

## 2011 REPORT

### OVERVIEW

Over the past year FNTG had organized briefings and delegations, developed materials and promoted learning and collaboration among funders working to address the impacts of the ongoing global economic and ecological crisis, while continuing to promote increased support towards grassroots organizations and networks working for deeper systemic change.

Activities have been organized around four core areas of work: Global Economy; Global Economy; Resource Rights and Movement-Building. As always, our engagement with social movements and civil society coalitions in the US and internationally have greatly informed and helped orient our efforts, leading to recommendations on ways philanthropy can better meet social change goals. Among these were calls to:

- **Pursue greater alignment among progressive funders** by being more strategic about moving philanthropic dollars, sharing information on who is funding what, developing greater dialogue among grant and funder alliances, working to align funding strategies and peer-to-peer learning, helping funders envision and overcome fears of deeper systemic change.
- **Broaden the circle of funders involved** by identifying individual donors who can organize others, building relationships and trust among community foundations and state and national funders, organizing more open and inclusive learning and dialogue circles to expand funds coming to social justice, and developing local donors and undertaking local and regional philanthropic efforts in partnership with movements.
- **Advocate for funding for grassroots organizing and social justice** by organizing strategies to institutionalize social justice philanthropy, using research to provide examples and proof of successful advocacy strategies, developing non-jargon language and arguments for long-term social justice funding, and challenging other funders to provide more long term support to movement-building rather than services and humanitarian aid alone. Develop greater foundation board buy-in through Board/staff retreats and Board/staff community engagement, adding community leaders to foundation boards.
- **Foster strategic collaboration/alliance building among grantees** by supporting spaces to develop shared analysis, investing in organizational staffing to build knowledge and relationships among groups, helping the grassroots organizing sector to hold larger intermediaries accountable.
- **Supporting other ways of strengthening the grassroots/social justice sector**, including supporting transnational work, explicitly funding political (c4) work, supporting non-foundation fundraising and development of alternative resources, and countering overly straightjacketing “evaluation matrices” and developing simple evaluation mechanisms.

Over the past year, FNTG has initiated with sister funder networks a series of initiatives that, after many years, has begun making progress towards these objectives.

In May FNTG brought together two-dozen funders and social movement allies to the Blue Mountain Center to discuss and build on these and similar long-standing conversations on the need for increased support to grassroots movement building. Following three days of deliberation it was agreed that FNTG, the Funders Collaborative on Youth Organizing ([FCYO](#)) and the Working Group for Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace ([Working Group](#)) would work together to develop a funder collaborative or federation aimed specifically at increasing philanthropic support to the grassroots organizing sector - community based movements, their local and transnational networks, and their NGO allies.

Our three networks have been meeting regularly over the past six months to develop a collective framework and to increase internal commitments and support among our board members and allies. With consultant support from Jee Kim (formerly with Surdna Foundation) and Nicolas Haeringer (with the Paris-based Fondation pour le Progrès de l'Homme), we have undertaken an initial landscape analysis on the context and current state of grassroots movement organizing and philanthropy in the US and in Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America, and sought to clarify and define further the grassroots organizing sector in different contexts around the world.

Through these efforts we have clarified our shared understanding of the nature, scope and collective mission of this initiative, and to begin to envision a collaborative structure to move the field forward. While maintaining our individual identities we are developing a framework that we hope will allow us to “harmonize” our administrative, staffing and other institutional structures, build on the financial resources, communications infrastructures, resource development capacities and membership strengths we each bring to the table, while eliminating as much as we can overlap and redundant functions and efforts.

This initiative will be modeled on FCYO’s successful efforts over the last decade to bring new funding into the youth organizing sector. It is understood within the context of funder/movement discussions organized over a long a period by FNTG within the US and World Social Forum process and similar spaces. It will incorporate tools and outreach initiatives being developed by the Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace Network (PSJP) that are intended to expand dialogue and learning among philanthropists globally.

And it would build on the kinds of collaborative funds, learning communities, convenings, delegations, collaboration with social movement partners and approaches practiced by our networks to move mainstream funders to support local and transnational grassroots organizing, deepen practice and mutual accountability among us and with others (including donors and members of family foundations) we hope to bring into alignment with us.

The project would be global, in the sense of understanding local and national movement-building in an international context and in its goal of incorporating grantmakers in Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America, even as it rolls out slowly in different regions of the world as opportunities arise and momentum builds.

While these discussions continue (along with parallel conversations with Grantmakers without Borders about developing greater collaboration between our two networks in the period ahead), FNTG has remained focused on our own organizing and learning initiatives, as can be seen from the following summary of program activities over that past year.

## OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The following short descriptions highlight FNTG educational, organizing and convening activities over the past 12 months, in our four core areas of work.

### 1. Global Economy

- Sarah Anderson with the Institute for Policy Studies produced for FNTG a [White Paper on Civil Society Responses to the Global Economic and Financial Crisis](#), containing brief descriptions, case studies and links on Bank Accountability; Financial Speculation Taxes; Commodities Speculation; IFIs; Building Grassroots Alternatives.
- In November, we organized a Funder Webinar Telebriefing entitled [Civil Society Responses to the Global Financial Crisis: What has been accomplished? What remains to be done? How can funders help?](#) The call featured Sarah Anderson (IPS), Lisa Donner (Americans for Financial Reform), and Soren Ambrose (Action Aid International) to talk about IFI and G20 organizing. Over 30 funders participated in this webinar.
- This webinar was co-sponsored by the Neighborhood Funders Group's [Working Group on Labor and Community Partnerships](#), which distributed the White Paper at a funder briefing on labor and the economic crisis in Washington in March.
- The White Paper was also featured on the website and in the newsletter of the [New Economy Network](#), a coalition of academics, activists and funders working to bring about a just and sustainable economy.
- Following meetings at the COP in Cancun and the WSF in Dakar with Our World Is Not For Sale members as well as French organizers of G8/G20 activities (ATTAC, Coordination SUD, CRID) FNTG has circulated OWINFS [G20 Statement of Demands](#) and [program plan](#) to members, which has helped bring resources to the network's work.
- With new movement in April on long dormant FTAs, FNTG hastily organized a [Funder Call on Trade](#) with Tim Wise (Global Development and Environment Institute, Tufts), Lori Wallach (Global Trade Watch) and Christine Ahn (Korea Policy Institute). A call summary and recording were circulated widely to funders following the call.

### 2. Global Ecology

- In September, over two dozen funders participated in a call organized by Sarah Christiansen entitled [How Grassroots Organizing Can Help Save Climate Legislation - Starting with Beating Back Attacks on California's Historic Global Warming Law](#), featuring Roger Kim (Asia Pacific Environmental Network), Jihan Gearon (Indigenous

Environmental Network), and Tammy Bang Luu (Labor Community Strategy Center).

- FNTG wrote to the funders on the Board of 1Sky in response to their Board's [Open letter to all people and organizations working to combat global warming](#), supporting the thrust of the letter and encouraging more support to grassroots movement-building on climate change.
- FNTG worked with our grassroots partner coalitions to respond as well, which they did a few months later in their own [Open Letter](#). Through FNTG dialogue with 1Sky staff, two grassroots representatives were invited to an important 1Sky retreat (Jihan Gearon of the Indigenous Environmental Network and Ananda Tan Lee of the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives).
- This [dialogue continues](#), and the new director of the newly merged 1 Sky/350.org May Bove has since participated in FNTG strategy retreats with climate justice and other grassroots activists.
- In October FNTG organized a dinner discussion for two-dozen funders with [Naomi Klein at the EGA Retreat](#), to discuss her new book/film/web project related to extreme energy, geo-engineering and the precautionary principle.
- FNTG [helped secure funding to cover travel for three additional members of the African Biodiversity Network](#) participants in climate discussions at the Dakar World Social Forum. FNTG staff and many of the two-dozen funders in our funder delegation closely followed climate justice discussions during the forum.
- A call in early November to prepare for the Cancun COP [Elite Failure, Grassroots Groundswell: The Changing Politics of Global Climate Negotiations between Copenhagen and Cancun](#) was organized with Peter Riggs (Ford), Janet Redman (IPS), Sarah Christiansen (Solidago) and Maria Aguiar (Grassroots International).
- A posting sent to the FNTG listserv encouraged funders to [Support Efforts Leading up to COP-16 Cancun and Join FNTG's Climate Equity Track to receive news & updates from Cancun](#). In addition to links to proposals from international and US CSO coalition organizing during the COP this communication provided information on the recently defeated Prop 23 battle in California, and links to recordings of our previous climate calls.
- During UN Climate Negotiations at COP 16 FNTG developed and circulated four [Climate Updates](#), providing funders with summaries and links to articles and video on analysis and activities coming out of Cancun.
- In January FNTG organized a "[Funder Discussion on Cancun and the COP 16- Building Momentum or Avoiding the Real Issues?](#)" to analyze the results of climate negotiations. Over 40 funders participated and feedback was very positive.

- In February FNTG helped co-sponsor a "[Funder Briefing and Dialogue: Climate Movement from the Ground Up](#)" in Boston, organized by Sarah Christiansen with Solidago, Heeten Kalan of New World Foundation and Mariela Tan Puerto of the Barr Foundation.
- FNTG's CJ Working Group organized a day-long [Strategy Session on Climate](#) with eighteen grantmakers at Rockefeller Brothers Fund in March, to share insights and analysis, and assess opportunities provided by organizing around COP-17 and within the broader context of the G20 and Rio+20. Funders were joined by [David Harvey](#) (Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at CUNY), Roger Kim (APEN) and – through video link from Durban, Bobby Peek (groundWork) and Rehana Dada (environmental journalist), members of the C17 organizing for the UN climate talks in December.
- Since this meeting, FNTG worked with the [C17 Civil Society Organizing Committee](#) to highlight the work of local and regional efforts around COP-17 in Durban.
- FNTG organized the closing general session of the Grantmakers without Borders annual "Just Giving" Conference. Organized with IDEX, the plenary entitled [Is a Fair Deal on Climate Still Possible? Building the Movement to Bring Development Rights and Ecological Justice into Global Climate Negotiations](#) featured Peter Riggs of the Ford Foundation, Desmond D'Sa of the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance, Alberto Gomez of UNORCA and La Via Campesina and Yeshica Weerasekera of IDEX.
- Coming out of our climate strategy meeting in NY, a White Paper [A Perfect Storm: Lessons from the Defeat of Proposition 23](#) was prepared for FNTG By Catherine Lerza. An early version was prepared for distribution at a meeting of the Climate and Energy Funders Group in Chicago. A finalized version, incorporating additional statistics and links, was published in September, and distributed widely at the Environmental Grantmakers Association annual retreat in Montana.
- Working with Solidago Foundation and Kontent Films, FNTG co-produced a ten minute documentary highlighting the crucial role played by grassroots groups in the California climate battles entitled [Where We Live: The Changing Face of Climate Activism](#). This film has been screened at a number of funder gatherings since October, including the Environmental Grantmakers Association Fall Retreat, Neighborhood Funders Group Annual Conference, a meeting of the Grassroots Climate Funder Collaborative, Resource Generation Making Money Make Change Retreat and the Health and Environmental Funders Network Annual Meeting.
- With Solidago, FNTG is launching a new [grassroots climate funder collaborative](#), that will support efforts first in California, then across the US, and eventually internationally as well.

### **3. Resource Rights**

- FNTG's volunteer Summer Intern Michel Chagas (a Duke University student originally

from Brazil) researched the positions of key governments and regional groups, and the positions of civil society coalitions and networks in Brazil and internationally in the lead up to the [Rio +20 World Conference on Sustainability](#) being held next June.

- Land grabs were one of the key issues to emerge from discussions at the World Social Forum in Dakar. FNTG played a small role in helping circulate information about a [Funder Briefing on Land Grabbing](#) in San Francisco on land grabbing in May, organized by Christensen Fund and IDEX.
- Together with The Christensen Fund, Grassroots International, IDEX and New Field Foundation, FNTG is organized a funder call on [Land Grabbing: An Urgent Crisis in the Global South](#), featuring speakers from the Oakland Institute, GRAIN and La Via Campesina.
- A second call in this series, [Funding Local Food Initiatives in the Face of Land Grabbing](#) is being organized with the same group of funders for the end of October and will focus on Africa. A third, on [Land Grabs in the USA](#), is being organized in November with the participation of the Sustainable Ag and Food Systems Funders.
- A call on November 2 was organized with CS Fund and GwoB, [The Rights of Nature: An Innovative Paradigm for Environmental Organizing and Protection](#) featuring speakers from the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund, Fundación Pachamama in Ecuador and the Community Rights Program at Global Exchange.

#### **4. Global Organizing**

- Following the return of the 70 member funder delegation to the US Social Forum in Detroit, a [Report from USSF 2010 Funder Delegation](#) was written and circulated to capture key points and recommendations emerging from funder deliberations at the U.S. Social Forum 2010 in Detroit, including the commitments made by a majority of delegation participants to [significantly increase support to grassroots organizing and movement-building](#) in the US and internationally.
- In October we followed this up with a funder call entitled "[US Social Forum: Advancing A Progressive Agenda, and What Funders Can Do to Help](#)" for over 30 funders. Presenters included [Adrienne Marie Brown](#), Ruckus Society/USSF National Coordinator; [Makani Themba-Nixon](#), Praxis Project/USSF Fiscal Sponsor, [Will Copeland](#), Detroit Local Co-Coordinator, and [Stephanie Guilloud](#) at Project South/PMA coordinator.
- A special initiative with funders working within a movement-building frame, the [F/M process has been incorporated into the heart of FNTG's work](#) - overtly in initiatives with funders comfortable with "movement-building," in more nuanced fashion with funders more at ease with "civil society networks," and with those focusing more squarely on policy and advocacy outside a movement-building frame.
- Following our efforts in Detroit, FNTG [has been in near constant dialogue with other](#)

[funder networks](#), and continuing to engage with grassroots networks and alliances within and beyond the WSF process, to create needed spaces within philanthropy for analysis and debate in an effort to increase resources to grassroots organizing.

- In preparation for the World Social Forum, FNTG highlighted [Funding Requests from the WSF Organizing Committee](#) for activities that included the participation of “Jasmine Revolution” leaders from Tunisia and the Maghreb region at the forum; enhancing linguistic diversity by increasing the number of volunteer translators and regional participation through support to caravans coming from surrounding countries; and increasing communications and media outcomes by supporting Indymedia-Africa’s Media Center activities.
- Through these and other efforts FNTG helped secure small amounts in additional grants from Solidago and the Schooner Foundation to [support the participation of Tunisian and Magreb activists in the WSF](#).
- In February twenty one funders, along with GwoB's director and FNTG staff participated in FNTG’s [delegation to the WSF](#), which was co-sponsored by [TrustAfrica](#) and [Grantmakers without Borders](#). Based on the debrief in Dakar and the post-trip online evaluation survey, most found the experience to be highly inspiring and informative, with over 80% of the online respondents saying the trip would have some or significant impact on their grantmaking.
- In March we circulated a 15 page, [Report from World Social Forum 2011 Funder Delegation](#), which included summaries of activities and funder engagements, funder assessments of their experiences, a summary of key WSF activities and links to further readings and articles.
- FNTG helped organize a funder learning call [Report back from the World Social Forum 2011 Funder Delegation](#) with [Grantmakers Without Borders](#).
- FNTG organized a follow-up [meeting with 20 international funders](#) in NY the day before the GwoB meeting to continue and deepen conversations begun in earlier in Detroit and continued in Dakar, focused on ways funders in different countries can collaborate in supporting grassroots movements around the world.
- In May FNTG organized a [three-day retreat at Blue Mountain Center](#) with a dozen funders and a similar number of grassroots organizing leaders. The participants at the retreat committed to establish some form of a “[Funders Collaborative for the 21st Century](#)” in Support of Grassroots Organizing and Movement Building.
- Following initial discussions with regional movement leaders in Dakar, we are exploring ways to support [social movements in Magreb/Mashreq](#), and there is an interest in FNTG [organizing a funder delegation to the region](#) early next year in collaboration, in collaboration with French foundations lead by FACT.

- With the Bay Areas Justice Funders Network, FNTG organized a pre-conference session for fifty grantmakers at the [Neighborhood Funder Group](#) conference in Albuquerque in October entitled [Justice at the Center: A Convening on Emerging Funder Collaborations Committed to Grassroots Organizing and Movement-Building](#).
- FNTG has been actively engaged in helping funders and donors interested in supporting the Occupy Wall Street. We prepared an initial guide [Funding the Occupy Movement: Occupy and Beyond](#), and organized a learning call entitled [Funder Conversation on Occupy Wall Street: How Can Philanthropy Help to Sustain the Occupy Moment?](#) Over 130 funders participated on this call, which was co-sponsored by the Neighborhood Funders Group's Working Group on Labor and Community Partnerships, the Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing, the Working Group on Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace, the Bay Area Justice Funders Network, and Grantmakers without Borders.

As noted above, commitments made by funders at the US Social Forum last year has led over the past six months to discussions within FNTG, with social movement partners and with partner funder affinity groups that may result in deep and far-reaching changes to our network. Deeper engagement with Grantmakers without Borders, both within the context of FNTG's funder delegation to the World Social Forum in Dakar in February and around GwoB's annual Just Giving Conference in New York in June is leading to enhanced collaboration among our two networks. Our discussions with the Funders Collaborative on Youth Organizing and the Working Group on Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace are bearing fruit, and leading to broader discussions with the Neighborhood Funders Group, the Bay Area Social Justice Funders, the Social Justice Infrastructure Funders and others.

Through these and other efforts outlined above we may be closer than ever to building a community within philanthropy willing to join us in acting on the need to shift greater resources towards deeper systemic change, by supporting – and accompanying – the increasingly vibrant and inspiring grassroots organizing and movement-building we see all around us.