

# Global Giving

# MATTERS

Issue 39  
Fall 2009

## In This Issue

This issue's feature story comes from Kim Samuel-Johnson, a founding member of the Global Philanthropists Circle and Synergos board member. In it, she examines the issue of isolation and how stronger connections between philanthropists and the groups they provide resources to may result in better outcomes for both.

*Global Giving Matters* presents best practices and innovations in philanthropy and social investment around the world.

It is an initiative of The Synergos Institute's Global Philanthropists Circle under the direction of Adele S. Simmons, President of the Global Philanthropy Partnership, and Beth Cohen, Senior Director, Global Philanthropists Circle.

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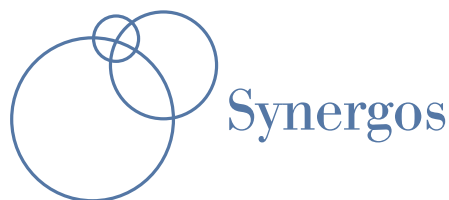
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ISSN 2157-264X

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## Introduction

In a departure from our past features, we are flipping the “who-what-why” of an exemplary philanthropic initiative and instead exploring the personal back-story of a philanthropist’s inner journey and relationship with her giving. This piece is written by Kim Samuel-Johnson, a founding member of the Global Philanthropists Circle and board member of The Synergos Institute.

Kim’s focus on the issue of isolation in her philanthropy has resulted in her support of initiatives with highly marginalized groups, from orphans and vulnerable children in Southern Africa to children with disabilities across the globe. Kim’s commitment to those who suffer from social isolation has been an important force in her giving and has also allowed her to explore and better understand the isolation that she has sometimes experienced, and learned to address, as a donor and philanthropist.

We are grateful to Kim for sharing the questions that she has grappled with and found meaning in over time. I hope that her reflections help to inspire and inform the questions that our readers face on their own journeys of giving. From my own conversations with diverse philanthropists from around the globe, I sense that Kim’s piece will resonate as they examine and reaffirm their roles as donors and social-change agents.

We look forward to your reactions and reflections on this piece and also invite you to share your own experiences with us.

Sincerely,

Beth Cohen, Senior Director, Global Philanthropists

## Isolation, Generosity, Giving, and Receiving

*By Kim Samuel-Johnson*

For some time, I have been concerned with the problem of “isolation” and the distress and damage it can cause to those who suffer from it. For me, isolation is the feeling of sitting alone at the bottom of the well. However, this feeling is not limited to those who are physically alone. Indeed, I have found it is often most acute when it is felt in the presence of others.

What’s more, I’ve noticed that isolation, or at least a feeling of bleak separation, can occur in the very act of philanthropy; that sometimes the manner in which the gift is made diminishes and isolates both the person who is seen as giving and the person who is seen as receiving. I worry about this and I know from talking with other members of the **Global Philanthropists Circle** that they worry about this, too.

I have been thinking about this quite a lot lately, about how my personal passion to tackle isolation – by identifying it, by measuring it, and especially by finding ways to address and eliminate it – plays a role in my philanthropic activities. I know this is what causes certain projects to resonate with me more than others. I suspect this is true because I’ve come to understand what a powerful factor isolation can be in snuffing out the prospects for individuals, groups, and communities to benefit from support efforts designed to improve their health and well-being.

This understanding is the thread that runs through the work that most engages me as a philanthropist.

One example is the development of a **Family Support Network** for individuals with intellectual disabilities along with **Special Olympics International**. A second project is using community-based, holistic interventions to overcome the isolation and exclusion of orphans and vulnerable children. This effort is underway in Southern Africa with the **Nelson Mandela Children's Fund** (South Africa), the **Foundation for Community Development** (Mozambique), and **Synergos** as partners.

A third initiative in which I am engaged is the **Quincy Jones Musiq Consortium**, created to inspire and bring together high-need public school students through music education projects and to create an innovative curriculum that explores, celebrates, and preserves the history of American popular music. Finally, I have been equally excited about a chance to work with the **Prince's School of Traditional Arts** in the United Kingdom that uses traditional arts to provide living skills and to connect people with their inner selves, their history, and their culture.

The process of engaging in each one of these initiatives represents an opportunity to be part of a particular venture in which a sense of isolation or separation is nowhere to be seen. Yet, in each case, I think what makes these interventions so promising is that they are not only meeting needs that are visible and important, but also doing this in a way that weaves participants together and makes them part of the cloth of a larger community.

There's something else worth mentioning about these four seemingly disparate philanthropic engagements: it's a spirit of acceptance and inclusion, for all the partners and participants, including me.

In these experiences, there is a spirit of mutual generosity. In each case, there seems to be a strong sense of unity, so much so that those involved in the wider community of these efforts have clearly been both giving and receiving.

For me, the decision to get involved began with a passion that resonated from deep inside to find a cure to what I consider to be the preventable disease of isolation, to make sure at the very least, that there can be someone sitting beside whoever is at the bottom of the well, so that person or group of people no longer has to feel like they are sitting all alone.

In my journey as a philanthropist, I've also come to recognize the limits of what I can do – isolated or alone – in trying to bring about change in policy and practice. I've also been able to see what's possible when I find ways to engage with fantastic organizations with the capacity, desire, integrity, established relationships, and reputations of their own.

What I've seen is that my partners, with their networks of collaborators in local communities, provide the vitality, work, and effort which dramatically increase the chances of achieving something worthwhile.

These groups have the ability to develop and implement specific initiatives and partnerships, build local capacity, and ensure local ownership in ways I could never do on my own.

So, far from feeling separated out as “the person with the money,” or the outsider in some other way, I feel the boundaries between the “me” and the “they” disappear. I feel welcome as part of, if you like, the family. This means a lot to me.

And yet – and this is important – there has to be a clarity and an honesty about what it is that each of us can bring. In my case, I try to bring a lot of passion and very high standards, two qualities I consider essential for philanthropy, because we all need to engage both the heart and the mind. I've also brought monetary resources, which are generally not unimportant.

In the case of others, though, they have brought resources of comparable or greater value, including knowledge of the community, management or other skills, creativity, hard-won knowledge, or a commitment to see the project through. In a way, mine may have been the easiest contribution to secure!

But the way in which I am brought into these circles to play my part was, from the outset, undertaken with discernment and sensibility. When the moment came for the transfer of funds, instead of feeling that sense of emptiness, which I know others have also sometimes felt, I felt more of a sense of fulfillment – not that something has ended but that something is beginning.

I finally understand that if the giving and receiving is done with the right spirit, from all corners, bearing in mind that we are all giving and receiving simultaneously, then money is a facilitator, not my “gift” per se but instead an expression of my commitment, and an important one at that.

So, it occurs to me I might ask myself the question as I look to future philanthropic endeavors: Whose need is being met by the act of philanthropy? And what does this mean?

Of course there is the need of the one who receives the funding – and this may be urgent. But then there is also the need of the one who gives and who does not want to be seen simply as providing the money but as someone who can play a part, together with others, in what we might call “Good Work” and who, therefore, is obliged to others for the opportunity to do so.

In doing this work, it is not unusual for the benefactor to be honored; but those who receive the funds, who contribute other forms of wealth and who have the responsibility of using them well, should be honored, too. If anything, the greater recognition should always be given to those who work so hard to make a project good. In the best of circumstances, this involves an engaged philanthropist as well as other stakeholders.

In my experience, the projects with the greatest impact and sustainability have as participants all the possible constituents, in terms of the make-up of its governance and operational processes, to ensure that all voices are represented and being heard.

I believe there is something else going on here as well, in terms of giving and receiving and the presence or lack of balance.

We can see all around us – in our contemporary financial, social, and environmental crises – where celebrity, wealth, and power are valued more than contributions that elevate the human spirit and promote the common good.

In such a world, it is hardly surprising to find “isolation.” It is endemic and potentially very damaging. If we are to find our way through what will, without question, be some very difficult times, we need new and more integrated ways of being and doing – not least in the realm of philanthropy.

In a fractured world, which endangers both our own human communities and Nature as a whole, we therefore have an important responsibility not only to think about what we give but about how we give.

Can we, then, in our giving, help not only to support particular projects but also to play our part in restoring and honoring those qualities of generosity, wholeness, and a reverence for others and for Nature without which so much is in danger?

At the conclusion of his recently published book, *The Idea of Justice*, Nobel Prize-winning economist **Amartya Sen** speaks to the role of overcoming isolation in terms of the pursuit of justice:

When Hobbes referred to the dire state of human beings in having “nasty, brutish and short” lives, he also pointed, in the same sentence, to the disturbing adversity of being “solitary.” Escape from isolation may not only be important for the quality of human life, it can also contribute powerfully to understanding and responding to the other deprivations from which human beings suffer. There is surely a basis strength here which is complementary to the engagement in which theories of justice are involved.

I think the same can be said of the importance of overcoming isolation through acts of generosity. For when we truly give, wherever we come from, nobody feels alone or isolated.

If the giving and receiving is shared and if everyone is able to come to the table, roll up his or her sleeves, and work together with an understanding of the interests, experience, passion, and goals that brought us together, then each of our needs will have already been factored into the initiative.

What is left then is simply a group of people creating something new together, in harmony, where no one at the table and from there outwards to the various partners or constituents feels like they are ever alone. I interpret this kind of collaboration as stemming from a wholesome and generous spirit of giving and receiving, a place of being included.

I also think that we as philanthropists have the capacity to increase the vision and scope of what we do by first making sure to the greatest extent possible that we come to this act from a place of generosity within ourselves, and from there help to facilitate and create something remarkable in partnership with others.

When this happens, the space at the bottom of the well is empty and the life available to all of us is full.

## Global Giving Roundup

*Overviews of news and best practices around the world and links to learn more about them*

### Pakistani companies step up CSR efforts

The launch of the *Corporate Social Responsibility Pakistan Yearbook 2009* brought together more than 150 corporate executives, diplomats, government officials, and members of civil society and the media to discuss existing corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts and encourage new ones. The *Yearbook*, published by **Capital Business**, provides general information about CSR as well as examples of good practices among Pakistani companies. “About 40% of the corporate companies in Pakistan think CSR means merely paying taxes... Only 5% clearly understand that CSR means directly implementing social development activities and projects,” said **Ammanullah Khan**, senior program officer at the Islamabad-based **Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy** ([www.pcp.org.pk](http://www.pcp.org.pk)). Other corporations face challenges in implementing social responsibility projects in the absence of government support. Khan believes that partnerships

between the government and nonprofit organizations could play a pivotal role in expediting community-development programs. **Naveed Khwaja**, COO of English Biscuits Manufacturers, said, “As a group, we can work with the government on putting in place a regulatory framework that could encourage, promote and measure the tangible benefits of CSR.” Capital Business provides CSR consulting and other services to corporations and development agencies. (*DAWN News*, August 8, 2009)

### Wealthy Muslims’ zakat to charity fund

The **World Zakat Fund**, an initiative of the **Malaysian government**, is set to launch in 2010 and expects to raise approximately \$10 billion, particularly from 400 billionaires in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as 40,000 other high-net-worth individuals in the region. The money will come from *zakat*, 2.5% of their savings which Muslims (only those who are able to save) are expected to set aside for charity donations, although in some Muslim countries, the money is automatically extracted from savings accounts. Instead of being immediately donated to poverty relief, sixty-five percent of the money will be invested in *sharia*-compliant micro-equity and micro-finance, as well as social projects. Some Islamic scholars criticize this strategy, and say that *zakat* should not be invested: “The priority is to give, not grow *zakat*,” said **Mohamad Akram Laldin**, a *sharia* scholar and an advisor to HSBC. (Reuters, September 29, 2009)

### Vehbi Koç Foundation recognized in its 40th year with Carnegie Medal

**Rahmi Koç**, the son of **Vehbi Koç**, accepted the **Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy** on behalf of his family, at an awards ceremony held in New York. Vehbi Koç’s eponymous foundation was the first philanthropic foundation in Turkey, and supports education, health, and culture. Koç and his sister, **Semahat Arsel**, the foundation’s administrator, both spoke of their father in acceptance of the award. Arsel explained her father’s struggle to bring philanthropic ideas to Turkey: “When he created [the foundation] 40 years ago, we didn’t have laws to provide the basis for philanthropy, so he had to fight to institute such laws.” Koç recalled his father’s and Carnegie’s lasting influence on the foundation: “Andrew Carnegie’s words on how it’s more difficult to spend money wisely than to earn it were frequently repeated by our father, and they became our guide in philanthropy. As his children, we continued his legacy and his philosophy.” (*Today’s Zaman*, October 17, 2009; onPhilanthropy.com, October 23, 2009)

### Mexican Billionaire joins with Grameen for micro-lending in Mexico

**Carlos Slim**, through his **Carlos Slim Foundation**, will contribute \$45 million to a micro-lending program called **Grameen Carso**, launched with **Muhammad Yunus**, founder of **Grameen Bank**. The program will begin lending to women in Oaxaca, one of Mexico’s poorest states. Instead of offering a guarantee for the loan, applicants will submit a proposal to receive a twelve-month loan averaging \$267. “Women always pay back the loans and the money they receive is put toward the well-being of their families,” said a Slim Foundation spokesperson. The program will eventually expand to other Mexican states. (Reuters, September 23, 2009)

### Alibaba CEO Jack Ma to launch Grameen China microfinance bank

“If you have money, but have not turned this money into an experience to elevate your own or other people’s level of happiness, then you may very well only possess a lot of symbols and a mountain of very colorful pieces of paper.” So wrote **Jack Ma** in a letter to his employees at the Alibaba Group. He has now contributed \$5 million to **Grameen China**, a new initiative he has founded with **Muhammad Yunus**, founder of **Grameen Bank**. Grameen China will make

loans to small farmers and businesspeople in the poorest regions of that country. Ma and Yunus hope to attract other investors and corporate sponsors. (*New York Times*, September 24 2009)

### Jet Li brings philanthropy to China's social-networking users

**Jet Li** is promoting his **One Foundation** on kaixin001.com, China's largest social-networking site with forty million users. Li and **Cheng Binghao**, CEO and founder of kaixini001.com, hope that the partnership will give Chinese "netizens," and especially young people, an easy way to participate in charity projects. Kaixin001.com users will be able to register as "fans" of One Foundation to receive news updates and interact with other fans about charity projects. Jet Li is a world-famous martial artist and movie star; his One Foundation, in collaboration with the **Red Cross Society of China**, focuses on education, health, environment, and poverty issues. The foundation is rooted in the notion that "one person plus one dollar/yuan plus one month equals one big family." (*China Daily*, Aug 27, 2009)

### Hong Kong philanthropist Yu Pang-lin donates to typhoon relief

Hong Kong-based philanthropist **Yu Pang-lin** recently donated HK\$5 million (US\$645,150) to the **Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission** to provide aid to families in Taiwan affected by typhoon Morakot. With his third donation to Taiwan, Yu ranks high on China's list of philanthropists. The founder of Hong Kong's **Yu Charitable Foundation** and the **Shenzhen Yu Panglin Social Welfare Association**, his donations, mostly aimed at health and education, and totalled US\$420 million in 2008. In 2004, Yu began the **Panglin Brightness Action** campaign to offer operations free of charge for almost 150,000 cataract sufferers in poor areas over a five-year period. Yu hopes his consistent dedication to philanthropy "will encourage more participation from others." (*Taiwan News*, August 15, 2009)

### California roaster names coffee blend after Zimbabwean activist

San Rafael, California, coffee roaster **Equator Estate** has named a new blend after Zimbabwean activist **Chido Govero**. Orphaned at a young age, Govero was forced to drop out of elementary school to provide for her family, but was eventually adopted by researcher **Margaret Tagwira**, who afforded her the opportunity to return to school and learn about mushroom farming. Govero has travelled throughout Colombia, India, Kenya, and the San Francisco Bay Area to teach sustainable farming techniques to underprivileged orphans. Today, Govero has written a book about her experience in a Zimbabwean village teaching orphans how to provide for themselves and escape abuse through self-sufficiency and food security. She hopes to continue to spread her knowledge throughout Africa to generate jobs and alleviate hunger using local resources. (*Metro Santa Cruz*, August 19, 2009)

### Voluntary airline tax could raise billions for WHO

A new funding strategy to raise money for HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis in Africa will ask online-airfare consumers for a donation of US\$2 with their purchase. The idea came from **Phillipe Douste-Blazy**, a UN special advisor in charge of innovative funding for **UNITAID**, a branch of the **World Health Organization** (WHO). Backing the plan are big players in both the philanthropy world, such as the **William J. Clinton Foundation** and the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**, and in the travel industry, including the CEOs of **Amadeus**, **Sabre**, and **Travelport**, worldwide leaders in reservation and ticketing systems. The initiative is set to launch in the United States and Europe in January, and the possibility of launching in African countries is also being discussed. Estimates state that the "tax" could bring in up to \$1 billion. Clinton told reporters at a press conference, "If you provide a user-friendly, efficient way of

giving...there's no question that large numbers of people will contribute if they know how little it costs and how many lives are saved." (*Time*, September 18, 2009; *New York Times*, May 21, 2009)

### Former clothing execs purchase South American land for national parks

Husband-and-wife **Doug and Kris Tompkins** are pioneering land and wildlife conservation in South America. Since leaving the outdoor-clothing industry in the United States – Doug was the founder of The North Face and Esprit, while Kris was CEO of Patagonia – they have spent the past twenty years buying land, restoring ecosystems, and donating land back to the government as national parks. So far, they have purchased almost one million hectares in Argentina and Chile, and have helped establish two national parks in Patagonia. They do have critics, however; many are distrustful of foreign landowners, and anti-Americanism has fuelled accusations about the Tompkins' motives, but "all these things are society's ways of beginning to accommodate new ideas," says Kris. Currently, the Tompkins are working to create Argentina's largest national park and to restore endangered species. **Sofia Heinonen**, a biologist working with the Tompkins' initiatives, hopes that "perhaps in some years we will bring back the jaguar; that is our big dream." (CNN, October 7, 2009)

### Mobile phone magnate promotes good governance in Africa

Sudanese-born businessman and philanthropist **Mohamed "Mo" Ibrahim** thinks Africa isn't doing as well as it could. "In 2009, there is no reason for Africans to feel disadvantaged.... I am sick of people portraying Africa as a poor country, with refugee's camp and sick and malnourished children. We have the best of everything in the world and when we are given the opportunity to showcase our skills, we excel," he told *The Voice UK*. He believes that once people look past Africa's rocky history, and once Africans "move away from the psychology that we always need aid," the continent has the power to surpass all other countries. Ibrahim has put his money and influence, earned through the sale of his multibillion-dollar telecommunications company Celtel, behind giving Africans such an opportunity through encouraging good governance. "I really believe that the essential requirement for Africa today is good governance. Without good governance there is no hope."

With good governance in mind, his foundation produces the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance, which ranks sub-Saharan African countries. "All we hear about Africa in the west is Darfur, Zimbabwe, Congo, Somalia, as if that is all there is. Yet there are 53 countries in Africa, and many of them are doing well," Ibrahim tells *The Guardian* in an interview earlier this year. The index is a tool not only for leaders, but for citizens, as well: this year, the foundation published the findings in multiple African newspapers in local languages. (*The Voice UK*, August 3, 2009; *The Guardian*, February 1, 2009)

## Resources & Links

*Activities, websites and other cutting-edge information for global givers*

### **New website for philanthropic advisors in the UK**

**Giving Advice: A Guide for Philanthropy Advisors** is a new website launched by **Philanthropy UK** and the **Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners**. The guide, available online at [www.philanthropyuk.org](http://www.philanthropyuk.org), aims to enable private client advisors – including private bankers and wealth managers, accountants and lawyers, family office managers and others – to more effectively support their clients’ philanthropic aims. It offers ideas on getting a conversation about philanthropy started and a framework for a process through which advisors can guide their clients to develop an effective, custom giving strategy.

### **Alliance magazine: New opportunities for philanthropy?**

The September issue of *Alliance* magazine ([www.alliancemagazine.org](http://www.alliancemagazine.org)), guest edited by **Matthew Bishop** of *The Economist*, asks how has the world changed? And what are the new opportunities for philanthropy? In addressing these questions, it includes interviews with **Sonal Shah** of U.S. President Obama’s new Office of Social Innovation and Civil Participation and **Susan Bell** of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. **Álvaro Rodríguez Arregui** in Mexico and **Reuben Abraham** in India argue for a new catalytic role for philanthropic capital. The issue also includes an interview with European Foundation Centre Chair **Emilio Rui Vilar** and an article on philanthropy in Turkey with **Filiz Bikmen**.

### **Matthew Bishop discusses philanthrocapitalism with GOOD Magazine**

*GOOD Magazine* ([www.good.is](http://www.good.is)) interviewed *The Economist*’s **Matthew Bishop** about philanthrocapitalism and the changing field of philanthropy. Bishop says that many newer foundations have become “rather bureaucratic organizations with a scattergun approach, without really enough focus on sustained long term impact,” while philanthropists in the early 20th century, such as the **Carnegies** and the **Rockefellers**, were the “first generation models for philanthrocapitalism,” using a “long-term, strategic, business-like approach over many years to come up with a solution.” Bishop considers **Bill Gates**’ malaria-eradication efforts to be a modern example of “first generation” philanthrocapitalism. In response to criticism of foreign aid, Bishop says that “the idea that all aid is worthless is wrong... You need to have some combination of government and private nonprofit money, what we call smart aid, coming in and actually building, making sure that government works more effectively.” Bishop also credits private aid with paving the way for the emerging field of for-profit development work: “I don’t think you’d get those business models without people doing the philanthropic work first.” *GOOD Magazine* was founded by **Ben Goldhirsch**, a member of the Global Philanthropists Circle who was profiled in the February-April 2007 issue of *Global Giving Matters*.

## Your Ideas Wanted

**Global Giving Matters** aims to present information on best practices and innovations in philanthropy and social investment around the world. We encourage you to send us:

- Ideas about issues or people you would like to learn more about
- Examples of your own philanthropy
- Comments about this issue.

Write to us at [comments@globalgivingmatters.org](mailto:comments@globalgivingmatters.org).

Global Giving Matters does not present solicitations of support for particular initiatives or organizations.

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