

**AN EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE
BARING FOUNDATION'S INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2015–2020**

Summary of key findings

by Singizi Consulting Africa

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About the Baring Foundation

The Baring Foundation is an independent foundation which protects and advances human rights and promotes inclusion. Since 2015, our International Development programme has supported civil society organisations to address discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) individuals and communities in sub-Saharan Africa, with a specific focus on lesbian and transgender communities. Find out more:

[baringfoundation.org.uk/programme/
international-development-programme](http://baringfoundation.org.uk/programme/international-development-programme)

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Introduction

The Baring Foundation (hereafter the Foundation) is a UK-based foundation that supports civil society in the UK and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Since 2014/5, the Baring Foundation's International Development programme has been providing support to locally based civil society organisations to address discrimination and disadvantage based on gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity, with a specific interest in supporting organisations that address discrimination against lesbian, bisexual and queer women and transgender individuals and communities.

In this programme, the Foundation aims to:

- develop the capacity and financial sustainability of civil society organisations, leading to an increase in the quality and quantity of advocacy for policy and cultural change and community support;
- enhance the work of local grantmakers that fund LGBTI civil society, particularly their focus on LBQ and trans communities;
- facilitate collaboration to leverage experience and skills that achieve national, regional and international change, track civil society activity and document successful models;
- use its role as a UK grantmaker to champion the role of local LGBTI civil society and highlight the successes and challenges of our partners through our networks; and
- bring further resources to the field, with a particular focus on funders based in the UK.

It does this primarily through working in partnership with **three African grantmakers (The Other Foundation, UHAI EASHRI and ISDAO – Initiative Sankofa d’Afrique de L’Ouest)**, awarding multi-year grants

to support their work with LGBTI communities on the continent, as well as by directly supporting with core grants a small number of **civil society organisations** who work with LBQ and Trans communities in Southern Africa. The Foundation also focuses on **influencing**, by building the evidence base for working with local civil society organisations and attracting further resources to this work. It does this by awarding small grants to support activities that assist to advocate for additional resources and by establishing formal collaborations where relevant to their programme strategy.

This evaluation of the International Development programme is located within a broader programme review and is intended to inform its strategic direction for at least the next five years. The evaluation focused on surfacing answers to the Foundation's questions about the effects of its approach, the underlying characteristics of this approach and, most importantly to review those parts of the approach that should be retained and changed in the coming five years. This focus is based on the questions in the Terms of Reference, which were further adapted in discussion with the Foundation.

Methodology

The evaluation approach sought to develop a comprehensive overview of the reach and impact of the Foundation's International Development programme, while developing in-depth and qualitative insights into how that reach and impact was achieved, and what this might imply for the future work of the programme.

To develop these insights, the approach adopted included:

- a **literature review**, primarily focused on documents provided by the Foundation;
- **interviews with all role-players reached by and involved in execution of the Foundation strategy**, including the three African grantmakers, UK based grantees, 'Indirect grantees' and others;¹
- a **survey of 'indirect grantees'** (i.e. grantees of the three African grantmakers) focused on understanding the impact that the funding has had on the grantees' work as civil society organisations working with the LBQ and/or Trans and gender diverse communities, and on their views of the grantmaking process.²

These activities were then the basis for a detailed **analysis and development of the report** – which included a presentation of key findings to the Deputy Director at the Foundation and to African grantmaker partners, resulting in further refinement. Finally, **the final draft report was presented to the Board** to create a further opportunity to receive verbal and written input to the final report. These last two steps support utilisation and integration of findings into the thinking, strategy and practice of the Foundation.

¹ In total we interviewed 8 LBQ and trans organisations that received funding from the African grantmakers in East Africa, 5 in West Africa and 6 in Southern Africa; 3 direct African CSO grantees; 3 regional partners and 7 global partners; and 3 members of Baring Foundation management/trustees.

² In total we received 30 usable responses to the survey, most of which were from organisations in East Africa.

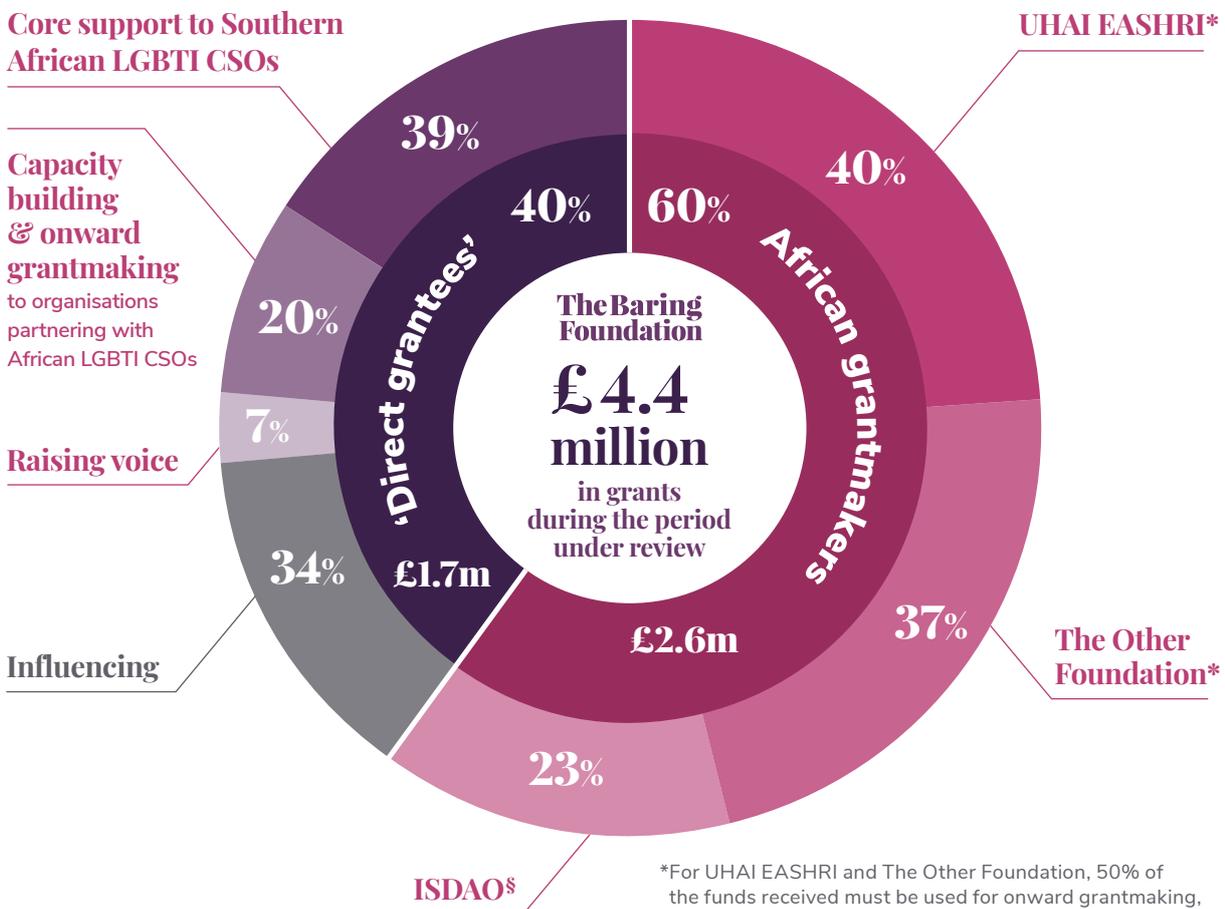
Ways of doing: reflecting on the grantmaking approach

While the questions in the Terms of Reference originally focused on the way in which the Foundation partners with African grantmakers, our findings point to a consistency of approach to grantmaking with both African grantmakers and 'direct grantees' (those organisations which it funds directly) in both Africa and the UK. We found that it is precisely in the **approach to grantmaking that change is realised**. The Baring Foundation's consistency of approach across all of its grantmaking relationships is a key finding and emerges as a theme that is interwoven throughout this evaluation.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE FLOW OF FUNDS

As indicated, the primary 'work' of the Foundation is the making of grants: since 2015, the Foundation has disbursed just under £4.4 million of which 60% (£2.6 million³) has been disbursed to African grantmakers to support onward grantmaking and 40% (£1.7 million) to 'direct grantees'.

Figure 1: Flow of funds



In terms of the agreement with the **African grantmakers**, 25% of the funds disbursed to UHAI EASHRI and to The Other Foundation are to be used for core support, 25% for programmes and 50% for onward grantmaking. ISDAO does not have these restrictions as they are new and still in the process of establishing themselves.

With respect to **'direct grants'**, referring again to Figure 1, the broad sub-categories of these grants are:

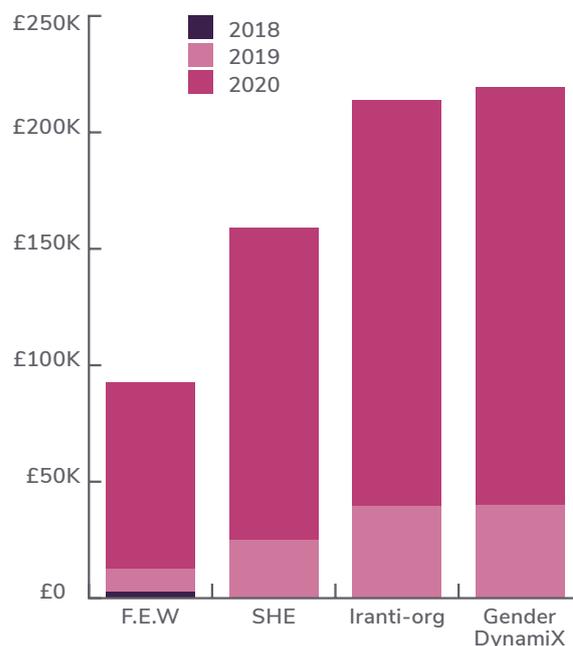
1. core support to established Southern African LGBTI CSOs;
2. support to organisations that work with African LGBTI CSOs for capacity and movement building activities and onward grant making;
3. support for activities which 'raise the voices' of LBQT individuals and bring those voices into the influencing and decision-making forums;
4. support to organisations for what we are broadly terming 'influencing'.

The direct support to Southern African LGBTI CSOs has been a feature of the Foundation's grant disbursement approach since 2019.⁴ As shown in Figure 1, this support has been provided to four organisations (**FEW**, **SHE**,⁵ **Iranti-org** and **Gender Dynamix**) which have received a total of nearly £685,000 over the period, primarily for core support but there have been some project grants made and, in 2020, specific grants to support the various organisations' COVID-19 response.

The second broad sub-category under 'direct grants' comprises two multi-year grants made to Synergia in 2018 and to the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice in 2020, for capacity and movement building, and for onward grantmaking.

The third broad sub-category here is what we have termed 'raising voices' – this covers grants made to ensure LBQT activists' presence at conferences and engagements in both the UK and Africa, as well as at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting: essentially

Figure 2: Disbursements to Southern African LGBTI CSOs



bringing leadership and representation from the LBQT movement into the rooms where plans are discussed, and decisions are made.

The fourth and final sub-category is 'influencing' – this reflects grants that address the Foundation's stated aim of 'building the evidence base for working with local civil society organisations and attracting further resources to this work'. The grants here are made primarily to organisations in the UK or the global North.

HOW THE BARING FOUNDATION'S 'WAY' OF GRANTMAKING IS PERCEIVED

This section considers whether the Foundation has been an **effective partner** for these organisations and whether **this funding and engagement has impacted their strategies and operations with a view to understanding the 'downstream impact'** of the Foundation's approach to grantmaking.

⁴ A small grant of £2,700 was made to FEW in 2018 to assist with auditing costs, but the bulk of the disbursements in this sub-category began in 2019 as shown in Figure 2.

⁵ Forum for the Empowerment of Women (FEW), Social, Health and Empowerment Feminist Collective (SHE).

A nimble and collaborative partner for direct grantees in the UK

Partners in the UK, including those who have received direct grants from the Foundation, consistently highlighted their appreciation for the Foundation's approach, which ensures that processes are nimble, responsive, and not unnecessarily onerous. A UK grant recipient respondent observed that the process had been "*all very smooth and easy*". They indicate that Baring Foundation has a thorough selection and assessment process, which allows the Foundation to award multi-year grants. These include core funding which partners suggest has been vital to enabling the strengthening of their organisations.

A strategic and respectful partner to direct grantees in Africa

Partners in Africa who are also direct grantees of the Foundation made similar observations expressing real appreciation for the Foundation's willingness to provide flexible funding rather than linking it to specific projects. This, they suggested, has made it possible to use this funding to strengthen their institution and has provided them the space to work in responsive ways in their advocacy agenda.

There was also an appreciation for the ways in which the Foundation works with the trans community ensuring that all initiatives are trans-led. One respondent commented that there are many funders that support efforts that are "*very top down – designed by international experts – and they fail... they fail because they don't bring in the people they are working with. With [the] Baring Foundation we are worked with....*"

The appreciation for an approach that supports African grantmakers was reinforced by a direct grantee who commented that the Foundation's commitment to democratising access to resources is also evidenced by "*the fact that they channel funding to African grantmakers*". The respondent commented that by relying on established organisations that have mechanisms for accountability, the Foundation makes it possible to ensure that funds – even if limited in amount – are able to reach less established organisations in specific communities. One grantee commented that

this approach has gone one step further in challenging traditional forms of grantmaking where the decisions about how resources are used are made in the North while implementation takes place in the South.

A flexible and enabling partner for African grantmakers

The Baring Foundation has adopted a flexible approach which considers the context in which the African grantmaker is working, how long they have existed for, and how established their systems and approaches to grantmaking are. African grantmakers comment on the willingness of the Foundation to "*come in at an earlier stage*" than other funders and specifically appreciate that the Foundation provides longer term, multi-year grant funding, which has allowed the grantmakers to develop institutionally and to leverage additional funding.

Over and above the funding received, African grantmakers highlight the Foundation's "*thoughtful, big picture guidance*" indicating that this is generally in response to a request for assistance. One respondent observed, "*the Baring Foundation offers support or distance based on what is required*". Respondents also indicate that they offer this 'light touch' support in a manner that is "*consistently respectful*".

...Which allows for more effective grantmaking in the region

African grantmakers spoke positively about the ways in which the support from the Foundation contributes to supporting their own grantmaking processes. They stress the Foundation's commitment to supporting participatory grantmaking, and ensuring the involvement of activists in decision making, whilst at the same time allowing grantmakers the space to "*determine their own pathways*". In this regard, respondents from the African grantmakers emphasised that the Foundation, as well as a few of their other donors, allows them the space to collectively determine funding priorities with the movement, through for example, convening sessions of activists in order to create spaces for the "*community to decide on strategic priorities*" or through in-person engagements.

Another respondent from an African grantmaker indicated that their ability to make different kinds of grants: small project-based grants for particular activities (especially where organisations do not have much capacity), larger grants that include core costs as well as emergency grants, is also instrumental in ensuring the effectiveness of their grants. This funding is then augmented by the other forms of support that they offer – beyond funding – which assists with creating the opportunities for organisations to build their systems and the space for leadership to grow.

The value of this process was confirmed by grantees of African grantmakers.

The views on the effectiveness of the African grantmakers' approach was confirmed by their grantees (the Baring Foundation's indirect grantees) who were interviewed and surveyed. They highlighted that the presence of African grantmakers creates a capacity for funding to be provided for organisations working with communities that are often neglected (LBQ women and Trans persons) even when they are not yet fully established, and confirmed the importance of these grantmakers for enabling a collective setting of priorities.

Many of the grantees also indicated that they value the openness of African grantmakers to providing core grants and highlighted the extent to which this has strengthened their capacity.

Grantees commented that they have a lot of respect for their African grantmaker stating that, “*they listen well and are also available and accessible*”. One grantee commented that they believe that this accessibility is in part explained by the reality that the staff come from the community and “*have their feelers on the ground*”. Many grantees highlighted that they were appreciative of the level of flexibility demonstrated by the African grantmaker, indicating also that their processes for applying for funding were generally accessible and that they felt supported during the application process. These views from the interviews were confirmed by the grantee survey results where over 80% of respondents agreed or completely agreed that the process of allocating and managing grants was very positive. Respondents also emphasised the importance of the support provided by African grantmakers over and above the allocation of funding.

Multiple respondents also indicate that the African grantmaker effectively plays a regional role by sharing information with their grantees using a range of mechanisms including social media and email. There is also a view that African grantmakers collaborate with and enable access to other partners, and specifically grantmaking partners, in the region. Grantees indicate that the local grantmaker consistently “*pushes grant application our way*”. Respondents all point to the learning that has emanated from these processes.

“During the application cycle, there is always a webinar... it is like a question-and-answer thing... where they tell people how to fill out the grant forms and explain the kind of information that they expect to see with the grant form. And encouragement, you know, usually to do better with the application. I find that very, very useful.”

Indirect grantee

Strengthening and funding organisations (and the movement) in Africa

This section addresses the questions of whether the work of the Foundation, including that done through African grantmakers, has supported those grantmakers to shape LBQ and Trans civil society, and the general contributions made to LBQ and Trans people.

These findings point to the importance of the Foundation's funding approach for **building individual organisations** – nearly 90% of grantee survey respondents agreed or completely agreed with the statement that, through the funding received, the organisation had been able to put in place systems which had strengthened it – **and for strengthening the movement** through collaboration and building visibility of the community (within the community and with key institutions and government departments). This has been achieved through undertaking a range of strategies and actions, which cut across thematic areas and include human and sexual rights education; reproductive health and HIV; political, social, economic, empowerment and law and justice. Activities include research and documentation, capacity building, skills acquisition and skill sharing, legal and paralegal training. Direct grantees also commented that this support has given them the space to determine priorities and to respond proactively to the crisis that has been magnified because of COVID-19.

As noted in the previous section, indirect grantees indicated that the extent of these changes is in part because the support is not restricted to funding, but that in most cases the African grantmaker was "*supportive and like mentors*". In this regard, grantees spoke passionately about the time and energy that African grantmakers put into building organisations in their regions. Indirect grantees highlighted the ways in which their staff members have benefitted from capacity building training that has been provided by the African grantmakers. They indicated that

through this support, as well as from the funding from the African grantmakers, they in turn have been able to play a leadership role in the sector and build the capacity of their organisations.

These grantees also spoke to the value of this capacity building work for **building leadership**. They described the ways in which both the approach to grantmaking employed by the Foundation, as well as the opportunities that the Foundation has created for individuals to participate in different processes, is invaluable for the development of leadership. One African grantmaker highlighted that this is an important issue for established and new organisations alike as there is a need to move beyond the charismatic founder of an organisation to a model that builds a layer of leadership within the organisation. African grantmakers also spoke to the importance of creating spaces for leaders to personally reflect on their own practices as well as collectively with other leaders. They also highlighted the value of leadership development that focuses on key strategic areas such as movement building etc.

Another area in which both indirect and direct grantees indicated that they felt that they had seen change was in relation to **leveraging additional funds** for LBQ women and Trans organisations in Africa. Indirect grantees also indicated that the local grantmaker has assisted them to access additional resources by developing their capacity to apply for funds through the feedback that they provide to grantees and also through "*opening doors*" and recommending them to other funders. A direct grantee in Southern Africa commented on the importance of the Foundation for accessing

additional funds stating that “*Baring is their first British donor*” and this “*has enabled them to start conversations with other foundations, based in the UK*”. These responses from the interviews with indirect grantees were confirmed in the survey responses, in which 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the funds received from the African grantmaker have enabled them to access additional resources and build greater sustainability.

This appears to also have contributed to the resilience of many of the grantees, which can be seen in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has seen grantees playing varied roles to support small organisations and in meeting the needs of LBQ women and trans persons. To consolidate this, African grantmakers highlighted the need to develop a ‘war chest’, or reserve fund, to better enable their own sustainability. The possibility of the Foundation’s funds being used in this way, as well as those of African grantmakers for their grantees, may require further consideration.

CHANGES REALISED THROUGH THE WORK OF ORGANISATION AND MOVEMENT BUILDING

Indirect grantees offered a number of examples of the kinds of shifts and changes that have resulted from the work that they have done with the support of the African grantmakers. These changes include: being part of Government National GBV taskforce; police officers trained by grantees are “*now serving as focal persons at the Police station, to respond to LGBTQI cases*”; shifting attitudes of immigration officers; and in another case, an indirect grantee indicated that through their advocacy, they have been able to include Intersex as a category in the Kenyan census, which is “*a first for Africa*”.

FACTORS LEADING TO SUCCESS AND THE CHALLENGES IN THIS REGARD

There were a **number of factors that emerged as critical to the success** of these grantees as well as factors that hindered this success. Some of the key factors to success include: the space to learn from others in the region; engagement with key stakeholders and community leaders; building partnerships and allies with other organisations that has allowed for an intersectional approach to human rights and giving “*people the courage ... to push on with the work*”; communities becoming more visible; emerging activists; and access to information through research work. Finally, the use of fiscal partners is seen as important for encouraging collaboration.

Factors that are more challenging include the challenge of ensuring that, firstly, there are sufficient spaces for LBQ women to collectively gather and, secondly, to ensure that those LBQ women who are visible, confident and empowered are able to remain in the regions in the context of harsh socio-political and socio-economic environments. Further, respondents highlighted the need to find ways to engage community gatekeepers who make it difficult to do the work. They point to the challenges related to conflict and competition amongst organisations and the danger of fragmentation within the movement. Finally, whilst there is a view that there has been growth in funding over the past five years, there is still a concern that there is not enough funding for the work that is required to address the imperatives of LBQ women and Trans persons.

Influencing

The Foundation has committed to use its “role as a UK grantmaker to champion the role of local LGBTI civil society and highlight the successes and challenges of our partners through our networks; and bring further resources to the field, with a particular focus on funders based in the UK”.

Respondents in the UK suggest that the Foundation is well on track to achieving this aim, indicating that the Foundation plays a role that is “*unique*”. We found evidence in this evaluation that the Foundation has recognised the role that it can play as a private foundation and that it has worked across networks within civil society, funders and in parliament to achieve this stated aim. Respondents suggest that the Foundation has done this sensitively and without occupying the space of civil society and has worked in ways that assists institutions to “*make sure that what they are doing is aligned with needs of community on the ground*”. It has done this through supporting collectives and remaining focused on leveraging funds from the UK government.

BUILDING THE COLLECTIVE

UK respondents commented that they appreciate the role that the Foundation plays as ‘thinkers’, suggesting that “*they are considered as a serious interlocuter on these issues in the UK and more broadly*”. Because of this, respondents said that they feel comfortable approaching the Foundation to test ideas and to ask for their convening ability to “*bring people together to look at something*”.

Respondents also spoke about the ways in which the Foundation has assisted in supporting different collectives. This includes their role in the Global Philanthropy Project (GPP) – including now as the co-chair – as well as their support for the All-Party Parliamentary Group on LGBTI Rights in the UK Parliament (APPG).

Members of the GPP indicated that the Foundation has been able to play the role of a critical friend amongst organisations where

there has been a lot of tension and, through creating a space “*where we could talk*”, have assisted in building a shared agenda focused on leveraging additional resources from government. This has been motivated, in part, because the UK Government is currently determining how it can position itself globally as a leader in LGBTI rights. There is, however, a shared view that working on this priority has been a complex process and not without frustration linked to changes in the structures responsible for this funding in Government and the postponement (related to COVID-19) of key events.

There has been a strong view, amongst UK partner respondents, that with these postponements there is a need to “*push the UK government to give more funds to the global movement*”. Respondents indicated that they thought that the Foundation has the relevant contacts and the ability to undertake this advocacy work while simultaneously working actively with other stakeholders and ensuring that each step was transparent and involved an engagement with different organisations.

A respondent further observed that the Foundation steers the process with a high level of realism, noting that, where there are differences, they are willing to discuss and reflect and where needed take a step back and even to “*go back to the drawing board*”. Another respondent confirmed the skill with which the Foundation plays this role, indicating that the “*level of discretion [shown by the Foundation] has let the group stay together*”, with another respondent commenting that they are able to keep everyone on board in ways that work “*and this is about trust*”.

In terms of the APPG, respondents indicated that the Foundation “*stepped up*” and supported enhanced coordination and project management for a “*disparate group of MPs*”. This funding was seen as an important “*boost for MPs who are doing this on the side and can now cohere into taking forward strategic objectives*”. A respondent highlighted the importance of the initial contribution made by the Foundation stating that, “*they have been an enabler for our effective capacity in lobbying. It is their funding that sat behind the group. Now we have leveraged additional monies from UK NGOs but that took time*”.

Respondents also indicate that the Foundation has been able to assist with the flow of information between MPs and civil society and has helped to create a basis for how these different parties can work together. They believe that this advocacy has been very effective and highlight the potential that this has both in the UK as well as more widely in the Commonwealth and beyond. What has been particularly valuable is that this has been done in a manner that foregrounds activists from the South.

This approach both makes sure that “*the UK government is a responsible leader in this context*” and “*that the South is not seen as implementors*”, which respondents suggest is often the case, but rather as part of the process of building a shared vision, which includes addressing the legacy of colonialism reflected in the reality that “*of the 53 member nations of the Commonwealth, 41 continue to criminalise consensual same-sex activities between adults. Over half the countries in the world that criminalise homosexuality are in the Commonwealth. Across the Commonwealth lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people are denied equal access to rights, education, employment, housing and healthcare*”.⁶ This ensures that the advocacy work considers complex North/South dynamics.

These findings all point to the extent to which respondents from across UK-based institutions value the work of the Foundation in these spaces, including that there will remain a delicate balance between support and playing a direct advocacy role.

LEVERAGING FUNDS THROUGH A CO-ORDINATED APPROACH

Over the last year, the Foundation has worked with UK LGBTI civil society partners to research and document options for a long-term financial commitment from the UK Government – and to develop an advocacy strategy. This resulted in the development of the *Leading the Way* report,⁷ the central recommendation of which is that the Government should commit an average of 0.3% of ODA per year to safeguard and strengthen global LGBTI+ rights.

During this review, respondents confirmed the importance of this work and the effective and focused way in which the Foundation has worked with other players to leverage monies from the UK government and in encouraging other funders to match the UK government contribution. Two main components to this work were noted. Firstly, the Foundation’s focused approach to leveraging funding from the UK government is based on the recognition that “*although there is some funding for the sector from the UK government, in reality there is a greater focus on policy statements rather than on the provision of funding for the South/East*”. Secondly, other UK foundations have seen the example of the Foundation and this has influenced their boards/trustees to fund this sector.

Respondents spoke of the advantage of the Foundation, as a private funder, assisting “*to get people interested*” in this process, suggesting that “*if Baring was not doing this work, I don’t think anyone would be as there are closed spaces on these issues*”.

⁶ *Speaking Out, The rights of LGBTI Citizens from across the Commonwealth*, Kaleidoscope Trust, outrightinternational.org/sites/default/files/Speaking%20Out.pdf.

⁷ *Leading the Way: the role of Global Britain in safeguarding the rights of the LGBTI+ community*, Ross Othen-Reeves, 2020. Available at: baringfoundation.org.uk/resource/leading-the-way-the-role-of-global-britain-in-safeguarding-the-rights-of-the-global-lgbti-community.

Respondents explained that this role is possible for the Foundation as it has the networks and is not asking for money, allowing it the space to interact across the spaces.

Respondents observed that the Foundation had worked with others to support research and one respondent commented that the Baring Foundation is “*very good at being innovative and watching where things are going*” and is very clear about what is possible and the sequence of what makes sense in the region.

BUILDING AN EVIDENCE BASE

The *Leading the Way* report is a key piece of research supported by the Foundation. Respondents spoke to the value of the practical support that the Foundation provided in the analysis of funding by the UK government of LGBTI causes around the world and one respondent observed that this research has “*been instrumental for me to make a case that if they claim global leadership in this space then they need to treble their funding. [It is a] very important piece of lobbying for the global LGBTI cause*”.

One respondent observed that the report had been used to develop a business case about the need to fund LBQ women and Trans persons that they had been able to present to their board. Another respondent, commenting on their ability to advocate to government for funding observed that, “*the research that Baring has done is another weight point. What they have done is played a crucial enabling role*”.

Another stated that they have been able to use the research to make a case for expansion for certain areas of work indicating that they had worked with the Foundation, within the context of the Global Philanthropy Project, and “*this research had helped us make the case for starting grantmaking in Kenya*”.

Generally, there was a view that while organisations in the South tend to focus on delivery, there is a lot to learn about how these organisations make things happen and how their models actively engage local communities. This, with a particular focus on understanding better the factors that contribute to change. There is also a need to build this knowledge up and then feed it into reflective processes including those that assist “*philanthropy in thinking together – so as to enable more effective grantmaking and ultimately services/advocacy*”. This evaluation has already demonstrated that UK based organisations and institutions value knowing what is happening in countries in the South as it deepens their advocacy and grantmaking. This knowledge loop could be strengthened by donors sharing evaluative work and even collaborating on evaluation where they have the same grantees.

Finally, there was also a suggestion that there is a need to monitor commitments from governments over time such that this can feed into ongoing advocacy. Ways to share this information with organisations would also need to be considered.

Overarching discussion

The results of this evaluation highlight the ways in which the International Development programme has, since 2015, focused on addressing the discrimination faced by LBQ women and Trans people in sub-Saharan Africa.

Through the deployment of a considered and respectful approach to grantmaking that is sensitive to power relations between the global north and Africa, the Foundation has contributed to achieving its aim of strengthening the work of African grantmakers, and in doing so, has created the space for African grantmakers to actively support the participation of activists and to provide grants in a responsive manner. These combined efforts have supported local civil society organisations to develop their capacity and financial sustainability and implement strategies to address the priorities of LBQ women and Trans persons in ways that best meet their needs, and in particular highlight the specific challenges around visibility in these communities.

The Foundation has reinforced these efforts through enabling increased interactions between civil society, parliamentarians and members of government, supported by research and evidence of how funding is flowing and the ways in which these resources are being utilised, ensuring that this work is grounded in an understanding of experiences in Sub-Saharan Africa. This work has both contributed to, and been supported by, powerful Trans and LBQ women leaders.

There is evidence that the realisation of these outcomes is already yielding an increase in funding from philanthropists and individuals in ways that have increased the visibility of the community and encouraged collective actions that are led by Trans and LBQ women leadership. Respondents also appear to be confident that this influencing work is poised for success and that, despite changes in structures, is likely to yield increased funding from the UK Government. All these gains – in visibility, in action, in leadership and in funding – add up

to creating significant potential for shifts in both the quality of people's lives and improvements in lived experience, and also in the broader human rights cultures and sense of realised justice in both recipient countries and the UK itself.

The evaluation findings show a pragmatic approach to achieving the aims of the International Development Programme. This has yielded positive results and creates the opportunity for the Foundation to consider which parts of the approach should be retained and what can be done differently in the next five years.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

A number of areas emerged in this review as being critical for this next period. It is emphasised though that these are priorities for grantees: as the Foundation's grants are flexible it does not suggest that there is a need for the Foundation to amend its focus in this regard. However, an awareness of these priorities may be valuable in informing the research agenda of the Foundation and so strengthen the connection between the Foundation's influencing, capacity development and grantmaking roles. These priorities are documented in the extended report, though critically, respondents spoke to the importance of understanding intersectionality and the myriad of factors including race, class, and not having access to education, for example, and how these further marginalise LBQ women and Trans persons. It was suggested that this lens is important to both understanding power relations and in defining the kinds of actions that it would be helpful to support within the context of a broader human rights agenda.

GRANTMAKING MODELS AND PRACTICES

The decision of the Foundation to work with African grantmakers has been very powerful: it has shifted power to the South to determine strategies and to make decisions about priorities. This is a significant intervention in changing traditional power relations and “*works against the traditional aid dynamic – which does not work well*”. Instead, through its practice, the Foundation has found ways to shift power dynamics towards its intended goal. This integrated approach is seen as essential to the programme and is an important dimension when reflecting on a decolonial agenda (and even more significant in the context of efforts to advocate for the removal of legislation that are remnants of British law).

Further, in providing flexible support and funding, the Foundation has created the space for different forms of grantmaking, both those that are selected through participatory panels and other grants designed against strategic priorities, collectively determined, for civil society organisations focusing on LBQ women and Trans persons across Southern, East and West Africa. The direct grants allocated by the Foundation are also considered vital to civil society organisations who receive multi-year core funding, which allows them to develop and implement their strategic plans, provide support to small organisations working with LBQT communities as well as to LBQ women and Trans persons. From interviews, it appears that these direct grants are complementary to the work of the African grantmakers, and that direct grantees are cognisant of the importance of making sure emerging organisations access smaller grants, through the African grantmakers, so that the movement as a whole grows.

In the context of the finding that this ‘blended approach’ is yielding results, the question that we reflected on is whether this approach should continue or whether it would make sense for all of these funds to be allocated through the African grantmakers. Issues that require consideration in this regard include:

1. The kind of grants that are allocated: some grantmakers have a combination of grants and include both grants selected by participatory panels and those that are strategic – often larger – grants. It is noted that there is an emphasis from some activists – and some pressure from organisations – to maximise the number of grants awarded, so spreading the grants across partners. However, there is also a recognition that this urge to distribute more equally risks undermining the goal of professionalising and formalising and strengthening organisations and lays bare one of the inherent tensions in this model of participatory grantmaking.
2. This review has highlighted learning about good practices and suggested the need for spaces for African grantmakers to share these practices in both an informal way as well as in a more systematic way, building contextual, values-based grantmaking that integrates what is often described as participatory grantmaking as well as grants that address strategic imperatives collectively determined. These engagements could consider the value of smaller grants which have wider reach and those that focus on communities where there has been limited funding and that may require specific support based on an intersectional analysis. We are suggesting that these engagements across grantmakers could also consider the different types of grants and how they affirm the value of different types of grantees and how these evolve as the capacity of grantees develops. These could include multi-year/core and project based/activity grants linked to maximum amounts, etc.
3. This review has reinforced the importance of African grantmakers and has pointed to their growing capacity, but we have also found that there are reasons to continue the Foundation’s direct grantmaking to civil society organisations focusing on LBQ women and Trans persons across Southern, East and West Africa. It was found that, for these organisations, having a direct external donor is key, both because this creates space for grantmaking decisions to be made that may be politically more complicated within a region, and because giving some grantees direct access to the Foundation puts them in a good position to access other funding in the UK. In addition, we also recognise that, in order to augment the capacity of African

grantmakers, there may be a need for funding to be channelled through UK grantmakers as these African grantmakers increase their capacity for grantmaking in the region. The caveat here is that these dual approaches could undermine African grantmakers and result in a competitive approach, and we are therefore suggesting that it is important that the rationale for the choices about when and why funds are granted directly and through UK grantmakers are made transparent, and that both UK and African grantmakers are included in (at least some) shared learning processes. This will signal that there is a recognition that there are opportunities for mutual learning and will allow for complementarities to emerge.

The need to sustain the focus on increasing the flow of funding

Across respondents there was a strong view that, through a considered, evidence-based approach to lobbying and advocacy for increasing UK (and Northern) funding to LGBTI organisations in the global South, the Foundation has been able to “*punch above their weight*” by taking the right evidence to the right people at the right time.

Respondents stressed that the work done thus far, and the profile of the Foundation in this sphere, should not be wasted: there is a need to retain this agenda and to remain focused on putting pressure on the UK government to fund these communities in an enabling manner. Respondents also recognised that it has been difficult to achieve the intended results in large part due to the dynamics in the UK in terms of the economy, challenges related to Brexit and the changing structures (the new Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, FCDO). This has resulted in delays in the funding commitment for the long-term sustainability piece, but **it was strongly suggested that this would not be the time to stop this work, given the level of commitment that has been made.**

It was however noted that there is a potential gap in funding for the sector over the next year, given delays in accessing the UK government funding – and a question was raised as to

whether the Foundation can assist in leveraging resources to ensure that UK partners can sustain their efforts until – as anticipated – the UK government funding is allocated.

Finally, respondents acknowledge that the focus on creating awareness of the disproportionate discrimination faced by LBQ and Trans communities, and the lack of funding (relative and absolute) for addressing the priorities of these communities within the broader spectrum of LGBTI communities, has been invaluable, generating resources to meet the immediate needs of these communities and using this targeted focus to draw broader lessons and conclusions about grantmaking in general and funding for the LGBTI sector more specifically. It was also highlighted that whilst there is an indication of increased funds to the LBQ and Trans communities over the past few years, the challenges – particularly in the context of COVID-19 – for these communities has been particularly severe making a continued focused approach relevant for the next phase.

Continue to build the alignment between UK and the South

The Foundation, in doing its UK-based work, has successfully managed to integrate the different components of the International Development Programme such that the UK community is enriched through learning about the experiences that have been supported directly by the Foundation and through African grantmakers. This has, in turn, combined with the Foundation’s support of the advocacy agenda in the UK, assisted in leveraging additional support and resources for LBQ women and Trans persons in Sub-Saharan Africa.

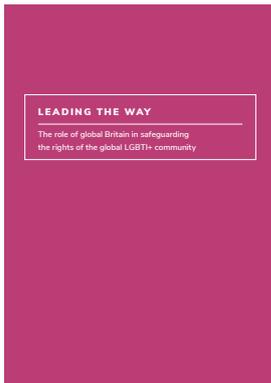
The Foundation has done this by working with institutions in the UK to “*make sure that what they are doing is aligned with the needs of the community on the ground*” and simultaneously in its approach to working with indigenous grantmakers and making sure that organisations that have historically not had access to funders in the UK are able to “*get messages in the right people – it helps as our partners would not have access*”.

During this evaluation respondents suggested that this sharing of experiences could be strengthened through a greater focus on documenting the successes and challenges of partners through the Foundation's networks. Some ideas that emerged related to joint evaluations rather than all donors requiring their own evaluation (although it was recognised that this is complex in terms of programme cycles). African grantmakers also suggested that these relationships could be further strengthened through the Foundation actively sharing the work it is doing in the UK to reinforce these learning loops.

Further, these relationships could be enhanced through an increased focus on dynamic ways of supporting collaboration as well as leadership development that focuses on LBQ women and Trans leaders across North and South. Emerging from this evaluation is the need to consider how we ensure "*that we are not reproducing problematic power – working with the same people*". There is a need to create opportunities for new voices and to work towards building "*more collective, more feminist leadership*". As part of this work there is a need to think about different ways that organisations may be able to do their work and to build leadership in ways that are sensitive to the needs of the organisation. It is noted that good practices emerged during this evaluation in this regard, which could be considered as part of a strengthened focused on leadership development.

Research supported under the Programme

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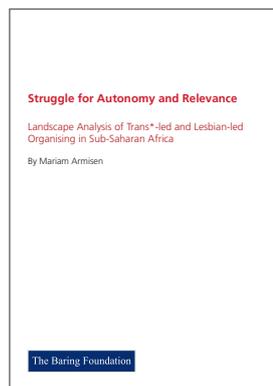
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