



IMPACT STATEMENT

We envision a world without poverty in any of its forms, where opportunities and the freedom to grasp and mold them abound for all people. A world in which no group exists in comfort based on the suffering of others, and in which no one is unseen due to distance of space or hierarchy of circumstances.

Funding Holistic Issues

In bringing our vision to fruition, we support a diverse group of organizations that work across a distinct but holistic set of issues. We view the following pillars of our funding as interconnected elements necessary to building more robust communities:

- Programs designed to stimulate and stabilize economies at all levels through the development of livelihoods
- Education programs promoting self-sufficiency with an emphasis on women's education and empowerment
- Health programs that are community-based and provide either short-term or long-term assistance
- Programs that support sustainable management of the environment, with an emphasis on the development of potable water supply

The foundation does not have a geographic locus, but instead funds organizations across the Global South whose core activities address these root causes of poverty by developing sustainable, cross-sector solutions that can be implemented at a community-level. Be it in education, livelihoods, health, or environmental management, we seek partners who treat beneficiaries with dignity and promote increased self-sufficiency. Our partners also keep an eye to holistic solutions and have a keen understanding that there are many different types of poverty, including the poverty of hope that comes from being unseen and unheard.

Community Voice as Paramount

At the apex of our funding program is the acknowledgement of community voice as paramount. We believe that the marginalized communities around the world most affected by global inequities can and must have the freedom to find and issue voice. Further, if we do not listen humbly while elevating the importance of the wisdom and capacity of local leaders, we will never make true headway in helping to resolve the entrenched challenges which perpetuate poverty.

As such, we form partnerships with both U.S. 501 (c)(3) organizations and indigenous groups that respectfully engage communities in identifying local needs and generating effective solutions. Our partners prioritize the employment and development of country nationals as staff, invest deeply in community leadership, and empower local decision-making. They intentionally leverage and

increase local skills, knowledge, and resources while mobilizing broad and inclusive networks to produce long-lasting change.

Women at the Vanguard

Girls and women around the globe are disproportionately impacted by poverty and oppression. The West Foundation understands that girls and women must therefore also be at the forefront of international community development. Through all our activities as a board and staff, we strive to lift and advance the voice and leadership of women at the vanguard of global change. Through our funding program, we support organizations that understand and address the unique barriers girls and women face in all areas of human development including access to basic rights such as education and healthcare. We are equally pleased to support programs that also serve boys and men and incorporate entire communities, especially those on the margins, in moving forward towards a more just and gender equitable society.

Relationships Grounded in Trust

As a foundation, we believe that open communication is key to the high level of trust necessary to working with our nonprofit partners in the complex environs of international development. Towards this ideal, we form long-term funding partnerships and stand by exceptional organizations as they confront the many barriers inherent to systemic change. Our staff also strive to engage in candid conversations with our grantees about the challenges they face while openly sharing our own struggles and limitations. By building relationships grounded in mutual respect and transparency, we hope to learn together more efficiently, overcome inevitable roadblocks, and collectively exceed all expectations.

We take the stance that investing in an organization's internal efficacy results in higher impact programs on the ground, but are not prescriptive about the type of funding our partners can request. Instead, we begin by asking our partners where our modest funding can be most helpful in responding to the unmet needs and opportunities of the moment. We are happy to consider requests for targeted project support, strategic administrative grants, and flexible and multi-year funding based on what is most pragmatic for a given partner.

Nimble Risk-Taking

In the same spirit of collaboration and transparency, we seek to both demonstrate and encourage nimble risk-taking through our grant program. We are happy to support projects which are otherwise difficult to fund because they are either complex in nature, located in an area considered unstable, will accrue results the long-term, or deeply engage local communities in program development or governance.

We also look to make small, strategic grants that will catapult an organization forward or help it overcome obstacles to its work. These may include projects such as conducting a feasibility study, developing proof of concept for a new program, or launching an initiative, especially if there is potential to better elevate community voice, deliver more effective results, or influence unjust systems.

Conclusion

Over the last 60 years, it has been our experience that the elements described above are imperative to generating influence as a small family foundation. By adhering to them as essential to our work, we show that it is possible for small gifts to equal big impact.