

The Nation and Beyond: The New Philanthropy Deakin Lecture Series - Thursday 12 June 2008

'Created to inform, provoke and stimulate ideas and conversations, the Alfred Deakin Lectures are a celebration of big ideas and brilliant minds. Following on from the very successful 2007 series, in 2008 the Deakin Lectures again focus on innovation and its importance to all aspects of our economy and society.'

**Jane Sloane
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I can still remember the very first International Women's Development Agency project I visited in Siem Reap, Cambodia. We were driven down a rutted track, something akin to the Gibb River Road in the Kimberley. After an hour of gutted travel, we arrived at a cluster of huts, to be welcomed by an excited group of men, women and children. They shepherded my colleagues and I into a communal hut where everyone was sitting or standing on the dirt floor. Mats were laid out and we were invited to sit.

For the next hour we were told stories, via an interpreter, of a village that was provided funds, support and expertise by IWDA to address the high levels of domestic violence perpetrated against women. With these funds the women and men nominated their own male and female trainers, the men to work with the men, the women with the women. I heard the most extraordinary stories that day, of the transformation that has taken place within this village, spinning into the wider community.

The men undertook anger and rage workshops to help understand the causes of their anger, frustration and violent actions, and to confront the violence that still permeates their community as a result of the atrocities and genocide of the Pol Pot regime. The men of this village then transitioned from these deeply personal workshops to exploring the legal and gender dimensions of violence, and to utilising the arts, music, painting and woodwork, as forms of expression and therapy. They are now looking at micro-enterprises, and engaging in work to deliver sustainable incomes and livelihoods.

The women of this village, through their workshops, also used art to address issues of security and self-esteem, power relations and laws as well as creating the sustenance of safe houses and support networks. They are now working towards producing goods and services through micro-enterprise programs to give themselves and their children a chance of a better life, of education, employment and freedom from fear.

That day I experienced this community's feelings of hope and elation, and the memory is still vivid in my mind, These people felt safe in, and connected to, their community. I witnessed a lightness of being that comes when fear is replaced by trust.

Since then, several of these trainers have asked us to imagine if they were able to train up more women and men to do this work in other villages and

communities, where the villagers were given the chance to select the men and women whom they trust, the people who are the informal leaders, in order to change the whole feeling within their communities... 'Imagine how powerful that would be', they suggested.

Well, we're hoping that IWDA has a role to play in that vision. And we're hoping that one of the ways we can expand this program and our other work is by growing the size of women's funds, in the same way that women's organisations in North America have. IWDA is aiming to create an accredited gender training program for women and men in the countries in which we work in order to build local capacity and expand the pool of available local expertise around gender issues. We want to support the creation of pathways to sustainable income for communities, while also addressing the structural causes of violence, poverty and inequality.

I could tell you any number of similar stories – the literacy programs for girls and women we support in East Timor that enable them to move from destitution and desperation to new power with greater control over their futures. The Pacific Peacebuilders in Fiji are working with the Fijian military to reintegrate military men into family life on their return from active duty and so address the high degree of domestic violence experienced by families of the military. The Karen Young Women's Leadership School was created by the Karen Women's Association on the Thai-Burma Border to give girls from refugee camps and displaced communities the life skills to manage in their extreme conditions and to contribute to rebuilding their country when change finally comes to Burma. These examples typify why such initiatives are crucial and why we are working to increase the flow of funds benefiting women and girls.

There's a familiar saying:

Give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day. But if you teach a man to fish, he'll eat for a lifetime.

In the world of women's funds, the saying goes like this:

Give a woman a fish and she will feed her family first and might possibly go hungry.

If you teach a woman to fish, she will feed her family until outside forces take away her fishing rights or pollute the lake.

If you help a woman to be an active player in managing the use of the lake, she will feed her family, keep the lake environmentally clean and have something to pass on to future generations.

If we are to work toward a world in which all people can live with dignity and hope we need to change the conditions and policies which promote disempowerment of women. Women need to be able to take control of their own lives and to live fully, economically, culturally, socially and spiritually. As

Adrienne Rich says, in order to empower women “you build from the ground up.”

There are compelling reasons for doing this. We live in a world where women do two thirds of the world's work; earn less than 10% of the world's income and only own 1% of the world's property. Of those living in abject poverty, 70% are women. Around the world at least one woman in three has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime. Of all the countries in the world that have no representation of women in Parliament, half of these countries are on our doorstep - in the South Pacific.

And so, in light of this picture, what is the old philanthropy and what is the new philanthropy?

The old philanthropy is where the needs of women and girls are not purposefully taken into account and where it is just assumed that women and men, girls and boys will benefit equally. In 1985, in the US, women's ideas and projects, female leaders and social entrepreneurs, were attracting less than 3% of philanthropic grants. This information became the catalyst for the formation of the international Women's Funding Network– at the same time as organisations such as IWDA emerged to address the absence of women in development.

The new philanthropy recognises that in order for women to have a voice, and to ensure that the funds raised for programs are invested appropriately, women need to be engaged in the design and delivery of these programs and in how funds are sourced. In the words of Geeta Rao Gupta, President of the International Centre for Research on Women “women need to be able to draw upon resources, to control these resources and make decisions that affect important life outcomes....they need to be agents of change in their own life.”

So I want to elaborate on three ideas central to the New Philanthropy as seen from my perspective, in heading a women's development agency:

Women and girls are engaged in the design and delivery of programs supported by philanthropy – because participation and agency are not optional extras, and the involvement of women and girls is key to increasing the quality of their lives, and that of their families and communities
Women's funds are a direct and dynamic mechanism for achieving gender equality

Policy influence and advocacy are embedded in this new philanthropy in order to move from individual or community change to influencing systems and structures that perpetuate gender injustice and inequity.

So, the first idea central to the new philanthropy is that women and girls are actively engaged in the design and delivery of programs supported by philanthropy

At IWDA we work directly with women's organisations in the Asia Pacific rather than establishing offices in those countries to do the work. We apply the same approach in Indigenous Australia. Women and organisations that are part of these communities drive the development and delivery of programs and we support them with funding, resources, mentoring and specialist assistance. We work with them to ensure their programs are sustainable in the long term and to help adapt to changing circumstances and information. We do this in ways that build local capacity.

In such a way, we engage in an active learning loop. For instance, through supporting our program partners, we know that microfinance is not always a means to improve the quality of a woman's life. Women are usually juggling many demands on their time and sometimes taking on debt when nothing else changes just makes life more stressful. However, with peer support from other women, with assistance to organise child care and other household jobs so a woman can undertake business training and then be able to scale up to a small enterprise, not only the woman's income but the quality of her life improves and consequently that of her family and community. The experience of our partners and program participants is part of our experience and informs how we think and work.

The capacity of women's organisations to directly assist women and girls and, in doing so, to develop solutions to critical social issues globally is limited only by the resources we can mobilise.

The second idea critical to the new philanthropy is that women's funds are a powerful mechanism to achieve gender equality. Women's funds have been around for some time and they are now supported by a powerful network model that is delivering stellar results. In 1985 the Women's Funding Network was established in the US, supported by professional staff and leadership. Between 1985 and 2008 the Women's Funding Network has grown to 125 members and a tripling of collective working assets to \$450 million.

The focus for the time ahead is to intensify the collective power of women's funds to impact across nations and regions. Women's funds are authentic voices, led by and for women and benefiting their families and communities. They are influencing and shaping the future of philanthropy by modelling best practices in fundraising, grant-making, diversity and effectiveness. This new path in philanthropy will enable the leap from giving charitably to investing strategically in women, for the benefit of all.

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In September 2005, the Global Fund for Women exceeded its \$20 million goal for an Investing in Women campaign to create the largest endowment in the world dedicated exclusively to women's rights.

The Women Moving Millions campaign is a new initiative established in the US in 2006 between the Women's Funding Network and a group of visionary women donors providing a 'spark' gift of \$10 million. The aim is to inspire a new level of giving from women to women – to elevate women and girls to the top of the philanthropic list and to invest in them with even greater commitment. The campaign has accrued almost \$100 million since it began late last year.

In Australia, women's philanthropy has traditionally been expressed primarily through voluntary work, while large-scale giving has been mainly the province of men. Yet, for over a century, a small number of Australian women have given significant sums of money to charitable causes alongside their wealthy male counterparts. Today, working independently or through trusts and foundations, Australian women are charged with the distribution of millions of philanthropic dollars annually. A female donor recently provided IWDA with a sizeable donation large enough to create a separate IWDA Trust as a way of generating ongoing funds for the organisation and providing a vehicle for attracting other significant donations. She's one of an increasing number of donors who are choosing to give away their money in their lifetime rather than as a bequest in order to see their money being used for great work while they are still alive.

The Australian philanthropist, Eve Mahlab, together with a number of other individual women donors and organisations, recently formed the Australian Women Donors Network - what Eve describes as a 'ginger' group, a catalyst for change in Australian philanthropy. Mahlab says the aim of the Network is to build better lives by channelling a greater proportion of philanthropic funds to or through women and girls. The Network is not a fundraising or grant-making body but a forum to bring women philanthropists together to meet and collaborate both locally and globally.

Other progressive steps include the Sydney Community Foundation's establishment of a specific Women's Fund that aims to raise \$1 million over the next two years to invest in programs for women in greater Sydney with a focus on education, safety; health-care and participation in sport.

The Victorian Women's Trust, which was established in 1985, continues to have impact on Victorian communities with its special blend of fundraising, granting and advocacy for women, thanks to generous support from donors.

And so, to my third point, policy influence and advocacy are embedded in the new philanthropy in order to address injustice and inequity

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At IWDA we realised that no matter how good our programs were, they were inevitably limited by the resources we could mobilise. We needed to work with mainstream agencies – governments, corporates and other NGOs - to ensure the needs, concerns and contributions of women and girls are taken seriously and integrated in the design and delivery of all policies and programs. So we're working to expand our impact by using our knowledge and experience to provide gender training and consultancy services. As an organisation committed to gender equality, we're keen to encourage a stronger focus on gender issues from all development players. The feedback from US foundations, UN bodies and members of the US Congress is that this type of consultancy is an important initiative that will fill a large gap.

Women's organisations such as IWDA are now gaining support in our advocacy efforts from the mainstream. Influential media and multilateral institutions are sending the message that it's time to invest in women. For instance, in the words of *The Economist* - "Forget China, India and the internet: economic growth is driven by women." The World Bank echoes that sentiment, confirming that women play a crucial role helping families and communities escape poverty: "When you educate a woman, you educate a family. Give a woman health care and a family has health care. An economically secure woman means an economically secure family. These institutions help make the case that addressing gender inequality is not just the right thing to do from a human rights perspective, it makes sense economically and in terms of broader human security.

And such support is certainly needed - it has been estimated that to realise Millennium Development Goal 3 on women's empowerment and gender equality by 2015 will require resources in the range of \$25-28 billion annually in low-income countries.¹ To achieve this will require reallocation of resources and mobilisation of significant additional resources.

Progress on gender equality is integral to achieving all of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as the global community's agreed priorities to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. The Rudd Government has committed a \$200 million package of initiatives to boost progress. Australia will contribute directly to the UN's efforts on issues as diverse as increasing child literacy, improving maternal and child health and the empowerment of women. IWDA is playing a hands-on role with some of these initiatives and has adopted a watching brief on the effectiveness of the measures undertaken to improve the lives of women and girls.

Of course we know that more is needed if we are to achieve gender equality in our lifetime. There are many opportunities for Australia to play a leadership role, focusing on areas where the least progress has been made

¹ Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women, 4-7 September 2007, Division for the Advancement of Women, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, EGM/FFGE/2007/REPORT, p.9

such as improving women's economic status, expanding their participation in decision-making and strengthening their role in leadership.

At the Commonwealth level, Australia was once a global leader in introducing a Women's Budget Statement to analyse all taxation and expenditure measures for their impact on women. We now have a performance-based budget framework designed to link resources to outputs and outcomes. We also have national and international commitments on gender. Integrating these commitments into the performance-based budget framework would be a cost effective way to link resources to gender equality policies and promote government accountability. A specialist gender unit within Prime Minister and Cabinet could be the mechanism to make this happen.

At IWDA we've just finalised a five year strategic plan which will deepen our investment in, and commitment to, women and girls. We're particularly interested in encouraging more of what we know works. And so our Plan includes a focus on Indigenous Australia involving research focused on analysing the characteristics of selected programs in Indigenous communities that have particularly benefited women and girls. This research report would then be provided to policy makers, contributing to a more informed basis for their own decision-making about what to fund, and why. And, if the communities agree, these programs could be used as a basis for a wider public campaign celebrating what is working well in Indigenous communities in relation to women and girls and what has the potential to transform.

Connecting philanthropic initiatives to wider policy change is a critical focus for women's funds. We know that sustainable long term change requires coupling programs that support individual change with a focus on structural and institutional change.

With all the work still to be done to create a just and sustainable world for women, we know that it's important to engage young people early, not just as fundraisers but as thinkers, advocates and policy influencers. At IWDA we aim to create a leadership program for students in schools to increase awareness of the impact that their choices and behaviour have on the lives and opportunities of young women in the region. And to give them the opportunity to advocate and fundraise with friends and family and within their school community and harness their natural creativity and desire to make a difference. One of my friends' daughters is planning to wash cars each weekend for a year in order to raise money for wells for women. She's calling it 'Alyce's Well Being Program.'

And so, to summarise, these are the three pivots of the new philanthropy from the perspective of a women's organisation committed to gender justice:

Women and girls are engaged in the design and delivery of programs supported by philanthropy

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Women's funds are a powerful mechanism to achieve gender equality
Policy influence and advocacy are embedded in this new philanthropy so that
it both changes lives and impacts the systems and structures that perpetuate
gender injustice and inequity

Of course there's still a long way to go in mobilising the resources needed for
transformative change. Despite a long period of sustained global growth,
rates of poverty, hunger, exploitation and inequity remain significant. More
creative approaches to poverty reduction are required, with more careful
qualitative measurement of the ways in which lives have changed, as much as
the numbers of lives changed.

And so what is my final message for today?

It is one of hope.

It was Kathy Kelly, a direct descendant of that great humanitarian, Dorothy
Day, who said "I'm working toward a world in which it would be easier
for people to behave decently."

Women's funds are working to address the structural causes of injustice and
to engage women from the ground up in finding appropriate responses that
are sustainable for their communities. Their example is a call to each of us to
do what we can in this life.

This could be through investing in women's funds or making an informed
choice to contribute to a program or an initiative that engages women in
design and delivery.

By the passionate actions of others we're moved to act ourselves, to step
away from the sidelines and to do something that will contribute to a more
equitable, just and sustainable world for women and girls.

The stories are a call to action, and to active hope.

As has been said many times, hope has never trickled down. It has always
sprung up from the roots of a community. And the roots of a community are
the women and the children.

Thank you