietnam, Tanzania, Uganda, and China.

Ian Davidson

After a degree in Geography from Oxford University Ian began his career in Marketing in the food and travel industries, with General Mills and Thompson Holidays.

He then gained an MBA from INSEAD in France before working internationally in e-commerce based in Barcelona.

Next he set up an online market research firm in the UK specialising in multi-country panel research studies, and this has been continued by his former colleagues.

Now based in Australia, Ian is Co-Founder and CEO of GoFar, an Internet of Things start up that's focused on reducing vehicle emissions. It is an in-car device which, based on extensive research, significantly reduces both serious accidents and vehicle emissions.

Ian has travelled extensively in Europe, Asia, and Africa, and lived and worked in four countries - UK, France, Spain, and Australia. He is married with two children.

Bruce Davidson

Bruce Davidson is a Trustee of the Hugh and Sandra Davidson Trust (HSDT) and will be taking over as Chair in 2023. He has been involved directly in a number of the projects advanced by the Trust and undertaken project evaluation field trips with the Trust to Odisha in India.

He graduated with a degree in Transport Planning and Management (Hons) at Loughborough University and later gained an MSc with Distinction from Oxford Brookes University, in Environmental Assessment and Management.

Bruce has spent his whole career at Environmental Resources Management (ERM), a global sustainability consultancy working with the world's leading organizations on solutions to sustainability and environmental challenges, including climate change. Bruce is a Senior Partner at ERM and has been a partner since 2002.

His particular professional focus has been on the environmental design/management of new transport infrastructure projects. Many of these projects can contribute to reduced carbon emissions from travel and positive socio-economic outcomes. He has worked on transformational rail projects such as Crossrail (the Elizabeth Line) in London and High Speed 2, and has been involved in a wide variety of transport improvements in the UK and internationally, including rail, road, and airport projects.

Bruce lives in London with his wife and three boys.

Anne O'Beirne

Anne was born in County Roscommon in the west of Ireland and was educated in a co-educational convent.

She studied engineering at University College, Galway where she was President of the Student Union and represented the college in international debates. While at University she was very involved in social issues.

Anne worked in a variety of manufacturing roles in Ireland, the UK, the USA and Canada. Her speciality was change management in a zero defect environment in industries including automotive parts, electrical components, and CD's. Latterly she was Operations Director at Denby Pottery and was part of the management team that effected a leveraged buy-out of the business from the UK stock market into private ownership.

With her husband Nigel, she has worked with Save the Children in Kolkata, through the H&S Davidson Trust, on two programs, one aimed at improving the life chances of young women, and the other focused on enabling street children to enter state education and not drop out.

Anne was business representative on the Amber Valley Partnership in Derbyshire, an umbrella organisation for the district's voluntary sector and the main provider of support for local voluntary and community groups. Her specific focus was persuading young girls to consider a career in the male dominated technical sector.

Nigel Worne

Nigel was born in Hertfordshire but spent his early years in Pakistan and East and West Africa where his father, who was in the British Army, was stationed.

He was educated at St Edwards School in Oxford and his early career in marketing took place in Canada with General Mills and Quaker Oats.

When he returned to the UK in the early seventies he worked in various consumer marketing roles including Beecham, Campbell's Soup and Ross Youngs.

Later in his career he held Managing Director roles with HP Foods, Caradon Bathrooms, Fox's Biscuits and Denby Pottery.

During this period he worked on a voluntary basis for St Anne's Shelter in Leeds which targeted the needs of homeless individuals, supporting them to live independently. He was Chairman of West Yorkshire and Humberside Business in the Arts.

He was invited to become a Trustee of the H&S Davidson Trust in 2012. With his wife Anne, he worked with Save the Children on two HSDT projects in Kolkata: one focused on rescuing female child domestic workers and the other creating education opportunities for children from the slum districts of the city enabling them to enrol in the state school system.

He is a non-executive director of Aquaspira, a Lancashire based manufacturer of composite steel reinforced plastic pipes and Deputy Chair of HSDT.

Jigsaw Research

Jigsaw is an independent, strategic research agency conducting research across 200+ countries. Its clients include public/social organisations and governments and both local and multinational businesses.

Jigsaw has been established for 23 years and has offices in the UK and the US.

Leading this project were Sue van Meeteren, Managing Director of Jigsaw and Luke Perry, Deputy Head of Qualitative Research. Both have 25+ years' experience in research.

Sue van Meeteren, studied business at university in London and moved into research after working at JWT advertising agency, IBM and Santander Bank. She then moved across to research agency Research International to become a research practitioner. She became Vice-Chair of Research International before leaving to start up Jigsaw Research with a colleague. Sue works across both qualitative and quantitative research techniques and covers many different sectors including financial services, technology, and retail. She also helps conduct research on behalf of some UK charities.

She has lived in France, Italy and the Netherlands and has been based in London for the last 26 years.

Luke Perry, studied Modern History at University of Oxford followed by International Relations at London School of Economics. He started his market research career in research in 1997 at SW1 Research, as a graduate trainee working across a wide range of qualitative research projects and sectors.

Luke has been at Jigsaw Research for 14 years again working across a many different sectors and research challenges. In recent years Luke has been heavily involved on a continuous qualitative research programme on behalf of the UK Cabinet Office exploring public reactions to the Brexit process and other policy areas including, most recently, during the pandemic.

Luke specialises in public and social policy work. He has presented at numerous research conferences in the UK, Europe and USA and has won several industry awards.

Barry Knight

Barry Knight is a statistician and social scientist who has spent many years working in international development, researching the field, advising philanthropies and governments, while encouraging civil society activism. Currently, he writes for [Rethinking Poverty](#) and advises the [Global Fund for Community Foundations](#).

With thanks to Alliance Magazine for their support in promoting and supporting this research.

Thanks to The Philanthropy Workshop for promoting the research among its members

Thanks to all the participants in the qualitative interviews.

Thanks to all who completed the quantitative survey.

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