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# UNDERSTANDING THE REGRANTING ECOSYSTEM IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH:

ENVIRONMENT, GENDER,  
SOCIAL JUSTICE & HUMAN  
RIGHTS IN ASIA, LATIN  
AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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WITH  
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FROM:



This report is shared in four parts:

**Part 1.**

Executive Summary, Major Findings, Recommendations, Horizons of Change, Methodology & Glossary

**Part 2.**

Regional Trends, New Framework of Qualities to Assess Partners and Self-Assessment Tool for Intermediaries

**Part 3.**

Voices from practice, Report from the Learning Series

**Part 4.**

Demonstrated Cases of Partners, Intermediaries, Networks and Organisations, and Findings from Piloting a Self-Assessment Tool

With this report, we are excited to deepen the conversation on the roles of intermediaries in the Global South as potential actors who can contribute to creating more respectful, caring, and sensitive funding ecosystems. **This report draws on the invaluable insights of 90+ philanthropic practitioners and societal leaders from across Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean who engaged with us in interviews, informal conversations, and two Learning Series<sup>1</sup>.** We are very grateful for these exchanges and committed to faithfully transmitting the different voices and hopes we heard throughout this process.

This study is a conversation starter carried out in partnership with Oak Foundation. We share what we have learned to invite you into this complex exploration. **If you are interested in getting involved with a community of practice to develop capacities and exchange knowledge on the role of Global South intermediaries, please subscribe to our newsletter here:** <https://philanthropydialogues.org/>

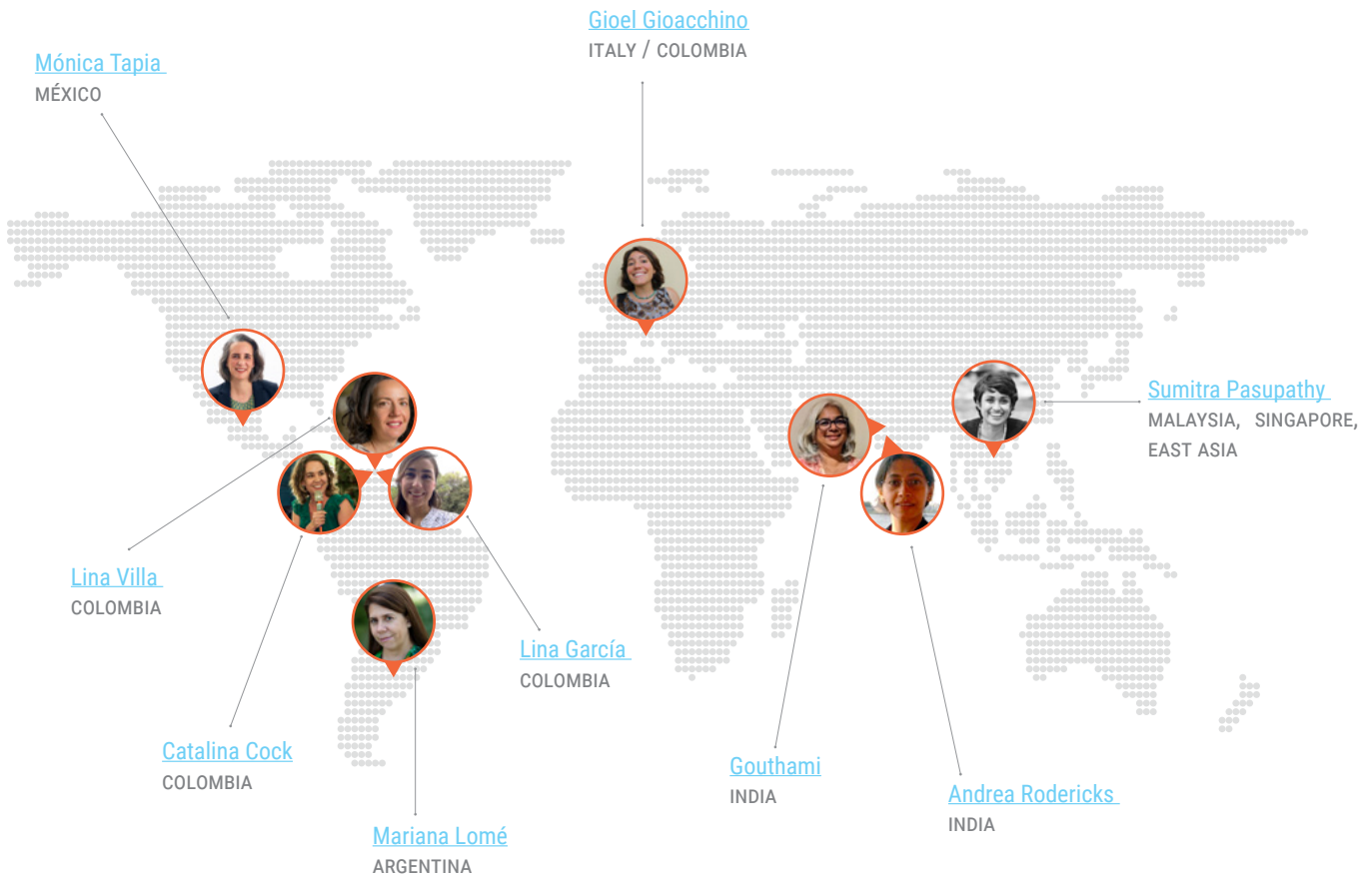
We look forward to holding further conversations, weaving connections and actions, and building a more robust, more just funding ecosystem.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 1 for the list of contributors

## ABOUT US



We are a team of women from across Latin America and Asia, committed to supporting a lively and healthy civil society. We each bring 10-25 years of experience founding, leading, and supporting grassroots civil society organisations and networks. We spent the last decade carrying out participatory research and advising philanthropic institutions in both the Global North and South.



[MORE ABOUT THE AUTHORS](#)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

# PART 3



<b>Introduction</b> .....	5
<b>1. Learning Series insights from Asia</b> .....	7
<b>2. Learning Series insights from Latin America and the Caribbean</b> .....	15
<b>Conclusions</b> .....	25

## INTRODUCTION

This document is the third part of a four-part report on the philanthropic ecosystem in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. The study was funded by the Oak Foundation and informed by over 90 interviews and two Learning Series. Through this process, we explored current practices and emerging trends in the philanthropic ecosystems in these regions. We identified potential ‘intermediaries’ ready to support grassroots and civil society organisations through more than channelling funds and enable philanthropy to empower the environment, gender, and social justice movements.

This part of the report presents the main points of discussion that emerged during the two Learning Series that we carried out as part of the co-research process. We hosted a total of 5 sessions, of 2 hours each, using a mix of interactive tools such as creative writing exercises, talking circles, and tools inspired by the Theory U toolkit, such as 3D sculptures<sup>2</sup>. The intentions of the Series were to bring a group of practitioners from potential intermediary organizations to promote:

- **Horizontal Learning:** Participants could engage in peer dialogue and collective sense-making, creating a collaborative learning environment.
- **Promising Practices Exchange:** Participants were invited to share experiences and insights with peer organizations from across the continent.
- **Reflection and Transformation:** Participants were invited to reflect on potential pathways to enhance their philanthropic endeavors.

In Asia we hosted two sessions around the following topics:

- **Session 1: Emerging Patterns of Giving and Transforming Power Imbalances in the Sector**
- **Session 2: Grant-Making Organizations: infrastructure, culture and capabilities**

<sup>2</sup> “3D System Sculpting involves creating a three-dimensional model that maps a current situation or system (using small items such as figurines, feathers, pieces of wool, etc. to symbolize elements and dynamics).” (from: <https://www.u-school.org/3d-modelling>)

In Latin America and the Caribbean we hosted three sessions around the following topics:

- **Session 1: Emerging Patterns of Giving in Latin America and the Caribbean**
- **Session 2: Transforming Power Imbalances in the Sector**
- **Session 3: Grant-Making Organizations: infrastructure, culture and capabilities**

Below we summarise what we learned in the Series by sharing the images, stories and main debates we heard during these sessions. The document is organised in three main sections: **1)** Insights from the Learning Series in Asia; **2)** Insights from the Learning Series in Latin America and the Caribbean; and **3)** Conclusions.

We enclose the terms 'intermediaries' and 're-granters' in quotes because these concepts come charged with power dynamics.

In Asia, the terms are relatively new, and regranting is emerging quietly and discreetly due to security reasons, especially in countries with restrictive regulatory environments; in other words, the terms come with political implications.

In Latin America, many are willing to adopt the terms, but the critique is that they reduce Southern organisations to in-betweens, putting in the shade their agency to add value. They are not merely grant administrators, but propose new perspectives on problems, strategies, processes, innovate, and shape agendas.

1



LEARNING  
SERIES  
INSIGHTS  
FROM ASIA

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Through a 3D sculpture exercise, the first session of the Learning Series in Asia invited potential intermediaries to represent the philanthropic sector and the various relationships in this ecosystem. The discussion surfaced metaphors and themes that we find relevant to Oak's research and internal reflections on how to show up to support grassroots organisations in the region.

First, several people highlighted how **donors often “squish” intermediaries**. This was represented with a stress ball – smaller organisations get squished to comply and fit the requirements of the donors. This phenomenon gets replicated between intermediaries and smaller civil society organisations, evidencing a systemic problem.



“This (metaphor) is about the power dynamics between granters and grantees. For the granter, (the stress ball) it is a very flexible thing. Look at it from this ball's point of view... What is happening to the ball? Somebody is squeezing it. That is what is happening to most organisations asking for a grant...”



**The attitude of governments towards international philanthropy** was another topic of discussion. Many governments in Asia (notably India) have put in place restrictions on receiving funds from foreign countries. In contexts where grassroots organisations were used to receiving funding from INGOs, such government restrictions put the sustainability of local civil society at risk. For fear of being blacklisted and having their status revoked, INGOs often respond to government restrictions by retreating. In this way, civil society is losing its strength and funding. This situation has increased the importance of national private sectors in sustaining civil society.

Another phenomenon related to power dynamics is **the role of international and national organisations working in capitals or big cities** – it is in these central hubs that most of the funding gets stuck. An Indonesia intermediary reflects:

**“Most of the money is stranded in the middle of the channel. Most are centralised at national level. We need to strengthen and empower local intermediaries outside Jakarta.”**

In the second workshop of the Learning Series, we did a collective exercise developing the avatar of an international donor that does not serve local communities. Participants filled out how this ‘bad donor’ avatar relates to each part of the body. Below is a summary of the exercise.

## AVATAR OF A “BAD DONOR”



### HEAD

#### How do they make decisions?

- Based on how it benefits their own organisation/ agenda or based on what is ‘sexy’ right now - rather than benefit to the local communities/ impact on the ground.
- They think about system change through log frames and business-style thinking.



### MOUTH

#### What language do they speak?

- They speak just English.
- They ask for reports and data – speaking a paternalistic language.
- They speak through quantitative Key Performance Indicators.



### STOMACH

#### What do they need?

- To feel they are sure they are making a difference.
- Detailed reports and data to be acknowledged and appreciated, public recognition, taxpayers’ validation.
- ‘My logo needs to be everywhere’.



### EYES

#### Whom do they see?

- They see the Northern INGOs that they constantly give funding to.
- They see an incompetent social sector that they can ‘fix’ – they see themselves as the heroes, the ones with the best answers, the best ‘winner’ pickers.
- They see only the problems and what people lack, not the innovation of local people.



### HEART

#### What do they have at heart?

#### What do they value?

- Achieving impact instantaneously through minimum resources.
- Well-intentioned but can only appreciate their own experience and limitations.
- They are disconnected from self and nature.
- They value marketing, Recognition with local government and business allies.



### EARS

#### Whom do they listen to and ignore?

- They listen only to other donors and governments.
- They ignore the grassroots, local, national, and regional actors. They ignore the needs of the community.
- They ignore your explanation of why the project was not accomplished according to the log frame.
- They listen to the media, to the VIPs, and to the corporate speak of return on investment.



### HANDS

#### How do they make decisions?

- Big money, lots of networks, access to international conference circuits, power.
- Endless capacity - great presentations, research, evidence.
- They concentrate the power of the local donors around business-driven solutions, service delivery and government driven ideas.
- Money Money Money.

The details and tone of this exercise evidence **a sense of frustration amongst our participants. In particular, they stressed how some Northern donors remain disconnected and 'out of touch' from local dynamics.** This creation of an avatar came along with the sharing of real-life stories of failed relationships with donors such as:

- The story of a donor coming to Indonesia, carrying out consultations, “wasting everybody’s time”, then disappearing.
- A government donor building a relationship with a local women’s fund and then trying to suggest they should work with faith-based organisations (which felt like an imposition and one that would not work, based on the fund’s experience).
- A donor representative who at an international meeting made a joke saying, “our supplicants, I mean our applicants.”
- Donors not understanding that putting a logo of their government does not help their cause, because it is seen as white European imposition.

**“Big problems invite us to dig deeper. They invite us to ask: How can we contribute to solutions in a holistic way? How can we bring all the resources to bear on the solutions? What I have seen is that there is a lot more attention to local and indigenous solutions. It’s not enough, but it’s happening now more than ever before.”**

#### **Some good practices highlighted included:**

- A donor sharing a survey with grantees evaluating the time they spent - this to help make donors accountable for their demands.
- Donors working on a principles-based approach asking what are your principles and how you want to manifest them – “it feels much more alive than log frame and KPIs”.

Although most participants felt unequal power dynamics are hard to transform, some sensed a push towards transformation in the sector (which is also invited by the dire environmental degradation and climate change).

In the 3D exercise, one participant - representative of a feminist, progressive donor - used the metaphor of compost: they stressed how activists, movements on the ground, and those advocating for transformation in the philanthropic sectors are acting like microorganisms transforming the sector. This emphasis on how many actors are changing the landscape day in and out offered some optimism to the discussion.

## AVATAR OF POTENTIAL INTERMEDIARIES THAT SERVE LOCAL COMMUNITIES



### HEAD

#### How do they make decisions?

- They consult with grassroots communities and changemakers.
- Decisions are facilitated peer to peer, they contextualise to local and act local, but then connect globally again.



### MOUTH

#### What language do they speak?

- They speak local languages and allow communities to express themselves in their own language.
- They speak a simple language: they help to simplify complicated matters and technical terms.



### HANDS

#### How do they make decisions?

- Network building - Knowledge sharing.
- Flexibility - Knowledge of local context, history, local people; understanding of the culture, proximity to the groups who need the support.
- They are great at listening - to community needs; and at communicating these to change larger systems.



### EYES

#### Whom do they see?

- They can see the local communities directly without needing a third party.
- They see other community members aside from leaders and officials.
- They see the broader stakeholders that can support communities.
- Eyes are also on governments to see how changes are being made to the regulatory frameworks so they can help local/ national organisations best.
- They can see the needs and challenges of grassroots organisations and communities and opportunities for funders to support.



### HEART

#### What do they have at heart?

#### What do they value?

- At heart they have grassroots organisation experience and knowledge.
- They value the impact grassroots groups are creating and want to find ways to support them - both at the organisational level and programmatic level.
- They value that everyone is a changemaker and a creator of value.
- They focus on cause rather than expanding itself - they understand their own limits.
- They value accompaniment beyond financial resources



### EARS

#### Whom do they listen to and ignore?

- They listen to the people closest to a problem - and in fact they get out of the way and let them speak for themselves.
- They listen to trends within donor communities, local authorities, and partners AND to local/ national changes and needs.
- They listen to stories of culture, beliefs, hopes and aspirations so that we can understand the people we are working with - they spend time with the community just listening - not doing anything.
- They ignore mansplaining donors and the "powers that be" and the old systems.



### STOMACH

#### What do they need?

- They need capacity strengthening in managing funds and programmes, learning how to be flexible intermediaries.
- They need donors that trust them to regrant as they see fit.
- They need the flexibility to bring in local people as part of their working group.
- They need Partnership forums to avoid competition with multiple intermediaries.
- Resources to research and innovate as well as institutional and core support.

**In short, the 'good intermediary' is an organisation that is close to local communities and speaks their language - their added value is their capacity to understand the needs of both donors and grassroots organisations and finding and facilitating collaboration/ partnership between them.**

#### **Interesting concepts/ terms that were discussed:**

Inspired by the discussion in Latin America, where the use of the term 'intermediary' was criticised, we asked participants to share the terms they use for the figure of regional, national, and local philanthropic organisations. In Asia, it appears that the term 'intermediary' is more commonly used, although terms such as 'facilitator', 'partnership organisation' and 'regranter' are also used as preferred substitutes.

**"You need the donors. You need the intermediaries, and you need the grassroots organisations. The problem arises when the donor tells the intermediary what to do, or the intermediary is telling the grassroots organisation what to do. We all have different roles."**

#### **Two groups of interest were given a spotlight in our discussion:**

**Indigenous people:** One participant stressed that the funds available for indigenous people in the last 10 years is only 10% of total funding. 70% of indigenous people live in Asia. More strikingly, direct funding to indigenous people is only 1% of the amount, from the Norwegian government. All funding for indigenous people gets stuck at the level of international organisations and intermediaries.

**"The t-shirt money (that is what we say) stays in the middle. Put t-shirt on and stay in the middle. The money goes to meetings, travel, per diems, etc. Only 10% goes to community level. This is the situation."**


**Young people:** The discussion highlighted that there is a whole sector of civil society that is invisible to the development infrastructure. This is because many young people are not necessarily forming registered organisations, and this has implications on the capacity of philanthropy to reach them:

**“We saw the tendency of younger generations to avoid some of the regulatory frameworks and laws. (Instead of organisations), they form campaigns, collectives, and movements. But this doesn’t let us fund them... because our due diligence is based on a structured framework. How can we learn how to fund more creatively and more flexibly and be able to frame what is due diligence? This is going to be a big challenge in the next 10-15 years.”**

# 2



LEARNING  
SERIES  
INSIGHTS  
FROM LATIN  
AMERICA AND  
THE CARIBBEAN



The Learning Series brought together a group of potential 'intermediaries' from across Latin America and the Caribbean to explore the evolution of philanthropy in the region.

The conversation started immediately with questioning the term 'intermediary', which some participants emphasised reduces Southern organisations to go-betweens, putting in the shade the unique set of values and ways of working that characterises them.

A representative from a Brazilian fund commented: *"The term intermediary does not apply to us, because we are funds generated to strengthen our own communities"*.

The discussion stressed that philanthropy is a pyramidal system, which perpetuates inequalities while resources remain far from people and nature. Donors set the rules, and organisations in the South follow. In this way, power structures replicate, leaving many actors marginalised.

Here are some key reflections that were shared on the pyramidal nature of funding:

**"Philanthropy looks at the situation from outside, as if it was not part of the same system, of the same problem".**

**"The issue is not where you invest but how you amassed so much that now there's a need to find a way for some of it to return to the community (This is what someone told Jeff Bezos when he asked where he could make donations.) If philanthropy aims to address inequality, how is that possible without making visible where the money comes from and its origin?"**



These reflections sparked the idea that it would be worth proposing an inverse due diligence:

**“We should consider a reverse due diligence - it is time for NGOs to question where the money comes from. This way, we can generate some competition among donors to transparently disclose the origin of their funds.”**

Here are some key pain points of philanthropy that were highlighted:

**Relationship to time** is an important dimension of philanthropy: when organisations are told to implement a lot with strict timelines, what gets lost is the process that enables projects to be impactful. Plus, the strict timelines limit participation and co-creation between donors and grassroots organisations, which might create opportunities to bridge ways of working and develop innovation. It was also mentioned that, while asking organisations to move rapidly, large donors tend to move slowly, with heavier bureaucracies. This makes it harder for donors to be responsive to local needs.

Another aspect that was made visible is the **nature of trends and fashions in philanthropy**. Donors’ interests and buzzwords change constantly, leaving organisations to adapt to terms that they would not otherwise choose. This obsession with new trends is seen as a form of infantilizing grassroots organisations: these imposed mental schemes do not necessarily fit or engage with the wide variety of emerging needs in Latin America and the Caribbean.

This makes it so that “organisations learn how to tell donors what they want to hear,” someone reflected.

What is missing, various participants commented, is **equality between organisations**. When donors only value specific ways of knowing, based on Northern, anthropocentric cosmologies, they undermine the local ways of knowing across Latin America and the Caribbean. Equality might come with a broader perspective on resources, which recognizes the value of local knowledge and non-financial contributions (such as time, knowledge, relationships, etc.). Equality might also come with an appreciation for empowering communities to self-determine and foster autonomy. Finally, this search for equality might bring the recognition that more resources are needed

for the co-creation of work plans, so that efforts can be directed towards ensuring that inclusion becomes a reality, rather than a mere statement of intent.

This lack of equality comes with a lack of **TRUST**. When donors trust organisations, they provide funds that are more flexible, allowing organisations to experiment, to try and fail, to discover what impact looks like in their own terms. Philanthropy centred on trust encourages local knowledge of all types and promotes practices that empower communities valuing their inherent knowledge and steering away from top-down interventions. For a trust-based philanthropy, **monitoring and evaluation criteria** need to change.

### Interesting concepts/ terms:

**Community philanthropy:** *community funds and foundations which address local issues by channelling and mobilising both financial and non-financial resources.* These organisations play a supportive role in philanthropy, acting as facilitators - without using the word 'intermediary'. Their role is to facilitate local knowledge for more effective resource allocation to organisations with local solutions, ultimately enabling a "bottom-up" approach. Some community philanthropy entities possess local wisdom and knowledge, understanding the needs to effectively channel both international and local resources.

**Turning the pyramid upside-down: experiment with others as you want others to experiment with you.** Within the philanthropic world, many see themselves as "victims of the system". This means that there is a feeling that there is some higher power or structure that dictates the rules.

**"There are attempts not to repeat this vicious circle, but in the end, it is in Washington, London, etc., where decisions are made about who receives the funds. In those organisations, there are individuals who fully understand this and want to change it, but the system is stronger."**

How can 'intermediaries' and other civil society organisations propose new ways to work that do not replicate these power structures? One practice is that of transferring the ways they want to work to the organisations they give grants to. Some suggestions mentioned included:

- Inviting partners to read contracts carefully and “say no” when they feel they cannot comply with requirements. Ensure they feel safe that a negotiation is possible if they say no.
- Be flexible with application formats. During the pandemic, some organisations started receiving oral and/or more lean application forms. Why the need to go back to longer, bulkier applications?
- Advocate for the creation of regional funds among NGOs to amplify the impact of international cooperation funds.

### Key actors and relationships

The group recognized the heterogeneity of civil society in Latin America, also observing that there are a few big donors and many diverse groups of implementing organisations – these are often administratively weak but enrich the ecosystem with new ideas and perspectives. The discussion focused on the organisations in between big donors and diverse activists’ networks, social movements, small organisations, and informal groups. These organisations in the middle, with administrative capacity, tend to follow the structures and ways of doing dictated by bigger donors, replicating systems that are out of touch with grassroots realities.

This sculpture represents hierarchy in philanthropy: communities at the base, international foundations (symbolised by a candle bringing its light) on one level, and civil society depicted with winged piggy banks. The sculpture represents the flow of resources: they arrive in a large cup, transfer to civil society in a smaller cup resembling a totumita, and eventually reach local communities in micro-sized containers.



The participant expresses a sense of disparity and is bothered when the terms 'top-down' or 'bottom-up' are used, as positioning communities at the bottom sets a negative tone. She refers to the winged pig, acknowledging that dreaming of pigs flying isn't entirely wrong, but it seems that everyone is in their own world without cohesion, lacking a unifying element for seeing and working together as a team.

She is particularly attentive to the scenario where international organizations bring in predefined agendas, trends, fashionable terms, or approaches. Local entities are forced to conform to these concepts, which results in a loss of resources. In the end, the reality is often lost in the process. She says it was hard to represent the element of time, the urgency that lands on projects—a short time frame without truly understanding what the community wants or needs. This is a common occurrence: a project is implemented in a community, but once the funds and organizations depart, the community returns to its challenges.

### **The 'bad donor' and the 'good intermediary' avatars**

As part of the third workshop, we carried out a *collective exercise developing two avatars: one of an international donor that does not serve local communities, and the other of an intermediary who manages to reach, serve, and support grassroots communities.*

Here is a summary of the **avatar of an international donor who does not support a fruitful ecosystem of grassroots organisations:**

## AVATAR OF A “BAD DONOR”



### HEAD

#### How do they make decisions?

- They want to wash their image.
- They seek to generate new business opportunities.
- Their interest is to make communities do things differently.
- They don't consult communities or groups; we know what is required.



### MOUTH

#### What language do they speak?

- English and only English - or German.
- They speak English and use stories from Central America where they stayed only 3 days.
- Buzzwords.



### EYES

#### Whom do they see?

- They only see what benefits them.
- They don't look at the situation holistically.
- Their philanthropic competitors.



### HEART

#### What do they have at heart?

#### What do they value?

- They value changing their strategy every three years.
- Impact, effectivity, numbers.



### STOMACH

#### What do they need?

- Listening/ closeness.
- Numbers to justify their investment.
- Digital security.



### EARS

#### Whom do they listen to and ignore?

- They listen to only those who speak in very technical terms.
- Their own advice, their consultants, etc.
- They ignore those working in the field.



### HANDS

#### How do they make decisions?

- Very technical MEL.
- Their connections with the government and other private entrepreneurs.
- Power their rituals are attending conferences to talk about 'shifting the power'.

This somewhat provocative collective construction of international donors working in Latin America and the Caribbean suggests that CSOs are tired of a type of philanthropy that is detached from local realities, and pursuing an agenda that does not reflect the world views of local civil society. Meanwhile, this is how participants imagined an intermediary able to serve communities:

## AVATAR OF POTENTIAL INTERMEDIARIES THAT SERVE LOCAL COMMUNITIES



### HEAD

#### How do they make decisions?

- They emphasise listening, local consent, and embracing the time it takes to achieve results.
- They take decisions through co-learning processes.



### MOUTH

#### What language do they speak?

- They keep open, frank communication.
- with their beneficiaries and partners.
- They speak local languages, they respect communities.



### STOMACH

#### What do they need?

- Long term data.
- Better use of technology.
- Transparent and quick bureaucratic processes.
- Collective learning.
- Getting paid for the time they spend applying to funds and being consulted.



### EYES

#### Whom do they see?

- They see the final beneficiaries in all their diversity, without homogenising people.
- They look at their ecosystem holistically but are also able to be flexible to specific situations.



### HEART

#### What do they have at heart?

#### What do they value?

- They value transformation and learning from the community perspective.
- Their heart is close to the region and places in which they work.



### EARS

#### Whom do they listen to and ignore?

- They have big ears, to listen and listen and listen...
- They listen both to the communities and the diverse actors around them.



### HANDS

#### How do they make decisions?

- Taking care of the time and capacities of the people who work with them.
- Field visit to get to know the communities more intimately.
- Rigorous processes and systems.
- They value their experience and know how.

**Based on this exercise and the discussion that it generated, we pulled out the following recommendations for a more inclusive, equitable, and collaborative philanthropic future:**

- Give **multi-year unrestricted funding** and invest in capacity building.
- For creative solutions to emerge, advocate for **a future that is locally driven**. Invite local organisations to dream big and to present proposals based on the possible future, not only on what is not working.
- **Envision a future that is more respectful of nature** and indigenous knowledge. Open the time and space to learn from them and build on their local capacities.
- **Work in coordination**, share both positive and negative experiences to learn and improve.
- Promote philanthropy committed to collaborating with social movements, adapting to their needs, and fostering a less unequal relationship. **Collaboration takes time and resources. Invest in this.**
- Have a constant **disposition for experimentation**, adaptability, and better coordination among local funds.
- Envision a future where organisations and funders **collaborate horizontally**, strengthening tools based on the needs, visions, and realities of the communities.
- **Open spaces for exchange with funders** where community voices and needs are central.
- **Advocate for a future with non-punitive and healing justice**, building collective economies based on trust.
- Encourage willingness from all philanthropic actors to **recognize privilege and share power**.
- Acknowledge the uncertainty of the future and the need for a conscious change in attitude and aptitude to face present and future challenges. Acknowledging this **uncertainty requires flexibility to adapt to what emerges**.

- **Avoid linear thinking** and narrow project design.
- Build a future constructed from inclusion, empathy, and solidarity to **address the climate emergency**.
- Envision a future with less asymmetry, more equity, and **real collaboration among different actors**.
- Strengthen connections, increase networking, and **expand spaces for co-creation among diverse actors**. Establish spaces or mechanisms for dialogue in and for the Latin American and Caribbean region to address future transformation needs. Foster inclusive solutions through systemic perspectives.
- **Simplify and streamline paperwork**. Explore creative reporting such as narrative audios and videos. Invest in translation to ensure participation of local organisations, not only intermediaries.
- Only a few funders **cover the costs for potential grantees to participate in consultations, design processes, and project applications**. It would be a good practice to make this more common.

**“The future of philanthropy is one where organisations and funders work horizontally and collaboratively, strengthening tools based on the needs, visions, and realities of Communities.”**



## CONCLUSIONS

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In Part 3 of this report, we summarised the main points of the discussions that emerged during the two Learning Series we facilitated through experiential learning exercises and talking circles.

We found that connecting organisations around complex topics - such as power, money and participation - was very valuable. The space helped us sense the philanthropic field, confront experiences, and listen to each other. This being said, participants also shared fatigue with pointing out what they find dysfunctional about the philanthropic system: they fear that donors will consult them and yet continue with the status quo of their funding practices.

Based on the experiences of hosting the 5 dialogues in the Learning Series, we feel Southern organisations and 'intermediaries' have the need to share experiences and connect, but also create more practical laboratories of experimentation. This might look like funding pilots while sharing learning experiences throughout the implementation process, and creating more peer-based learning communities.

Inspired by the principles of participatory action research, transformative research must have several rounds of action and collective reflection. Each learning circle can deepen the learning and bring together more tightly connected communities of practices that can develop relevant critical thinking and innovative practices. We welcome more opportunities to keep strengthening dialogues amongst Southern civil society practitioners.