

IHRFG HIGHLIGHTS: SEPTEMBER 2010 – SEPTEMBER 2011

IHRFG is a growing network of grantmakers committed to advancing human rights around the globe. Our aims are to improve the use, reach and strategic effectiveness of existing funding for human rights; to extend linkages among human rights funders around the globe; to expand the extent to which funders across issue areas incorporate a human rights framework into their grantmaking; and, ultimately, to increase overall human rights funding.

IHRFG currently has 315 institutional grantmaking members and over 800 individual members, an increase of 25 institutions and 130 individuals from one year ago. International membership, or non U.S.-based funders, now comprise 16% of IHRFG membership. Amid our fast-shifting world, IHRFG has been working hard to help grantmakers from around the world stay abreast of lightening-speed changes in current events and make sense of their implications for human rights and human rights grantmaking.

We organize our work around **three primary programmatic strategies**: education and convening, outreach and communications and policy and research.

I. EDUCATION AND CONVENING:

CONFERENCES

IHRFG conferences provide an opportunity to explore critical issues in human rights; promote exchange and collaboration among grantmakers; deepen knowledge of best practices; and meet fun and interesting colleagues. Planning and implementation of IHRFG educational programming is led by IHRFG members. Examples of recent conferences include:

July 2011: New York

The plenary theme of IHRFG's July 2011 Conference (July 12-13) was *Human Rights Philanthropy and the Ten-Year Legacy of 9/11: Where From Here?* Our plenary focused on the impact of the "war on terror" on human rights in the United States and abroad. With an eye to charting a course for the future, this plenary explored the lessons learned over the past decade as well as philanthropic strategies for finding a better balance between rights and security. A session co-sponsored by Liquidnet focused on *Mass Atrocities from Rwanda to Libya: A Sea Change in Response to Civilian Protection?*



January 2011: San Francisco

Our January 2011 conference (January 25-26) plenary -- *Human Rights and the Private Sector* -- opened two days of thought-provoking discussion and grantmaking skills workshops focusing on strengthening the citizen sector in increasing private sector accountability. Over dinner we explored *Philanthropy, New Media, and Human Rights*.

Pre-conference Institutes

On July 12, 2010, we for the first time launched day-long pre-institutes: one on evaluation and human rights grantmaking, the other on gender justice and human rights grantmaking. The evaluation institute explored how to effectively institutionalize evaluation systems and practices that: a) promote learning among grantees and within one's own grantmaking institution, and b) assess progress of grantmaking programs towards achieving social change goals. The gender institute examined barriers to gender-sensitive grantmaking and organizational

strategies for effectively addressing these challenges. IHRFG's third institute, on January 24, 2011, focused on the intersection of human rights and international development. Participants explored ways in which the realization of human rights – particularly economic, social and cultural rights – can help bring people out of poverty. On July 11, 2011, IHRFG held its fourth institute, focused on how funders and advocates can build authentic partnerships with diverse stakeholders traditionally thought of as opponents, achieving policy wins with “unlikely allies.”

FEDERAL POLICY BRIEFINGS

Against the backdrop of vitriolic U.S. budget reform debates and escalating revolts in the Middle East and North Africa, IHRFG held its most recent Federal Policy Briefing on March 29-31, 2011 in Washington D.C. (in collaboration with the Peace and Security Funders Group). Sessions focused on developments in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, and the unfolding nuclear emergency in Japan. Participants met with several senior-level U.S. policy-makers and NGO leaders, including then Deputy Secretary of State Jim Steinberg, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, Representative Jim McGovern, and Zainab Salbi, founder and CEO of Women for Women International.

TELE-BRIEFINGS

IHRFG tele-briefings focus on issues ranging from the mechanics of grantmaking in conflict areas to the role that funders play in mitigating – and at times aggravating -- risks that grantees face. A recent example is a tele-briefing we hosted on February 23, 2011, which drew 58 participants, focused on the recent uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt and implications for human rights funders in this region.

II. OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS

IHRFG's e-newsletter *Human Rights Funding News* now features the *In Focus* section, which spotlights pressing human rights issues and innovative grantmaking strategies via articles written by IHRFG members. Recent *In Focus* articles have explored: the human rights funding landscape in Europe, submitted by Jo Andrews, Ariadne; online media and human rights, submitted by Helen Brunner, Media Democracy Fund; and human rights and the private sector, submitted by Theodoros Chronopoulos, The Sigrid Rausing Trust.

In fall 2010 we launched a new website, which features a vastly upgraded funder directory. This tool allows grantmakers and grantseekers alike to search by a number of categories, including areas of rights funding, activities supported, and geographic focus.

III. POLICY AND RESEARCH

In January 2010 IHRFG began a partnership with the Foundation Center to map the current scope and landscape of human rights grantmaking, as well as identify trends over time. This project focuses on capturing how, and how much, funding goes to human rights, as well as on a number of more detailed sub-categories such as population served, strategy supported and geographic focus. The project also aims to improve the taxonomy used by the Foundation Center to code grants to more accurately capture the diversity of human rights grantmaking. In spring 2012, we anticipate launching an online visual mapping of human rights grantmaking by IHRFG members, along with a briefing that explores trends in human rights funding in spring 2012.

IHRFG also aims to help its members contribute to the cultivation of a favorable policy environment for human rights grantmaking, both within the U.S. and globally. Our July 2010 conference featured a session that explored the implications to funders of the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling on material support to terrorist organizations. Our working group on civil society and counterterrorism helped organize a fall 2010 tele-briefing on the implications of U.S. counterterrorism measures for funding human rights work.

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