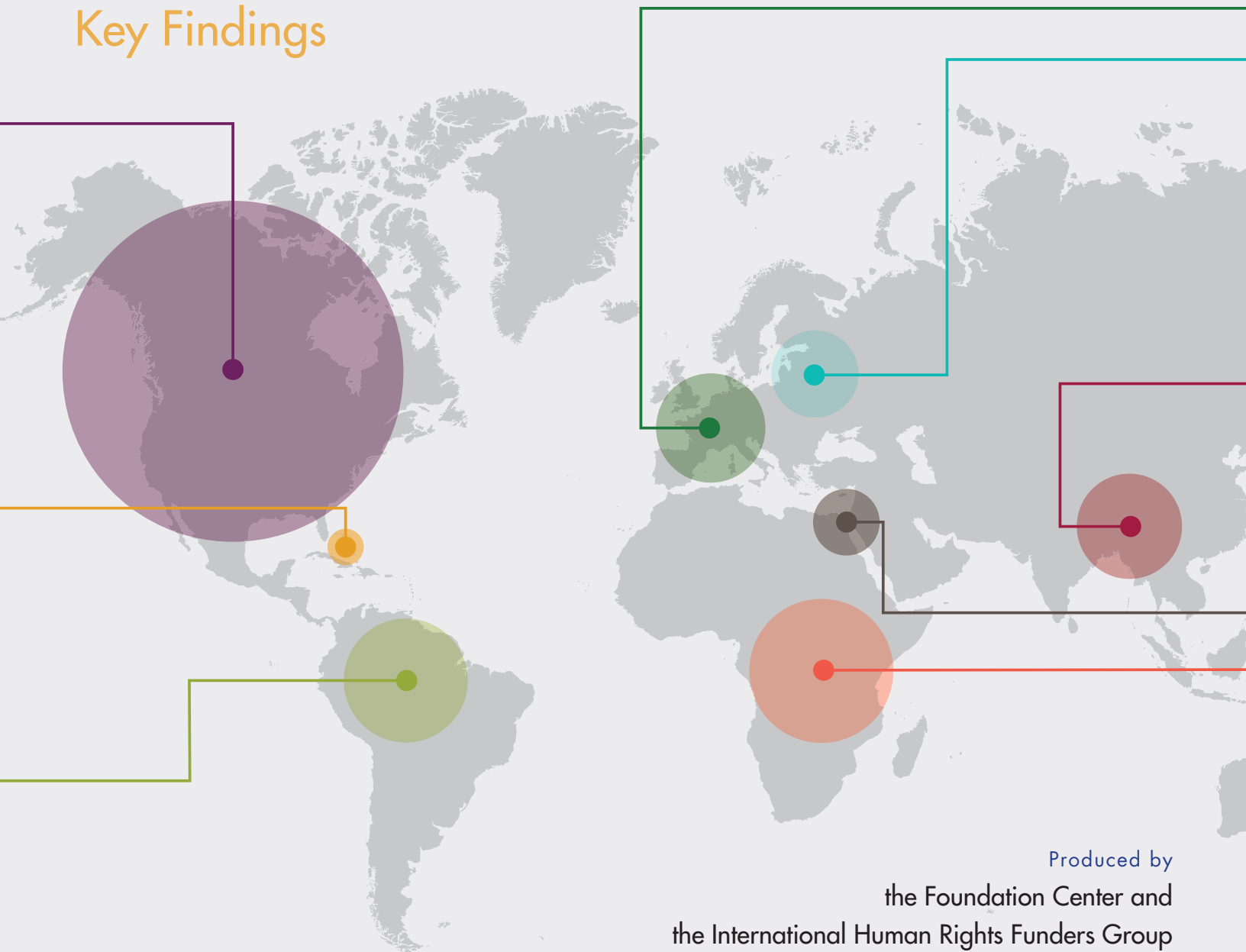


ADVANCING HUMAN RIGHTS

The State of Global Foundation Grantmaking

Key Findings



Produced by
the Foundation Center and
the International Human Rights Funders Group

Foundation funding for human rights comes from scores of large and small grantmakers located around the world.

Some of these foundations are well known for their human rights focus, while others may think of themselves as “social justice” or “progressive social change” funders. Still other foundations do not explicitly support human rights or social change. But all of the foundations included in the *Advancing Human Rights: The State of Global Foundation Grantmaking* report share one commonality: they have made at least one recent grant for organizations or specific efforts that seek to advance human rights based on the human rights definition adopted for this report—a definition consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the first United Nations declaration to outline the basic rights and fundamental freedoms to which all human beings are entitled. Many of the foundations in this study have made dozens or hundreds of grants to advance human rights.

The Foundation Center and the International Human Rights Funders Group (IHRFG) have partnered on this first-ever examination of global human rights grantmaking. Our goal is to build understanding of the current landscape of foundation support for human rights and begin to track changes in its scale and priorities and trends going forward. Grantmakers seeking human rights funding partners and learning opportunities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and allies working in the human rights sphere, and bilateral and multilateral organizations undertaking complementary human rights endeavors will all be well served by this research. For those considering human rights-related grantmaking for the first time, this publication offers an accessible introduction to the field.

Through the ongoing collaboration between the Foundation Center and IHRFG, with the assistance of Ariadne, the European Human Rights Funders Network, the International Network of Women’s Funds (INWF), and other grantmaker networks and individual foundations, the *Advancing Human Rights* initiative will provide knowledge resources to help secure and strengthen the rights of innumerable people around the world.

Top Foundations by Human Rights Grant Dollars, 2010

Foundation Name	Location	Amount
1 Ford Foundation	USA	\$159.5 MILLION
2 Open Society Foundations	USA	\$140.0 MILLION
3 Atlantic Philanthropies	USA	\$48.2 MILLION
4 Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation	USA	\$42.7 MILLION
5 W.K. Kellogg Foundation	USA	\$41.9 MILLION
6 Vanguard Charitable Endowment Program	USA	\$40.1 MILLION
7 Sigrid Rausing Trust	ENGLAND	\$32.6 MILLION
8 Oak Foundation	SWITZERLAND	\$29.7 MILLION
9 Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	USA	\$23.5 MILLION
10 Nationale Postcode Loterij	NETHERLANDS	\$22.9 MILLION
11 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation	USA	\$22.3 MILLION
12 John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation	USA	\$22.1 MILLION
13 California Endowment	USA	\$20.8 MILLION
14 Huber Foundation	USA	\$16.2 MILLION
15 Public Welfare Foundation	USA	\$14.8 MILLION

Highest Number of Grants **1,248**

Source: The Foundation Center, 2013. Figures based on grants awarded by 703 foundations located in 29 countries. For the purpose of this analysis, selected grantmaking by various Open Society Foundations throughout the world is attributed to the network’s New York, USA location.

The State of Foundation Funding for Human Rights

WHO MAKES HUMAN RIGHTS GRANTS?

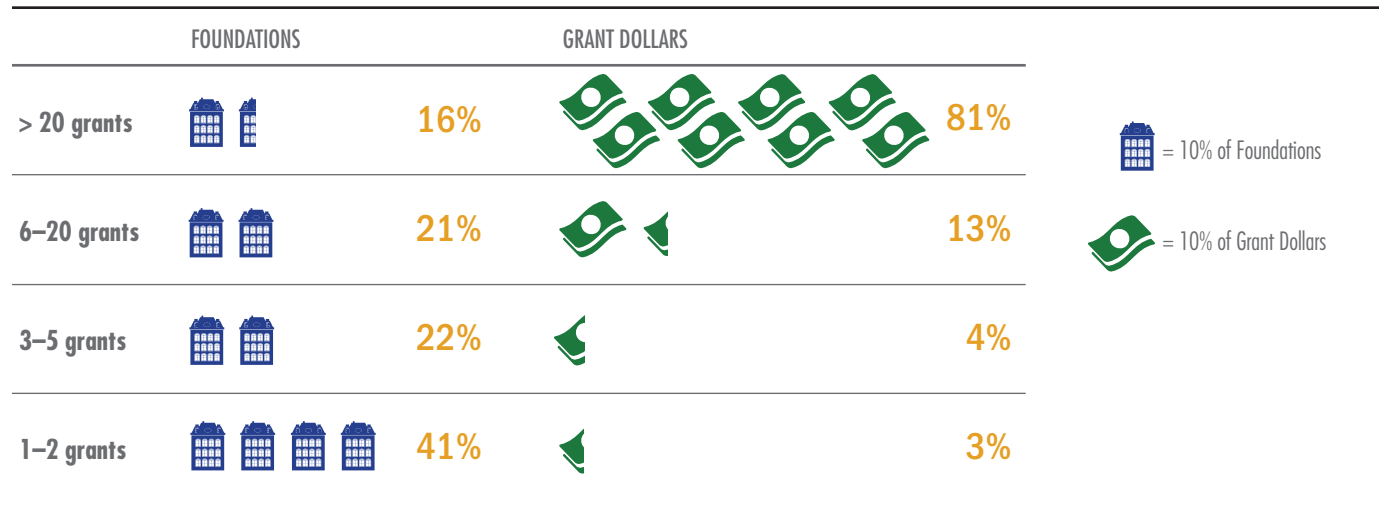
- The following analysis combines grants data collected from IHRFG, Ariadne, and INWF members based across the globe with similar data collected by the Foundation Center from a set of the largest U.S. private and community foundations.*
- Human rights philanthropy is a global phenomenon: the 703 funders included in this analysis span 29 countries and seven major world regions.
 - The United States accounted for the largest number of human rights funders included in this study (652), largely reflecting the relative accessibility of grants data for these foundations.¹
 - Western Europe accounted for the next largest number of human rights grantmakers included in this analysis (28), followed by Latin America (9), Asia and the Pacific (4), Eastern Europe (3), Sub-Saharan Africa (3), and the Middle East (2).²
 - The Ford Foundation ranked as the largest human rights funder in 2010 by grant dollars (\$159.5 million), while the Open Society Foundations reported the largest number of human rights grants (1,248).³
 - The 146 grantmakers affiliated with at least one of the three human rights or social justice networks involved in this study provided the majority (64 percent) of overall human rights grant dollars and approximately seven out of 10 grants.
 - Among the 557 foundations included in this analysis that are not currently affiliated with these human rights or social justice networks are those that are exploring

human rights grantmaking, those with an interest in one or two specific rights issues, and those that do not consider themselves human rights funders but made a grant that fell within the human rights definition used for this analysis.

WHERE DO HUMAN RIGHTS GRANTS GO?

- Every major region of the world benefits from human rights-related foundation support. The following analysis examines the distribution of human rights giving intended to focus on each region, regardless of whether the grant was made to an NGO based in the region or outside of the region.*
- Of the \$1.2 billion in 2010 foundation human rights-related funding, 9 percent or \$111 million focused on Sub-Saharan Africa. Just over two-thirds of this funding was awarded directly to NGOs based in the region. The balance of funding went to organizations based in other regions for work related to Sub-Saharan Africa.
 - The largest share of 2010 human rights-related giving (69 percent or \$830 million) was awarded to U.S.-based organizations. This reflects the concentration of U.S.-based grantmakers included in this analysis. Most of this funding focused on domestic rights-related work within the United States, ranging from protecting women’s reproductive rights to ensuring access to healthcare to protecting the rights of various identity-based populations.
 - Nonetheless, over one-fifth of human rights funding received by U.S.-based recipients focused on other countries, regions, or work at the global level. For example, the Open Society Foundations made a grant to U.S.-based Harvard University to facilitate domestic-level implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in China, Bangladesh, the Philippines, and South Africa.

Foundation Funding for Human Rights by Number of Grants, 2010



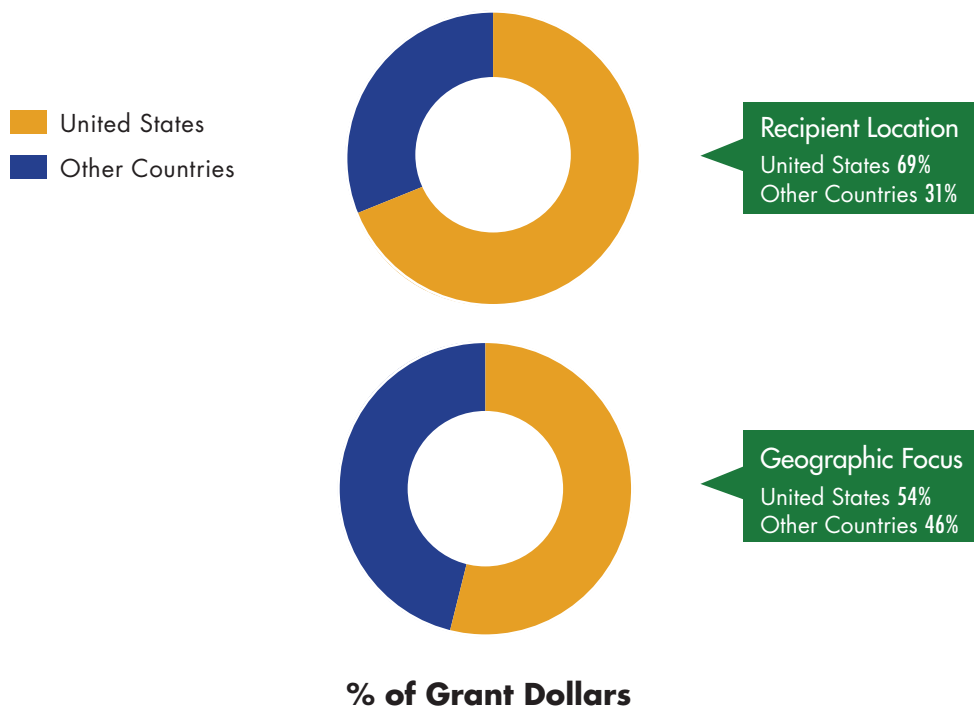
Source: The Foundation Center, 2013. Figures based on grants awarded by 703 foundations located in 29 countries.

WHAT DO HUMAN RIGHTS GRANTS SUPPORT?

The definition of human rights grantmaking adopted for this study includes 26 issue areas combined into 10 overarching areas of activity. The following analysis highlights human rights issue areas benefiting from the largest shares of foundation grant dollars.

- Foundations are making a difference through support for all areas of human rights activity, with funding for individual integrity, liberty, and security accounting for by far the largest share of 2010 human rights grant dollars (36 percent).
- Within the individual integrity category, the vast majority of funding supported the right to equality, which includes grants for ensuring the protection of the rights and opportunities of marginalized populations, as well as grants for the general support of organizations focused on protecting the rights of marginalized populations. For example, the Fund for Global Human Rights made a grant to Philippines-based Babaylanes for a project to educate university students about LGBT rights and organize LGBT associations to press for policies that respect and protect their rights.
- This category of individual integrity, liberty, and security also includes funding for freedom from discrimination; freedom of opinion, expression, and access to information; and freedom from interference with privacy, family, home, and correspondence.
- Individual integrity, liberty, and security was also the top foundation funding priority in all of the eight major geographic regions, but secondary priorities varied considerably.
- The second largest category of 2010 human rights funding based on grant dollars included: (1) grants that could not be assigned to more precise human rights issue areas due to the limited information on their purpose, such as an unrestricted grant for Human Rights Watch or a grant to “protect human rights” in a specific country or region, and (2) human rights grants that did not fit within the specific human rights categories adopted for this study—e.g., grants that support a range of human rights-related activities through a single award, that are intentionally vague to protect the safety of human rights defenders or practitioners, and/or that reflect an identity-based framework rather than the issue area framework used for this analysis.
- Among other major areas that captured at least 5 percent of foundation human rights grant dollars in 2010 were health and well-being rights (\$119.3 million), sexual and reproductive rights (\$103.4 million), social and cultural rights (\$68.4 million), and access to justice/equality before the law (\$61.6 million).

Foundation Funding for Human Rights by Recipient Location and Geographic Focus, 2010



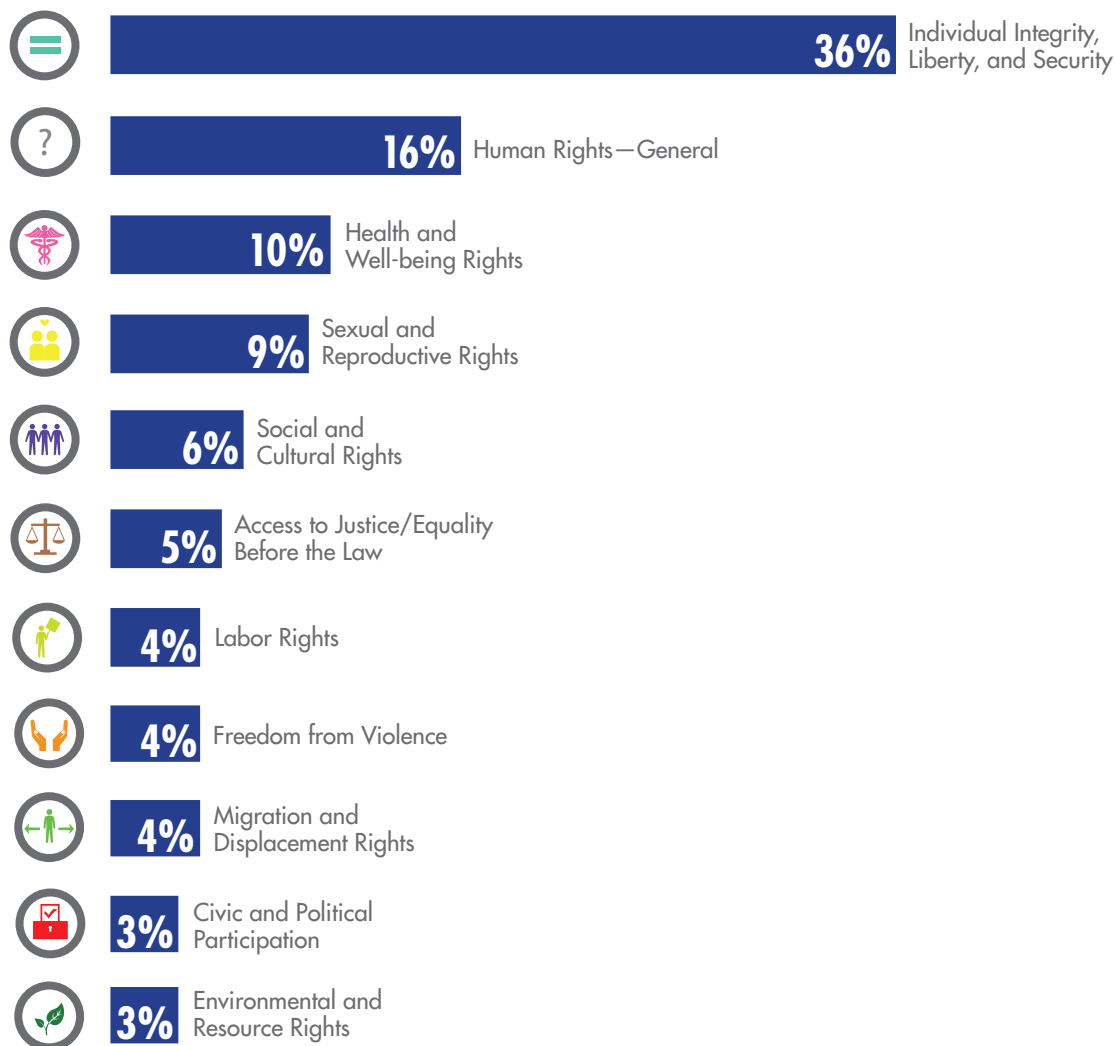
Source: The Foundation Center, 2013. Figures based on grants awarded by 703 foundations located in 29 countries.

MEASURING HUMAN RIGHTS GRANTMAKING

The definition of human rights grantmaking adopted by the *Advancing Human Rights* initiative, a multi-year effort to map and analyze human rights grantmaking, emphasizes funding that seeks structural change in pursuit of the protection and enjoyment of the rights enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, from the right to own property to the right to education. It also draws on ideas expressed in more recent international human rights covenants and conventions. Because these rights apply to all populations, regardless of ethnic, gender, or sexual identity or other individual characteristics, particular identity groups are not explicitly referenced within the definition.

This definition of human rights grantmaking was mapped by the Foundation Center to actual foundation grants data collected by the Foundation Center and by IHRFG, Ariadne, and INWF directly from their members. Because this process is objective, grants that met the human rights definition used for this initiative were included regardless of whether foundations may have considered them to be related to human rights.

Foundation Funding for Human Rights by Major Issue Area, 2010



Source: The Foundation Center, 2013. Figures based on grants awarded by 703 foundations located in 29 countries.

HUMAN RIGHTS GRANTMAKING

703 FOUNDATIONS
12,000 GRANTS

NORTH AMERICA • \$649 MILLION (M)

 \$250.6 M
Individual Integrity,
Liberty, and Security

 \$87.5 M
Health and
Well-being Rights

 \$64.9 M
Sexual and
Reproductive Rights


Giving Focused
on Region

Top Priorities

WESTERN EUROPE • \$64 MILLION (M)

 \$25.6 M
Individual Integrity,
Liberty, and Security


CARIBBEAN • \$8 MILLION (M)

 \$2.6 M
Individual Integrity,
Liberty, and Security

 \$1.8 M
Access to Justice/Equality
Before the Law

 \$0.9 M
Health and
Well-being Rights


LATIN AMERICA & MEXICO • \$82 MILLION (M)

 \$28 M
Individual Integrity,
Liberty, and Security

 \$17.1 M
Sexual and
Reproductive Rights

 \$10 M
Human Rights—
General

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA • \$111 MILLION (M)

 \$44 M
Individual Integrity,
Liberty, and Security

 \$24.6 M
Human Rights—
General

 \$7.2 M
Sexual and
Reproductive Rights

ONS IN 29 COUNTRIES MADE OVER
NTS TOTALING **\$1.2 BILLION**

EASTERN EUROPE \$41 MILLION (M)

\$9.5 M
Individual Integrity,
Liberty, and Security

\$13.7 M
Human Rights—
General

\$6.0 M
Migration Rights

EASTERN EUROPE \$41 MILLION (M)

\$18.5 M
Individual Integrity,
Liberty, and Security

\$10.1 M
Human Rights—
General

\$4 M
Freedom
from Violence

ASIA & PACIFIC \$59 MILLION (M)

\$25.4 M
Individual Integrity,
Liberty, and Security

\$11.6 M
Human Rights—
General

\$4.3 M
Environmental and
Resource Rights

NORTH AFRICA & MIDDLE EAST \$24 MILLION (M)

\$11.7 M
Individual Integrity,
Liberty, and Security

\$6 M
Human Rights—
General

\$1.9 M
Social and
Cultural Rights

NOTE: Human rights grants made by foundations included in this study supported 6,800+ organizations worldwide in 2010. Figures for each region represent human rights grantmaking for activities *focused on* that region, regardless of the recipient location. These figures exclude giving to organizations located in a specific region for activities focused on other regions.

Human rights grants generally benefit a specific country or region. However, as grants with a focus on multiple regions do not specify the share of support that targets each region, the full value of these grants is counted in the totals for each specified region. In addition, foundations made human rights grants not reflected in this graphic totaling \$41 million focused on “developing countries” and totaling \$193 million focused on providing a global benefit.

The \$1.2 billion total human rights grantmaking figure for 2010 *excludes* all double-counting of grants that focused on more than one region.

These findings were developed through the International Human Rights Funders Group and Foundation Center’s *Advancing Human Rights: Knowledge Tools for Funders* initiative, with support from the Ford Foundation and Oak Foundation.

Foundation Funding for Human Rights by Issue Area, 2010

Issue Area	Amount ¹	No. Grants
Access to Justice/Equality Before the Law	\$61.6 M	357
Civic and Political Participation	\$41.1 M	351
Right to Peaceful Assembly and Association/ to Participate in Government and Free Elections		
Environmental and Resource Rights	\$38.7 M	863
Cooperative Rights/Sustainable Agriculture Rights	\$4.3 M	25
Right to a Healthy Environment/Right to Share in and Determine the Distribution of Lands, Territories, and Resources	\$33.5 M	820
Right to Own Property	\$860 K	18
Freedom from Violence	\$47.3 M	553
Freedom from Domestic Violence	\$5.3 M	112
Freedom from Gender/Identity-based Violence	\$8.6 M	162
Freedom from Genocide, Crimes Against Humanity, and Forced Disappearance	\$1.3 M	12
Freedom from Slavery and Trafficking	\$15.2 M	138
Freedom from Torture and Degrading Treatment	\$16.9 M	129
Health and Well-Being Rights	\$119.3 M	874
Right to Adequate Housing	\$13.3 M	122
Right to Rest and Leisure	\$3.6 M	50
Right to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health	\$102.5 M	702
Individual Integrity, Liberty, and Security	\$429.2 M	5,100
Freedom from Discrimination Rights	\$24.6 M	285
Freedom from Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, and Correspondence	\$2.8 M	15
Freedom of Opinion, Expression, and Access to Information	\$18.4 M	207
Right to Equality	\$383.4 M	4,593
Labor Rights	\$48.5 M	653
Right to Desirable Work		
Migration and Displacement Rights	\$45.8 M	283
Right to a Nationality and Freedom to Change Nationality	\$37.4 M	248
Right to Asylum in Other Countries from Persecution	\$8.4 M	35
Sexual and Reproductive Rights	\$103.4 M	563
Right to Decide Freely and Responsibly on the Number and Spacing of Children	\$101.5 M	540
Right to Sexual Expression	\$1.9 M	23
Social and Cultural Rights	\$68.4 M	626
Freedom of Belief and Religion	\$4.3 M	71
Right to Education	\$48.0 M	359
Right to Marriage and Family	\$13.8 M	120
Right to Participate in the Cultural Life of a Community/ Engage in Community Duties Essential to Free and Full Development	\$2.3 M	76
Human Rights—General	\$194.0 M	2,139
Total	\$1.2 B	12,362

Source: The Foundation Center, 2013. Figures based on grants awarded by 703 foundations located in 29 countries.

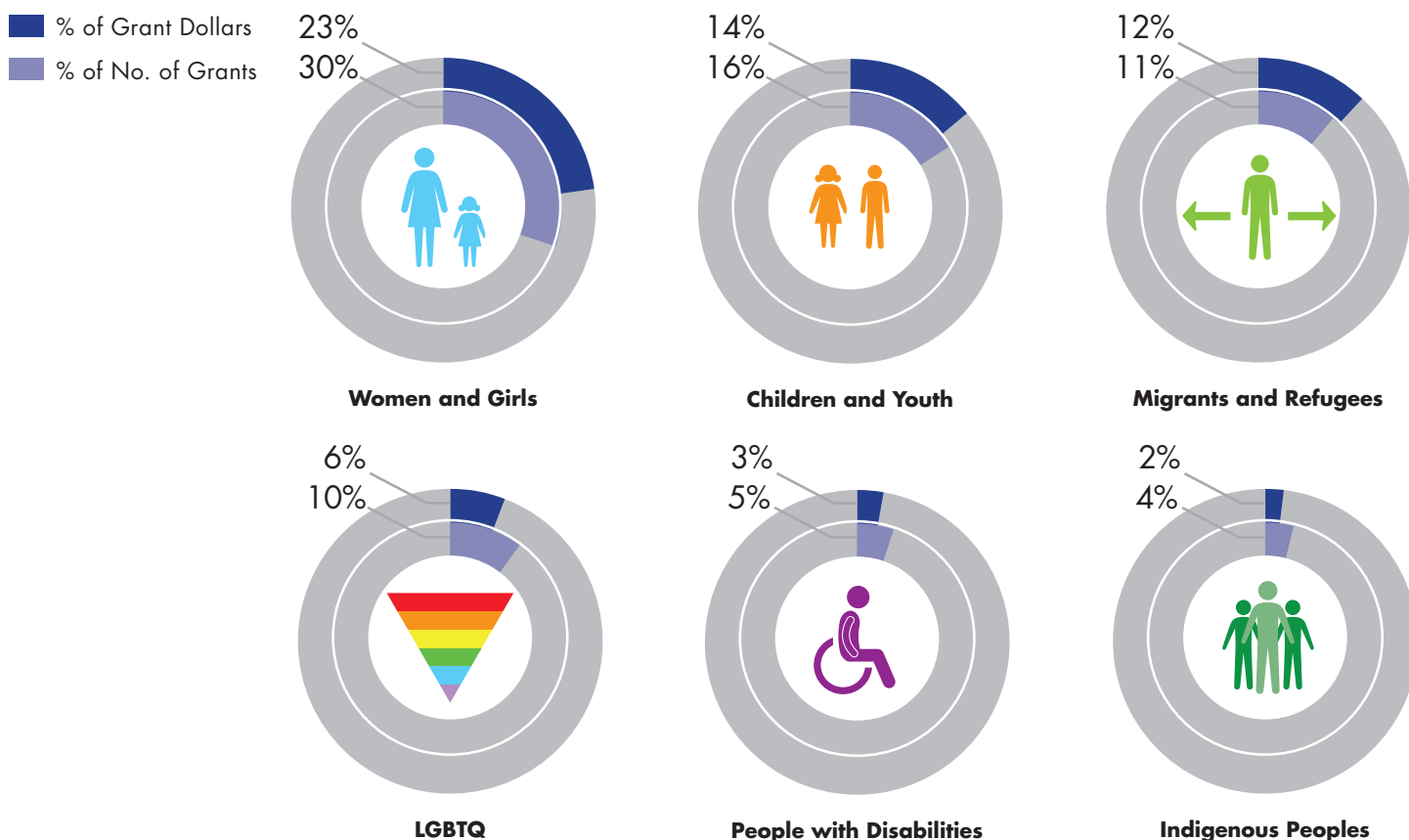
¹M = Million; B = Billion.

WHO IS THE FOCUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS GRANTS?

Most human rights-related grantmaking includes an explicit focus on specific population groups. A number of grants focus on multiple population groups (e.g., female refugees). In the following analysis of the population focus of human rights grantmaking, the full value of a grant is counted toward all of the population groups identified by the grantmaker as being an explicit focus of the grant. For example, human rights grants intended to benefit girls will be counted within the totals for both “children and youth” and “women and girls.”

- Most human rights-related grantmaking (82 percent) includes an explicit focus on specific population groups or funds organizations whose missions focus on specific populations.
- Across the world, women and girls are among the groups most likely to be the focus of foundations’ 2010 human rights grant dollars (23 percent) and grants (30 percent). The focus of this giving ranged from securing women’s right to political engagement and economic opportunity to ensuring the right to make reproductive choices to guaranteeing the right to education for girls worldwide.
- Human rights funding focused on children and youth accounted for over 14 percent of grant dollars, supporting activities such as ending child labor and ensuring that children are protected from political and family violence.
- Migrants and refugees and the LGBT population were also the focus of at least 10 percent of foundation human rights grant dollars or grants in 2010, and funding related to these groups spanned all of the major human rights issue areas tracked in this analysis.
- Human rights funding focused outside of the United States was most likely to focus on women and girls, victims of violence, indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, and sex workers.
- Among human rights giving focused on the United States, about half included an explicit focus on ethnic or racial minorities, followed by at least 10 percent each for the economically disadvantaged, women and girls, children and youth, and migrants and refugees.

Foundation Human Rights Funding for Selected Population Groups, 2010



Source: The Foundation Center, 2013. Figures based on grants awarded by 703 foundations located in 29 countries. The Foundation Center codes grants as benefiting specific population groups when grant descriptions provided by foundations indicate a focus on specific populations and/or when the missions of recipient organizations specify a focus on specific populations.

Advancing Human Rights: Where Are We and Where Are We Headed?

In 2012 IHRFG conducted in-depth interviews with a diverse group of 25 funders based in nine countries who support human rights work around the world. These interviews explored key factors influencing human rights philanthropy, contemporary strategies in human rights grantmaking, and opportunities for advancing the field. Following are selected observations.

WHAT ARE THE KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING HUMAN RIGHTS PHILANTHROPY?

Human rights grantmaking is a vibrant, diverse, and thriving field within a continually evolving geo-political context. Interviewees identified four major factors shaping the human rights landscape at this time:

Shifting Global Power Dynamics

As power and influence is increasingly shared with emerging economies in the Global South, a growing number of human rights funders are asking how they can support Southern organizations to: strengthen human rights movements within their own countries and regions, encourage government leaders of those countries to respect human rights norms, and strengthen the role of Global South governments and non-governmental organizations in more global human rights debates.

Increasing Influence of Non-state Actors

Growing understanding of the prevalence and influence of non-state actors—e.g., multinational corporations, international financial institutions, organized crime networks, paramilitary groups, and military subcontractors—as human rights violators has prompted grantmakers to consider how to effectively address these violators, as well as how to engage non-state actors as allies in human rights promotion and protection.

Impact of the Global Financial Crisis

Foundation endowment losses and resulting reductions in grant budgets have led to limitations on the capacity of many human rights organizations to act strategically and take advantage of critical opportunities for change. Government austerity measures often cut services that are critical in fulfilling a government's responsibility to protect the rights of its citizens. At the same time, the financial crisis has served to increase awareness of the interconnectedness of struggles for justice across the globe.

Technology: Tools to Empower and Repress

Funders are supporting the expansion of the effective use of technology as a tool for advancing human rights. Yet, technology is also a tool increasingly employed by governments and non-state actors to repress human rights, such as digital surveillance techniques that monitor activists and the use of broadcast and social media to spread anti-rights rhetoric.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ADVANCE HUMAN RIGHTS GRANTMAKING?

According to many funders interviewed, supporting efforts to mobilize and strengthen a far larger and more active constituency for human rights offers great opportunity for moving the human rights field forward. Following are a series of challenges to constituency-building that interviewees identified and that some are actively working to address, as well as several other opportunities for advancing the field.

Supporting efforts to mobilize and strengthen a far larger and more active constituency for human rights offers great opportunity.

Addressing Negative Public Perceptions of Human Rights

Several funders noted that hostility and cynicism toward human rights is mounting and that countering this negativity is a key challenge. Among factors they offered as contributing to public reticence toward human rights are: growing political conservatism, especially in the United States and Europe; the perception that rights advocates are primarily interested in protecting terrorism suspects and criminals rather than “law-abiding” citizens; and a growing animosity toward migrants and refugees.

Countering Government Backlash Against Human Rights

As popular movements are vocally and visibly asserting rights claims, some governments are, in turn, responding with repressive measures. Human rights defenders endure persistent threats and civil society organizations in some countries face increasingly restrictive regulatory requirements that severely constrain their work. In response, some human rights funders are using alternative terminology, such as “social justice grantmaking” and “social change grantmaking” to characterize their work, which they find is less likely to prompt government scrutiny.

Making “Human Rights” Accessible

Several funders noted that the concept of human rights can be perceived as too abstract. Using more accessible ways of conveying the real-life meaning of human rights holds the potential to make a considerable difference in building a strong and vocal constituency for human rights. Clear public messaging by the human rights sector will be critical to cultivating a broad base of support to advocate for the protection and promotion of human rights on the grassroots, national, regional, and global levels.

Connecting Across Sectors

Many funders cited a need to work more closely with their peers, both within and outside of the human rights funding field. They also noted that human rights is still unnecessarily seen as separate from fields such as development, health, education, environment, and conflict resolution and that human rights funders have numerous opportunities to bridge these divides.

Increasing Coordination Among Human Rights Funders

Several interviewees stressed the importance of forums that provide the opportunity for funders to reflect with peers about human rights grantmaking practice, learn from one another’s strategies, and analyze critical funding gaps within the field. They also noted the need for greater transparency around grantmaking strategies among human rights funders.

Increasing Usage of a Rights-based Approach within Grantmaking Institutions

A number of funders interviewed noted an expansion in the integration of a rights-based approach within grantmaking institutions. Yet even with the increased internal usage of a human rights framework, some funders admitted that “making the case” for human rights—to trustees, donors, and fellow staff members—is an ongoing challenge. A rights-based approach is based on global norms and standards that advance the promotion and protection of universal and inalienable rights for all peoples, as well as examine the root causes of the denial of these rights.

Evaluating the Impact of Human Rights Grantmaking

A major challenge faced by all human rights grantmakers is assessing impact, which is complicated by factors such as the difficulty of measuring abstract human rights concepts, the slow nature of change with most human rights issues, and inadequate foundation staff presence where the work is taking place. Funders also face the challenge of assessing impact both when they evaluate their own grantmaking and when trying to determine the overall impact of the field of human rights funding.

Clear public messaging by the human rights sector is critical to cultivating a broad base of support.

Leveraging Additional Financial Support for Human Rights

Funders interviewed for this study held mixed perspectives on the prospects of future philanthropic support for human rights. Most expected their human rights giving to increase or remain level over the next two years. When asked about prospects for human rights funding overall, responses were split between those who are uncertain and those who believe that funding will increase. However, close to one-quarter predict that overall funding for human rights will decrease. Some interviewees expressed a desire for human rights funders to play a bigger role in engaging potential new donors in support of human rights work, including diaspora communities, governments in emerging economies, high net-worth individuals (especially in emerging economies), and businesses.

Endnotes

1. U.S.-based foundations are required to file an annual information return (Form 990-PF) with the Internal Revenue Service. This return requires foundations to provide basic information on all grantees, including their name, location, and the amount of the grant received. The Foundation Center and the International Human Rights Funders Group are also in early stages of collaboration with Ariadne, the International Network of Women's Funds, and other possible partners to expand the data available on funding for human rights globally. As data on additional funders based outside of the U.S. is collected, the share of human rights giving accounted for by U.S.-based foundations should decline.
2. In addition, the analysis includes grantmaking by two foundations based in Canada: the International Development Research Centre and the Cloverleaf Foundation.
3. Data on giving by the Open Society Foundations includes all grantmaking by the U.S.-based Open Society Institute and Foundation to Promote Open Society and self-reported grantmaking by selected Open Society Foundations based in other countries.

Some interviewees expressed a desire for human rights funders to play a bigger role in engaging potential new donors in support of human rights work.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

The International Human Rights Funders Group (IHRFG) and the Foundation Center welcome your feedback on the methodology of this research and resources produced. Your ideas for further data collection and meaningful analysis are also invited.

IHRFG and the Foundation Center are committed to expanding understanding of global human rights grantmaking. As this research continues, one key step will involve broadening the scope and range of data collected to ensure that rights funding is captured as fully and accurately as possible.

The project's next phase includes gathering data on grantmaking by bilateral and multilateral donors as well as by additional foundations not yet included in the study. Your input and feedback is of great assistance to this effort to support more strategic, effective, collaborative, and transparent human rights philanthropy.

For more information about this ongoing effort, to submit data, or to provide feedback, contact Christen Dobson at cdobson@ihrfg.org.

The **Advancing Human Rights: Knowledge Tools for Funders** initiative is funded by the Ford Foundation and the Oak Foundation. We are grateful for their support.



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