

Executive Summary

WINGS 2023-2027 Strategic Plan



W I N G S
ELEVATING PHILANTHROPY

Background

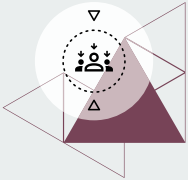
As the only global network of philanthropy support and development organisations, and a community of more than 200 thought leaders and changemakers across 58 countries, WINGS' goal is to encourage collaboration and rally philanthropic actors everywhere to build a more just, equitable and sustainable world. Achieving this requires strategic thinking and intentional investments in the infrastructure, or ecosystems, that can support, stimulate, and lead philanthropy, giving and private social investment. This diverse set of enablers and catalysts — philanthropy networks, advisors, advocates, collaboratives, giving platforms and media — boost the volumes and effectiveness of philanthropy. At WINGS, we aim to bring this diversity of actors together, to grow, strengthen and transform philanthropy to meet the challenges of the day.

We are acutely aware of the global context in which we are operating, as the world grapples to find its footing in the aftermath of the pandemic and amidst an unfolding global polycrisis of wars and nuclear threat, the climate catastrophe, large-scale forced migrations, an ever-shrinking civic space, dysfunctional governance systems, and tech-accelerated disruptions, all rooted in our inequitable and unsustainable economic and socio-political models and individual behaviours. In contrast, however, communities across the world are mobilising in response to systemic inequalities; businesses are increasingly thinking and acting with purpose in mind; and the youth's call for urgent change is growing louder.

This era of disruption is creating space for ideas on the margins to take centre stage. For agents of social good, including philanthropy, this is the time for conscious commitment to the transformation of our economic, social and governance models.

Values

At WINGS, we believe that people and their communities, geographic and otherwise, must be at the heart of everything we do. As such, we aspire and strive to live our organisational values every day.



ACCOUNTABILITY

We believe in learning from our mistakes, practising our craft with humility, and, above all, taking ownership and being accountable to ourselves, each other and our community.



AUTHENTICITY

We strive to remain true to our values, vision and mission. We often pause to reflect and ensure that we remain clear about where we add value and are committed to being impactful in our pursuits.



CARING

We treat our people, members, and all stakeholders with an equal measure of respect, fairness, and care. We put our community's well-being front and centre



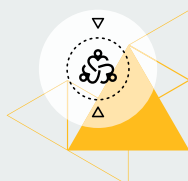
COLLABORATION

Collaboration is the starting point in everything we do. We work with our members and the broader field to create change – from design and development to implementation – mindful and appreciative of the expertise and work that our members and partners bring. We integrate that collaborative spirit across all of our engagements, inside and outside of our organisation, including among members and partners.



CURIOSITY

We employ brave curiosity to truly understand the problem we intend to solve. Often, this means that we suspend judgement, dispense with impossibilities and investigate questions to their roots.



INCLUSION AND SOLIDARITY

We know that the sum of us is far stronger than any one person or organisation and, for that reason, we lead with inclusion, especially of voices and ideas from under-represented and disenfranchised communities.

The role of philanthropy

There are significant opportunities within the philanthropic sector to create deeper impact, including an unprecedented USD 30 trillion wealth transfer, expected in the coming two decades; the emergence of a middle class with an upward trajectory in emerging economies, with a caveat that this has and will be impacted by Covid-19, the cost of living crisis and evolving crisis situations; rising tech-enabled disintermediation of global giving practices; larger numbers of individual donors to civil society in 2021 than in any year of the previous decade, despite a global pandemic and economic hardship; as well as pandemic-accelerated collaborations between philanthropy and other sectors.

We believe that to build strong, inclusive and resilient societies, and leverage existing opportunities, philanthropy must be bolder, more inclusive and democratic, and take its place as a key strategic partner in the global development agenda. Philanthropy should work less to plug gaps left by governments and markets and, instead, leapfrog into a role of leading and catalysing change in the public and private sectors. Such transformative work will require the sector to reflect on its history, examine its ways of working and its unique strengths, and relinquish control to become part of a collective holistic vision for change, through increased cross-sectoral collaboration and strong ecosystems of support.

While difficult, planning is essential during these tumultuous and uncertain times. As we forge ahead, the WINGS community is reflecting on its role and collective vision for how philanthropy must transform to meet its own objectives and the world's needs; how to ensure that ours is a diverse and inclusive global platform, anchored in advocating on urgent issues; our unique value proposition, and how it will remain relevant; how to ensure the durability of our impact, the sustainability of our organisation and resiliency within the network.

Overview of the *WINGS* 2023-2027 strategy

This strategy was developed with purpose, clarity from our community, and an understanding of the contributions we can make to solving some of the most vexing social challenges.

We continue to define ourselves as a catalyst for social change, powered by philanthropy. WINGS is a network of members and stakeholders; we are a platform for philanthropy and other social change actors to engage and co-create, and we will kickstart the building of focused movements to affect the necessary change in the global landscape of philanthropy. We work with members to collectively achieve change. We are responsive to our community and our values are our guiding principles. As such, we view ours to be a community thriving on the basis of solidarity.

We are modifying our approach in order to meet the challenges before us and create greater organisational consistency and execution focus. These changes in structure and approach, elaborated on throughout this strategic plan, include: i) consolidating organisational units working in the research, data, and learning streams; ii) an additional strategic mandate to inform evidence-based advocacy and movement building in our policy, research and collective intelligence activities; iii) greater complementary clarity between WINGS' network/membership-facing activities and WINGS' organisational initiatives; and iv) the elevation of WINGS' organisational development and resilience to a strategic priority.

Led by our vision, and with insight from our network and lessons from the last strategic period, we are consolidating our work along three strategic priorities (SPs):

SP1

**Nurturing network(s) and
strengthening ecosystems**

SP2

**Influencing philanthropy's norms,
practices and environment, and
strengthening a global and unified
collective voice and action**

SP3

**Transforming WINGS as an
organisation**



We continue to
define ourselves as
a catalyst for social
change, powered
by philanthropy

Nurturing network(s) and strengthening ecosystems



Recent crises have underscored the necessity of strong local intermediaries and networks to generate and channel resources locally – where they can create the conditions to strengthen agency and create meaningful change, as well as showing the importance of understanding how local and global issues connect with each other.

There are two primary focal areas under SP1. First, we will continue to invest in strengthening and expanding philanthropy support ecosystems (PSEs), or infrastructure, to help philanthropic action thrive and contribute to a transformation agenda, with emphasis on supporting local, national and regional ecosystems, particularly in under-represented geographies. Second, we will deepen our work with our members globally, to expand and diversify the WINGS philanthropy community, welcome organisations and efforts that will help to reset conventional

definitions of philanthropy, and enable collaboration, voice, systemic impact and sector growth globally.

We will work with our network in ways that amplify our respective strengths, avoid duplication, and create the conditions for our members to take the lead on the curation, engagement, and management of network activities, thereby multiplying the value for and of our community. By making tools, resources and opportunities available, our members will be supported to initiate new efforts and collaborations.

At the end of this strategic period, we expect to see better-resourced and effectively connected local and regional PSEs – particularly in under-represented geographies – to generate more domestic resources for social impact objectives at an accelerated rate. There will be new knowledge and data on PSEs available, and increased awareness

of the collaboration, gaps, opportunities and investments needed to level the unevenness of funding distributions to PSEs in and from Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. This, coupled with support to philanthropy support organisations (PSOs), will help pilot and/or grow locally-led and owned innovations in philanthropy. We also expect to see increased solidarity, disintermediated engagement and collaboration and strengthened capacities, through deeper connections and knowledge sharing between WINGS members globally.

As a global organisation, WINGS will work more closely with and for our members, to harness this knowledge and these connections, which will contribute to articulating and sharing a more diverse and inclusive narrative and understanding of philanthropy and its stakeholders, connecting the work to SP2.



We will work with our network in ways that amplify our respective strengths, avoid duplication, and create the conditions for our members to take the lead on the curation, engagement and management of network activities, thereby multiplying the value for and of our community.

Influencing philanthropy's norms, practices and environment, and strengthening a global and unified collective voice and action

Transformation requires effort that is at scale, and the policy environment, as well as the norms and practices of our sector, we believe, are going to change when the sector combines evidence with smart and targeted influencing efforts. The kind of global influence we seek to exert on our field and environment requires this new kind of focus and the expertise to build evidence, craft messages and narratives and orchestrate campaigns, coalitions and movements.

SP2 has three broadly-defined work streams: i) Influencing our sector's norms and practices through 'collective intelligence and action' – a combination of research and ongoing learning that emerges from across our network and portfolio of activities; ii) More consistent discipline

in our policy research practice, focused on an enabling environment and regulatory issues affecting philanthropy; iii) Shaping our policy advocacy and movement building strategies, based on the evidence and data work from the first two objectives in this SP area.

At the foundation of our thought leadership and active influencing work in SP2, and also feeding into other strategic priority areas, is the consolidation and strategic alignment of generation, aggregation and analysis of data and evidence.

Building on the community strengthening and platform offerings from SP1, we will deploy tools and initiatives and, at times, directly engage in building influence campaigns and

advocacy movements for and by philanthropy, to move the needle on some of the key transformational challenges detailed in this strategy, including the existential threat of climate change to humanity.

At the end of this strategic period, we expect to have reinforced an enabling environment for philanthropy worldwide and to have improved conditions in specific regions, through support and amplification of local and regional actors' voices at a global level. Our members will be empowered and supported in their advocacy efforts to bring about positive changes in regulations at national and sub-national levels, with the WINGS network recognised as the collective voice of the field.



At the end of this strategic period, we expect to have reinforced an enabling environment for philanthropy worldwide.

PSOs will become more active and coordinated globally, to not only serve but influence their constituencies, as we support successful movement building on philanthropy's transformation and general effectiveness, as well as on sub-campaigns on specific issues, such as localisation and climate change. As a result, the broader philanthropy community's efforts to realise the transformation agenda will be strengthened through increased collaboration, trust and leveraging of its unique assets and

will increase its commitment to acting on major existential issues that affect the future of humanity.

From civil society and governments, to philanthropy and the private sector, we will become the go-to source for information on global philanthropy, which will be acknowledged and understood in its diversity, both to bring about transformative change and to partner with governments and other actors on the SDGs.



Photo credit: Robert Collins on Unsplash



Transformation
requires effort
that is at scale,
and the policy
environment, as
well as the norms
and practices
of our sector,
we believe, are
going to change
when the sector
combines evidence
with smart
and targeted
influencing efforts.

Transforming WINGS as an organisation



We are cognisant that, as we move into this new strategy, WINGS will work on two levels. On the one hand, we will continue to be the convener of our network and the larger philanthropy stakeholder community and will strengthen our community work. On the other hand, our thought leadership work, direct advocacy, subgranting pilots and other initiatives will draw on our institutional capacities with more rigour. We believe that upgrading and building solid organisational infrastructure, from talent and skills to systems and protocols, will prepare WINGS for this work.

To realise our ambition of collectively transforming the sector, we must transform our organisation. Under SP3, we will elevate the institutional health, organisational culture and accountability that we demonstrate to our stakeholders. We will bolster internal systems, upgrade skills and develop a more agile structure.

The institutional health stream will take on digital transformation, resource planning and sustainability, as well as operational modernisation (e.g. developing dispersed teams planning and updating tools and methods for administration). A significant portion of the work in this strategic priority area will be devoted to the organisational culture, focusing on organisational development, human capital planning and talent recruitment and retention, with an emphasis on developing a diverse global team.

The organisational development and well-being of our colleagues will be combined with the third focal area: our commitment to accountability to our community and the broader field of stakeholders. We will create an intentional intersectional analysis of our performance against programmatic and operational metrics, ensuring that our approach is holistic and all-encompassing.

We will develop accountability protocols around safeguarding, transparency, external engagement, and performance principles, all based on our values.

At the end of this strategic period, WINGS will have operational agility and evidence-based systems and protocols, making it a resilient and responsive network and organisation for the next decade. We will achieve key institutional modernisation milestones, including fully operational and integrated client relationship management and talent recruitment and retention protocols as part of a broader human capital plan, with higher job satisfaction for our teams. Our Institutional Monitoring, Learning, and Accountability Framework will be a key part of our overall organisational life. Finally, we will work towards enhanced financial and institutional sustainability.



We believe that upgrading and building solid organisational infrastructure, from talent and skills to systems and protocols, will prepare WINGS for this work.

Learning and accountability

The WINGS 2023-2027 strategy will shift how we use and share evidence generated through our monitoring and evaluation activities. This will significantly impact our day-to-day work and will be central to our strategic approach to delivering on our mission, as a hybrid network and organisation, pursuing a single mission. With this in mind, and as part of the 2023-2027 Strategy, WINGS will launch its Learning and Accountability practice, integrating monitoring, learning, and evaluation objectives, protocols, and interventions into the design, delivery and scaling of all initiatives and operations.

WINGS will build on its programme-level monitoring, learning and accountability methodologies, and gradually adopt a developmental evaluation methodology, which will facilitate our use of timely data to make management and programming pivots and, as a result, create a pipeline of learning that will drive our accountability commitment. For us, it is essential to use tools and approaches that help us learn, develop capacity, improve our work and build a narrative arch that inspires.



W I N G S
ELEVATING PHILANTHROPY
