

### Introduction

In times of the COVID-19 pandemic, philanthropy has been put to the test to show its reactivity to a global crisis of an unprecedented scale. To better understand foundations' immediate response to the challenges posed by the crisis, the Development Co-operation Directorate of the OECD conducted a survey with almost 70 of the largest philanthropic foundations working for development. The survey was carried out in April-May 2020 and collected unique insights on both the financial and policy response of the international philanthropic community based in OECD countries. Responses by 27 foundations were complemented with insights from a research online on additional 21 philanthropic providers (see Annex).

As the pandemic has been spreading over the globe, hitting an increasing number of regions, foundations' response has been significantly evolving too. The timing of the survey was such that it offers unique insights in foundations' immediate response. Detailed project-level information on philanthropies' financing decisions related to the pandemic in developing countries will be collected through the regular data collection cycle in 2021 on 2020 activities.

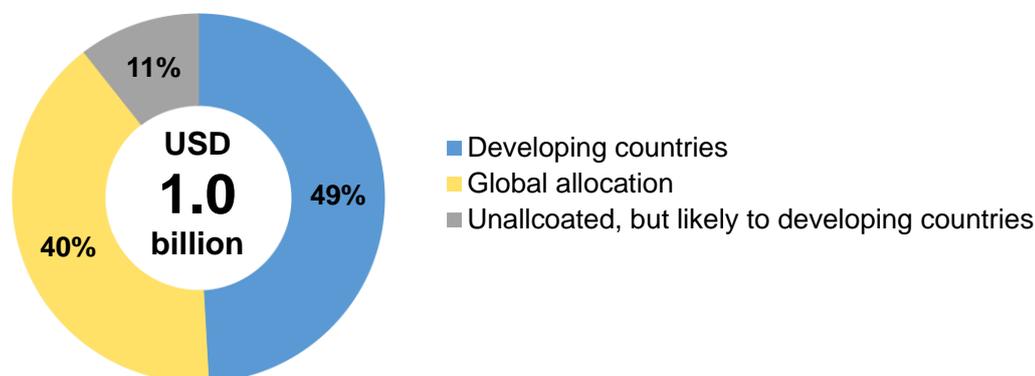
The survey was carried out as part of a larger effort targeting a broader group of development finance providers, including members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) as well as other non-DAC countries, multilateral organisations and private philanthropic foundations. This note focuses on the survey results for the private philanthropic sector but information for all providers can be found in a [broader OECD report](#) on this topic.<sup>1</sup>

### Main findings

#### Financial contributions

The survey results indicated that, by end-April 2020, the foundations had already committed approximately USD 1 billion as an immediate response to the COVID-19 crisis toward developing countries. This figure also includes commitments without a specific geographic allocation<sup>2</sup>, but assumed to benefit developing countries and global public goods, based on the general mission and geographic focus of the funding institution. In addition, some foundations provided details on their COVID-related commitments allocated domestically, towards high-income countries or not yet allocated, amounting to USD 579 million.

**Figure: Foundations' COVID-19 response allocated to developing countries and globally**



Note: the figure in this chart represents commitments of 35 philanthropic foundations, allocated to developing countries and global public goods as part of their COVID-19 response by end-April 2020.

<sup>1</sup> OECD (2020), *COVID-19 Survey – Main Findings*, see [https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD/DAC/STAT\(2020\)35/en/pdf](https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD/DAC/STAT(2020)35/en/pdf).

<sup>2</sup> While some philanthropies had put aside resources for their COVID-19 response, they had not allocated the funds to individual countries by end-May.

Focusing on the commitments allocated to developing countries (USD 491 million), Latin America and Africa appear to be the main beneficiary regions of philanthropic finance (19% and 13% respectively). Asia and Europe together accounted for 6% and the remainder of 61% was unallocated by region.<sup>3</sup> This finance has mainly targeted the health, education (e.g. distant learning) and other social sectors – either for specific projects or as core (or softly earmarked) support to the grantee organisations to help them overcome imminent financial shortfalls. Furthermore, foundations also pledged USD 404 million for global response.<sup>4</sup> Examples of such activities include support to the COVID-19 Therapeutics Accelerator, as well as the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovation (CEPI) and contributions to the WHO Solidarity Response Fund. At the time of the survey, the top five providers included BMGF, BBVA Microfinance Foundation, Open Society Foundations, Wellcome Trust and the Bloomberg Philanthropies (see section with examples below).

### **Non-financial support and policy response**

Concerning the non-financial support of the surveyed foundations, many of them aligned their response to the pandemic with their general funding strategy as agreed by their trustees. In this respect, five distinct types of non-financial contributions could be identified:

1. **Increased flexibility.** Approximately one-third of foundations, such as the Dutch Postcode Lottery and the MAVA Foundation, announced flexibility to their existing partners by lifting administrative obligations (e.g. reporting deadlines). Some philanthropies, e.g. the Ford Foundation, also loosened the restrictiveness of their grant making and allowed their partners to use earmarked funds for other purposes. In a similar fashion, some lending foundations initiated debt rescheduling discussions with their clients.
2. **Continuation of usual pay-out.** While the crisis affected foundations' endowment, many foundations manifested support to their trustees by committing to continue their grant making activities as usual and to refrain from budget cuts.
3. **Technical assistance.** Another type of non-financial support was technical assistance, such as distributing guidance on crisis management, providing IT literacy training to facilitate teleworking or conducting various research activities related to the COVID-19.
4. **Large-scale fundraising.** Several foundations showed their leadership by fundraising, establishing vehicles and launching influential engagement campaigns. For example, the Wellcome Trust announced its Covid-Zero initiative calling for USD 8 billion from the official sources and the private sectors and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) engaged in mobilising G7 leaders to secure coordinated international response.
5. **In-kind contributions.** Some of the surveyed foundations provided in-kind contributions, such as medical equipment.

More details and illustrations can be found in the section on examples below.

## Next steps

While the survey captured the immediate response of foundations and other development finance providers to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 OECD data collection round is expected to gather data on providers' response to the crisis in more detail, at the project level.

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<sup>3</sup> This includes finance committed for middle-income countries, multiple regions or global objectives.

<sup>4</sup> This includes support for activities with benefits which are non-attributable to specific geographies or population groups.

It will be particularly important for reporting institutions to clearly indicate the relevance of individual funding commitments and disbursements to the COVID-19 response for example by means of key words or hashtags.

### Examples of foundations' responses to the COVID-19 crisis

#### Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Wellcome Trust

Besides their own funding initiatives, both the BMGF and the Wellcome Trust have played a leading role in raising awareness about the pandemic, contributing to many international coordination efforts and securing political support for an immediate international response among many of the world leaders. For example the foundations actively engaged in the Coronavirus Global Response initiated by the European Commission.

- The USD 260 million support by the BMGF was targeted to developing diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines, strengthening low-income countries' health systems as well as helping mitigate the social and economic impacts of the virus. The foundation made both long- and short-term investments, including R&D on treatments and stabilizing markets for medical supplies.
- The Wellcome Trust established the COVID-Zero initiative with the objective of raising USD 8 billion to cover the funding gap for scientific research to end the pandemic. The foundation called the private sector to donate up to USD 1 billion from their crisis management budgets to the COVID-Zero fund. The funds raised will be directed to advance research and development of Covid-related vaccines, treatment and testing.
- The BMGF and Wellcome Trust, together with MasterCard Impact Fund, launched the Therapeutic Accelerator initiative, designed to accelerate the treatment of the coronavirus by coordinating and facilitating R&D efforts, and to enable equal access globally to the vaccine once available. With a cornerstone contribution adding up to USD 125 million by the three funders, the initiative was subsequently joined by the Alwaleed Philanthropies, Avast Foundation, Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, EQT Foundation, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) as well as some high-net-worth individuals.
- Furthermore, the two foundations pledged to step up their support to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), alongside government contributions from Germany, the United Kingdom and others.

#### Bloomberg Philanthropies

The Global Response Initiative of the Bloomberg Philanthropies consists of a USD 40 million partnership with the WHO and other organisations to support relief activities in low- and middle-income countries, with a strong focus on Africa. Additionally, Mike Bloomberg committed USD 10 million to the International Rescue Committee to reduce COVID-19 impacts on vulnerable populations worldwide, including through strengthening WASH systems and health care capacities in fragile communities.

#### Open Society Foundations

Open Society Foundations invested nearly USD 65 million globally and in developing countries to support low-income workers, including in the informal sector; care givers, and the undocumented; to protect refugees, migrants and asylum seekers, and to provide access to new vaccines and treatments, regardless of economic or citizenship status.

#### Ford Foundation

The Ford Foundation provided significant flexibility in the provision of funding to its existing partners. It shifted its project/programme grant making to general operating support, taking into consideration the immediate shortfall of its grantees' activities and income.

### **BBVA Microfinance Foundation**

The BBVA Microfinance Foundation adopted several measures to ease the financial burden of its clients, largely consisting of low-income entrepreneurs in Latin America. Efforts taken towards borrowers with outstanding microloans included the restructuring of loans and debt moratoriums of three to four months. Additionally, the foundation provided direct and indirect technical assistance to clients and conducted analyses of the pandemic's impact on their entrepreneurs' businesses.

### **MasterCard Foundation**

The MasterCard Foundation established the COVID-19 Recovery and Resilience Program, primarily assisting institutions and communities in Africa to respond to short-term impacts of the pandemic and to strengthen resilience in the long run. Its investments are targeted towards emergency health support, equitable education, decent work and the provision of financial services, channelled to and through non-governmental organisations and the private and public sectors. In June 2020, the foundation specified that the size of the programme was up to USD 40 million.

### **Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation**

The Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation initiated a pledge, signed by 26 organisations in the inclusive finance sector, to support microfinance institutions through technical assistance, such as pooling available information and liquidity analyses. The foundation also assisted its clients in seeking funding for new programmes as well as in debt restructuring. Moreover, the foundation created an observatory to carry out surveys and analyses and regularly shared results and observations on its website.

### **Google Foundation**

Google.org made a USD 100 million financial contribution targeting domestic and global projects with a major focus on health and science, distance learning, and economic recovery. Additionally, employees were able to carry out up to 6-month pro bono projects related to the pandemic under Google.org Fellowship Program.

### **Conrad N. Hilton Foundation**

The Hilton Foundation's financial contributions were disbursed domestically and to developing countries mainly in the African region. Funding was mainly allocated to disaster relief and preparedness projects implemented by its partner grantees, and some funding went to activities related to health and education, especially for children with HIV and AIDS. Parts of the contributions were made through its Employee Matching Gifts Program.

### **IKEA Foundation**

The IKEA Foundation committed up EUR 10 million as part of its immediate response to the pandemic. These funds focused on life-saving humanitarian work in low-income countries of the Médecins sans Frontières, and to communities that risk to be overlooked by national responses, including migrants and chronically sick individuals.

### **United Postcode Lotteries**

Given the urgency of the global crisis, the Dutch Postcode Lottery stepped out of its annual awarding round and provided extra emergency grant to provide refugee children in Greece with access to education during the pandemic.

### **UBS Optimus Foundation**

The UBS Optimus Foundation established the COVID-19 Response Fund to raise donations for projects in low- and middle income countries, channelled through global organisations, such as Médecins Sans Frontières and local frontline organisations, such as Last Mile Health in Liberia. The foundation matches such donations with 10% from its own sources.

### **MAVA Foundation**

The MAVA Foundation extended rapid response grants to cover their grantees' salary shortfalls and to support the implementation of e-learning opportunities for environmental education. Further, the foundation pledged to finance all their grantees as usual, without payment interruptions. In addition, the foundation announced enhanced flexibility regarding reporting deadlines and the

implementation of work plans and provided emergency funds to their financially most vulnerable partners.

### **William and Flora Hewlett Foundation**

Although the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation expects its endowment to significantly diminish due to the global crisis, it committed to continue its usual pay-out to grantees with no adjustments to the approved budget.

### **World Diabetes Foundation**

Novo Nordisk Foundation granted DKK 5 million to the World Diabetes Foundation in support of its relief program in Jordan to provide medical care to refugees with non-communicable diseases, and also granted DKK 5 million to the World Diabetes Foundation in support of its program on non-communicable diseases in Tanzania.

### **Donations by high-net-worth individuals and companies to their foundations**

- Jeff Skoll donated USD 100 million to the Skoll Foundation to address global challenges related to the pandemic. This contribution has been primarily invested in epidemiological tools, such as testing and contact tracing and in the provision of medical equipment, including respiratory devices for low- and middle-income countries.
- Michael Dell donated USD 100 million to the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, which has been directed to its domestic and global community relief initiatives and to the COVID-19 Therapeutic Accelerator.
- Jack Dorsey, the CEO of Twitter, committed to give away USD 1 billion for domestic and international relief programs related to the pandemic. Beneficiaries include the Médecins Sans Frontières and other organisations working in vulnerable areas of the world.

# PRIVATE PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATIONS

## OECD DAC Survey on Providers' Response to COVID-19

### Annex: Survey responses, sources and foundations' financial contributions for the COVID-19 response, pledged or committed by end-April 2020, USD million

Private philanthropic foundations	Main office location	Developing countries	Global objectives	Unallocated, but likely developing countries	Domestic (see note below)	Cross-border, HICs	Unallocated	Total
Apple*	USA	-	15.0	-	-	-	-	15.0
Avast Foundation*	CZE	-	25.0	-	-	-	-	25.0
BBVA Microfinance Foundation	ESP	88.0	-	-	-	14.0	-	102.0
Bernard van Leer Foundation	NLD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	USA	195.0	61.0	-	5.0	-	-	261.0
Bloomberg Philanthropies, Mike Bloomberg*	USA	50.0	-	-	-	-	-	50.0
Carnegie Corporation of New York	USA	-	-	-	2.5	-	-	2.5
Caterpillar Foundation*	USA	0.3	-	-	-	-	8.5	8.8
Chan Zuckerberg Initiative*	USA	-	25.0	-	-	-	-	25.0
Charity Projects Ltd (Comic Relief)	GBR	-	-	-	-	-	12.0	12.0
Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF)*	GBR	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Citi Foundation & Citi	USA	-	5.0	-	12.5	-	5.0	22.5
Coca-Cola Foundation*	USA	19.2	-	-	17.4	11.2	-	47.8
Conrad N. Hilton Foundation	USA	6.4	-	-	7.2	-	-	13.6
Dalio Philanthropies*	USA	-	-	-	4.0	-	-	4.0
David and Lucile Packard Foundation	USA	-	1.8	-	5.8	-	-	7.5
EQT Foundation*	USA	-	1.1	-	-	-	-	1.1
Fondation CHANEL	FRA	0.6	0.2	-	1.1	0.6	-	2.5
Ford Foundation	USA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gatsby Charitable Foundation	GBR	-	-	-	2.6	-	-	2.6
Goldman Sachs Foundation*	USA	-	25.0	-	25.0	-	-	50.0
Google.org	USA	8.7	19.5	26.3	10.5	5.3	29.8	100.0
H&M Foundation	SWE	1.6	0.5	-	0.1	-	-	2.2
IKEA Foundation	NLD	11.2	-	-	-	-	-	11.2
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation	USA	-	-	-	1.9	-	-	1.9
Johnson & Johnson Foundation	USA, UK	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
La Caixa Banking Foundation	ESP	-	1.7	-	9.3	-	-	11.0
LEGO Foundation*	DNK	15.0	-	-	-	-	35.0	50.0
Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust*	USA	1.4	-	-	1.2	11.0	-	13.6
Margaret A. Cargill Foundation*	USA	-	-	7.0	6.0	-	7.0	20.0
MasterCard Foundation	CAN	48.3	-	-	-	-	-	48.3
MasterCard Impact Fund*	CAN	-	25.0	-	-	-	-	25.0
MAVA Foundation	CHE	0.2	-	-	0.0	0.2	-	0.4
McKnight Foundation	USA	-	-	-	0.2	-	-	0.2
MetLife Foundation	USA	3.0	-	10.5	1.0	-	10.5	25.0
Michael and Susan Dell Foundation	USA	-	20.0	40.0	-	-	40.0	100.0
Mondelez International Foundation*	USA	6.7	-	-	6.7	6.7	-	20.0
Oak Foundation*	CHE	-	-	-	-	-	6.0	6.0
Open Society Foundations	USA	3.5	63.5	-	60.0	3.0	-	130.0
PepsiCo Foundation*	USA	10.7	2.0	-	8.8	2.1	26.4	50.0
Rockefeller Foundation	USA	-	35.0	-	15.0	-	-	50.0
Skoll Foundation	USA	9.7	2.6	21.1	3.3	-	63.3	100.0
UBS Optimus Foundation*	CHE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Visa Foundation*	USA	-	10.0	-	-	-	-	10.0
Wellcome Trust*	GBR	10.0	50.0	-	-	-	-	60.0
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation	USD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
World Diabetes Foundation	DNK	1.6	-	-	-	-	-	1.6
Other*			15.0		75.0			90.0
<b>All private philanthropic foundations</b>		<b>491.1</b>	<b>403.8</b>	<b>104.9</b>	<b>281.9</b>	<b>53.9</b>	<b>243.4</b>	<b>1,579.1</b>

Note: Survey results based on web research are marked with a star (\*). Please note that information related these foundations' contributions for domestic purposes or to recipients beyond developing countries may be partial.