supporting a more secure future for all
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about us

The Center for High Impact Philanthropy (CHIP) is the premier source of knowledge and education on how philanthropy can do more good. Founded collaboratively by the School of Social Policy & Practice and alumni of the Wharton School, it is the only university-based center with a singular focus on philanthropy for social impact.

university of pennsylvania
school of social policy & practice

Our home school, Penn’s School of Social Policy & Practice (SP2), is dedicated to the passionate pursuit of social innovation, impact and justice. Together with a worldwide network of global collaborators, SP2 is advancing knowledge that drives justice, equity, and social innovation in a range of critical areas such as homelessness, health equity, social innovation, and more.

CHIP’s work benefits from the involvement of faculty, staff, and students at SP2. We are especially appreciative of partnerships with researchers and practitioners at the Center for Guaranteed Income Research; the Field Center for Children’s Policy, Practice & Research; and Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy.

This guide was prepared by our team at the Center for High Impact Philanthropy:

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Welcome to the 2023 High Impact Giving Toolkit. Our theme — a more secure future for all — reflects the fact that while some people have returned to a sense of stability after COVID-19, many continue to face tremendous insecurity and uncertainty about the future. For individual donors and professional grantmakers alike, the question is, "How can I help?"

This document, the companion to the electronic toolkit available for free on our website https://www.impact.upenn.edu/giving-guide is our team’s answer. The document is organized into three parts.

The first part describes five evidence-based strategies that lead to a more secure future:

- Recover learning lost due to COVID-19 and accelerate gains for students at risk of being left behind
- Increase financial security with guaranteed income, savings, and jobs
- Address structural inequality so everyone has a fair chance
- Provide effective disaster relief across all four stages — immediate relief, recovery, risk mitigation, and preparedness — so that communities are more resilient
- Strengthen democracy to foster social cohesion and government accountability

The second part provides profiles of 12 nonprofits implementing one or more of these strategies. These organizations were vetted by our team and provide real-world examples of how you can help. Collectively, they also illustrate all four of the philanthropic plays that lead to impact (see the opposite page).

The final section provides tips, best practices, and other resources for practicing high impact philanthropy.

Thank you for your interest in making the world a more safe, fair, and secure place for all. We hope this document and the accompanying electronic toolkit help you translate your generosity and good intentions into high impact.
HOW PHILANTHROPY CAN HELP

Philanthropic support takes many forms. It can fund nonprofit programs that provide direct services to those in need; increase the capacity of systems so that programs can function more effectively and efficiently; fund research that underpins these programs; and support policy initiatives that are needed to sustain them. It can also back innovation with the potential for game-changing progress.

Many organizations employ several plays. For example, FreeFrom (page 16) provides direct service to survivors of intimate partner violence and also advocates for changes in laws to protect them. Leading Men Fellowship (page 17) enhances preschool learning through direct service, in addition to increasing educational capacity by recruiting and training teachers. CCD India’s DEWATS (page 21) uses innovative technology to provide wastewater treatment to previously neglected communities, serving as a model for potential government support.

Across the many social impact areas our team has analyzed, we find that philanthropic support typically falls within one of four categories, or philanthropic plays. While each is an equally valid choice for creating social impact, each brings different levels of risk, time horizons, and potential for scale. Participants in our High Impact Philanthropy Academy have found the table below useful in recognizing the tradeoffs in these choices. Nonprofits have also found these guidelines helpful in prioritizing activities and managing funder expectations.

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| Direct Services     | 3-5 years                         | **Strengths:** Lower risk since generally less complex; often addresses immediate need; specific client/beneficiary outcomes are relatively easier to measure  
**Limitations:** Doesn’t change underlying conditions or causes |
| System Capacity Building | 5 years +                        | **Strengths:** Potential for more sustainable change  
**Limitations:** Higher investment risk/uncertainty of results due to greater complexity (e.g., more players with potentially competing interests and incentives); progress can be harder to measure and attribute to any one funder’s work |
| Policy/ Advocacy    | 1-10 years +                      | **Strengths:** Can leverage resources of other stakeholders (e.g., government and business) in ways that lead to more widespread and sustainable change  
**Limitations:** Higher investment risk/uncertainty of results including potential reputational/political risk; progress harder to measure |
| Research/ Innovation | 5-10 years +                      | **Strengths:** Breakthrough could lead to widespread change over the long term  
**Limitations:** Higher investment risk/uncertainty (i.e., money and time spent learning only what doesn’t work) |
recover learning lost and accelerate gains

WHY NOW?
The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted learning for children of all ages. For children ages 0 to 8, brain development, social and emotional learning, and life skills are especially critical since early school success predicts later academic achievement and a host of positive life outcomes.

HOW PHILANTHROPY CAN HELP
Philanthropy can strengthen the web of support that all children need to thrive. That web of support consists of the adults in their lives — parents, caregivers, teachers, and others — who help them meet their physical, social, emotional, and academic needs.

NONPROFITS MAKING AN IMPACT
All Our Kin (page 14) supports and trains family childcare providers so that the youngest children have better educational outcomes and their caregivers can pursue secure employment. Leading Men Fellowship (page 17) brings young Black men into preschool classrooms to improve early learning and increase the pool of teaching talent. Yamba Malawi (page 25) supports the economic well-being of families so that children experience the secure home lives that serve as the foundation for strong school attainment.

Early School Success: Recover learning and accelerate gains

Primer for individual donors and professional grantmakers

Prepared by our team in partnership with the Campaign for Grade Level Reading (https://gradelevelreading.net/), this primer outlines the following ways to help:

- Support the whole child by meeting children’s comprehensive needs, at home and at school
- Increase learning opportunities by expanding when and where learning happens and who teacher
- Ensure digital equity by improving digital access and literacy for those who continue to be left out.

You can download the free Early School Success primer, watch videos from related webinars, and find more real-world examples of nonprofits implementing these strategies at https://www.impact.upenn.edu/toolkits/early-school-success/
WHY NOW?
COVID-19 spotlighted just how precarious the financial situations of low and moderate-income households are. Even for those who have a reliable income, the lack of even $500 in savings can start the slide into financial hardship, unemployment, or homelessness when an unexpected repair or medical bill comes due. ¹ Thanks to the groundbreaking research of our colleagues at the Center for Guaranteed Income Research (https://www.penncgir.org/), we now know that guaranteed income can be a powerful and cost-effective tool to help.

HOW PHILANTHROPY CAN HELP
Guaranteed income, savings, and jobs are all ways to improve a family’s financial security.

Direct, unconditional cash transfers — also known as guaranteed income programs — have emerged as one of the most flexible, efficient, and swift means of reducing financial insecurity. As a result, it’s been used for a range of issues funders are concerned about, including mental health, physical health, children’s school achievement, employment, and earnings in adulthood. Unrestricted money allows individuals to address their most pressing needs as they surface. Unlike in-kind assistance (e.g., food, clothing, housing), guaranteed income is more flexible and responsive.

Programs that help families build savings allow households to look beyond immediate crisis to a more secure future that includes owning a first home or having their children be the first in their families to pursue college and, of course, access to better paying jobs further secures financial security.

NONPROFITS MAKING AN IMPACT
LIFT (page 18) and Yamba Malawi (page 25) use direct cash transfers to improve academic outcomes and family financial health. FreeFrom (page 16) uses direct cash transfers to enable survivors of intimate partner violence to achieve safety and independence.

In the U.S., Compass Working Capital (page 15) helps families in subsidized housing build savings to pursue education and reduce reliance on public support, while Leading Men Fellowship (page 17) opens a path to teaching jobs, and All Our Kin helps childcare providers strengthen their businesses. Outside the U.S., CAMFED (page 20) improves education and the economic status of women in sub-Saharan Africa while Make a Difference (page 22) does the same for children living in shelter homes in India.
WHY NOW?
COVID-19 exposed and exacerbated disparities, along lines of race, gender, socio-economic status, age, and geography. Those disparities result from policies and practices that systematically exclude certain groups.

Structural inequality exists across a wide range of social issues, including health care, education, economic development, environmental impact, and many more.

HOW PHILANTHROPY CAN HELP
Even when a proposal has not been explicitly designed to target structural inequality, funders can consider five factors in reviewing an organization’s work. These factors are outlined on the opposite page. In particular, work that addresses inclusivity, durability of power, and systems-level impact can be especially promising in dismantling structural inequality. These 5 dimensions are part of our free toolkit (see box on this page) for assessing grant proposals for their potential to address structural inequality. That toolkit was developed in partnership with Lever for Change, an affiliate of the MacArthur Foundation, and benefited from the expertise of colleagues at Penn’s School of Social Policy & Practice — Amy Hillier, Dennis P. Culhane, Johanna K.P. Greeson, and Ioana E. Marinescu — who each study different aspects of structural inequality.

NONPROFITS MAKING AN IMPACT
The nonprofit CDD India (page 21) leverages local talent to build sanitation systems in historically neglected communities of rural and isolated areas of India. Make a Difference (page 22) is creating networks of support to help children break the intergenerational cycle of poverty with on-ramps to middle-class lives. Project ECHO (page 24) brings effective medical care to isolated areas around the world by connecting local care providers with expert practitioners outside their communities. CAMFED (page 20) is providing a path to secondary education and economic opportunity for girls and young women in sub-Saharan Africa.
dimensions for addressing structural inequality

Below are five dimensions to consider when deciding what to support. Many funders already consider two dimensions: the case for success and organizational capacity. However, the other three — inclusivity, durability of power, and systems-level impact — are especially critical to addressing structural inequality. Learn more about how to apply these five dimensions for addressing structural inequality at https://www.impact.upenn.edu/choosing-change/.

Inclusivity: Involvement of intended beneficiaries
How much do beneficiaries shape the proposed solution design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation?
How deeply and frequently does the organization engage intended beneficiaries?
How does the organizational model incorporate intended beneficiaries’ input throughout its solution?

Durability of Power: Assurance that gains of power will persist
How well does the proposal actively shift the balance of power toward groups disadvantaged by structural inequality and create a sustainable source of power for those groups?
How well does the proposal develop and engage with leaders in the intended beneficiary community, also known as proximal leadership?
How well does the proposal build the capacity (e.g., financial resources, knowledge, skills, networks) of the intended beneficiary population so that the solution is sustained?

Organizational Capacity: Ability to implement, measure, and manage results
How well does the proposal demonstrate an ability to create impact, given the organization’s history and resources?
How much does the organization’s prior work show a commitment to addressing structural inequality?
How adequate are the organization’s resources (staff, budget, capabilities, governance, board leadership) for implementing, measuring, and managing toward intended results?

Strength of Evidence: The case for potential success
How compelling is the evidence for a solution that addresses a barrier to structural equality?
How strong is the evidence that the problem the proposal is solving contributes to structural inequality?
How strong is the evidence that the chosen solution has the potential to reduce structural inequality?

Systems-Level Impact: Approach to addressing systems-level barriers
If successful, will this proposal address systems-level barriers and provide opportunities for structural change in the field of social impact it operates within?
How well does the proposal’s solution leverage and influence the work of existing stakeholders — other nonprofits, policymakers, commercial interests — to address the problem it seeks to solve?
How strong is the proposal’s plan for scaling its solution?
Climate- and weather-related disasters and floods have been rising disproportionately in both incidence and gravity. At the same time, communities face human-created disasters including mass shootings, armed conflict, and refugee and migrant crises.

Many individual donors and institutional grantmakers are moved to help when a crisis first hits. Yet the effects of a disaster persist long past the initial headlines. Here are tips to ensure a more secure future for those most affected by disaster.

- **Prioritize cash, not goods.** The early days of responding to a disaster are often chaotic. There isn’t time to sort through donations, which then take up space or likely go to waste. Needs also change fast. Cash donations allow organizations responding to the disaster to shift purchases and programming as the situation evolves. If you want to give something more tangible, consult NeedsList, which matches the specific needs of NGOs and disaster victims to donors and local suppliers of needed goods. Purchasing needed goods from local suppliers avoids shipping costs and supports the local economy in addition to helping victims.

- **Consider small, local nonprofits/NGOs and larger, international groups.** Both have critical roles to play. Local organizations in disaster-affected areas are often able to determine what their communities need most to recover. For example, in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, local organizations like People in Need Ukraine and Razom for Ukraine worked to provide food, shelter, and medical assistance to vulnerable people in Ukraine and seeking refuge across borders.

Large national and multinational organizations provide a critical role, too. These organizations have presences, networks, and specific expertise in disaster response and can mobilize and provide emergency response very quickly and at scale. For example, CARE, an international humanitarian agency, has emergency response experts in 95 countries. International Medical Corps (IMC) provides mobile medical teams and house-to-house visits and trains local community members, including health staff, social service specialists and police officers, on topics spanning health and hygiene awareness, self-care, and positive coping strategies, or Psychological First Aid.

- **Look beyond immediate relief.** Ensuring a more secure future requires moving through all four stages of disaster relief, as outlined on the opposite page. Consider donating to a pooled fund which gathers donations when disaster first strikes (when attention is greatest), but disburses grants to individual nonprofits over a longer period. Examples include several funds run by the Center for Disaster Philanthropy (https://disasterphilanthropy.org).

- **Support rebuilding and risk mitigation.** Media and donor attention to a disaster is quite short. The Center for Disaster Philanthropy estimates that one-third of all giving is complete within one to four weeks of a disaster occurring; two-thirds of giving is complete one to two months after the disaster; six months post-disaster, giving has stopped. Yet full recovery efforts are typically on the scale of years. Donors can consider setting aside funds to make multi-year gifts to organizations which are engaged in longer term recovery efforts and monitor the progress over time.

Initial Response
The first response includes search and rescue operations and meeting the immediate needs — medical care, food, water and temporary shelter — for those directly affected. Both large and small nonprofits help. Large international organizations can bring supplies, specialized equipment, and trained personnel that bring experience from other disasters. Local organizations bring community knowledge and networks and are often more trusted by those affected.

Recovery
Recovery begins after short-term needs have been addressed and the situation has stabilized. Recovery includes rebuilding a community’s infrastructure. This includes physical infrastructure such as roads, telecommunications, schools, hospitals, and homes. It also includes non-physical infrastructure such as a functioning government, healthcare system, education system, and business sector. As communities recover, there is often an opportunity to build back better.

Preparedness
Unfortunately, communities can’t eliminate all disaster risk. However, they can prepare in ways that ensure an effective initial response that minimizes damage. Stockpiling supplies, developing disaster response protocols, performing regular drills, setting up mechanisms that pool insurance — these are all examples of activities that can increase preparedness and lessen the human and economic cost of disasters.

Risk Mitigation
Risk mitigation builds communities’ resilience. For natural disasters, constructing earthquake-resistant buildings or raising the height of bridges are two examples. For man-made crises, peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives can mitigate risk. While the upfront investment may seem high, the payoff can be enormous: According to an analysis of 25 years of U.S. federal data, every $1 spent on natural disaster mitigation saves society $11 on average (NIBS 2019).
WHY NOW?
In 2022, indices that track the strength of democracy — both in the U.S. and globally — measured declines in democracy and increases in authoritarianism. Yet democracy and democratic institutions have been a powerful force for ensuring that the interests of individuals are well met and that their futures are secure. In 2019 we published We the People, an original framework for how philanthropy can strengthen democracy.

HOW PHILANTHROPY CAN HELP
Our team identified five elements of a strong democracy, including one that is often excluded from other frameworks but is increasingly under threat: social cohesion (see chart below). Philanthropy can help by supporting organizations working to improve one or more of these five elements. These elements reinforce each other and collectively contribute to a healthy and vibrant democracy.

NONPROFITS MAKING AN IMPACT
One of the best ways to reinforce multiple elements of a strong democracy is to provide access to trusted, reliable news and information about the local community where a person lives and works. In fact, a lack of basic local news coverage is linked to greater political polarization, lower voter turnout, and lower citizen engagement in government accountability. Report for America (page 19) is one nonprofit working in the U.S. to ensure that communities have timely, relevant, local news.

Identify opportunities for advancing a more vibrant democracy in We the People: A Philanthropic Guide to Strengthening Democracy with the 5 dimensions of a healthy democracy below:

Access We the People, our toolkit for strengthening democracy, at https://www.impact.upenn.edu/toolkits/democracy/.
On the next pages, we profile 12 nonprofits whose work illustrates how to effectively implement one or more of the strategies to achieve a more secure future for all. We identified these nonprofits through partnership with the organizations below, whose research and collaboration helped us source nonprofits with high potential for impact. We then conducted due diligence and applied our own analytical lens to present 12 nonprofits making an impact — six which primarily work within the United States (pages 14 to 19) and six with international reach (pages 20 to 25). Each profile describes what the organization does, evidence for its impact and cost-effectiveness, how you can help, and other nonprofits doing related work. This diverse set of organizations — both small and large, new and well-established, in varied communities and geographies — illustrates how nonprofits of all kinds are working to create a more secure future for all.

There are many other worthy nonprofits to support beyond the 12 we profile. At the end of the document on page 31, you’ll find a list of resources curated by our team to help you find additional nonprofits translating philanthropic funding into high impact. To find more resources, guidance, and nonprofits to support, visit the toolkit website at https://www.impact.upenn.edu/giving-guide/.

organizational partners:
Thank you to the organizations below for their partnership in identifying the nonprofits and strategies featured in this guide.

**The GreenLight Fund** is a national nonprofit that partners with communities to create opportunities for individuals and families to move out of poverty. It facilitates a community-driven process that matches local needs not met by existing programs to organizations with track records of success elsewhere. [https://greenlightfund.org/](https://greenlightfund.org/)

**Lever for Change**, founded as a nonprofit affiliate of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation in 2019, has influenced more than $800 million in grants and provided support to more than 140 organizations to date. Lever for Change leverages investments in solutions to the world’s biggest problems — from racial and gender equity to climate change. [https://www.leverforchange.org/](https://www.leverforchange.org/)

**The Barry & Marie Lipman Family Prize** is an annual global prize that celebrates leadership and innovation in the social sector with an emphasis on impact and transfer-ability of practices. Administered by the Wharton School on behalf of the University of Pennsylvania, the Prize is committed to resourcing and connecting change-mak-ers to bring innovative ideas to new places and problems around the world. [https://lipmanfamilyprize.wharton.upenn.edu/](https://lipmanfamilyprize.wharton.upenn.edu/)
Family childcare centers, where providers care for small groups of children in a residential building, are the primary source of care for many young children. This is especially true for children from low-income communities where these providers tend to be the most affordable and available during nontraditional hours. But the availability and affordability of high-quality programs remains inadequate.6

All Our Kin (AOK) partners with family childcare providers to build high-quality, sustainable programs that offer accessible, reliable childcare for parents; strong developmental and education outcomes for young children; and better livelihoods for childcare providers.

WHAT IT DOES
All Our Kin serves nearly 1,100 family childcare providers that in turn care for over 6,000 children. To address the need for more high-quality early childcare, the organization works directly with providers by:

- Helping them get licensed
- Delivering coaching and workshops on topics like caring for children with special needs that enhance their ability to provide high quality care
- Providing a free 10-week series that builds providers’ capacity as business owners and ensures the longevity of their childcare centers. Topics include business marketing and accounting. All of All Our Kin’s direct service programs are offered in English and in Spanish.

In addition to these direct services, All Our Kin has partnered with local organizations such as the Louisiana Department of Education, SEIU Education & Support Fund, and the National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance in 22 states across the U.S. and in Washington, D.C. to work with family childcare providers to increase the supply, quality, and sustainability of family childcare. To improve policy, All Our Kin has also recently launched a program working with state and local government leaders and releases policy recommendations on increasing the quality and supply of family childcare providers.

HOW EFFECTIVE IT IS
Researchers found that All Our Kin providers scored an average of 53 percentage points higher than non-AOK providers on the Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale, which measures the safety and quality of family childcare centers.7 Children cared for by All Our Kin providers also demonstrate better social emotional development than both their non-All Our Kin peers and the national norm.8 In addition to its impact on children, within one year of completing All Our Kin’s licensing or business programs, the majority of providers reported increased earnings by $5,000 or more and 81% of providers said their quality of life improved.9 That same study found that for every dollar spent on the licensing program, $15 to $20 is returned to society in terms of increased gross regional product (GRP) through revenue generated by childcare providers and parents. For every provider aided by the licensing program, 4 to 5 parents can enter the workforce.10

MORE WAYS TO HELP
Nearly 85% of All Our Kin’s funding in 2021 came from philanthropic contributions. Philanthropy supports free programming for family childcare providers (e.g., licensing support, professional learning, and business support) as well as the organization’s expansion to new cities. Providing general operating support allows the organization to direct funds where the money is most needed. For example, $65 subsidizes quality care for a child for a month, $250 provides educators with two in-depth education coaching sessions, and $1,000 supports an educator completing the 10-week business skill-building series. Learn more at https://allourkin.org.
WHAT IT DOES

Founded in 2005, Compass Working Capital is a nonprofit financial services firm that operates the savings component of the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program, an employment and savings program established by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for families in federally subsidized housing. In the FSS Program, when a household increases their earnings and has a corresponding rent increase, the amount of the rent increase is deposited into the household’s FSS savings account, which is held in escrow while the participant is in the program.

Compass’s financial coaches help participants set goals in five core areas: income/employment, credit/debt, savings, utilization of quality financial services, and asset development. To graduate from the program, participants must make progress towards these goals and no adults in the household can be receiving cash welfare. Once the program is completed, participants have unrestricted access to their FSS savings account and can use the funds however they wish. A qualitative study funded by HUD and the Oak Foundation found that participants reported using their FSS money to pay bills, fund savings accounts, buy a home, or cover unexpected expenses like the funeral of a family member.

Compass also advances policies that improve families’ financial security, such as removing asset caps on down payment assistance programs and establishing a permanent refundable child tax credit. The organization has sites in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Washington, D.C., supporting nearly 4,400 families, the majority of whom have been headed by Black or Latina women. It aims to enroll 220,000 households in their FSS program by the year 2030.

HOW EFFECTIVE IT IS

Compass Working Capital outperforms national benchmarks of FSS programs. The organization’s FSS programming enrollment rate of 14% is 3 to 5 times that of the national average and its graduation rate of 75% is nearly 3 times higher. More than 90% of graduates leave the Compass program with savings. An independent evaluation of Compass found that after an average period of 3.2 years, participants (564 households in total) reported a $6,032 average increase in annual household earnings, a 23% increase compared to matched peers. They also reported a $249 average decrease in annual household public assistance, a 39% decrease compared to matched peers. Every dollar spent to deliver the program generates more than $2 in savings and increased income for participants over a 3-year period.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Nearly 75% of the organization’s revenue is from philanthropic donations with the remaining 25% coming from contracted financial coaching services. Philanthropic donations support increasing enrollment, supporting other providers, and pursuing policies to make asset-building the norm in HUD-assisted housing. Providing general operating support allows the organization to direct funds where the money is most needed. For example, $500 supports training for financial coaches, $1,000 equips the Compass outreach team to enroll more families, and $1,500 provides a year of coaching for one family. Learn more at https://www.compassworkingcapital.org.

MORE WAYS TO HELP

Benefits Data Trust (BDT) connects people to financial benefits and services (e.g., SNAP benefits, Medicaid) in six states. They are also helping state and local governments understand and adapt to new federal laws and supporting community-based organizations facing increased demand and strain. HOPE provides financial services, economic development programs, and policy advocacy to increase the financial empowerment of underserved communities in the deep south.

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In the United States, 1 in 4 women and nearly 1 in 2 transgender people experience intimate partner violence (IPV) during their lifetime.\(^3\) The vast majority also experience economic abuse, such as having their money or property stolen, loans taken out in their names without their knowledge or permission, and being prevented from earning income.\(^4\) In one study, 73% of survivors reported staying with the perpetrator of abuse because they couldn’t afford to leave.\(^5\)

FreeFrom works to free survivors from intimate partner violence by giving them the resources to live safely and independently.

**WHAT IT DOES**

Founded in 2015 and headquartered in California, FreeFrom is led by a diverse team of survivors, working with a network of 30,000+ fellow survivors from all 50 states, DC, and Puerto Rico. FreeFrom helps survivors build financial independence through multiple programs:

- The Survivor Safety Fund is an open-application, unrestricted cash grant program that has distributed more than $1.9 million to 8,400 survivors to meet basic needs like food, rent, and utilities since its 2020 launch.
- The savings matching program supports survivors in building up to $500 in emergency savings over 6 months.
- Gifted by FreeFrom is a social enterprise run by survivors that sells gift boxes, apparel, and products to support survivors’ entrepreneurship, thereby helping them earn a living wage.
- The peer-to-peer financial support groups foster community amongst survivors while they build financial security together.
- A compensation tool equips survivors by walking them through their legal options for reimbursement and financial compensation.

FreeFrom advocates for changes to the systems that keep survivors financially dependent. For example, the Survivor Wealth Policy Group and Survivor Wealth Summit bring together survivors, service providers, asset-building experts, funders, and policymakers to build survivors’ financial independence. FreeFrom works with 550+ nonprofit, corporate, government, and philanthropic partners, including Congress, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), and banks such as Wells Fargo and Berkshire Bank, to implement their Survivor Safety Banking Guidelines. These guidelines create systems within banking institutions to identify and address economic abuse and support survivors in building financial security.

**HOW EFFECTIVE IT IS**

Participants in the most recent Survivor Safety Fund report needing an average of $1,567 right away to stay safe, but their average savings were only $10. By making $730 direct cash grants to survivors before they reach acute crisis, a national direct cash assistance program helps survivors get and stay safe sooner at 1/7th the cost of helping survivors in peak crisis and in need of medical care, housing, debt relief, and support through existing IPV response. For example, the state of North Carolina spent $5,543 for every IPV incident reported that year.\(^6\)

In 2021 the Biden administration used FreeFrom’s data in support of its pledge of $5 billion in direct cash assistance for survivors and signed into law the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Reauthorization Act of 2022, reauthorizing all VAWA grant programs until 2027. In the private and philanthropic sectors, FreeFrom is working with Berkshire Bank to pilot a survivor paid and protected leave policy for their 1,900 employees. Employers like ASOS, Facebook, Bumble, Blue Shield of California, and Kering Group have also adopted the policy.

**HOW YOU CAN HELP**

FreeFrom is almost exclusively funded by philanthropic donations. Providing general operating support allows the organization to direct funds where the money is most needed. For example, a gift of any amount can help a survivor of intimate partner violence build emergency savings and gain the independence to live safely. Learn more at [https://www.freefrom.org](https://www.freefrom.org).

**MORE WAYS TO HELP**

For more information on direct cash transfers, see our primer on guaranteed income. For an international organization working to provide direct cash transfers to fill basic needs, see [GiveDirectly](https://givedirectly.org). In the United States, [Springboard to Opportunities](https://springboardtoopportunities.org) introduced the Magnolia Mothers Trust, which provides $1,000 cash on a monthly basis, no strings attached, for 12 months straight to extremely low-income, Black mothers living in affordable housing in Jackson, MI. For more organizations providing direct cash transfers in this guide, see [LIFT](https://www.lift.org) and [Yamba Malawi](https://yambamalawi.org).
WHAT IT DOES
Leading Men Fellows are all young men of color between the ages of 18 and 24 years old who have graduated from high school but have no college degree. Fellows participate in a year-long, residency-style program that includes over 140 hours of coaching and training in evidence-based, early childhood literacy interventions as well as training in developing children's socio-emotional skills. Fellows work in one pre-kindergarten classroom in an underserved community for the entire school year, working 25-30 hours a week and earning $16.50 to $18.00 an hour depending on their state, as well as a $120 monthly commuter and communication stipend. Fellows also receive college credit from their service, participate in standardized weekly professional learning groups, and receive $2,500 upon completion of the program and college enrollment.

Upon completion of the program, fellows can also elect to come back and serve again and mentor new fellows.

The Literacy Lab launched the Leading Men Fellowship in 2016 with the support from the DC Public Education Fund and in partnership with DC Public Schools, drawing on the Literacy Lab's decades-plus experience providing literacy interventions to underserved schools.

The program has since expanded to Atlanta, Georgia; Baltimore, Maryland; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Richmond and Portsmouth, Virginia; Cincinnati, Ohio; and Phoenix-Mesa, Arizona. Thus far, over 180 Fellows have tutored over 3,000 pre-kindergarten students.

HOW EFFECTIVE IT IS
A 2015 quasi-experimental external evaluation of the program found that participating pre-kindergarten students were kindergarten-ready in five out of five areas of early literacy, while students in classrooms without fellows were kindergarten-ready in only one out five areas. The program was found to be effective across a range of settings and for all pre-K students regardless of race or ethnicity, gender, or English as a second language status.

Studies show that every $1 invested in quality early childhood literacy programs can yield returns between $4 and $16 through higher worker productivity, lower education costs later in life, reduced crime, and less reliance on government assistance.19

84% of Fellows planned to pursue a career in education at the end of the 2021-2022 school year. The program is also growing and diversifying the pool of teaching talent.

HOW YOU CAN HELP
About 55% of The Literacy Lab's funding comes from philanthropic sources, with the remaining coming from Americorps grants and local partners that contract the organization to provide tutoring services. Providing general operating support allows the organization to direct funds where the money is most needed. For example, $120 will cover a fellow's commuter and communication stipend for a month and $2,500 for a fellow's higher education award when they successfully complete their year of service. Learn more at https://www.literacylab.org.

MORE WAYS TO HELP
All Our Kin partners with family childcare providers to build high-quality, sustainable programs that offer accessible, reliable childcare for parents; strong developmental and education outcomes for young children; and better livelihoods for childcare providers. For more on improving early childhood outcomes, see our Early School Success Primer, Early Childhood Toolkit, and High Impact Philanthropy to Improve Teacher Quality donor investment guide.
WHAT IT DOES
Founded in 1999, LIFT has worked with more than 100,000 families in Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, and Washington, D.C. In the U.S., generational poverty is more persistent among people of color; 99% of LIFT families identify as people of color and average $14,064 in annual income and $16,000 in debt coming into the program.

LIFT’s one-on-one coaching program pairs low-income parents with professionally trained coaches who meet once a month over a 2-year period to create personalized, actionable plans around family goals. Goals can include increasing savings, reducing debt, and securing educational opportunities and jobs. For example, LIFT participant Jimmy, a father of three, worked with his coach to improve his credit score 20 points over the two years since he joined LIFT, and to earn an associate degree in accounting and an associate degree in business.

In 2018 LIFT’s Family Goal Fund began providing $150 every 3 months in unrestricted cash to its families for a total of $1,200 over two years (see Guaranteed Income: A Primer for Donors for more on how cash transfers work). As of April 2021, LIFT had provided nearly $582,000 in cash to over 980 families, in addition to emergency funds distributed for COVID-19. LIFT’s monitoring shows that parents spent 30% of these funds on food or groceries, 20% on gas or car repairs, and about 10% on expenses directly related to their financial and educational goals.

HOW EFFECTIVE IT IS
Surveys of program participants found that within three months of program implementation, 94% of LIFT parents reported improved finances, 65% reported reduced levels of stress, and 95% reported building trusting relationships with their coaches. On average, LIFT families that increase their income have an income increase of $21,325, increase their savings by $4,761 (the average savings at the start of the program is $1,910), and decrease their debt by $2,310.

In addition, LIFT has built the capacity of coaches within pediatric clinics to provide quality support during well child and prenatal visits. Initial results from a randomized control trial show families in coaching attended their appointments more often, saved more money, and had greater income gains. Moreover, there are earlier than expected indicators that the children in the coaching group have stronger social-emotional development compared to the control group.

WHY IT’S NEEDED
Poverty, like wealth, is passed down from generation to generation. LIFT seeks to break the cycle of poverty by investing in parents to help children achieve. Through monthly coaching and direct cash transfers, LIFT works with families to build financial strength, social connections, and overall well-being, moving individuals and families toward increased self-sufficiency and away from multi-generational poverty.

Through an internal evaluation of the Family Goal Fund, its direct cash transfer program that provides families with $150 every three months, 62% of parents who received the Fund were able to save consistently, compared to only 39% of parents who did not receive funds. Families who received direct cash transfers from the Fund had higher rates of retention, met more frequently with coaches, and built greater social connections.

HOW YOU CAN HELP
Roughly 90% of LIFT’s funding comes from philanthropic contributions, with the rest of its funding coming from government grants and earned revenue. Providing general operating support allows the organization to direct funds where the money is most needed. For example, $1,200 sustains cash transfers for a family across the full two years of the program. Learn more at https://www.whywelift.org/.

MORE WAYS TO HELP
Compass Working Capital works with participants in public housing to set financial and educational goals while providing them with the tools to grow their savings. For an organization outside of the U.S. working to reduce generational poverty, see our profile of Make A Difference. For more on supporting children through a two-generation lens, see our Two-Generation Lens guidance. For ways to address the structural inequality that reinforces intergenerational poverty, see CHIP’s Choosing Change.
WHAT IT DOES
Report for America holds two application processes: one for news organizations with urgent gaps in coverage and a plan to deploy Report for America corps members, and another for journalists who apply to serve these communities. The organization matches selected reporters with local newsrooms, kicking off the corps members’ 1-3 years of service as fulltime employees of these host organizations. Corps members are recruited to be more representative of the communities they serve than traditional newsrooms: more than 40% of corps members are journalists of color and more than half are women. In contrast, people of color make up 16.5% of newsroom employees, and women make up 39%, according to Report for America data.

In addition to selecting, matching, and training these reporters, Report for America works to transform how local news is financed. Report for America pays for half of a corps member’s salary and then supports the host news partner in securing local funders to contribute the other half. Report for America builds the fundraising capacity of partner newsrooms by offering training and toolkits to improve newsrooms’ strategies to secure local public support. It also establishes regional and local news endowments across the country so that editors and reporters can focus on civically important beats that have long been under-covered such as education, poverty, criminal justice, environment, and health.

HOW EFFECTIVE IT IS
Launched in 2017, Report for America has placed close to 600 reporters in 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, and Guam in the past 3 years. It aims to place 2,500 local reporters in 750+ existing newsrooms nationwide.

Report for America estimates that each corps member writes over 400 stories a year that would otherwise be untold. One half of all corps members are working in communities and states that they call home, which is critical to quality reporting and long-term sustainability as these reporters often have a deeper commitment to the communities they serve. Report for America also points to qualitative evidence of their work’s impact. For example, Corps member Will Wright’s reporting for the Lexington Herald Leader held local government accountable for a broken water system affecting tens of thousands of people.

HOW YOU CAN HELP
Report for America’s efforts are 100% philanthropically funded, though the newsrooms it supports rely on a combination of subscriptions, advertising, and local philanthropy. More than half of Report for America’s budget goes to local reporters as salaries, with the rest going to training and editorial support, recruitment of reporters, programs to build newsroom capacity to fundraise locally, and core operations functions. Every dollar Report for America raises is matched by a dollar from local news organizations and local funders. Learn more at https://www.reportforamerica.org/.

MORE WAYS TO HELP
For more on ways donors can support a healthy democracy, see our We the People guidance. To learn more from funders in the democracy and journalism space, see the Knight Foundation and the Lenfest Institute.

report for america
/// Eliminate local ‘news deserts’

Nearly 1,800 communities across the United States have no source of timely, relevant news about their local communities. Lack of local news coverage – often referred to as “news deserts” – has major impacts: greater political polarization, lower voter turnout, lower citizen engagement in government accountability, and less trust in news overall.

Report for America, an initiative of the nonprofit news organization The GroundTruth Project, eliminates news deserts by matching qualified journalists with local newsrooms and developing more sustainable financing of local news, with a goal of having a watchdog reporter for every county in America.

More than half of Report for America’s corps members are journalists of color and more than half are women. In contrast, people of color make up 16.5% of newsroom employees, and women make up 39%, according to Report for America data.

In addition to selecting, matching, and training these reporters, Report for America works to transform how local news is financed. Report for America pays for half of a corps member’s salary and then supports the host news partner in securing local funders to contribute the other half. Report for America builds the fundraising capacity of partner newsrooms by offering training and toolkits to improve newsrooms’ strategies to secure local public support. It also establishes regional and local news endowments across the country so that editors and reporters can focus on civically important beats that have long been under-covered such as education, poverty, criminal justice, environment, and health.

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Report for America is working to get an additional 200 reporters in the field by 2024. The organization will launch a new track for mid-career reporters to help keep seasoned veterans in the field reporting on public service beats in 2023.
WHAT IT DOES
CAMFED began in 1993 by offering scholarships to 32 girls in Zimbabwe and has grown into a pan-African movement. CAMFED provides loans, pathways for young women to transition out of and beyond school, and support to help alumnae expand business opportunities to create jobs and increase their own income.

CAMFED created SISTER (Social Interest System to Escalate Returns on girls’ education). CAMFED’s SISTER program enables young women to apply for an interest-free loan to pursue education or start a micro-enterprise. In lieu of financial interest, participants pay a kind of “social interest” by serving as Learner Guides who return to their former schools to provide emotional support, academic support, and reproductive health information to vulnerable girls.

Once girls graduate from SISTER, they join CAMFED Association (CAMA), the organization’s alumnae network. Each CAMA member financially supports on average three other girls in their community in secondary school, fueling a continuing cycle of opportunity.

CAMFED has supported more than 5.5 million children across Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe to overcome poverty-related obstacles to school attendance. In 2021 alone, CAMFED supported 866,951 girls in education and 31,814 young women in business.

HOW EFFECTIVE IT IS
Studies have found that CAMFED’s interventions, particularly those incorporating Learner Guides, have significant impact on girls’ learning outcomes and retention. In Tanzania and Zimbabwe from 2013 to 2017 the program improved literacy at more than double the rate than among similar girls in comparison schools, and in math, girls improved at nearly five times the rate. Girls also were 1/3 less likely to drop out of school, and 95% of the girls themselves said they felt more positive about their future and more able to shape their life goals.

A 2018 cost-effectiveness analysis of CAMFED’s program in Tanzania found the equivalent of an extra 1.7 years of schooling per $100 spent. For the most marginalized girls, the effect was even higher, with two additional years of schooling per $100 spent.

HOW YOU CAN HELP
The vast majority of CAMFED’s funding comes from philanthropic donations. Providing general operating support allows the organization to direct funds where the money is most needed. For example, $10 can buy a girl’s sanitary wear for a year in a context where a lack of sanitary products can push girls out of school; $40 can pay for a girl’s school uniform, a requirement in sub-Saharan Africa; and $150 can support a girl through secondary school for a whole year. Learn more at https://camfed.org.

MORE WAYS TO HELP
In northeastern Tanzania, Pastoral Women’s Council helps pastoralist and Masai women take control of their own lives and give other girls and women access to education, economic benefits, land rights, and legislative representation. In Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina, Pace Center for Girls emphasizes both academic and social services for middle- and high-school aged girls and young women. For more guidance on how donors can improve the lives of women and girls, see our XX Factor and Women’s Index guidance.
Founded in 2005, Consortium for DEWATS Dissemination India (CDD India) is a Bangalore-based nonprofit whose consortium of 18 partner organizations across India brings easy-to-manage sanitation services to India’s poorest, largely located in smaller towns and on the edges of its larger cities.

CDD India uses an intervention called the Decentralized Wastewater Treatment System (DEWATS), a community-level wastewater treatment technology that is up to 80% less expensive to operate than conventional technologies. Instead of electricity and chemicals used in conventional systems, DEWATS uses natural bacteria, plants, and gravity to filter and clean water. This innovation serves the sanitation needs of rural communities in developing countries that often do not have access to electricity.

CDD India taps into local knowledge by recruiting teams with first-hand experience with inadequate sanitation. It conducts technical, socioeconomic, ecological, and cultural analyses to determine how best to meet each community’s sanitation needs and trains local community members to operate, maintain, and fix their sanitation systems.

In addition to building and installing DEWATS fecal sludge treatment, CDD India also trains engineers, government officials, and key decisionmakers across the world in decentralized sanitation solutions. Since 2005, the organization has trained more than 3,500 professionals.

HOW YOU CAN HELP
About 66% of CDD India’s funding is from philanthropic sources, with the rest largely from government contracts. Philanthropic support allows CDD India to install new DEWATS, conduct research and development, and maintain existing DEWATS. Providing general operating support allows the organization to direct funds where the money is most needed. For example, $225 supports sewage treatment for one family served by a DEWATS, $5,000 pays for one year of maintenance costs for an existing system, and $100,000 pays for the installation of a new community DEWATS system to serve about 450 families.

Learn more at https://cddindia.org/.

MORE WAYS TO HELP
For another organization working to improve health in rural communities, see Project ECHO. For more CHIP guidance on health interventions and organizations working to lessen health disparities in underserved communities, see our Community-Based Approaches to Health guide.
**WHAT IT DOES**
MAD’s Age Transitional Model provides age-appropriate educational, social, and emotional support services for children living in Child Care Institutions (CCIs), the government administered shelter home system for abandoned and orphaned children:

- **Foundational Program** (ages of 10 to 13) aims to develop the functional life skills that are the bedrock for learning at later stages. As part of the Foundational Program, children attend “Dream Camps,” three-day retreats designed to encourage self-confidence and motivation and give children opportunities to play outside of the confines of CCIs.

- **Academic Support Program** (ages 14 to 16) bridges learning gaps and ensures students complete schooling and can pursue higher education.

- **Transition Readiness Program** (ages 16 to 18) equips youth with the skills to move out of CCIs and transition into work or pursue higher education.

- **Aftercare and Mentoring Program** (young adults in their 20s) supports academic, emotional, social, financial, and professional wellbeing to help them become productive members of their communities.

MAD has served more than 60 communities in 23 cities and more than 3,500 children.

**HOW EFFECTIVE IT IS**
In the 2019-2020 school year, 93% of participants passed the 10th grade standard exam compared to the 50% baseline (children who lived in CCIs but did not participate in program), and 93% of participants passed the 12th standard compared to the 25% baseline. Additionally, 72% of participants went on to pursue higher education in 2019-2020 as compared to the 15% baseline. While 92% of children in shelter homes drop out of school by the age of 18, more than 90% of MAD participants have continued into higher education after the age of 18. Program participants also self-reported improvements in their confidence, academic motivation, self-reliance, confidence, and their outlook towards the future.

These outcomes are associated with well-paid employment that is essential to escaping intergenerational poverty. In 2019-2020, MAD participants pursuing work in the formal sector, an indicator for longer term employment and stability, had 100% job placement, compared to the 60% baseline. They also make significantly more money than their peers: participants with jobs in the formal sector earn an average starting salary of $600 per month, compared to the baseline of their peers earning $200 per month at 35 years old.

**HOW YOU CAN HELP**
Over 95% of MAD’s revenue comes from philanthropic contributions, with the rest coming from corporate sponsorships. Providing general operating support allows the organization to direct funds where the money is most needed. For example, a donation of $24 supports a child in the MAD program for a month, and $284 supports a child for a year. A gift of $7,075 will provide support for a child from age 10 to 28. In the next two years, MAD’s goal is to double the number of children they serve. Learn more at [https://makeadiff.in](https://makeadiff.in).

**MORE WAYS TO HELP**
In the United States, Youth Guidance’s Becoming a Man (BAM) and Working on Womanhood (WOW) programs help at-risk youth make better decisions, supporting more than 13,000 youth in Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Kansas City, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC. For more on helping young people succeed, see our Pathways to Student Success guidance and our Reconnected: Opportunity Youth Toolkit.
WHAT IT DOES

Established in 2008, Pristine Seas spearheads a worldwide network of country and business leaders, NGOs, and local governments, all working towards its “30x30” goal: protecting 30% of the ocean by 2030, the minimum experts say is necessary to prevent an irreversible loss of marine biodiversity and allow fish stocks to recover and serve as a sustainable food source.34

Pristine Seas works towards that goal by establishing marine protected areas (MPAs), parts of the ocean that are legally protected from overfishing. Pristine Seas uses a combination of advocacy strategies to create MPAs. Pristine Seas documents marine biodiversity, supports preservation projects, and builds public awareness of overfishing and support for the protection of ecosystems.

HOW EFFECTIVE IT IS

MPAs have been shown to address three main problems brought about by the destruction of marine resources by:

1) Protecting biodiversity. Conservation of ocean area protects endangered species and reduces rates of habitat loss, the main threat to biodiversity. No-take marine reserves boast 21% greater species richness, and the fish biomass exceeds those of non-protected areas by 600%.35

2) Replenishing fisheries. MPAs serve as nurseries, replenishing fish and crustacean populations that disperse beyond the protected areas into fishing communities.

3) Reducing climate change. The banning of bottom trawling in MPAs sequesters carbon dioxide, helping to mitigate climate change and contributing to the protection of coastal communities from severe weather events related to global warming.

Pristine Seas has partnered with 122 different organizations and agencies across 23 countries and territories, contributing to the creation of 26 marine protected areas, covering 6.5 million square kilometers of ocean, more than twice the size of India. Pristine Seas has undertaken 35 expeditions in some of the least understood places around the world, publishing more than 140 scientific papers since 2008.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Funding for Pristine Seas comes from the National Geographic Society, individual donors, and private foundations. Providing general operating support allows the organization to direct funds where the money is most needed. For example, $100 could protect 25 square kilometers of ocean, $400,000 could fund a local leadership education program, and $1M could create an entire marine protected area. Learn more at https://www.nationalgeographic.org/projects/pristine-seas/.

MORE WAYS TO HELP

Representing all 574 U.S. federally recognized Tribes and Alaska Native Villages, the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) promotes the conservation and development of agricultural resources of American Indian Country, protecting soil, water, air, vegetation, and wildlife that affect the American Indian agricultural community. For more policy and practice on the themes of climate action, stewardship of nature, and human prosperity, see the Penn Environmental Innovation Initiative.
Half of the global population has no access to essential health services, and even fewer have access to specialist services for common, complex diseases such as HIV or tuberculosis. Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) improves access by connecting local healthcare providers with specialists outside their community who provide remote training, mentoring, and collaborative problem-solving.

Originally founded at the University of New Mexico to address a shortage of providers in rural areas of the state to treat hepatitis C, Project ECHO now supports a community of doctors, nurses, community health workers, and other healthcare personnel serving underserved communities in the U.S., India, and Africa.

WHAT IT DOES
Teams of experts participate in virtual case-based learning sessions, helping local healthcare providers build the necessary skills to treat patients in their communities. But knowledge doesn’t flow only in one direction. Experts refine their knowledge by learning what’s required to adapt their expertise to specific local experiences and cultural contexts.

For example, in Punjab, India, the state government used Project ECHO to train local providers to provide free hepatitis C treatment to all residents. In the two years since Punjab began using the model, the number of hepatitis C patients completing treatment went from 1,500 to 36,000, with a 91.6% cure rate. Because of the program’s success, India’s national government now uses ECHO to implement many national programs, including its National Viral Hepatitis Programme and multidrug-resistant tuberculosis program.

Project ECHO has trained more than 85,000 healthcare workers, building local workforce capacity in over 70 topics and conditions. It currently operates in 38 countries. Since India and Africa have a disproportionate share of the global burden of disease, these regions are priorities for the organization. Project ECHO has established a regional team in Delhi and plans to establish regional offices in Bangalore, Mumbai, Kolkata, South Africa, and Cote d’Ivoire in coming years.

HOW EFFECTIVE IT IS
In one of the earliest evaluations of Project ECHO’s model in 2011, researchers found that rural health providers who participated in the first hepatitis C ECHO program achieved the same patient cure rates as highly trained specialists at the leading regional academic medical center, with fewer complications. Since that assessment, more than 500 peer-reviewed publications found that the ECHO model improves provider satisfaction and self-efficacy, builds communities of practice, increases patient access to and quality of healthcare, and reduces patient mortality.

With its planned expansion, ECHO will have 750 partner hubs in India and 250 in Africa. The organization estimates that this expansion will allow them to reach 1 million new healthcare providers, each with the potential to provide better care for hundreds of patients.

HOW YOU CAN HELP
Project ECHO’s partners cover 100% of their own operating costs, which typically range from $30,000 to $50,000 a year in India and Africa. Philanthropic donations of any amount help cover the cost of training new partners, technical support via Project ECHO’s online Partner Portal, which connects healthcare providers across the world, and regional training centers that provide in-person training supporting Project ECHO’s partner development network. Future donations support further development in India and scaling in Africa as well as the development of ECHO Digital, an open-source digital platform for partner training, support, outcomes tracking, and resource-sharing. Learn more at https://hsc.unm.edu/echo/.

MORE WAYS TO HELP
For another organization working to improve health in remote areas, see CDD Society. For more guidance on health interventions and organizations working to lessen health disparities in underserved communities, see our Community-Based Approaches to Health guide.
Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world, where 41% of children under 5 are stunted and 59% are anemic. Because living in extreme poverty can cause irreversible damage to children’s health and life prospects, Yamba Malawi supports children under the age of five by providing direct cash transfers to their families, coaching to their caregivers, and building the kind of broader community supports that allows these children to thrive.

WHAT IT DOES
Though Yamba Malawi has been on the ground in Malawi for 15 years (previously under the name “Goods for Good”), in 2017, the organization changed its name to Yamba Malawi and shifted its focus to reducing extreme childhood poverty. It does this in two ways.

- At the household level, Yamba Malawi provides phased, intensive training and coaching to caregivers on supporting childhood wellbeing, sustainable business, and financial inclusion. The organization also provides unrestricted direct cash transfers of $20 a month to caregivers for the first year of the program. Yamba Malawi has found that caregivers use these payments to address immediate needs like food and medical bills. Once participants have developed an approved business plan, they also receive a one-time $300 transfer of startup capital to launch sustainable microbusinesses that generate ongoing profits for their families.

- At the community level, the organization helps community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and Community-Based Childcare Centers (CBCCs), or preschools, to train and retain qualified caregivers and strengthen local governance committees to promote children’s rights and services.

Yamba Malawi currently serves approximately 55,000 children.

HOW EFFECTIVE IT IS
Recent program data on household participants show improvements in children’s nutrition, school attendance, caregiver income, and household financial stability. The number of children in participating households eating three or more meals per day increased from 18% of children before the program to 90% of children once in the program. There was also a 71% increase in regular school attendance for children under 10 years old and a 92% increase in attendance for children over 10 years old. Average caregiver income increased by 259%, from an average pre-program income of $73 to an average income of $262, with an average of 85% going directly to children’s needs. The number of households with savings also increased from 2% of households to 22% through the program.

The organization has plans to reach an additional 100,000 next year and ultimately scale nationwide in Malawi.

HOW YOU CAN HELP
Yamba Malawi receives 100% of its funding from philanthropic sources. Providing general operating support allows the organization to direct funds where the money is most needed. For example, $18 can provide access to basic needs like food and clothing; $125 can foster best practices around childcare, financial management, and business skills; $500 can help launch sustainable businesses like farms, grocery stores, and tea shops. Learn more at https://www.yambamalawi.org.

MORE WAYS TO HELP
In the U.S., LIFT provides coaching and direct cash transfers to low-income families. For another organization providing unrestricted cash transfers, see Give Directly. To learn more about the benefits of unrestricted cash transfer programs, see our Guaranteed Income Primer. For more research on direct cash transfers and guaranteed income, see the Center for Guaranteed Income Research at the University Pennsylvania.
All donors have a “philanthropic portfolio” that includes gifts that aren’t necessarily aimed at maximizing social impact. This includes impromptu donations to support our friends’ interests, thank you gifts to our alma mater or hospital, or contributions to our church or temple. Increasingly, donors are including social impact in their portfolios, asking, “How can my money do more good?” Here are tips to help you answer that question well:

**FOCUS ON THE GOAL**
As the saying goes, “if you don’t know where you’re going, any road will get you there.” High impact philanthropy starts by asking, “What is the philanthropic goal of this donation?” That goal could be feeding the hungry, ensuring all kids learn, reducing poverty, improving the lives of women and girls, or any number of other worthy causes. Personal experiences often lead donors to commit to a particular community or a particular cause. It is fine to let the heart choose the goal. Once you are clear about the goal, your head can help you find the programs and organizations that are well-positioned to reach that goal.

**A LITTLE RESEARCH GOES A LONG WAY**
Unlike a decade ago, donors no longer need to spend days doing their own due diligence or trying to interpret tax returns in the hope of identifying a nonprofit worthy of their gift. Organizations like ours now exist to do the legwork so that individual donors can get to impact faster and with more confidence. The high impact opportunities profiled in this guide—and many more on our website—offer specific options that our team has analyzed for program efficacy and cost-effectiveness. Within each profile, we offer tips for getting involved in an issue, including what to look for in related nonprofits. Still can’t find what you’re looking for? You’ll find a wealth of free information on our website.

**THINK “BANG FOR BUCK”**
Not even the Gates Foundation has enough money to solve the problems it seeks to address. To do more good, every donor needs to ask, “How can my money go the farthest?” Comparing nonprofit organizations can help answer that question, but don’t just look at their expenses. That’s literally only half the equation. Instead, compare what the organization spends overall to what it achieves. For example, $1 donation can translate to enough food for 15 meals at a global food bank. At a harm-reduction center, $4 buys food for a day and $38 covers a dose of life-saving naloxone. $100 supports an individual student in a civics education program. $500 can connect five new families to home visit services for new mothers and infants. $1000 can provide transportation and utility payments to help support an individual who was previously homeless.

Another way to think of “bang for buck” is to compare costs with societal benefits: $30 in societal benefits for every $1 spent on effective crime-reduction programs. That’s “bang for buck” thinking where the “buck” is the money a nonprofit has to spend and the “bang” is what it’s able to achieve with that money.

By focusing on the goal, doing a little research, and thinking “bang for buck,” donors can make sure their annual giving reflects more than generosity and good intentions. It allows for year-round social impact.
It’s your right as a funder to conduct some due diligence — and even have some healthy skepticism—before committing your funds to a particular nonprofit organization or response fund. Just because someone asks you to support a worthy cause doesn’t mean you can’t take time to consider the nonprofit seeking your donation. The first step on the way to higher impact is to avoid fraud. Here are some things you can do to avoid charitable fraud:

A SIMPLE INTERNET SEARCH
If a nonprofit, its staff, or its board has been the subject of negative press or an official investigation, that is a clear red flag to proceed with caution before committing funds. A simple internet search can identify red flags. In addition, nonprofits such as Candid, Charity Navigator, and BBB Wise Giving Alliance help funders understand the work of specific nonprofits by providing free financial and programmatic information.

REMEMBER THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A WORTHY CAUSE AND A WORTHY CHARITY
There are many good and worthy causes, but that doesn’t mean that every charity addressing that cause is just as good. It’s a distinction that can be hard to remember when you feel strongly about a cause. It’s also why one fraudulent cancer charity successfully raised so much money: Donors who had friends or family with cancer found it hard to say “no.” They may have avoided the fraudulent charity altogether if donors had done a simple internet search and asked their friends and family touched by cancer: “Which nonprofits have really helped you?”

GET INVOLVED DIRECTLY WITH AN ORGANIZATION
By volunteering your time or speaking with staff or the people who benefit directly from the organization, you can get a firsthand look at how a nonprofit uses philanthropic funds and other resources to benefit clients. COVID-19 has changed the shape of volunteering but not the need. As more organizations and services have developed online components, opportunities to volunteer have also changed, through remote work like staffing text-based response lines, conducting online advocacy, and lending professional skills, such as marketing, technology, or accounting. Contact organizations like VolunteerMatch for opportunities for volunteers to help remotely or on-site.

Because COVID-19 puts older and immunocompromised people at especially high risk, there has also been a surge of healthy volunteers creating local mutual aid efforts. Mutual aid organizations support local communities outside of licensed organizations and the government, and create networks of volunteers and recipients. Mutualaidhub.org lists hundreds of mutual aid and community organizations in the U.S and Canada.
We would like to thank the following individuals who shared their expertise, offered insights, connected us to others, or provided feedback on this project:

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Harshvardan, CDD India
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Aditi Pandey, CDD India
Sumedha Pandit, Make A Difference
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Dr. Ioana Marinescu, Associate Professor, School of Social Policy & Practice
Tunisia Meek, Lipman Family Prize, The Wharton School
Bart Miltenberger, School of Social Policy & Practice
Euria Min, Lipman Family Prize, The Wharton School
Juliana Rosati, School of Social Policy & Practice
Kristina Garcia Wade, University Communications
Sarah Wasch, The Field Center for Children’s Policy, Practice & Research.
endnotes


9. Ibid.


## nonprofits in this guide

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<td>Fidelity Charitable School of Social Policy &amp; Practice</td>
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<td>GreenLight Fund</td>
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<td>Lipman Family Prize</td>
<td><a href="https://lipmanfamilyprize.wharton.upenn.edu">https://lipmanfamilyprize.wharton.upenn.edu</a></td>
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<td>Lever for Change</td>
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<td>John T. and Catherine D MacArthur Foundation</td>
<td><a href="https://www.macfound.org">https://www.macfound.org</a></td>
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<td>pg 6</td>
<td>Campaign for Grade Level Reading</td>
<td><a href="https://gradelevelreading.net">https://gradelevelreading.net</a></td>
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<td>Asset Funders Network</td>
<td><a href="https://assetfunders.org">https://assetfunders.org</a></td>
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<td>Economic Security Project</td>
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<td>Springboard to Opportunities</td>
<td><a href="https://springboardto.org">https://springboardto.org</a></td>
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<td>NeedsList</td>
<td><a href="https://needslist.co/">https://needslist.co/</a></td>
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<td>People in Need Ukraine</td>
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<td>Razom for Ukraine</td>
<td><a href="https://www.razomforukraine.org">https://www.razomforukraine.org</a></td>
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<td>CARE</td>
<td><a href="https://www.care.org">https://www.care.org</a></td>
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<td>International Medical Corps (IMC)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.internationalmedicalcorps.org">https://www.internationalmedicalcorps.org</a></td>
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<td><a href="https://www.disasterphilanthropy.org">https://www.disasterphilanthropy.org</a></td>
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<td>All Our Kin</td>
<td><a href="https://www.allourkin.org">https://www.allourkin.org</a></td>
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<td>Center for Guaranteed Income Research</td>
<td><a href="https://www.penncgir.org">https://www.penncgir.org</a></td>
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<td>Compass Working Capital</td>
<td><a href="https://www.compassworkingcapital.org">https://www.compassworkingcapital.org</a></td>
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<td>Give Directly</td>
<td><a href="https://www.givedirectly.org">https://www.givedirectly.org</a></td>
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<td><a href="https://theliteracylab.org/leading-men/">https://theliteracylab.org/leading-men/</a></td>
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<td>Pastoral Women’s Council</td>
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<td>Pace Center for Girls</td>
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<td>Youth Guidance</td>
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<td>National Geographic Pristine Seas</td>
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<td>Intertribal Agriculture Council</td>
<td><a href="https://www.indianag.org">https://www.indianag.org</a></td>
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<td>Penn Environmental Innovations Initiative</td>
<td><a href="https://environment.upenn.edu">https://environment.upenn.edu</a></td>
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<td>BBB Wise Giving Alliance</td>
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<td>VolunteerMatch</td>
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<td>Mutual Aid Hub</td>
<td><a href="https://www.mutualaidhub.org">https://www.mutualaidhub.org</a></td>
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## more resources for identifying nonprofits to support

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<tr>
<td><strong>Nonprofits Due Diligence</strong></td>
<td><strong>Candid (Guidestar)</strong></td>
<td>World’s largest source of information on nonprofits</td>
<td><a href="http://www.guidestar.org/">http://www.guidestar.org/</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Charity Navigator</strong></td>
<td>Rates nonprofits on financial health, accountability, and transparency</td>
<td><a href="https://www.charitynavigator.org/">https://www.charitynavigator.org/</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>GreatNonprofits</strong></td>
<td>Community-sourced stories about nonprofits, written by donors, volunteers, and beneficiaries</td>
<td><a href="http://www.greatnonprofits.org">http://www.greatnonprofits.org</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>ImpactMatters (a service of Charity Navigator)</strong></td>
<td>Provides “audits” of nonprofits that have proven evidence of impact</td>
<td><a href="http://www.impactmatters.org/">http://www.impactmatters.org/</a></td>
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<td><strong>GiveWell</strong></td>
<td>Rates nonprofits based on empirical data, cost-effectiveness, and capacity for increased funding</td>
<td><a href="https://www.givewell.org/">https://www.givewell.org/</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>The Life You Can Save</strong></td>
<td>Nonprofits that aid the global poor vetted for record of effectiveness</td>
<td><a href="https://www.thelifeyoucansave.org/">https://www.thelifeyoucansave.org/</a></td>
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<td><strong>Research on Cause Areas and Programs</strong></td>
<td><strong>Innovations for Poverty Action</strong></td>
<td>Research on over 300 potential solutions</td>
<td><a href="https://www.poverty-action.org/">https://www.poverty-action.org/</a></td>
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<td><strong>Grantmakers in Health</strong></td>
<td>Helps grantmakers improve the nation’s health by strengthening grantmakers’ knowledge, skills, effectiveness, and collaboration</td>
<td><a href="https://www.gih.org/">https://www.gih.org/</a></td>
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<td><strong>The Jameel Poverty Action Lab</strong></td>
<td>Database of over 850 publicly available randomized evaluations of programs found to be effective</td>
<td><a href="https://www.povertyactionlab.org/">https://www.povertyactionlab.org/</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Giving Compass</strong></td>
<td>Curates content from many expert sources, including the Center for High Impact Philanthropy with the goal of sharing knowledge in order to create social change</td>
<td><a href="https://givingcompass.org/">https://givingcompass.org/</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Root Cause Social Impact Research (SIR)</strong></td>
<td>Reports on cause areas and topics for creating social change</td>
<td><a href="http://www.rootcause.org/">http://www.rootcause.org/</a></td>
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<td><strong>IssueLab (a service of Candid)</strong></td>
<td>Organizes research from social sector organizations on 30+ cause areas</td>
<td><a href="https://www.issuelab.org/">https://www.issuelab.org/</a></td>
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<td><strong>Disaster Recovery</strong></td>
<td><strong>Center for Disaster Recovery</strong></td>
<td>National resource dedicated to helping donors make more intentional disaster-related giving decisions</td>
<td><a href="https://disasterphilanthropy.org/">https://disasterphilanthropy.org/</a></td>
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<td><strong>International Federation of the Red Cross</strong></td>
<td>World’s largest humanitarian network that acts before, during, and after disasters and health emergencies</td>
<td><a href="https://www.ifrc.org/">https://www.ifrc.org/</a></td>
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<td><strong>The Global Disaster and Coordination System</strong></td>
<td>Cooperation framework between the United Nations, the European Commission and disaster managers worldwide to improve alerts, information exchange, and coordination in the first phase after major sudden-onset disasters</td>
<td><a href="http://www.gdacs.org/">http://www.gdacs.org/</a></td>
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<td><strong>Disaster Information Management Research Center</strong></td>
<td>Quality health information resources and informatics research for disaster and public health emergency preparedness, response, and recovery</td>
<td><a href="https://disaster.nlm.nih.gov/">https://disaster.nlm.nih.gov/</a></td>
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<td><strong>MSF/Doctors Without Borders</strong></td>
<td>Well-regarded international nonprofit and often among the first on the scene of multiple international disasters</td>
<td><a href="https://doctorswithoutborders.org/">https://doctorswithoutborders.org/</a></td>
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<td><strong>United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction</strong></td>
<td>International coordinating body promoting disaster preparedness and mitigation strategies among members</td>
<td><a href="https://www.unisdr.org/">https://www.unisdr.org/</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Disaster Accountability Project</strong></td>
<td>Nonprofit organization that provides long-term independent oversight of disaster management systems</td>
<td><a href="https://disasteraccountability.org/">https://disasteraccountability.org/</a></td>
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</table>
Fidelity Charitable is an independent public charity that has helped donors support more than 357,000 nonprofit organizations with $61 billion in grants. Established in 1991, Fidelity Charitable launched the first national donor-advised fund program. The mission of the organization is to grow the American tradition of philanthropy by providing programs that make charitable giving accessible, simple, and effective.

The content really challenged my assumptions about how higher social impact can be achieved and helped me realize what questions I should be asking grantees, as well as myself.

— 2022 Academy alumnus

Our flagship funder education program is designed for individual donors, professional grantmakers, and other philanthropic leaders seeking greater impact. Participants learn the principles of high impact philanthropy and how to apply them in real-world situations. Along with the program’s esteemed faculty, peer participants bring a wealth of experience and a valuable community of practice for long after the program ends. Accepting applications for our Spring 2023 cohort, March 6-10, 13-17, 2023, and upcoming Fall 2023 cohort.

Learn more https://www.impact.upenn.edu/high-impact-philanthropy-academy/