



**Enabling Environment
for Philanthropy**
An international
convening of WINGS

LISBON, PORTUGAL
MARCH, 2016



WINGS
WORLDWIDE INITIATIVES
FOR GRANTMAKER SUPPORT

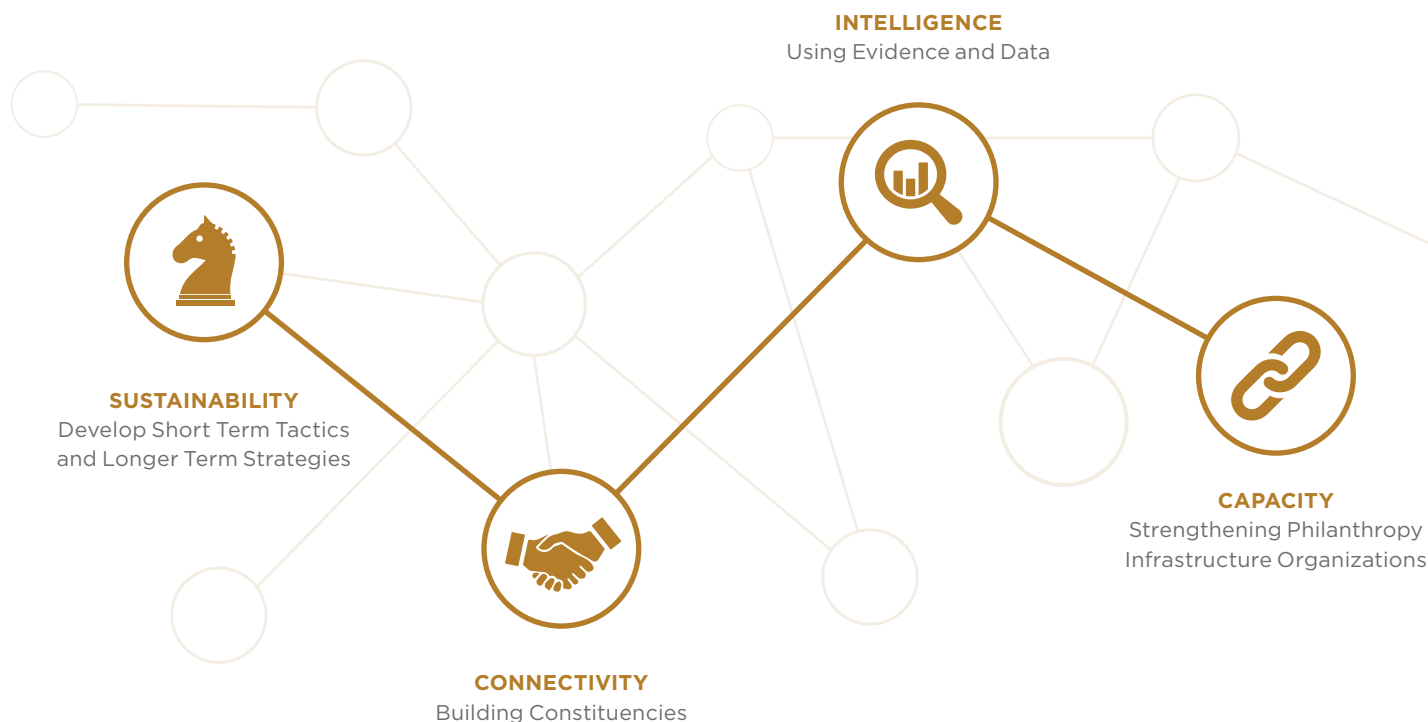
In order to thrive, philanthropy needs an enabling environment that is fit for purpose today and for many years to come.

In March 2016, experts and philanthropy professionals from 18 countries met in Lisbon to discuss a complex and troubling situation – the increasing restrictions on funding and freedom of civil society organizations and its consequences on philanthropy – from a global perspective.

Participants reflected on what could be done to influence the forces framing this issue and improve the giving environment. The focus of the meeting was on philanthropy infrastructure organizations, with additional participation of colleagues from international law and civil society.

WINGS is committed to using its networks and knowledge base to move forward WITH the recommendations stemming from this meeting.

Below is an emerging ‘road map’ for the global philanthropy community, with special relevance to support organizations and associations. No one organization or network can do this alone. This is a global effort, one that requires investment, strategy, and collaboration. Some actions will be needed that are internal to an organization or to our sector, such as working on policy decisions with governing boards. Others call for collective outreach to legislative bodies, private sector champions, or new community partners.



SUSTAINABILITY:

Develop Short Term Tactics and Longer Term Strategies

- ✔ Have a prior plan in place to navigate new obstacles and survive when necessary
- ✔ Be prepared to accommodate future uncertainties
- ✔ Learn from peers about workarounds when barriers are present
- ✔ Mobilize new sources of funding for advocacy and policy work (seek out the unlikely suspects)
- ✔ Build THE capacity of the sector, especially of philanthropy infrastructure organizations, offering 'tool kits' and peer learning
- ✔ Cultivate the media as part of educating broad publics on the positive impact of philanthropy as well as concerns around the closing space for civil society
- ✔ Build awareness that philanthropy is ideas, participation, and advocacy – not just money
- ✔ Mainstream the concerns of a vibrant civil society into all types of grant-making and social investing



CONNECTIVITY:

Building Constituencies

- ✔ Develop and maintain on-going good relationships (credibility) with policy informers, public officials, law-makers, governments
- ✔ Seek out new allies such as parties, interest groups, professional associations, banks and credit unions, legislative assistants, public intellectuals
- ✔ Engage additional global voices, using the SDGs and FATF, and partner with OECD, Finance for Development, Hudson Institute, Funders' Initiative for Civil Society, CIVICUS, etc.
- ✔ Adopt thematic/issue based approaches when beginning work locally
- ✔ Build trust through engagement and a public service mindset
- ✔ Do more to enlist younger philanthropists and understand their perspectives
- ✔ Enlist faith-based philanthropy in advocacy, in those places where they carry strong moral authority
- ✔ Improve the effectiveness of coordination, collaborations and partnerships without deflecting from the core mission of each entity
- ✔ Share resources and knowledge within and across sectors: successful interventions, tools for fundraising, models of self-regulation



INTELLIGENCE:

Using Evidence and Data

- ✔ Use research and data to tell a better story about philanthropy
- ✔ Measure the contribution of philanthropy and civil society to the national economy – GDP
- ✔ Use data to show the huge contribution of private capital flows to developing countries (80% while 20% is ODA)
- ✔ Increase evidence & data on the incentives & barriers to conducting the work of philanthropy
- ✔ Strengthen the narrative of best practices: what works in philanthropy
- ✔ Strengthen data on effectiveness, going beyond individual organizations to begin to project the impact of the sector
- ✔ Impact evaluations need to be more affordable and utilize existing data such as opinion polls
- ✔ Make philanthropy research attractive to increase investments in data, analysis and storytelling
- ✔ Share resources and knowledge across sectors – to form broad coalitions that include private, public, media and civil society actors



CAPACITY:

Strengthening Philanthropy Infrastructure Organizations

- ✔ Strengthen associations to collect and utilize data for advocacy
- ✔ Map allies and partners to assist with rapid response when needed
- ✔ Adopt strategic approaches that are tailored to different places and groups
- ✔ Develop tool kits to build the capacity of philanthropy leaders
- ✔ Improve our radar: eyes, ears and minds of WINGS members to raise awareness of threats, when possible before they become realities
- ✔ Improve our impact through new/affordable approaches, including: evaluation of advocacy efforts, better accountability
- ✔ Transparency is about communication; overcome suspicion by encouraging openness about sources of funding, how grants are allocated, etc.
- ✔ Explore advantages and best practices around accreditation
- ✔ Make self-regulation a priority topic in the philanthropy community
- ✔ Raise awareness beyond the rights and peace-building organizations to reach all in the global philanthropy community: start with article or blogs in Alliance Magazine
- ✔ Organize a session on the outcomes of the Lisbon meeting at upcoming regional and national philanthropy meetings

The above forms an emerging 'road map' for the global philanthropy community, with special relevance to support organizations and associations. Each should be able to find a set of compatible activities and on that basis to seek out partners with similar objectives. WINGS will undertake to keep communication and information flowing as this work moves forward.



Several concrete examples of successful advocacy for changing policies and legislation and their effects on civil society and philanthropy were highlighted in Lisbon. From those we have compiled a set of ‘tips’ or methods of working more effectively that can help to build collective impact. These include both aspects of preparedness inside one’s organization as well as ways of conducting joint advocacy for policy change:

INTERNAL

- ☑ Be prepared to think big and take calculated risks for important gains
- ☑ Address one manageable chunk of complex problems at a time
- ☑ Commit to what you already do best and set clear divisions of effort with partners
- ☑ Use on-line tools to magnify impact – a focused message that gets a thousand tweets may ultimately be seen by millions
- ☑ When legislation is under review, keep in close touch with key actors
- ☑ Utilize the contacts your board members have with key decision makers
- ☑ Be ready with data. Prior studies of good legislation in other places, for example, can be useful at an early stage, less so after draft laws are in circulation

COLLECTIVE

- ☑ Find champions or allies within government agencies and cultivate relationships over time, before a crisis erupts
- ☑ Clarify issues to officials – they can’t fix a problem they don’t understand or know about
- ☑ Use opinion data to show legislators there is public support for your cause
- ☑ Place-based relationships are important for building trust: youth service organizations, co-ops, arts councils, chambers of commerce, etc.
- ☑ Utilize multiple channels to get messages across: quiz shows, debate clubs or competitions in universities, local radio and television talk shows, etc. The goal is creation of broad constituencies with positive views of civil society and the crucial role of private philanthropy.

Participants left the Lisbon meeting having forged new alliances and drawn inspiration from the positive stories that were shared. As this topic is discussed in multiple venues throughout the year, a commitment is growing to work more systematically to address the ‘disabling’ environment in many settings. Upcoming global and regional meetings will provide opportunities to expand the alliances that are needed. Meanwhile, for further details on WINGS’ initiative for the enabling environment and a fuller account of the proceedings of the Lisbon meeting, please visit the WINGS website at: wingsweb.org