



ILSS FUNDRAISING CONFERENCE

SUPPORTED *by*

 **OMIDYAR NETWORK INDIA**



Founder's Note

200+
participants

from across impact organizations & functions

25+
speakers & facilitators

lending their perspectives to the conversation

1 day
of learning & exchange

with lasting connections

When we hosted the Fundraising Conference in January 2020, the first platform of its kind dedicated to fundraising professionals in Indian development, the impetus was to address a gap we had seen in the sector. We needed to *reimagine* the function of fundraising for social impact – to elevate and legitimize it, and to give it its due respect.

While all of us may be equally committed to creating lasting impact in our spheres, any real change can only be brought about if our mission is supported by adequate resources. Giving, as they say, is not about making a donation, it's about making a difference. Therefore, fundraising efforts must not be seen as secondary to our cause. Rather, it is for us to understand and recast fundraising as the *fulcrum of change*.

This belief is at the core of how we envisioned and designed FRC 2022. In the two editions we have hosted, and for those to come, FRC is a space where

actors across the sector – from philanthropists, domain experts, grassroots organization leaders, and everyone else in between – can come together and build a community of knowledge-sharing, understanding, support, and innovation around fundraising.

In particular, this edition came at a particularly pivotal moment – after the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, where we could simultaneously acknowledge the difficulties of the year past, as well as celebrate each other's resilience, and chart out a road ahead. We have been humbled by the strength of this sector – deftly adapting to times of crisis, unwavering in the delivery of essential support to the public when they have most needed it.

We hope that this conference can continue to enrich organizational practices, as well as create lasting networks of support – all toward a better future for this country.

Thank you for being on this journey with us.

ANU PRASAD

Founder & CEO

India Leaders for Social Sector, ILSS

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Building FRC 2022

In the two years since the first fundraising conference in 2020, ILSS has made significant strides towards achieving the objectives we set out then– to highlight the critical role of fundraising in achieving scalable social impact and to build capacity for it at large. The ILSS Fundraising Program, now in its fourth edition, has reached hundreds of non profit organisations and social entrepreneurs across the country, helping them build resilient fundraising

strategies and pushing them to reach for ambitious funding goals. With 124 current alumni, the Program has fostered vibrant communities of fundraisers through easily accessible and collaborative groups that have fed into the larger ILSS community of over 400 alumni.

FRC 2022 was envisioned as bringing together these communities and other social sector stakeholders to share a platform, engage in meaningful dialogue

and identify collective priorities. The conference provided participants the opportunity to assess the changes in the landscape since 2020, explore emerging trends, and build long lasting connections. More than 200 participants gathered to hear from over 25 speakers and facilitators at the Stein Auditorium in India Habitat Centre, Delhi. The conference was organised with the support of our partner, Omidyar Network India.

There is an overarching need in the sector for open communication and building towards more equitable and purposeful impact.

CURRENT CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

The pandemic had a deep impact on the sector, pushing us to adapt quickly, find new ways of working and most importantly, better ways of supporting our communities. Additionally, the recent amendments to FCRA have also brought in regulatory changes to tackle. These major shifts formed the backdrop to the conversations at the conference.

While it has become even more critical for organizations to put in the work and build familiarity with compliance frameworks, the collective mobilization during the pandemic has pushed ideas around scale and collaborations.

New challenges have inspired innovation in the sector and the recent growth of funding collectives is an indicator of trends to come. Functioning on mutual trust and confidence, collectives can be a viable approach to achieving audacious impact goals. There is a need for bold visions and large scale solutions. Building replicable models, working with the government, and leveraging technology have emerged as critical pieces for organizations to look at for achieving scale.

Several philanthropists are now working to build change at the systemic level by supporting consortiums of organizations and filling gaps in the ecosystem, particularly around knowledge building. Several intermediary organizations working on capacity building for the sector are proving instrumental in strengthening the ecosystem.



Institutional donors are approaching the donor-grantee relationship as a collaboration with increasing investment in organization building.

There is an overarching need in the sector for open communication and building towards more equitable and purposeful impact.

SUCCESS STORIES

The diverse group of organizations invited to showcase their successful fundraising journeys shared their distinctive approaches to strategic thinking- a clear reminder that there is no one path to success. While some pivoted to a social enterprise model, post FCRA amendments, achieving great success, others found it through educating their donors on the felt needs of their

community. The group included two alums from the Fundraising Program who were able to draw on the impact of the Program on their work. Once again, working with governments was found to be inevitable for scale as was flexibility grounded in strategic clarity for resilience. An important thread running through each of the stories was the critical importance of community-based on shared goals-for achieving ambitious goals. These were found through incubators, accelerators, fellowships or other learning programs. With this and future Fundraising Conferences, planned to be biennial, we hope to forge more such communities dedicated to building the future together.

Opening Keynote



ROOPA KUDVA

Partner

Omidyar Network India

In more than a decade of working in India, the social sector has undergone tremendous evolutions, and so has the conversation around fundraising.

At Omidyar Network India, we have several takeaways in this area to share.

- a. First, fundraising has to be a core activity for nonprofits, not a support function, nor a distraction from the “main work”.
- b. Second, a good fundraising setup is one of the best investments founders can make. In today’s development ecosystem, external partners can be leveraged to gain crowd and capital from HNIs. Community relationships, too, can be leveraged for fundraising. Jan Sahas,

which has incubated twelve community-based organisations for this purpose, has 50% of their total funds through community contributions.

- c. Third, a good **fundraising pitch is a perfect balance between storytelling, explaining your strategy, and the data:**
 - i. As humans we are naturally programmed to respond to narratives, and funders are no different. Figure out which is the **most powerful story**, one which appeals to both the head and the heart.
 - ii. Next in the pitch is the strategy. **A strong and clear strategy helps funders understand you better, and lean in to support you.** Otherwise, there is a risk of your strategy being determined by the funders – excessively directing the purpose or utilization of funds. **Make your own organization visible to the funders:** the structure, the team, the state of your infrastructure, tech,



Understanding the donor is a vital part of the fundraising strategy.

processes, and your aspirations. Most pitches focus only on work outputs, and speak very little about the organization. Use every opportunity you get to speak about the organization itself. **Enabling funders to get an internal view of your organization – your strengths, your challenges – is essential for building the case for core funding.**

- d. Lastly, understanding the donor is a vital part of the fundraising strategy – do your homework on the funder. Funders have different risk appetites and bring different expectations and contributions to the table. *For instance, CSR funding is most likely to focus on parameters like reach, and be more cognizant of increasing awareness of their own brands. On the other hand, UHNIs might be more patient and long-term in their outlook, while also championing the less-funded causes.*

In the case of ONI, there is a significant emphasis on focusing on areas that typically do not attract sufficient capital. Our grantmaking toolkit enables us to fund a wide range of initiatives, going beyond grassroots efforts and government program implementation.

We therefore fund a range of organizations, including think tanks, consultancies, incubators, and collaborators. They have diverse approaches, but have in common a demonstration of leadership, and new solutions for critical solutions facing India. Similarly, other funders will have their own strategic priorities, and it's important you identify these as you make your pitch.

During the last two years, NGOs have played a vital role in complementing and informing government initiatives, supporting the most vulnerable communities. They have demonstrated admirable public spirit, grit, empathy, and boldness. There is an opportunity now for the social sector to evolve with the times, and become much more intentional and strategic in its approach to fundraising.

Alina Alam

Founder-CEO,
MITTI CAFE



Through my work with people with disabilities, I realised that the problem is not the 70 million+ people with disabilities in India, but the larger group of people who aren't able to see the magic in their abilities.

I wanted to build a model that is visible for those who can't see tangible interactives, and the success or failure of which will be directly related to the community. Food would be the perfect medium for this model, and so we started Mitti Cafe.

Mitti Cafe is a chain of cafes, mostly within corporates and hospitals, which are completely managed by adults with physical, intellectual, and psychiatric disabilities. The first was started with failed sales attempts and multiple rejections, but the scarcity of access allowed us to effectively ask for help from the community. Around 80% of the cafe's equipment was donated by strangers and the community.

One of my first employees was a young woman who had various physical disabilities - today, she is the manager of the first cafe, with 10 other staff members. There are currently 18 cafes and growing - to 35 and more this year - which are completely run by people with disabilities. This is a space where social perceptions around disabilities can be shifted, with every meal being an opportunity to bring better understanding. Till now, the team has served over 8 million meals and beverages.

COVID presented several challenges. There were 13 cafes based in Corporate offices, and with COVID, all the offices were shut down. To deal with these changes, we turned to our first round of retail fundraising. Initially, we were completely supported by the community, and the community in turn owned the cafe. In COVID, we made appeals to the community for support, and raised 1 crore. The heart of this were the employees, who worked relentlessly during COVID, and ultimately served over 2 million meals during this period.

We were able to scale so effectively due to 2 reasons: first, the community was invested in our success, and secondly, the Mitti Cafe team owned this initiative.

We also started working with NGOs who worked in the disability inclusion space, which were making products for sale. With the support of HT Parekh Foundation, employees started making 'gift baskets' which featured items from these partner organizations, selling on an online platform. They sold over 60,000 gifts.

Mitti Cafe employees are passionate about being able to work with dignity. When corporates were shut, we were able to pivot to opening cafes in hospitals, colleges, public spaces, and residential communities, and were able to scale so effectively due to 2 reasons: first, the community was invested in our success, and secondly, the Mitti Cafe team owned this initiative.



CEO

Centre for Advancement
of Philanthropy

Funding Amidst Changing Regulations

Let's look at the universe
of fundraising – from a
compliance standpoint.

FUNDAMENTALS OF FUNDRAISING

- You need money, you have to ask
- If you haven't heard a no recently, you haven't asked enough people
- If you are afraid of asking for money, do it anyway; What you believe in has to be bigger than what you are afraid of
- Fundraising requires you to be optimistic, persistent and innovative. Crowdfunding was once an innovation over junk mail.

SOURCES OF FUNDS

- Individuals (HNIs, UHNIs, Cash Boxes, Bequests, Board Members, Door to

Door)

- Companies (Corporate Foundations & CSR, Employee Giving)
- Online Portals (Crowdfunding, own website, social media, portals)
- Self Generated (Fees, Product sales, Events, Rent, Interest)
- Online Portals (Crowdfunding, own website, social media, portals)
- Government (State, Central, Municipal)
- Overseas (Diaspora, Overseas Chapters, Expatriates, Foreign Foundations)

TYPES OF DONATIONS

- Unrestricted funding (virtually over and is being restarted by some people)
- Earmarked/Restricted (currently most popular)
- Corpus Giving (hugely important but non existent)

Compliance is key to surviving. If one is not compliant with the regulatory laws, they are out of business.

Here are some key compliance points according to funding sources as of the date of the conference:

INDIVIDUAL GIVING

- If your donor is looking for tax deduction, you must capture donor details
- Income tax donor details required in Form 10BD
- Income tax donor certificate in Form 10BE
- Cash Donations more than Rs. 2,000 are not eligible for tax deductions under 80G
- Anonymous donations over Rs 1 lakh are also taxable under section 115BBC at the maximum marginal rate of 30%

SELF GENERATED

- Charitable purpose is identified under section 215 of the Income Tax Act
- If you are an organization working for a charitable purpose, your business income must not exceed 20%
- GST is applicable even for charitable organizations.
- If your income from supply of services crosses 20 lakhs or

income from supply of good crosses 40 lakhs you need to register under GST

CSR

- The organization must be registered either as trust, society or section 8 company
- The organization must have both 12AA (now 12AB) and 80G
- Organizations have a choice between 12AA and 10(23c). While the latter can be more useful, particularly for research organizations, it is not accepted by CSR laws
- The Organization must have a track record of at least three years of service
- CSR funds can only be given for Projects & Programs for activities under Schedule 7 of the Companies Act
- Since 2021, companies have to show full utilization of funds or have unspent funds returned
- An Organization can book CSR funds under 'Liability' rather than 'Income' to avoid returning unspent funds
- Reporting, Monitoring & Evaluation, Impact
- Assessment is required

- There is a 5% cap on admin expenditure for companies and not for the not for profit organization

FCRA

- FCRA amendments do not allow for sub granting of FCRA funds
- Service agreements (or grant agreements disguised as such) are not a solution to this and require caution.
- A Non Resident Indian is not a foreign source and funds from NRIs do not fall under FCRA
- Contribution from an Overseas Citizen of India, even if currently residing in India, will count as foreign funds
- If foreign company is working under a license in India will count as foreign donors but not companies registered in India, under the Indian Companies Act
- Admin costs have to be limited to 20%

NGOs today are square pegs trying to fit into round regulatory holes. So what can be the solution? A social enterprise? A For Profit model? Perhaps, a dual entity— combining both— is what you need.


Aniket Doegar

Co-Founder-CEO,
HAQDARSHAK


Haqdarshak is a social enterprise focused on helping people access government schemes – bridging an information gap. Our fundraising journey has been a continued hustle. In 2015, Haqdarshak pivoted to a for-profit model, and was incubated in IIM Ahmedabad. Through this, we received support from Airtel, NASSCOM, and others.

The initial focus of our fundraising process was our journey – what the platform would look like, and digitizing over 7000 government schemes. At first, the process was filled with excitement, winning multiple grants, and receiving a lot of encouragement from key supporters. Following the first two years, we entered the evidence piece, where we faced crucial questions on impact. This is when we faced a number of struggles, and had to develop a stronger idea of how to raise funds effectively.

At this time, our for-profit model was not being understood by for-profit companies, because we were impact-oriented, and not making a profit. We spent a lot of time building the internal team. We realized that one of the key things in the scaling period is how you can build the team with you, staying focused on building the product, true to our values.



Instead of solving a multitude of complex issues, by focusing on key mission of the organization, one can focus on effectiveness.



One of the key strategies we have focused on during the fundraising journey is focusing and delivering on a central problem. Instead of solving a multitude of complex issues, by focusing on key mission of the organization, one can focus on effectiveness. Due to this, we turned down funding which demanded work in areas other than our core product. Today, we reach 25 different states, and around 125,000 families a month, and 2.2 million families and small businesses. In a country like India, scale is crucial. To work effectively at scale, one does have to work with the government, and prove they have scaled their work.

Organizations with Haqdarshak's model, a for-profit with a social impact focus, are still unique in India. There is still no clear definition for 'social enterprise'. However, it is a space where many different factors come together, and many bodies can collectively interact. Particularly given the current FCRA regulations, there is a great opportunity to set up private limited social enterprises. Haqdarshak is still on its fundraising journey, and with the team and platform we have built, we are in a sustainable and scalable position.



PANEL

Building Funding Collectives

Moderator:

Shantanu Ghosh,
Independent Advisor,
Growth Partner, Investor

Panelists:

Aakanksha Gulati
Director, ACT Grants

Amit Chandra
Founder, A.T.E. Chandra
Foundation

Prachi Windlass
Senior Director - India,
Michael & Susan Dell
Foundation

Priya Naik
Founder & CEO, Samhita

SHANTANU GHOSH: How has the longitudinal story of the funding collective evolved in terms of scale, ambition and the desire to come together?

PRACHI WINDLASS: The biggest evolution in the idea of the collective is ambition, and how these collectives have emerged as bolder and bigger. For example, the quality education bond in a partnership with UBS Optimus foundation, British Asia Trust, and MSDF, had a vision to impact 300,000 children. The result was that we were able to achieve 10X of this goal. The second phase of this vision is totally different – the number

of children impacted is in millions, focusing on foundational literacy. The second trend in terms of evolution is that there is a convergence around creating deeper impact and outcomes, which would be near impossible for organizations to achieve alone. An example is the Skills Impact bond in partnership with British Asia Trust and MSDF, where the outcome was to not just look at employment in terms of placement, but also retention. Collectives help in taking away the distraction and ‘white noise’ and putting the emphasis back on common parameters and outcomes as the key focus area.

Finally, there has been an evolution in the level of trust. There is an environment of trust, with domestic funders and partners coming together to collaborate at a level which would have been difficult to accomplish in previous years.



SHANTANU GHOSH: What are your insights/learnings regarding working as a collective?

AAKANKSHA GULATI:

A key-learning was that there are war-time collectives and peace-time collectives, both of which operate very differently.

During war-time, the conditions for collaboration are conducive: there is already an end-goal, a guiding

force, a vision and the focus is on providing a platform where solutions are galvanized in a data-driven manner. The genesis of collaborations under ACT grants took place during COVID phases 1 and 2. We were able to map out needs across the country and forge solutions in a data-intensive manner. There is also a high level of gratification, in raising funds, disbursing them in a data-oriented manner and actually seeing impact on the ground.

Peace-time collectives are very different. Having a common goal to orient people towards becomes vital. Gratification is slower because impact happens slowly, and more patience is required to see accelerated progress on the ground.

Collectives require that individual needs are met first, and then catering to the collective's larger needs. This makes working in collaboration harder, because the individual organization's needs cannot be side-stepped. Therefore, the question is: how do we enable more organizations to thrive? If more organizations thrive, the ability to collaborate will be deeper.

Lastly, we explore how collaboration can be a central part of our identity at ACT. Collaboration and capacity-building should be a part of our core – grant-making and creating avenues to build both likely and unlikely partnerships together is what will accelerate change.

SHANTANU GHOSH: What should the ambition of these collectives ideally be? Also what can collectives learn from the financial services industry, to really scale up in an effective way?

AMIT CHANDRA: As a small family foundation, A.T.E Chandra Foundation has been working with collectives for 10 years now.

Firstly, you must have audacious goals. Building Ashoka University, joining forces with Ashish Dawn and Sanjeev Bikhchandani, with the aim to raise 750 crores to build a liberal arts institution which would be a beacon for other universities, was an audacious goal. Health was the other vertical ATECF was involved in, to build an eminent pediatric hospital, which at the time was beyond our financial means.



Today, we have been able to accomplish that goal by bringing together 15 philanthropic families.

The second point is that a lot of these audacious goals are only possible if you put purpose before self – Ashoka and the pediatric hospital were propelled by a shared vision. The governance of these institutions are not entrusted within the founders’ families and the focus is purely on solving a problem and building a solution that is sustainable.

The third point is that to galvanize collectives, it is important to show excellent results and impact. While looking for examples from financial services industry collectives that would be relevant to the social sector, in my opinion, we found none. On the other hand, there are plenty of successful replicable models from the social sector that can be lent to other sectors – during COVID this was especially seen to be true.

There are plenty of successful replicable models from the social sector that can be lent to other sectors – during COVID this was especially seen to be true.

For example, GiveIndia, the most prominent organization that provides retail funding to the social sector. We, along with a few other partners such as Gates Foundation and MSDF among others, decided to give a 30 crore grant to GiveIndia to help increase its impact. Two years later, they raised 1000 crores INR, which is huge growth. This is an example of how collectives can be truly powerful.

SHANTANU GHOSH: What are the elements to retain in collectives during peace-time (as opposed to collectives during war-time)?

PRIYA NAIK: It’s key to work on the foundational elements of a collective during peace-time. During COVID, REVIVE was mostly reacting to crises, but now we have the time and the ability to build capability, data, processes. Secondly, the social sector is moving beyond CSR and

donor agency money, and towards unlocking government money and others beyond the usual sources of funding. This creates a business and financial logic and metrics behind the partnerships and collaborations forged, so the social impact factor goes beyond a unifier. The third element is technology, which has the potential to help us harness and change the way we unlock solutions in the social sector.

SHANTANU GHOSH:

How do you show results, when instant impact may not be available?

PRACHI WINDLASS:

Impact and outcomes need to be at the core of the conversation – from the start and the consortium needs to be clear about this. There are also backbone organizations like Sattva and Dalberg that work on M&E, and help dial up the performance of each partner.

Are collectives the route to unlocking retail participation in formal philanthropy?

AMIT CHANDRA: First, there is a need to build retail platforms like

GiveIndia, which offers a credible opportunity for millions of people, in unlocking retail philanthropy. We also need a reimagined, strategic and bold approach towards retail fundraising. There is a dearth of campaigns that engage retail donors in any meaningful way, with people citing high costs and low returns from those campaigns. However, retail building is actually the best source of long-term funding to unlock – since you can use the funds as unrestricted money for capacity building and organizational development, unlike CSR and HNI money which tend to be shorter term in use.

SHANTANU GHOSH :

What is the approach towards trust building between different partners?

AAKANKSHA GULATI: It is important to have the belief that you can make a difference. Additionally, having preliminary conversations can lead to immense learnings about mutual needs, goals and priorities, before starting ambitious projects and goals.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Funding Collectives make sense for an ambitious, bold, and wide-ranging solution, not for an isolated problem
2. Collectives are primarily a problem-solving exercise and not a brand-building one
3. Collectives require trust, for which you need backbone organizations and galvanizing agencies, as well as openness to multiple perspectives and solutions
4. Flexibility is essential to course-correct and innovate
5. There is a difference between war-time and peace-time collectives. In the former, the focus must be on quickly solving the problem with maximum leverage, and in the latter, on building core competencies and capacities of individual members.



Anushri Alva

CEO,
ADHYAYAN QUALITY
EDUCATION FOUNDATION



At Adhyayan, we are dedicated to enable leaders in education to answer the questions: How do we know our schools are good schools? What do we do to make them good? Our goal is to help multiple stakeholders in the government ecosystem develop a shared vision of what good schools look like, and then learn how to measure and work towards it.

When I think of Adhyayan's fundraising strategy over the last two years, I call it "Counterintuitive Jenga." Jenga, for those not familiar, is a game where players destabilize a tower of wooden blocks, where you pull out blocks from the bottom and stack them higher and higher so that when your opponent touches it, the whole thing collapses.

How interesting would it be if we played this game counterintuitively, where players are not competitive, but cooperative? Players would be collectively incentivized to build the strongest, most stable tower. Adhyayan's journey over the last two years was a series of counterintuitive decisions that allowed us to foster unlikely partnerships, that enabled us to not only stay afloat, but also grow.

Here's what we learned from our game of collaborative Jenga.

- **Focus on the goal and not just survival.** In 2020, we were three years old, and almost entirely dependent on one institutional donor. Then, they had a moratorium on renewals, and let us go.

I was in shock – we lost 90% of our funding. We had to downsize our operations and team. We started listening and responding to needs and changes on the ground, with the goal of improving education systems in mind. With the Government of Goa, we co-created a program, sticking to our larger work of helping school and system leaders use data for self-evaluation. This traction on the ground, during the peak of the pandemic, got the attention of other donors, and we slowly saw funding return.

- **Pursue growth and stability simultaneously.**

We often got the advice to focus on stability first, and growth later. But while this is logical, we needed to grow. For one, our flagship geography in Goa was not attracting funds. Through a lot of deliberate and intentional pitching, we got the support of two more state governments, one of them ironically being one of the smallest receivers of philanthropic funds. However, we realized that there was a lot of

state and district level funding to be tapped into. Also, through our Board, we onboarded a new donor. Through this, we managed to keep our core team through the crisis. Stability and growth were not mutually exclusive.

- **Use your non-dominant hand.**

We had come to believe there was one kind of donor for us – institutional, who liked data-driven governance, policy, and scale. We knew how to talk to this donor, we knew what got them excited – this was our dominant hand. However, during the pandemic, this type of donor had stepped back to strategize, but retail giving had exploded. We started a program where we paired private school students with government school students to co-create projects, where they would also understand our work better. If they felt compelled, we would train them in crowdfunding so they could raise money for us. This caught on amongst many private schools. In 2019, individual donations contributed 7% of our budget, and in 2021, this was 17%

- **Stay responsive and co-create contextually.**

The designers of Jenga wanted to introduce randomness to the game – each block has slight unevenness, and inconsistencies. This means no two towers are exactly the same. You can't predict two moves ahead, but have to respond in that moment with your co-players. At Adhyayan, we had a clear sense of our fundraising goals, but avoided having a rigid path. We recognized donors were as dynamic as us, and we had to stay responsive. When donors said "no", we still asked them for feedback, and kept in touch. One such donor recently helped us secure funding.

In 2020, we lost 90% of our funding to one institutional donor. Today, we have 11 institutional donors, thousands of retail givers, and secure funding for all our programs. We know that even if the Jenga tower collapses, there will be many with blocks in their hands who will help us build back again.



Legacy in Giving

Moderator:
Shilpa Kumar, Partner,
Omidyar Network India

Panelists:
Amit Chandra,
Philanthropist &
Founder, A.T.E.
Chandra Foundation

Mekin Maheshwari,
Founder & CEO, Udyam
Learning Foundation

Sanjeev Bikhchandani,
Founder &
Vice-Chairman, InfoEdge

SHILPA KUMAR: Working at Omidyar, I sometimes realize how critical the role of the philanthropist is in the ecosystem. We have spoken about capital that is patient, support that is flexible, and doing what it takes to support the entrepreneur. Given that I have with me three first generation entrepreneurs, and first generation givers, building their giving legacy, I will ask: **How did you think about philanthropy when you first started giving? What was your approach?**

AMIT CHANDRA: Reflecting on the past, the journey was not really well thought out, visionary, or

planned! It's been a very organic journey – the most important thing we did was get started. We kept learning, kept reflecting on what to do differently and better, with course-correcting every few years. Importantly, we also redefined our objectives as our income increased. The first phase of our journey was individual, i.e., supporting individuals with things like scholarships, etc. The second phase was institutional, making grants to NGOs and other organizations. And the third phase was systemic, trying to impact the system itself, so many organizations can benefit. Earlier we were also

diversified in terms of sectors, and now we focus on two main verticals.

SANJEEV BIKHCHANDANI:

I don't have a strategy, or a vision – we don't have a foundation, nor are we looking at multi-generational legacy. A friend ran a non-profit, and asked if I would be on the Board. She then asked for a bit of money to run the organization, and I started giving there. Then I gave to my business school. Then I got the idea for Ashoka University, discussed it with Ashish Dhawan, and gave to that! When CSR became a law, we began the process, and now support 25-30 organizations, including Ashoka and Plaksha universities. At this point, the Board had a discussion, deciding to focus 85% of the funds on education and employability, and in Delhi-NCR, where we were headquartered. This was the beginning of a strategy. At this stage, regarding our personal giving, we don't have the ability to audit, or conduct monitoring & evaluation, so we go by causes we believe in, and who we know and trust.

MEKIN MAHESHWARI:

I have just gotten started. Most of my philanthropy has been through my own organization, Udhyam. Like Amit, there's been a lot of learning in our early days. The spirit has been of support when I meet young entrepreneurs – how can I add a little bit to making this person go forward? I find the divide between philanthropists and entrepreneurs in the nonprofit space much bigger than in the for profit space. We should be on the same side, although we have different resources. I may bring in money, but they bring drive, fire in the belly, and youth. When I see ideas, sometimes crazy ideas, but that I would like to see bring change in the world, that's what I'm working with right now. Supporting those entrepreneurs.

SHILPA KUMAR: I agree with you that it has to be talent that drives the solution. Large problems are being solved through smart people and technology. Problems being solved at scale happens when seed investors, angel investors support people with bright ideas.

What role do you see with patient, flexible capital – core funding – in supporting the person that makes it happen?

SANJEEV BIKHCHANDANI:

I will interject that for the biggest problems, you have to fundamentally work with the government. For real scale, you can't do it on your own.

AMIT CHANDRA:

We imagine problems are going to be miraculously solved with passionate entrepreneurs playing with one hand tied behind their back. They are expected to solve problems much bigger than in the for profit world. Even if you give adequate resources and technology, you can reach a threshold. I completely endorse Sanjeev's point. Most of our work with farmers, we are clear that all the work we are doing is to demonstrate to state governments what is working, so they can replicate it at scale.

MEKIN MAHESHWARI:

I want to bring in two other levers or channels of scale. One is technology, globally and in India – this is not used enough. Wikipedia and Signal are the biggest B2C nonprofits in the tech domain. The second is scaling through communities, with simple replicable constituency models. The government is the largest and most central, but the others are major channels of scale as well. The government is also not a monolith, it is made up of individuals, in particular positions that may like the work you do. The best approach in my experience is not viewing government as a different side, but that there is a common problem, that can be solved together.

SHILPA KUMAR: Were there any learnings for you investing in early-stage entrepreneurs?

SANJEEV BIKHCHANDANI:

The main need is if the model is replicable. At Ashoka, we realized that India needs 100 Ashoka Universities, but we could only create one. The same happened with IIT, where the government created 5, and then 1000 similar institutions popped up.

What works well in India gets copied. Therefore, the problem solution at scale will not come from you, but from where others including the government have copied you. You can remain small, but have to show the way. You don't have to scale yourself.

SHILPA KUMAR: What does systemic change mean as a giver?

AMIT CHANDRA: We have a good sense of the daily challenges faced by nonprofit organizations. Over the last 10 years, what we have tried to do is think about what are the missing pieces for nonprofits, and solving them one by one. Some examples are IDR, CSIP-Ashoka for knowledge building. We've probably been involved in 10-15 organizations that have served these needs for organizations and the ecosystem. The same goes for movements, like Daan Utsav. We've started a water security movement, building a consortium, that can be scaled. It's gathering traction ultimately, building templates that can become broad based movements in the country. Another part of the 'replicability' question is

insisting on knowledge-sharing. We try to publish a lot of what we do, the learnings from things we've funded are continuously gathered and disseminated.

MEKIN MAHESHWARI:

I learned a lot from reading Paul Graham's essays. He was an early founder who had penned some 30 essays that were nuanced and detailed. He said "An idea is worth nothing, it's about the execution." So, focusing the energy of people into the right channels and problems is necessary. Very few of us understand the Asha workers, Anganwadi systems, or even MGNREGA, and many of these simpler institutional systems, let alone what other nonprofits have done in the space, and how. We aren't standing on their shoulders. We should be understanding these efforts, and celebrating their impact.

SHILPA KUMAR: As givers, are we putting too much burden on entrepreneurs in the sector to demonstrate the best model, including replicability? Given the time and money constraint for organizations, what can we as givers do to make up for it?



SANJEEV BIKHCHANDANI:

In every organization, there are aspects that can be cut and expanded. For example, we work with an organization that was providing worksheets & toolkits to families for at-home learning. Instead, we got them to upload it to the website, so it can be freely downloaded. The same material could be reaching 100,000 people then, instead of just 5000. And it cost nothing. There are always these cost-cutting measures that can be found.

MEKIN MAHESHWARI:

As funders, we should always give M&E support, along with programmatic funding.

AMIT CHANDRA: Ideally, we would see the best talent and resources going to the organizations with the best social model. Those who would solve the problem in the best way. Unfortunately, this doesn't happen in the social sector. We see the death of an

NGO as a bad thing, where it doesn't necessarily have to be on an ecosystem level. Then, resources can be redeployed for better models. Sometimes, we have bad leaders, or other reasons why organizations are not delivering on outcomes.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- The three possible phases for a philanthropist's journey in giving: Giving to Individuals, Giving to Institutions, and finally, Building Systemic Change
- Personal giving is led by trust in causes and individuals
- The divide between philanthropists and entrepreneurs in the sector needs to be bridged
- Working with the government and leveraging technology is crucial for solving problems at scale
- If your model is replicable, the solution is scalable



Ashif Shaikh

Co-Founder,
 JAN SAHAS



We founded Jan Sahas 21 years ago in a small district in Madhya Pradesh. I come from a Dalit Muslim family, and saw exclusion, discrimination on a day-to-day basis that many such communities face. In our work, we are not trying to help others, but our own community – that is the base idea.

I am not sure if 'fundraising' is the right word for us. We are not just raising the funds, but also giving something back to the donor. For example, in our work on manual scavenging, we reached out to several philanthropic initiatives and potential donors, but realized we have to start with donor education. Most of them didn't believe that manual scavenging practices still existed in India. We established the issue first, with a lot of data and information, and then asked them to contribute.

Some of our key fundraising learnings from the last two decades of experience:

- **Diversity is key.** We started with two villages in Madhya Pradesh. Now we work with 20,000 villages across 13 states. There are 2000 team members in the organization – of which 90% come from the communities we work with. Most importantly, the communities own the work. As a result, across our Programs, about half our funding comes from the target communities, and the other half can be raised from philanthropies and donors. ***Diversification is not only important when it comes to what kind of philanthropic donors we have – CSRs, HNIs, families, foundations – but also in ensuring community ownership and participation.***

- **Scale and depth go together.** We cannot treat them in competition, or ‘versus’ one another. Depth comes first, creating a sustainable model, testing the solution, then you can scale with the support of funders and/or government. Back to the example of our work in manual scavenging, we started a campaign that worked in one district for a year. We liberated about 200 women from manual scavenging work, and then approached the government at a national level, who then implemented the program at scale.
- **Data is an essential part of the story.** Most funders are ultimately interested in the data part of the impact. However, when you work with the community as we do, it is important to communicate the human story. Data has an important role strategically, but we must respect the lived experiences, and emotional stories of those involved.
- **Fundraising goes beyond highlighting your organization’s work.** Before the pandemic, the struggle of migrant workers was invisible. It was very difficult to demonstrate to donors that this was something they could invest in. During the pandemic, however, we conducted a study on the state of migrant workers and released it as a report called ‘Invisible Citizen’. This was picked up by media, and funders began realizing this was an important issue for them to include in their portfolios. In this case, we had to bring awareness about the issue at large, before approaching funders about the work we do. This process helps not just your organization, but everyone who is working to solve the problem. *Working at the ecosystem level is vital in sustaining our fundraising strategy.*
- **Working together is key.** In the sector, certain issues are highlighted at certain times. After 3 years, there will be another hot-button issue that has caught the attention of donors. How do we sustain funds in this kind of changing environment? For us, the learning was creating a collective of organizations working in similar domains. For example, in the manual scavenging issue, our coalition was able to raise \$18 million collectively, by combining our fundraising efforts and therefore demonstrating scale.
- **Keep innovating.** For some of our programs, we are completely dependent on philanthropic and institutional funding. However, we were able to change our model to increase funding streams. In the migrant labor programs, we approached companies and industries who are dependent on migrant labor to pay for our services. Philanthropic money can be used for testing our work, and then we can approach governments and industries to scale our solutions.
- **Every team in the organization can work together to fundraise.** For any kind of fundraising, you need clarity around the problem and the solution. That is why we must engage all teams – communications, programs, fundraising, and others – in the fundraising process.



Mahi Titus

SENIOR MANAGER - FUNDRAISING,
DREAM A DREAM



Rome wasn't built in a day, but they were laying bricks every hour. This describes our fundraising journey at Dream a Dream. Over the last few years, our funding has grown threefold, we built systems for managing donor details, gained widespread recognition for our work, and gone from a founder-driven strategy to institutionalizing the process within the organization.

Here are our fundamental learnings:

- **Failure is a given in fundraising.** Vishal Talreja, our founder, told me that 90% of the time, the donors will reject you. *I was forced to shift my mindset to see that rejection is not a failure, but an opportunity to identify gaps, and understand the donor better.*
- **Ensure value alignment between you and the donor.** This means meeting the donor where they are, and building the bridges to our work and what we are trying to do. The flip-side is that sometimes, you can't find alignment, and have to make tough calls to not continue with certain partners.
- **Continue diversifying the funding portfolio.** Currently we have three main channels: CSR, grants, and corporate foundations. Each donor has specific strengths and areas of interest. Finding a good mix is not just about donor type, but also spreading the donors across different strategic areas of the organization. This could be direct impact, or systems demonstration, or building the field around our direct work. This lends stability to the organization.

For example, having a split between FCRA and domestic funding has helped us manage the regulatory changes that have been happening.

- **Invest in building trusting relationships.**

They aren't just money bags! They are key players in shifting the larger ecosystem. For us, that means we have donors who are deeply involved in our strategy-building, others who help with building our culture and capacity-building, some have connected us to other funders, or their employees as active parts of the interventions we run.

- **Shift your mindset from scarcity to abundance.**

The strategy of Dream a Dream determines the funds we raise, not the other way around. This means we aren't competing with other organizations. We are generous with supporting each other. We are collectively growing the pie.

LESSONS FROM THE PANDEMIC

COVID threw a spanner in the works for all our plans.

Having 18 months of cash flow available gave us the space to be there for our communities. I was in the ILSS Fundraising Program at the time, and that community, particularly the opportunity to hear from mentors, was invaluable.

We also had to have honest and direct conversations with our donors, where we shared our challenges. Our donors were empathetic and supportive, and did not pause our funding. They gave us the space to figure out how to adapt our work to the online space. We also developed our 5-year strategy, which helped us receive support from Mackenzie Scott.

Here were the main 'bricks' with which we have built:

- **Building credibility through recognition and awards.** This helped boost the understanding and appreciation of our work. Being a 2020 WISE award winner for our partnership with the Delhi government validated our systems-change work at the global level.
- **Learning to be more adaptive.** Being nimble in our tactics, while

being grounded and clear in what we're seeking has been helpful. The rate of change in the fundraising space and landscape, whether it's because of the pandemic or policy, has forced this on most of us now.

- **Nurturing long term relationships with funders.**

We kept donors informed even when we weren't receiving any funding from them, and let them know where we were on our journey. We've had funders who stepped away from a partnership with us, but because they knew where we were, are now back and contributing in a completely different area than they were before.

- **Focusing on raising multi-year funding.** This helped us develop sustainability and stability for the organization.
- **Making sure you're having fun.** Fundraising has scope for creativity, innovation and excitement. We aren't just fundraisers but fundraisers!



PANEL

Institutional Funding in India

Moderator:

Pritha Venkatachalam,
Partner,
The Bridgespan Group

Panelists:

Arnav Kapur,
Lead - Philanthropic Partnerships India & South Asia,
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Hrishikesh Parthasarathy,
Chief Programs & Strategy Officer,
Azim Premji Foundation

Shaveta Sharma-Kukreja,
CEO, Central Square Foundation

PRITHA VENKATACHALAM:
What are the top threats & opportunities for nonprofits in the next few years from your perspective?

HRISHIKESH PARATHASARATHY: I want to reflect on the effect of COVID on social impact organizations, and funders. COVID has shown us the strength and resilience of nonprofits in India. A crisis of this scale cannot be managed from home. Nonprofits were with communities throughout the crisis, which meant many people succumbed to the virus as well. There are a series of issues the sector was

facing before COVID. The first is the inability of non-English speaking grassroots organizations to reach funders like us. The second is the recent FCRA regulations, especially with regard to sub-granting, which have sounded a death knell for many organizations. The whole grassroots space is going through a crisis.

PRITHA VENKATACHALAM: 83% of organizations during the pandemic said that it was a big challenge to raise non-programmatic funding. **How do you look at building stronger nonprofit institutions?**



ARNAV KAPUR: We have specific strategies for each of our key focus areas, and work with our partners closely to co-shape articulations, grants, and results. We also have partnered with EdelGive on the GROW Fund, and with Bridgespan on Pay-What-It-Takes on core funding, as well as with CSIP at Ashoka University, and Dasra, who work on capacity building in the sector. Most of our funding is in the domain of health, split largely between UP and Bihar. We have MoUs with governments, who, as others have mentioned, are required for work at scale.

PRITHA VENKATACHALAM:
What sustains the donor grantee relationship over time, and especially in times of distress?

SHAVETA SHARMA-KUKREJA: Central Square Foundation has had an

interesting journey, as for the first 5 years, we were a grant-making organization. But, at the same time, we had a strategic donor – Gates Foundation. The donor must be strategically aligned with the purpose of funding. If the articulation is very programmatic, then when the schools shut, fundings can shut. But if the core alignment is on the issue area, and systems reform, it will be a slow burn process. We had the chance to view it as: when schools next open, are we better prepared than we were in April 2020? Finally, have critical and honest conversations. Be in sales mode until you are securing the grant. Seek not just approval from donors, but consultation. Take the onus to approach it not just with the highest standards of integrity, but also in a consultative capacity.



PRITHA VENKATACHALAM: How can the sector become equitable in looking at nonprofit support?

HRISHIKESH PARTHASARATHY: Funders aren't fully equipped for this kind of work. There are a few ways, however. One way is that social sector leaders across the country can become informal grant-makers on behalf of funders. We also can clarify the role of the donor. It is upto the donor to get out of the way – they struggle with this. What they need to do is understand the program first, then determine whether they can trust the person executing it, and let them do so. It's something we have to be careful about.

PRITHA VENKATACHALAM: How can NGOs build resilience for a rainy day?

SHAVETA SHARMA-KUKREJA: Corpus is not a five-year journey. It's something we need to work towards now. Who are the donors we already have that will write even a small check toward corpus? Start this exercise from year one. The time and effort that needs to go into budget, scenario, financial planning is necessary. For our partners, the first couple of months is figuring out whether we truly understand budgets. The moment you deprioritize this, it becomes overwhelming to come to in year two and three.

PRITHA VENKATACHALAM: What's your advice to those working in systems reform?

ARNAV KAPUR: We have to look first at what comprises a system. It's a loaded word. A health system, for example, is health financing, technology, supply chain, providers, insurance companies, public & private sectors, and the community as the anchor. So we have to start from looking at these as a system and identifying the gaps, along with the ultimate goals. Let's say reducing out-of-pocket expenditure is the goal – how do we get there? In this exercise is where the co-creation lies. Everyone has a thesis for where the problem is, so bringing together all of these is key. We also have to determine where we come in in the co-creation.

Every large systems reform will have 5-6 key elements. But the large point is that the goal needs to be a bold vision, not just for one district. You can do it one district at a time, but the goal needs to be larger.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- There is a critical need to build bridges between grassroot organizations and funders
- The donor-grantee relationship must be reframed as a collaborative partnership
- Institution Building funds are critical for organizations to build resilience
- Organizations must approach corpus building as a long term exercise
- Systemic reform requires co-creation of solution by all its constituent bodies



Siddhant Sachdeva

Co-Founder,
 ROCKET LEARNING



It is a well known fact that 40 million of Grade 2 children do not have recognitional ability of letters and numbers. The problem in education in India is oft-discussed in terms of enrolment numbers and dropouts – but we also need to focus on early education.

The Rocket Learning team realized that a big beneficiary that was missing from the entire ecosystem were parents. Our focus became getting parents and caregivers involved in the education of their children as early as possible. We want to give parents from low-income families the aspiration that their children can receive a high-quality education.

A main question for us was, does RL partner with governments or should we work directly with schools, parents, and teachers? As the government is the largest funder in the education ecosystem, we decided we needed to work with them to effectively scale. RL was then conceived as a nonprofit with a pilot of 50,000 children, working with government partnerships at district level. This served several purposes. First, it helps in effectively utilizing the government machinery. It also gives governments the confidence that they are working as partners who can access data and insights from the initiative to measure value and efficacy. Lastly, it helps in building a proof of concept, which gives the government confidence to fund the initiative at scale. Rocket Learning has scaled up its impact by almost 10X in 2021-2022 and is now impacting 1 million children across 6 states with a mix of funders/partners from both India and abroad.

Here are our key fundraising learnings from our journey:

- **A clear narrative about the problem and solution being offered is essential.** Our mission statement was sharpened again and again. This narrative, along with the theory of change, has been consistently communicated to stakeholders.
- **Borrow ideas from what works in the for-profit world.** For example, a product-market fit is a basic idea in the for-profit world. This was treated as key in our journey.
- **The scalability and sustainability of the solution is crucial to the fundraising strategy.** Today the government spends Rs 50,000 per child per annum. The cost of our solution is less than Rs 50 per child per annum, so it is conceivable for the government to want to pay for this solution and also engage with it at scale.
- **Creating institutionalization and ownership of the solution from the government point of view is key.** All of our programs have government names in them, according to the state. This creates greater impetus for government buy-in and institutionalization.
- **Recognition within the ecosystem is important.** RL applied for grants and accelerators within India and abroad, which lended credibility and partnerships/expertise as needed. Some examples include The /Nudge Institute, Harvard Social Enterprise Fellowship. RL was also featured as a case study in the Harvard Business Review which boosted visibility within the ecosystem.
- **It is crucial for theory of change to align with partners and funders.** This enables access to funding which goes beyond programmatic funding, for innovation and improvement.

Venkatesam Eshwara

Pro-Vice Chancellor (Development, Placements, and Alumni Relations)

ASHOKA UNIVERSITY



I have been with the Ashoka University project for nearly 10 years. Fundraising is required to build organizations, and expand offerings. I approach it as a straightforward sales job. Like a shopkeeper, one rolls up the shutter every morning and says they're open for business, and begin fundraising. To be an outstanding fundraiser, one needs to fundraise for at least half the day. You should try to sell to a new person everyday. Through this, one can build up a body of supporters. Additionally, one should engage with their funders regularly. This can include sharing resources and updates, casual conversations, formal meetings, or any other format. Through this, one is telling their funders that they're thinking about them.

These two strategies are crucial for effective fundraising:

1. **Sell everyday.** And Sell to a new person everyday.
2. **Engage with your funders and audience** as much as possible.

Annually, Ashoka's donors receive a minimum of 30 emails from their Fundraising Team. In addition to that, we meet the donors in person 4-6 times a year, through organizing University events across different cities, along with serendipitous phone conversations.

It is important to build fundraising capacity through any, and every, possible amount. Anu Prasad's work at the Young India Fellowship is an example – with a limited budget of 5.5 crores per year, it built up into what it is today. Ashoka has been built brick by brick, with no shortcuts, and there is still so much of the journey to go.

What trends do you see in the fundraising space? How it will grow over time? What advice would you give young professionals in this space?

With a population the size of India, there should statistically be more Indian institutions ranked in the World's Top 200 Universities - currently, there is one. The second point is that a funder recently gave \$1.1 billion to Stanford to build a sustainability school; in comparison, Ashoka's ultimate goal is to raise \$1 billion, and has raised \$200 million so far. To have effective

institutions which move society forward, educational institutions need to be well-funded to have the resources to do so. For India to be a leading nation in the world, it needs academic institutions which can provide the talent to get to that point. The onus, therefore, is on civil society to make sure that institutions of excellence are strengthened.

The future of fundraising for academic institutions is bright, because there is a significant shift over the last decade. There is more acceptance and understanding of the need for Ashoka in the Indian landscape. Even though fundraising is an arduous job, the opportunities to do so have grown.

Ashoka's success has also shown that there is the opportunity to ask for and raise funding to build strong educational institutions. There will continue to be an increase in universities effectively fundraising, as well as

It is important to build fundraising capacity through any, and every, possible amount.

there being more opportunities/sources of that funding.

How do you see value alignment with donors?

The value alignment process will happen in 2 ways: first, to portray a vision for the person to imagine a residue value; to paint a picture. Focusing on the impact that can be created on civil society, will allow donors to see the final outcome. This is particularly important for donors who are unsure which spaces/causes to give to. The second aspect is where donors want to give to a specific aspect/detail within the larger program. The value alignment happens when you can effectively bridge donors with these

We need to pull donors out of a programmatic funding focus, and instead shed light on the larger picture, such as building institutional capacity.

of the institution that speaks to it. A donor once wanted to support Ashoka's disability justice work, who we then connected with Ashoka's Office of Learning Support. The two entities then work and build a relationship, deepening the donor's specific engagement with the University.

How do you effectively raise for non-programmatic causes as well?

We need to pull donors out of a programmatic funding focus, and instead shed light on the larger picture, highlighting the importance of non-programmatic activities, such as building institutional capacity. India really needs strong structural capacity on the ground which will address endemic societal problems. This can occur through sustained conversations with individual donors.

How can organizations which don't have the same backing of individuals and networks as Ashoka build fundraising?

Ashoka started with two people underwriting a cheque – it was built from drawing in individuals from that, one by one, through our network. Every organization that is raising money does have networks, it's just about working those networks effectively. That process is a daily, difficult job, but is possible, and is part of the daily selling.



AMIT CHANDRA

Founder

A.T.E. Chandra Foundation

Closing Keynote

We must start building toolkits and templates for fundraising. Organizations such as ILSS that are building this knowledge and taking it to hundreds of other organizations and leaders are incredibly important.

We have been working with over a hundred partners for the past fifteen years and have

seen only a few scale up distinctively. Often, their Fundraising capability is what makes them stand apart from others along with the presence of a long term roadmap with different engines (HNI, retail, CSR etc) and their dedicated responsibilities and goals.

Have two to three anchor organizations which deeply and consciously share the vision of your organization. These will serve as reference points, get more donors for you and wave your organization's flag- someone who believes in your cause will want to give more to it. Diversification of the donor base and non-reliance on a single source of growth is recommended. It is the only solution for unpredictable events

impacting funding and programs. Spend time in identifying donors who are aligned with the organization and its cause. For such research young people can be effectively leveraged as it has become more convenient with easy availability of data. On the donor side, it is important to educate them on institution building and does, capacity building must form a crucial factor in donor proposals. It can be beneficial to identify and join collectives like Grow Fund, Give India etc. and this trend will only grow.

I have seen organizations grow over ten times in my career, and the difference is between people taking an idea and working on it versus those who sit and ponder upon it for a long time. I hope that everyone will go from the conference with immense learnings and ideas to act upon. The country holds a vast amount of funding and opportunities for people to harness and thrive with all the great work everyone here does.



ASHISH DHAWAN

Philanthropist, CEO

The Convergence Foundation

assets, or the definition of poverty. If you look at any problem in India, whether education, health, livelihoods, water, it's at a massive scale. Hundreds of millions need to be impacted, and soon – we can't let this go on for long.

Fundraising as Nation Building

In the long path of history, human development didn't happen in a very significant way until 1800 AD. It's really from the 1800s that GDP increased, per capita income increased, and so on. But really, it was the advanced countries of the Global North that pulled away at this time.

Now is the period, I think, when we will see convergence again where 'poorer' countries catch up. That bodes really well for us over the next decades. All of us who are working, across sectors, have our role to play. Everyone has to come together to bring India to where it needs to be.

That being said, all these growth metrics hide great and deep inequity. This becomes even more stark when we look at

The social sector has grown in many ways over the last decade. The funding landscape shows that sources have changed quite a bit. For one, the relevance of foreign funding has lessened. Depending on the way the government chooses to look at it, it will most likely shrink further. CSR is well entrenched in the space, and meaningful. This should double every 5 years or so.

The challenge has been personal philanthropy. While the Bain report puts out a number, it is a difficult amount to quantify. What we know is that it is low. So, how do we grow the pie? Philanthropy must be sold, not bought. Amit Chandra and Atul Satija have been critical in this shift, with GiveIndia.



If we believe that the NGO sector plays a critical role in nation building, solving the biggest problems for a better country, then fundraising is at the heart of it.

Along with other efforts and platforms, this has been done in a very sophisticated way. First generation givers, too, are at the beginning of their philanthropic journeys. There is likely to be a tsunami of giving in the next few years.

This is where fundraising becomes critical. There is a general aversion toward fundraising – this needs to be reframed. If we look at an NGO as an enterprise, at the heart, are programs, implementation, and impact. Along with that is your revenue. Without revenue, you can't scale your programs, you can't bring talent in, you can't pay for impact evaluation, nor can you build your own capacity to fundraise. We have under-invested in the profession of fundraising in building the sector. Part of it is donors not wanting to invest in capacity building, with a few exceptions.

In a way, fundraising capacity is the highest ROI and the best investment you can make. Good fundraising talent pay themselves back very quickly. More money for the ecosystem will get unlocked with better fundraisers. It also needs to be a respected profession. In the US, for example, the Bureau of Labor categorizes fundraising as a profession in the nonprofit sector, comprising of about 100,000 full-time people. It's a badge of honor to be a fundraiser. In US universities, the biggest fundraisers are the Presidents of the institution, who will proudly tell you they spend half their time or more on fundraising. This culture needs to stem from the top.

On one hand, we need the number and quality of fundraising professionals to go up, but equally, we must work on the demand. ILSS's role is not just to work on the supply, but to convince organizations they need this kind of talent, and to convince donors to carve out money to invest in this profession for their grantees. It's a chicken-and-egg situation.

If we believe that the NGO sector plays a critical role in nation building, solving the biggest problems for a better country, then fundraising is at the heart of it. If we hope to solve these issues at scale, then we need more resources, and we need to know how to raise them.



In line with our commitment to knowledge and skill building for the social sector, the conference included workshops as learning spaces for participants looking to take away some tangible skills through the day. Workshop subjects were chosen as a response to the felt needs of organizations in the sector and designed to include hands-on practice. Three workshops were offered in parallel and engaged more than **50 participants** in total.

Special Interest Workshops

DIGITAL MARKETING 101

Facilitator: **Amrit Ahuja**,
*Communications Advisor,
Michael & Susan Dell Foundation,
UNICEF - Yuwaah,
Central Square Foundation*

A strong digital presence is increasingly crucial for organizations across sectors. Keeping this in mind, the workshop was designed to support participants in building a digital engagement strategy with a focus on identifying their target audience and developing relevant communication materials.

STORYTELLING FOR SOCIAL IMPACT

Facilitator: **Ameen Haque**,
Founder, Storywallahs

As emphasized by several speakers at the conference, good fundraisers are essentially good storytellers. The workshop was designed to show the participants how to utilize storytelling tools to relay impact and create a powerful narrative around their work

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Facilitators: **Aditi Chatterjee**,
Senior Engagement Manager, Sattva
Rahul Rathore,
Senior Consultant, Sattva

A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation process is essential not just for organizational development but also as evidence of impact for funders. The workshop clearly articulated the why, what, and how of building a strong monitoring and evaluation framework.

fre 2022 would not have been possible without our supporters.

First, huge thanks to all the social impact leaders and professionals who attended the event in person, creating an atmosphere of learning, exchange, and connection. At ILSS, our work is to serve your causes for a better India.

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Thank you all for being on this journey with us.



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