

Convening and Connecting HIV/AIDS Philanthropy: Building Global Partners

A Funder Reception in Vienna

On the evening of July 19th, Funders Concerned About AIDS (FCAA) and the European HIV/AIDS Funders Group (EFG) welcomed 200 representatives from more than 75 private, public and multilateral funding organisations to the “**Convening and Connecting HIV/AIDS Philanthropy, Building Global Partners**” funder reception. This first ever joint convening of FCAA and EFG provided an initial step in creating dialog among funders from across Europe and the United States in an effort to increase networking, find commonalities and explore ways of working together to address HIV/AIDS more effectively.

We were honoured to be joined by two dynamic and inspiring speakers: **Bill Gates, Co-Chair and Trustee, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** and **Annie Lennox, Founder, SING**. Both speakers encouraged the audience to remain hopeful in the face of the many challenges presented by the current economic environment and news of decreased government commitments. Ms. Lennox encouraged funders to recommit to supporting women and children, noting the tremendous transformation that can be seen in the world by investing in the lives of women. She also urged funders to recognize the human rights of people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. In the afternoon’s special session on prevention Mr. Gates spoke to a need for new efficiencies in funding to ensure we are “getting the most benefit from each dollar of HIV/AIDS funding and every ounce of effort,” and named HIV/AIDS as a top priority for the Foundation. At the reception, he outlined a number of innovative and cost-efficient tools that funders can scale-up to turn the tide on the epidemic, including: male circumcision, the prevention of mother-to-child transmission, and antiretroviral-based microbicides.

Ms. Lennox called upon the images of Nelson Mandela and the Berlin Wall to remind funders that change can and does happen, and not just by accident. *“They happen because people were committed long-term and they believed passionately in human rights. HIV/AIDS is fundamentally a human rights issue, and we are all potential agents for change.”*



Mr. Gates reminded the audience of the importance of **diversity, innovation and a strong political voice in funding the AIDS response**. *“It’s the combination of resources, innovations and ideas that allow us to say that we are making progress against this epidemic.”*

Then, with a full hour of cocktails and canapés, funders focused on networking with colleagues from across the US and Europe. Postcards disbursed throughout the reception acted as conversation starters by depicting images and stories of innovation in HIV/AIDS funding, including: the Ford Foundation's new initiative to address the domestic U.S. HIV/AIDS epidemic; supporting prevention of mother-to-child-transmission initiatives (The Elton John AIDS Foundation, Johnson & Johnson, M.A.C AIDS Fund); The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund's Palliative Care Initiative; The Greater Than AIDS initiative, a project by the Kaiser Family Foundation and the Black AIDS Institute supported by the Ford Foundation, M.A.C AIDS Fund and the Elton John AIDS Foundation; funding domestic (AIDS Foundation of Chicago) and international (the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) syringe exchange programs; the power of funders to convene (Flowers Heritage Foundation); supporting community partners (Levi Strauss Foundation) and youth prevention & awareness programs (the MTV Staying Alive Foundation); and improving the quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS in Africa. (Comic Relief).

"It's important that US, EU and global funders have the opportunity to get together without an agenda to talk and to begin to build the partnerships that will move this work forward."

John L. Barnes, Executive Director, FCAA

"In this time where our effectiveness as funders is becoming more and more critical, this is the kind of dialogue that I hope and strongly believe we'll be promoting in the future."

Astrid Bonfield, Chair, EFG Steering Committee and Chief Executive, The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund.



FCAA and EFG are pleased that this inaugural effort to create a network of US and European funders was so well received and believe that this reflects a genuine interest on the part of funders to network beyond borders. The two organisations plan to build on the momentum of this initial event to strengthen the global field of HIV/AIDS philanthropy.

FCAA and EFG extend our warmest thanks to the reception's sponsor organisations. We remain grateful for not only your support, which made this event possible, but also for your continued leadership within and commitment to the field of HIV/AIDS Philanthropy. The funder reception was generously supported by: The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund, Ford Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Elton John AIDS Foundation, M.A.C AIDS Fund, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, and the MTV Staying Alive Foundation.

MORE ABOUT AIDS2010

Organised around the theme "Rights Here, Rights Now," the 18th International AIDS Conference (AIDS2010) took place in Vienna, Austria from July 18-23, 2010 and focused on the critical importance of human rights in the global AIDS response. AIDS2010 hosted 19,300 people for nearly 300 sessions including the historic announcement of the CAPRISA 004 trial results that revealed the first microbicide to be proven effective in reducing HIV transmission for women. A new analysis released on July 18th by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation and UNAIDS found support for global AIDS efforts was flat in 2009 at US\$76 billion - data that ignited the most consistent theme of the conference: **holding donors accountable for their commitments.**

EUROPEAN HIV/AIDS FUNDERS GROUP

EFG is a knowledge-based network dedicated to strengthening European philanthropy in the field of HIV/AIDS. The group aims to mobilise European philanthropic leadership and resources to address the global HIV/AIDS pandemic and its health, social and economic consequences. In doing so, it also seeks to promote an enabling environment for strategic and independent giving in this field as well as fields closely connected to HIV/AIDS such as human rights, global health and global development. For more information, please visit www.hivaidsfunders.org.

FUNDERS CONCERNED ABOUT AIDS

FCAA mobilizes the leadership, ideas and resources of U.S.-based funders to eradicate the HIV/AIDS pandemic – domestic and internationally – and to address its social and economic consequences. Founded in 1987, FCAA is the only U.S.-based organization comprised of and for private philanthropic institutions concerned about, engaged in or potentially active in the fight against HIV/AIDS. For more information, please visit www.fcaaid.org.

