

Elevating Children and Youth in Adversity:

A Map for Philanthropy



Addressing Unmet Needs Across Fields

Global leaders and foundations are increasingly recognizing the importance of investing early to break the cycles of global endemic poverty and insecurity, as we have seen with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Children, young people and families require integrated support, including education, health, nutrition, care and protection. Continuing to respond to one issue at a

time distinct from existing realities, which has been the overwhelming tendency of the international community to-date, will ultimately be detrimental to children facing various forms of vulnerability.

Therefore, ECFG has committed to broadening its mandate to engage foundations that address diverse segments within the full lifecycle (from birth to adolescence) of children and youth affected

by adversity. ECFG will expand its reach and membership, and focus its efforts around a myriad of topics to catalyze information sharing and collaboration for the betterment of children everywhere. ECFG will engage with these topics not as isolated, siloed issues, but in a holistic manner focusing on the continuum that connects them to build greater cohesion in the field.

What We Are Working Towards in the Next Three Years

- 1 **ECFG Membership:** Strengthened grantcraft and effectiveness of ECFG's member community of philanthropic foundations
- 2 **Field:** Increased and more effective philanthropy that targets children facing adversity
- 3 **ECFG:** Enhanced profile of ECFG among stakeholders working to support children facing adversity



How Did We Get Here?

2009

First Informal Private Donor Meeting

In 2009, a group of 20 foundations met to discuss the possibility of convening a private donor collaborative on child protection. A few of the meeting attendees proceeded to move forward with the creation of the Children and Evaluation Fund, a pooled funding initiative addressing the gaps in the violence against children field.



Mission

Elevate Children Funders Group seeks to advance philanthropy that supports children facing adversity in order to elevate the holistic children's agenda in philanthropy. ECFG focuses on the full lifecycle of children and youth affected by adversity, from birth to adolescence with a focus on children facing the threats of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect.

ECFG Strategic Plan: Why Now?

Elevate Children Funders Group (ECFG) was established in 2011 as a vehicle to foster donor collaboration and to support its members in directing funding and attention to under-addressed areas in philanthropy, particularly violence against children and care. In 2016, ECFG embarked on a strategic review process to refine key elements of its work and to increase its relevance to the philanthropic field. This process resulted in a three-year strategic plan launched in early 2017.

As a platform for raising the philanthropic field through shared best practices, elevated grantcraft and pooled efforts, ECFG believes that it is "better together" and that the sum of our parts can drive greater sustainable change than the work of individual foundations in any given field. Over the next three years, ECFG will use its collective convening power to respond to the shifting global political landscapes and to support advocacy efforts around policy and build bridges to policymakers to forge strategic alliances and ensure that children and youth issues are elevated.

“The beauty of Elevate Children is that we can share our similarities but also our differences. When we can combine these there are a lot of possibilities. ECFG can bring in new and different voices to the table.”

– ECFG Member



2010

Donor Collaborative in De-institutionalization and Establishment of Pooled Fund Initiative Around Violence

A year later, six foundations convened a meeting, *The Partnership for Children: Reducing Reliance on Residential Institutions*, to discuss the formation of a donor collaborative on de-institutionalization. It was agreed not to form a collective entirely on de-institutionalization but to continue the discussions around broader child protection issues.

2011

Formation of the Child Protection Funders Group at Somerset House

From these conversations, what is now known as the Elevate Children Funders Group, was formally established in 2011 as the Child Protection Funders Group during a meeting at the Somerset House.

Service Vehicles: What Will ECFG Provide Members?

Recognizing the important diversity among member foundations' expertise, interests, and strengths, ECFG offers a range of services, which are designed to share information and knowledge as well as support diverse collaborative activities. This mix of service offerings will provide a platform for engaging a larger and more diverse membership group while indicating to the broader funding community that philanthropy supporting children and youth facing adversity necessitates direct attention with real shifts that can be made to increase effectiveness.

Research and Education

ECFG will disseminate data-driven research and platforms for information through its monthly newsletter and other tools to inform and engage members, as well as develop resources for the wider philanthropic community. In doing so, ECFG will help map the philanthropic field, identify funding trends and gaps, and address pressing and current grantmaking issues impacting our members and partners.

Convenings and Collective Action

ECFG will expand its coordination of strategic convenings to help funders connect with and learn from one another, coordinate their efforts, increase their knowledge of developments in the field and, ultimately, elevate their grantcraft. These gatherings will include ECFG's Annual General Meeting as well as smaller country or regional-level or thematic-focused funders roundtable discussions and briefings organized with other peer funder groups to facilitate cross-sectoral discussions.

Working Groups

ECFG will build out its portfolio of working groups as a critical vehicle for members to dive into geographic or thematic areas of shared interest, coordinate their funding strategies and leverage shared resources and new partnership opportunities.

Incubation

ECFG will continue to facilitate the incubation of strategic ideas generated by its members through pooled or aligned funding to encourage their exploration and potential development into independent initiatives. ECFG will aim to capitalize on these influential opportunities while striking an appropriate balance with its core member services and membership expansion activities.



2012

Formalization of Funders Group and Establishment of Secretariat

In 2012, funders group staffed and established a Secretariat, with a part-time coordinator, which oversaw activities within informal working groups (De-institutionalization, Child Protection Systems, Violence Against Children, Child Protection in Africa) and incubated initiatives. The donor collaborative supported strategic regional and thematic issues within the child protection sector.

2014

Broadening of Scope and Name Change to Elevate Children Funders Group

The collaborative underwent a name change to the Elevate Children Funders Group in effort to see the field more broadly by looking beyond child protection with a clear intention to elevate the place of children in development and philanthropy overall.



Each of these service vehicles will

RESEARCH & ED



CONVENINGS



WORKING GROUPS



INCUBATION



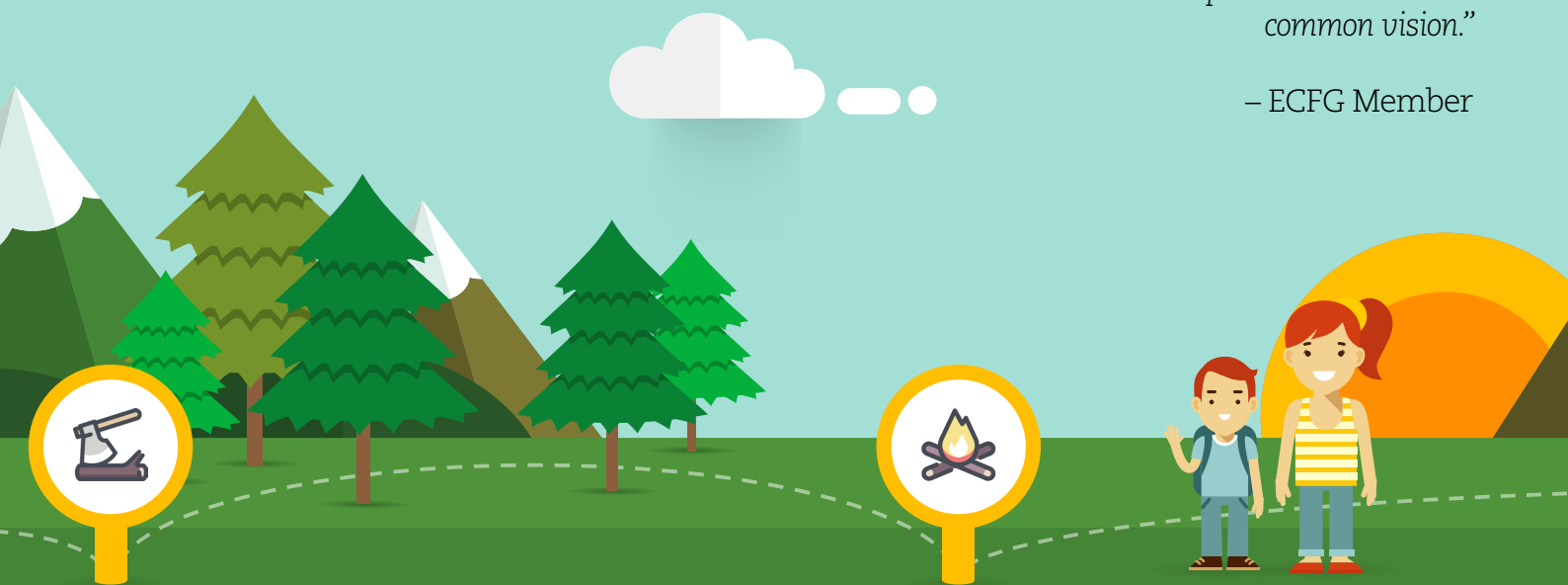
Information Exchange	●	●	●	
Co-Learning	●	●	●	
Informal Alignment			●	
Collaborative Funding				●

What Will the New Mission and Strategy Enable ECFG to Do?

- Allows ECFG to broaden its engagement across a range of issues affecting children in adversity, beyond violence against children and care, and to connect the various alliance points
- Broaden and diversify ECFG's members by types of foundations, sector and region of operation
- Unearth areas of need and synergy and build a coalition of partners and allies,
- Forge a discussion around the critical issues by rolling out a "road show" of visits to a series of cities in Europe, North and South America and Africa elevating a wider-set of under-addressed topics issues facing children and youth in adversity
- Explore the unique opportunities and challenges of working as a funder
- Support funders to address monumental challenges and to uphold their role as defending the rights of children and their families

“The grantmaker world can be very lonely. We know what our team is doing but it takes an extra effort to find out what other funders are doing. Elevate Children provides that space to interact with others, discuss areas of opportunity and collaboration, identify common partners and share a common vision.”

– ECFG Member



2015 Formalization of Pooled Funds

Following this name change, ECFG initiated two pooled fund initiatives; the Post-2015 Advocacy Fund supporting advocacy initiatives in relation to violence prevention within the SDG Agenda, and a second focused on funding streams linked to children's care. Four working groups were active in: Agenda 2030, East Africa, Children's Care and Monitoring and Evaluation.



2016 Fully-Staffed Secretariat, Strategic Review and Strategic Planning Process

In 2016, with thirteen foundation members and a fully operational Secretariat staffed by two full-time positions, ECFG began this strategic review process to assess what its optimal structure and approach to the field should be.



Thank you to those who have contributed to the Strategic Plan through the various stages of the process.

Steering Committee Members

Mark Guy, Chair
GHR Foundation

Swatee Depak
Stars Foundation

Michael Gibbons
Wellspring Advisors LLC

Britta Holmberg
World Childhood Foundation

Brigette DeLay (former member, active during planning process)
Oak Foundation

ECFG Secretariat Staff

Ghazal Keshavarzian
Director

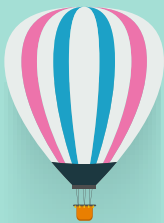
Ariel Carroll
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Consultants

Many thanks to the team at ChangeCraft who facilitated our strategic planning process: **Yonatan Gordis** and **Beth Glick**



Lastly, we are grateful to ECFG members, former ECFG staff, and philanthropic, donor and non-profit leaders for providing critical insights and feedback.



Lisa Bohmer, Hilton Foundation
Florence Bruce (formerly Oak Foundation)
Don Ciprani, Ignite Philanthropy: Inspiring the End to Violence Against Girls and Boys
Violaine Desrosiers, Pathy Family Foundation
Michael Feigelson, Bernard van Leer Foundation
Sara Bensaude De Castro Freire, Children and Violence Evaluation Fund
Meg Gardiner, ChildFund Alliance (former ECFG Senior Coordinator, November 2014-June 2015)
Eleanor Gurney (former ECFG Coordinator, 2012-2014)
Mary Healy, Human Dignity Foundation
EJ Jacobs, Nduna Foundation

Patricia Lannen, Marie Meierhofer Institut für das Kind (formerly UBS Optimus Foundation)
Peter Laugharn, Hilton Foundation
Fassil Mariam, Children's Rights and Violence Prevention Fund
Patrick Obonyo, IKEA Foundation
Peggy Sailer, Network of European Foundations
Kathleen Strotman, Global Alliance for Children
Kamela Usmani, Comic Relief
John Williamson, Displaced Children and Orphans Fund, USAID
Lisa Witter, Assemblyfor



To find more updated information about ECFG members, working groups and events or if you are interested in joining ECFG, visit www.elevatechildren.org or reach out to the Secretariat at info@elevatechildren.org

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