

THE NGO WORLD



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End of an Era of NGOs?

In recent years, the nonprofit sector has been experiencing a transformation so profound that it prompts a serious question: Are we witnessing the end of an era of NGOs? As unsettling as it may sound, this conversation is not driven by pessimism—but by facts, global trends, and emerging realities.

A Changing Landscape of Giving:
Donors today are more informed, connected, and selective. Digital platforms like GoFundMe and GlobalGiving allow individuals to support causes directly, often bypassing traditional NGOs. Moreover, corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives are increasingly managed internally by companies or through partnerships with social enterprises, rather than through third-party nonprofits. There is also a growing trust deficit. The 2024 Edelman Trust Barometer reported declining public trust in NGOs in several countries due to concerns around transparency and accountability.

The Rise of Social Enterprises:
The emergence of social enterprises presents a new model of social impact—one that combines purpose with profit. These hybrid organizations generate income, scale faster, and often offer more sustainable solutions than traditional grant-dependent NGOs. Consequently, they are attracting both donors and investors who seek long-term impact over temporary relief.

Localization and Shifting Power:
A significant shift in the development sector is the localization agenda. Since the 2016 Grand Bargain, there has been increasing pressure to fund local actors directly, recognizing their deeper understanding of community needs. Donors such as USAID and the EU are now prioritizing grassroots organizations over large international NGOs. This marks a clear shift in power and responsibility.

The Bureaucracy Burden:
Many traditional NGOs have become overburdened with bureaucracy—heavy reporting requirements, layered staffing structures, and administrative overheads. In contrast, today's

donors and communities seek agile, lean, and transparent organizations that can deliver impact efficiently.

Political and Legal Challenges:
In more than 60 countries, governments have imposed new laws limiting NGO operations, especially those dependent on foreign funding. This shrinking civic space is forcing many NGOs to scale back or close entirely. The environment for civil society is becoming increasingly hostile.

A Digital Shift:
Movements like #FridaysForFuture, #MeToo, and others have shown that impactful activism can happen without conventional NGO structures. Digital activism and decentralized networks are reshaping how people engage with causes. Advocacy and fundraising are now just a click away, eroding the gatekeeping role once held by traditional NGOs.

The COVID-19 Catalyst:
The pandemic acted as a stress test. It exposed the limitations of many large NGOs to respond quickly and effectively. In many areas, it was the local volunteer groups, youth collectives, and tech-driven solutions that met immediate needs—prompting a reevaluation of who holds real capacity.

A Call for Evolution:
This editorial is not a eulogy for NGOs, but a call for reinvention. The traditional NGO model—dependent on foreign donors, structured hierarchies, and top-down programming—is no longer sufficient. The future belongs to organizations that are community-rooted, tech-enabled, impact-driven, and accountable.

At The NGO World, we believe this is not the end—but the beginning of a new chapter. One that calls us to adapt, to localize, to innovate, and most importantly—to stay relevant in the service of humanity.

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12 Ways To Effectively Recruit Nonprofit Volunteers

In a digitally driven environment, the staff that a nonprofit is able to recruit plays a significant role in how well the organization is able to navigate a competitive business landscape. While full-time staff members are critical to meeting targets, the contributions of volunteers are just as important to the success of the organization.

From looking at established networks and connecting with peers to doing targeted outreach, enticing people to become volunteers requires knowing how to best engage with interested parties. To help, 12 [Forbes Nonprofit Council](#) members share effective strategies they've found to recruit volunteers in today's business landscape.

1. Recruit From Within

Be clear and transparent about your volunteer needs. If you work with the youth, ask their families and caregivers. If you work with animals, ask your friends and family. Volunteerism isn't a solo endeavor, and short-term volunteer

duties fit well within our busy society. Consider pairing volunteers up on one or multiple tasks to help lessen the burden on their time. - [Erin Davison](#), Davison Consulting

2. Optimize The Hiring Process

Match volunteer roles to their interests and skills while simplifying the application process and offering flexible schedules. This will help to align the right volunteer to the right job. Inspire potential volunteers with compelling stories about the impact of volunteering and showcase real-life examples of how volunteers make a difference. Always recognize the contributions of your volunteers. - [Victoria Burkhardt](#), [The More Than Giving Company](#)

3. Focus On Discovering People's True Motivations

The most effective way to recruit volunteers is by

discovering their true motivations. Ask what drives them and what they hope to gain. Then, align roles with their personal "why." People stay where they feel seen and valued, not just needed. In a digital world, authentic connection still wins hearts. - [Yujia Zhu](#), [FASSLING.AI](#)

4. Develop Personal Relations Through Storytelling

In a crowded digital world, the key to genuine volunteer recruitment is building personal relationships and sharing purposeful stories. People want to know their time matters. When they see themselves as part of the narrative and believe in the cause, they don't just sign up but also stay committed. - [Gregory Johnson](#), [Foundation for the Mid South](#)

5. Build A Sense Of Community

We focus on building a genuine sense of community, not just filling roles. Through virtual information sessions, engaging social content and personalized outreach, we help potential volunteers feel welcomed and connected from the start. When people believe they're joining a cause rather than just checking off tasks, they're more likely to show up, stay and advocate for others to join. - [Alan Thomas](#), [Association for Materials Protection & Performance](#)

6. Offer Meaningful Opportunities

Volunteers want two things: communal experiences and to help the organization's core mission. An effective way to recruit volunteers is to offer opportunities that combine the two. When nonprofits clearly connect volunteer work to mission outcomes and shared experiences, they highlight purpose and connection. This can inspire volunteers to be more willing to help. - [Matt Nash](#), [The Blackbaud Giving Fund](#)

7. Target People Already Engaged In The Work

The most effective way to recruit high-caliber mentors is through introductions from peers who are already engaged with your work. Instead of mass outreach, we build a curated experience that attracts impact-driven leaders by showcasing the tangible contributions mentors make to social entrepreneurs. It's also just as important to highlight what they gain in return, including intellectual engagement, purpose and community. - [Brigit Helms](#), [Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship](#)

8. Call People Directly

To recruit, nonprofit leaders should try calling people

directly. A message sent is never a message received on social media. I believe in high-touch interactions, verbal communication and collaborations that don't happen through a computer. People appreciate a phone call! - [Rhonda Vetere](#), [Laureus Sport For Good](#)

9. Make A Personal Ask

It is hard to beat a personal ask. Cleophus P. Franklin Jr., one of my board members, often says, "Competence gets you in the room. Storytelling gets you the signature." Share your nonprofit's mission and then ask them to help. Allow them to become the hero of the story. Allow your passion for the cause to become contagious. - [Aaron Alejandro](#), [Texas FFA Foundation](#)

10. Create A Culture Of Genuine Engagement

Make volunteering both a social interaction and service. Hosting a happy hour or offering a meal after a meeting or event fosters an atmosphere of excitement and collaboration. The organization doesn't even have to carry that expense; just create the opportunity. The creation of these social avenues better engages volunteers and helps them see serving as an exciting opportunity instead of a chore. - [Jamee Rodgers](#), [Urban Neighborhood Initiative](#)

11. Prioritize Transparency And Empowerment

The best volunteer recruitment starts with transparency and empowerment. Be clear about the role and the impact. Volunteers step up when they know their time, voice and the things they treasure truly matter. Equip them with the tools and the confidence to be ambassadors. Empowered volunteers share your story on social channels through their eyes, driving both engagement and donations. - [Karen Cochran](#), [Philanthropy Innovators](#)

12. Blend Social Media With Tailored Outreach

The best approach blends social media reach with personalized outreach. Nonprofits need to meet prospective volunteers where they are at the right time and on the right platform. Tools like agentic AI help optimize this process by analyzing patterns in volunteer behavior, predicting when someone is most likely to engage, and automating personalized communication to drive action. - [Scott Brighton](#), [Bonterra](#)

Source: <https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbesnonprofitcouncil/2025/07/28/12-ways-to-effectively-recruit-nonprofit-volunteers/>

'All Children Deserve Protection': NGO Aditus Condemns Malta's Detention Of Child Migrants

Local human rights NGO aditus has warned it is unacceptable for the Maltese government to detain child migrants in detention centres.

"All children deserve protection. Malta is a nation that prides itself on cherishing families, especially children," the NGO said.

"It steps in when children are suffering because it believes that all children should be able to play, smile, learn and enjoy life to the full. Children are protected not only because they are the future, but because the present is so important to them."

"So why is it that when immigration detention centres are visited, children are often found inside? Why has Malta decided that it is acceptable to deny some children smiles and replace them with fear, anxiety and uncertainty?"

Aditus pointed out how the Council of Europe's anti-torture committee noted [just last week](#) that the children they had met in Malta's detention centres were only allowed into an exercise yard for around one or two hours a day.

They stressed that the detention centres "are not designed to care for

children and not only are they inadequate in terms of material conditions, they also completely lack an adequate regime and any specific care provision to cater to the best interests of the child."

Aditus also pointed out that it recently mounted a [successful case](#) against the Maltese government before the European Court of Human Rights over the detention of five boys for over 180 days.

"They were detained in appalling centres: some bathrooms had no doors, drains were often blocked and flooded, there was no access to a yard or open space and no activities whatsoever," they said.

"When government experts assessed them, they noted 'significantly elevated' or 'extremely high' levels of anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), acute stress and three also had suicidal thoughts. They had also been harassed, threatened, and tricked by the very people responsible for their care."

The Court confirmed that Malta had violated the boys' human rights, ruling that their detention was illegal.

It also underlined that states may only detain children as a means of last resort when no alternative is available.

Aditus director Neil Falzon said Malta already has alternative places to accommodate migrant children that can cater for their educational, leisure and psycho-social needs.

"What is lacking is the commitment to continue saying: all children deserve protection," he said.

[aditus foundation](#) is a non-governmental organisation established to monitor, report and act on access to fundamental human rights for all persons in Malta. It advocates for stronger legal and administrative frameworks for human rights protection. It also offers free legal services.

aditus' lawyers visit Malta's detention centres on a regular basis. They provide information and support and intervene when clients are being illegally detained. The organisation believes that no child should ever be detained and will continue to fight against Malta's detention of children.

Source: <https://lovinmalta.com/sponsored/all-children-deserve-protection-ngo-aditus-condemns-maltas-detention-of-child-migrants/>



Teen-led NGO empowers widows, vulnerable women with N6m

In a powerful act of compassion and empowerment, Capital For Her, a non-governmental organisation dedicated to uplifting disadvantaged women—including widows and women in rural areas—has distributed over ₦6 million in grants.

The funds aim to help vulnerable women achieve financial independence and ensure their children's education continues uninterrupted.

Launched in March with an initial group of 11 widows, the initiative has expanded to support 20 women across Lagos, Ibadan, and Abeokuta in its June edition.

At the forefront of this inspiring movement is 16-year-old Emmanuella Olamide Folorunsho, who selflessly sacrificed her midnight snack allowance to fund this noble cause. "This project

is about more than money; it's about restoring hope and helping women rebuild their lives through sustainable businesses," said Folorunsho, the teenage founder and convener.

According to Mrs. Veronica Folorunsho, Executive Director and Matron of Capital For Her, the program offers more than financial aid—it provides mentorship, educational support, and pathways to economic independence. "Losing a husband isn't just emotional; it often means losing financial security and identity. Through this program, we are rewriting that story," she explained.

The grants enable women to start or grow small businesses, empowering them to become self-sufficient entrepreneurs. "This is not charity; it's an investment. We want these women

to thrive, regain confidence, and uplift their families," Mrs. Folorunsho emphasised.

In addition to financial support, the initiative allocates resources for essential needs, ensuring the overall well-being of widows and their children.

Many beneficiaries have already begun to see transformative changes. Toyin Omadoku, who used her grant to expand her poultry business, shared, "This grant has changed our lives. I can now provide for my children and ensure they get the education they deserve. My hope has been restored."

Similarly, Toyin Adeyemo from Ibadan recounted how the support helped her revive and expand her garri processing business after years of hardship following her husband's death.

Source: <https://guardian.ng/features/teen-led-ngo-empowers-widows-vulnerable-women-with-n6m/>



An opportunity to restructure sport for development in challenging times

The global aid crisis, coupled with economic challenges and conflict, has tested the strength of the sport for development sector and the character of its leadership. Can we see this as an opportunity to reimagine and restructure sport for development for future generations?



Suheil F. Tandon

In the recent past, the world has been battling with economic instability and growing inequality, along with deadly conflict in various pockets globally. In this precarious scenario, the global aid crisis in 2025 has been nothing short of devastating for the development sector, including those focusing their efforts on using sport as a tool for social change.

Just when the sector was starting to recover slowly from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, these global forces

have led to further setback. Acknowledging the growing volatility of economies and systems worldwide, can the sport for development sector reimagine and restructure itself to become more resilient for the benefit of future generations?

Diversifying fundraising efforts and income sources

There is no better time than now for organizations individually, and the sector as a whole, to think about

diversifying income sources and strategically plan varied and innovative resource mobilization efforts. [Remedy's 2025 report](#) on the fundraising performance of the sport for development sector highlights that currently more than 55% of the sector's income comes from institutional grants and individual donations. Moreover, close to a quarter of organizations rely on a single donor for more than 50% of their income. Given the risks that over-reliance on single sources and donors pose to organizations, especially during economic shocks such as the global aid crisis, it is clear that diversification of income should be a key strategy for the sector in the current fundraising scenario.

Moving forward, the sector needs to think about how it can increase grant revenues from corporates as well as sport governing bodies and the larger sports industry in general, funding avenues that are currently under-explored by the sport for development sector.

Moreover, raising revenues through the trading of goods and/or services as part of a social enterprise model, the surplus of which can be utilized towards the social mission of organizations, is a largely unexplored avenue to provide organizations with unrestricted income.

New and innovative funding models are also on the rise, including outcomes-based or [results-based financing](#) and social stock exchanges, like the one [started in India](#) a few years back. However, these new avenues will require due diligence and understanding by the sector before increasing reliance on and/or revenues from them. Furthermore, capacity building and technical support will need to be provided to organizations working in the sector in order to re-strategize, connect with and raise revenues from these potential sources.

Encouraging the sports industry to enhance leadership in sport for development

Given all the economic stressors and challenges facing the world, commercial sport continues to buck the trend and [grow at a steady pace](#), with leaders [optimistic about its future growth](#) in the next 3-5 years. Sponsorship in commercial sport continues to be valued at [record levels](#), while the [top 50 athletes](#) in the world are earning more than ever before. Given the continued positive growth in the commercial sports industry, it is definitely worth engaging with them more proactively, to enhance their leadership in and support to the sport for development sector. Efforts such as advocating for sport for development and engaging

sports leaders in meaningful dialogues should be directed towards sports governing bodies at all levels of governance, professional sports teams, professional athletes, commercial sports properties and leagues as well as large sports events. Surely, it would be in their interest from a commercial, fan engagement and social responsibility perspective to give back to their sports by enhancing equitable and inclusive access at the grassroots, strengthening the role of sports for positive change and ensuring lifelong participation in sports.

Though the sports industry has taken some initiative to contribute to sport for development, continued engagement with them to enhance and scale their efforts, take greater leadership within the sector and grow the sector in a participatory manner can be transformative. In order for this to be successful, advocacy efforts of the sector must be brought together and scaled-up along with improvements in measuring and communicating the impact of the sector. The current global leadership vacuum in the sport for development sector needs to be filled by a transnational institution that can influence global-level policy efforts and bring stakeholders from the sector together to amplify a collective voice.

Collaboration not competition

As global pressures challenge the sport for development sector, competition for scarce resources among organizations in the sector increases. Enhanced competition might seem natural to individual organizations to serve their purpose in the short term, however, the sector as a whole will be worse off in the long run, as the scarcity of resources will push many organizations in the sector to cease serving their communities.

The sector needs to embrace collaboration, within and beyond, rather than compete for scarce resources. Sharing knowledge and expertise, working collaboratively on projects, partnering on advocacy efforts and accessing financial resources jointly are just some ways to enhance collaboration within the sector. Working with diverse development organizations towards common and complimentary objectives is a way to enhance collaboration beyond the sector. Instead of competing for a small slice of the pie in the short term, can we come together to find ways to increase the size of the pie in the long term?

All of these ideas outlined will need time and effort on behalf of the stakeholders within the sport for development sector to execute. Thinking about these ideas now, developing strategies for the long-term and committing to actioning these strategies are ways in which we can start working collectively to restructure and strengthen the sector to ensure future sustainability and resilience.

Source: <https://www.sportanddev.org/latest/news/opportunity-restructure-sport-development-challenging-times>

Environmental NGOs try to halt funding for Cabo Delgado LNG

Maputo, 16 Jul (AIM) – International environmental organizations filed a civil lawsuit on Tuesday in the United States Court for the District of Columbia seeking to halt the disbursement of 4.7 billion US dollars in financing for the Mozambique Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project off the coast of the northern Mozambican province of Cabo Delgado, operated by the French company TotalEnergies.

According to a report in Wednesday's issue of the online publication "Mozambique Times",

heading the case are Friends of the Earth US and Justiça Ambiental/Friends of the Earth Mozambique, represented by the US-based legal advocacy group EarthRights International.

The NGOs claim that the approval of the funding by the United States Export-Import Bank (EXIM Bank) was unlawful and that the project "displaced thousands of local residents, has been the scene of alleged human rights violations, is surrounded by violent conflict, and will cause significant environmental destruction."

The organizations accuse EXIM Bank of rushing the approval process "without conducting the required

environmental and economic assessments, and without enabling the public and Congress to participate as mandated."

"EXIM failed to comply with its own statute and federal law, creating a dangerous precedent for future decisions," reads the NGOs' statement.

The lawsuit also accuses US President Donald Trump of illegally nominating board members to EXIM Bank without Senate confirmation, in violation of official nomination procedures.

"Just weeks later, in March, that improperly constituted 'interim' board approved a massive loan to support a controversial project led by oil giant TotalEnergies," the NGOs claim. "The decision was taken despite the ongoing armed conflict and humanitarian crisis in the region, as well as TotalEnergies' own declaration of force majeure."

That declaration was made in the wake of a major attack by Islamist terrorists against the Cabo Delgado town of Palma in March 2021. Work at the project installations on the Afungi Peninsula in Palma district came to a halt.

However, thanks to operations by the Mozambican Armed Forces (FADM) and their Rwandan allies, the security situation has greatly improved,

and TotalEnergies has expressed confidence that it will soon be able to lift the force majeure declaration and resume work at Afungi.

Kate DeAngelis, Deputy Director of Economic Policy at Friends of the Earth US, is quoted in the statement as saying, "there are legal procedures and safeguards in place to ensure the US Export-Import Bank does not waste taxpayer money on risky projects in areas affected by violent insurgencies."

"Mozambique Times" learned that the environmental organizations have retained experts on jihadist insurgency to argue in court that financing the gas exploration project in Cabo Delgado contributes to fueling the conflict. They claim the project is one of the structural causes of the insurgency, exacerbating local inequalities between the affected communities and workers brought in by the project.

"Mozambique's LNG would only benefit fossil fuel companies and a small political elite," the NGOs claim.

"Continuing to fund gas projects in Cabo Delgado would be a betrayal of Mozambique and of humanity. It would be a disregard for justice owed to those who have suffered human rights violations. It would ignore the voices of families bearing the heaviest burdens, those who have lost their land, access to the sea, and their livelihoods."

If the US court rules to suspend the disbursement of funds, it could delay the resumption of TotalEnergies' project in Cabo Delgado, currently expected in the third quarter of 2025. EXIM Bank's contribution represents roughly 25 per cent of the total investment required for the 20 billion US dollar project.

Source: <https://aimnews.org/2025/07/16/environmental-ngos-try-to-halt-funding-for-cabo-delgado-lng/>

NGOs Under Fire: The Political Battle for Europe's Civil Society

Over the past months, environmental NGOs found themselves in the eye of a political storm. The legitimacy of their EU funding was questioned. The next biggest battle will be about preserving their funding from the EU multi-annual budget which risks being heavily skewed towards competitiveness and military spending. What does this shifting European political landscape reveal? And how can civil society respond effectively in the face of such hostility?

Today, over 100 leading academics signed [an open letter](#) calling for an end to the crackdown initiated by European politicians on their EU funding and stress their essential role in upholding democratic principles in policy-making. They also demand that the LIFE programme be maintained in the next EU multi-annual budget (MFF) and warn against the latest Commission proposal to subsume environmental priorities into a "Competitiveness Fund." [A leaked draft](#) suggests this would involve repealing the LIFE Programme altogether. [Another group of scientists](#) also called for a closing of the biodiversity funding gap in the next MFF.

NGOs under fire

Since November 2024, environmental NGOs in Brussels have been at the [forefront of a carefully orchestrated scandal](#) targeting their

EU funding via the LIFE programme. This flagship EU fund has, for decades, supported environmental and climate action, including partial operating grants for NGOs working to facilitate democratic dialogue and policy engagement. Contrary to accusations, LIFE funding is subject to stringent transparency rules and legal scrutiny, as all grants are publicly disclosed and NGOs are obliged to meet strict criteria under EU financial regulation.

Nonetheless, the attacks, originating in the European Parliament's Budgetary Control (CONT) Committee, quickly spread. They were spearheaded by members of the centre-right EPP group, alleging that the Commission was funding NGOs to act as its mouthpiece for the Green Deal. This narrative was soon weaponised by far-right actors and echoed in sensationalist media coverage.

A brief respite came in early May when the European Parliament voted down a key amendment threatening NGO funding. Yet the threats are far from over. On June 19th, the Conference of Presidents will vote on the conservative ECR group's proposal to establish a committee of inquiry into NGO funding. Such a procedure is typically reserved for serious institutional wrongdoings. Its use here is both disproportionate and politically motivated.

Looking ahead, the next critical front for NGOs is the upcoming [multi-annual EU budget](#) (MFF) proposal, set for release on July 16th. Leaks indicate that climate and nature funding, including LIFE, could be undermined in favour of a sweeping new "Competitiveness Fund." The risk is that social and environmental priorities will be deprioritised just as the EU enters a period of intensified geopolitical and ecological instability. More than 60 MEPs from across various EU political groups have signed a [letter raising concern at this new proposal](#).

In parallel, the controversy around NGO funding reignited in Germany. Outlets like WELT and Tagesschau republished claims about "secret contracts" between the European Commission and NGOs such as ClientEarth and Friends of the Earth Europe (FoEE). The Commission, this time, responded more assertively, dismissing these claims and reiterating that all LIFE-funded NGO activities are legally compliant and transparent. Nonetheless, the accusations continue to spread such as via a new German group, Transparent Democracy, and politicians like Oliver Luksic.

The resurgence of these narratives, including in Brussels media via Euractiv and Euronews, appears timed to influence public opinion ahead of the Commission's MFF announcement.

One wonders why such a disproportionate reaction when NGOs'

EU funding represents a fraction of the resources big oil and [big tech are channelling towards EU political lobbying](#)? Why wasting so much energy on the least powerful? The answer may lie in the failure of a liberal political project attempting to deflect attention to their inability to address real issues by targeting those least culpable.

A deeper malaise in the European project

President Trump's bulldozer approach, heavily slashing civil society funding and restricting civic rights, may seem a world away from Europe. Yet disturbingly similar dynamics are unfolding here, as foundational democratic freedoms once taken for granted are increasingly under pressure. This new political reality reflects not just a backlash against progressive values, but a deeper malaise in our economic and political system.

What triggered it? For many, it is evident that the failures of neoliberal economic policies would start to bite back. The Gilets Jaunes movement in France was one sign of a crack in a system prioritising market-driven reforms and preserving capital at the expense of the working class. Covid-19 was another one. The reshuffling of the geopolitical order added further instability for the European project, which for decades aligned closely with the U.S. on trade and foreign policy.

While liberals in power saw their popularity dwindle in the last European elections – losing ground to the far right and parts of the radical left – they still cling to the same policy discourse that signalled their downfall. To admit that their policies have helped fuel today's cost of living crisis – with one in five Europeans at risk of poverty and social exclusion – and contributed to the collapse of ecosystems would be to

question the very foundation of their political project: profit-seeking based on the fallacy of economic growth.

This ideology's fallback, when growth stalls, is austerity for the many and continued profits for the few. Public services are squeezed, while corporate interests remain protected. Addressing these crises effectively would require bold structural change: redistribution through wealth and profit taxation, the reorientation of our economies away from the primacy of markets, and the prioritisation of public governance structures and control over our public goods. But such proposals remain absent from the programmes of liberal forces in power.

Instead, the new mandate of the European Commission is centered on large-scale military investment, a competitiveness agenda that rolls back social and environmental safeguards, deep cuts to public budgets, tighter borders, and public guarantees for private markets. This agenda is not only economically shortsighted and socially-environmentally regressive, but it misidentifies security as a purely defense-related issue, when our most urgent threats are ecological and economic. And Europe remains dangerously unprepared to face them.

Building a common vision: forging new alliances

In the face of these converging crises, civil society's role is more vital than ever. For decades, it has led efforts to sketch the contours of a fairer, more sustainable European economy. In 2023, thousands gathered in the European Parliament under the [Beyond Growth banner](#) to imagine an alternative future. Though political momentum for systemic change has waned,

clinging to the European Commission's competitiveness mantra – even under a "green" or "social label" – would be a mistake.

Our task is to put the real concerns of Europeans at the heart of policy-making: guaranteeing access to essential needs like housing, clean energy, nutritious food, public transport and a healthy and safe environment. Besides, Europe is not an island. Its trade, migration and foreign policies must shift toward solidarity, cooperation, and justice – not toward exploitation, securitisation and isolation.

Civil society needs a renewed and unifying narrative – one that reflects the interconnected challenges and presents a compelling vision for change. Our advocacy must both engage policymakers with rigorous evidence and remain grounded in the lived experiences of communities, social movements, and ordinary people.

This moment demands more than resilience against the everyday attacks NGOs are being faced with. It calls for solidarity across civil society actors, including environmental, social and trade union organisations. The far-right thrives on division and fragmentation. Our strength lies in unity and by playing offense through shared messages, coordinated action, and unwavering demands for bold, systemic change.

This is not just a battle over NGO funding. It is a fight to defend democracy, peace, social cohesion and environmental protection, which should remain at the heart of the European project.

Source: <https://www.webwire.com/ViewPressRel.asp?aId=341268>



What the One Big Beautiful Bill Act Means for Charitable Giving — and What Nonprofits Should Do Now



Jason B. Zwang

The [One Big Beautiful Bill Act](#) became law on July 4, and buried in its language is a provision that could have real implications for how everyday Americans — and high-net-worth individuals — give to charity.

For the first time in years, Americans who do not itemize will be able to deduct charitable contributions: up to \$1,000 for individuals and \$2,000 for married couples. Prior to this change, unless your total deductions exceeded the standard deduction threshold — somewhere in the mid-\$20,000s for couples — your charitable gift wasn't tax deductible.

This is a meaningful shift when you consider that the majority of donors, in terms of raw numbers, are non-itemizers. In my view, this change, which goes into effect for the 2026 tax year, is less about incentivizing new giving and more about bringing existing giving back into the fold of formal philanthropy. Last year's hand-wringing over a donor dropoff missed the mark: People didn't stop giving, they just gave differently — through GoFundMe, Facebook fundraisers and other platforms where a tax receipt was an afterthought, if one existed at all. This bill, in part, is about regaining visibility into those dollars and behaviors.

At the other end of the giving spectrum, the bill introduces a 35% cap on charitable deductions for those in the top tax bracket, starting with the 2026 tax year. This might seem minor, but for fundraisers who work in major and principal gifts, it's a material change. These are the donors who, guided by their tax advisers, often made large year-end gifts not necessarily because of deep personal alignment, but because a financial professional said, "You may want to move \$500,000 to charity this year." When those gifts showed up, we thanked the donor warmly — and often assumed they were more intentional than they really were.

In many ways, this cap may reduce the frequency of these over-the-fence gifts. That puts added pressure on organizations to engage high-net-worth individuals more deliberately and to strengthen their value proposition.

So what should nonprofits be doing right now?

1. Re-engage Your Small-Dollar Donors

Make sure they know about the new deduction. It's not flashy, but it's real. Consider incorporating it into your year-

end appeal or spring campaigns. Framing a \$1,000 gift as a new "tax-smart giving level" could encourage some donors to stretch beyond what they've given before.

2. Update Your Acknowledgment Language

Make it clear — in receipts, email confirmations and follow-up messaging — that these gifts are now deductible even if the donor doesn't itemize. This is a small but important signal of trust and transparency.

3. Make It Easy to Give — and Track

Impulse giving isn't going anywhere. But now, you have a chance to move that behavior back into formal philanthropy. Use platforms that generate instant receipts. Offer donor portals that allow people to retrieve their history. Make tax season easier for them.

4. Double Down on Major Gift Cultivation

The 35% cap means fewer large gifts will be pushed out the door for purely tax-based reasons. That means more gifts will come only after relationship-building and shared vision. This is not the year to coast on last year's list.

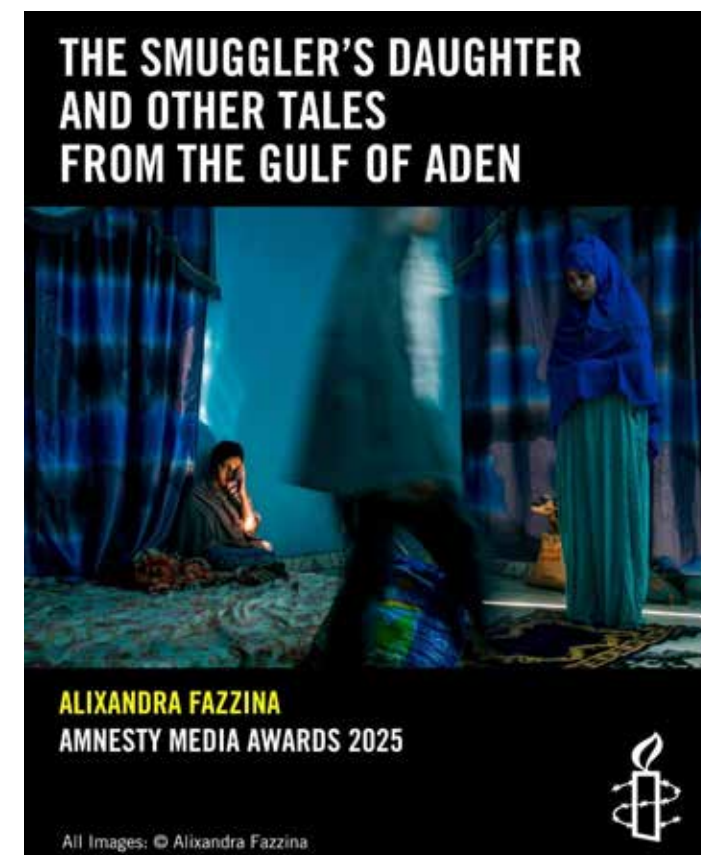
5. Steward Like It Matters — Because It Does

With tax benefits changing, the donor's sense of impact and connection becomes even more important. The thank-you note isn't just a formality anymore — it might be what determines whether they give again.

We're entering a new chapter in donor behavior — one that blends emotional motivation with shifting tax policy. Nonprofits that embrace both sides of that equation will be the ones best positioned to thrive.

The preceding content was provided by a contributor unaffiliated with NonProfit PRO. The views expressed within may not directly reflect the thoughts or opinions of the staff of NonProfit PRO.

Source: <https://www.nonprofitpro.com/post/what-the-one-big-beautiful-bill-act-means-for-charitable-giving-and-what-nonprofits-should-do-now/>



How an International NGO Plans to Fight the Digital Divide with a Satellite Company



Aashna Miharia

The Whitaker Peace and Development Initiative (WPDPI) partnered with Intelsat, a global satellite provider, to bring reliable internet access to South Sudan and Uganda, increasing young people's access to digital education. The collaboration, which the organizations formally announced on June 25 at an event in New York City, comes amid an expanding digital divide worldwide.

A nongovernmental organization, the WPDPI works with local communities to empower youth peacemakers and sustainable development in areas impacted by conflict and armed violence. At the event, WPDPI's founder and CEO Forest Whitaker and Executive Director Caroline Descombris sat down with Intelsat's CEO David Wajsgas to discuss the new nonprofit-corporate partnership and WPDPI's core values.

The Partnership

Wajsgas explained that Intelsat—which has one of the world's largest satellite networks and emphasizes international connectivity—will make digital communication four to 10 times faster at three locations in South Sudan and seven locations in Uganda, at the WPDPI's preexisting [Community Learning Centers \(CLCs\)](#). Wajsgas said that the work is “nearing completion” to install equipment and ensure reliable satellite connectivity for the next three years.

At the CLCs, the WPDPI hosts cultural community events and provides free courses in topics such as conflict resolution, information technology, and business skills to bolster

education in areas lacking digital infrastructure, explained Descombris at the New York event. She also said that these CLCs include playgrounds and athletic facilities with the goal of fostering peace, reconciliation, and gender equality.

“We were relying on a very traditional way to try to connect the place, but because it's very remote, it was really not reliable and not functional,” Descombris said. “So now, it's really bringing an amazing change for the communities.”

The WPDPI plans to equip the 10 locations in East Africa with digital resources, such as remote classes and virtual exchange programs, to complement its curriculum in conflict resolution and entrepreneurship. The organization will also educate students in digital literacy and ethics for using the internet and social media.

The Digital Divide in Conflict-Affected Regions

In Uganda, where northern communities are [struggling to foster prosperity](#) in the years following several decades of civil war, [28 percent of people](#) have access to the internet. Areas that are still being directly impacted by conflict—such as South Sudan, where [political violence rages on](#) despite several attempted peace deals since 2015—see even smaller percentages. About [15.7 percent of South Sudan's population](#) have access to the internet.

Although more people use the internet every year,



disparities in digital access between low- and middle-income countries and wealthy ones is widening. Only nations with strong economies tout the conditions to support rapid technological advancements, and [investments in technology are narrowly diverted](#) to these countries. Meanwhile, most people in low-income nations lack the cash injection and infrastructure needed to support online connections. Fewer women, elderly people, and rural populations have access to the internet compared to their counterparts.

Weakened infrastructure, mass displacement, and declining education systems in regions facing armed conflict or recovering from civil unrest exacerbate that digital divide. Additionally, amid large-scale humanitarian crises and fragmented governing structures, increasing people's internet access may not feel like a priority.

The WPDPI and Intelsat's new joint initiative to increase South Sudan and Uganda's digital connectivity could help ultimately boost their peace and prosperity. Strong internet access could encourage global collaboration between regions, create jobs for residents, and disseminate information about security and health. As NPQ has previously reported, the internet serves as an important tool on several social and climate justice fronts—including [delivering early warnings of disaster](#) and [creating equal opportunities](#) to minimize racial inequity.

However, it is important to keep in mind how information technology can also [pose additional risks](#) for people in conflict zones. It has the potential to amplify misinformation and hate

speech, expose people to digital theft like identity fraud, and restrict the right to privacy. As humanitarian groups aim to expand connectivity in such regions, they must concurrently work to strengthen necessary frameworks for safe internet usage and educate populations on digital literacy.

How the WPDPI Inspires Change

At the event, Whitaker and Descombris discussed WPDPI's three key elements to inspire meaningful change for communities: trust, community ownership, and a long-term approach.

They emphasized the importance of gradually building trust in communities through WPDPI's worldwide network of [Youth Peacemakers](#), who undergo a one-year training in topics like mediation and trauma awareness before reentering their communities. Whitaker and Descombris explained that the Youth Peacemakers program aims to create a ripple effect, as individuals bring their peace education both to schools and their everyday lives, help establish small businesses, support aspiring entrepreneurs, and more.

To measure the WPDPI's impact, the team has been working with Columbia University to create an evaluation framework and collect quantitative data such as the number of people served, but also qualitative data from local actors and stakeholders about how effectively their initiatives are responding to needs on the ground.

“It's not only about tools, but it's also about allowing people to take charge—to also take the lead and build their own resilience from within,” Descombris said. “When you combine that with a strong local staff, with a strong evaluation and community ownership, this is where you start seeing change.”

Source: <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/how-an-international-ngo-plans-to-fight-the-digital-divide-with-a-satellite-company/>

New Bill Incentivizes Small Nonprofits to Offer Retirement Plans

Both Houses of Congress have introduced the "Small Nonprofit Retirement Security Act," which would provide nonprofits with tax credits for retirement plan start-up costs, employer contributions, and auto-enrollment features.

Both Houses of Congress have introduced the "Small Nonprofit Retirement Security Act" (H.R. 4548 | S. 2365), which would extend from for-profits to nonprofits tax credits of up to \$5,000 for three years to start a retirement plan and an additional \$500 if the plan includes auto-enrollment features.

Additionally, the bill extends to nonprofits the Employer Contribution Credit, which provides a tax credit up to \$1,000 per employee for employer retirement contributions (excluding deferrals) to workers earning under \$100,000 annually, with the full credit available for the first year and phasing down over five years.

Since nonprofits generally do not have any income tax liability, the credits will be delivered against their payroll tax liability.

The American Retirement Association (ARA) strongly supports the bill, which was introduced only in the Senate last Congress but now has bipartisan support in both chambers led in the House by Reps. Vern Buchanan (R-Fla.) and Jimmy Panetta (D-Calif.) and in the Senate by Sens. James Lankford (R-Okla.) and Catherine Cortez Masto (D-Nev.).

"One out of 10 U.S. workers are employed by a nonprofit organization," American Retirement Association (ARA) CEO Brian Graff said. "Most of them are smaller and do not offer a retirement plan. This legislation will ensure that nonprofits have access to the same tax incentives for starting up a retirement plan that were provided to for-profit small businesses in SECURE 2.0. The ARA applauds Senators Lankford and Cortez Masto, and Representatives Buchanan, Panetta, Moore, and Schneider for their bipartisan leadership on this issue."

The SECURE 2.0 Act of 2022 provided a tax credit for start-up costs of small employer pension plans, a tax credit for employer contributions, and a credit for incorporating automatic enrollment features.

However, charities, which employ 10% of the American private-sector workforce, cannot access these tax credits since they generally have no income tax liability.

In 2022, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that over 300,000 nonprofits employed 12.8 million people. Most nonprofits (90%) have less than 100 employees, with over 50% having less than 10 employees.

These are community-based organizations that provide free meals, emergency housing, faith-based outreach, arts and culture programming,

childcare assistance, and youth and after-school programs.

A national survey on retirement challenges faced by the nonprofit workforce found that, like the for-profit sector, small nonprofit employers are far more likely than their larger counterparts to face disproportionate costs and administrative burdens in launching and operating a retirement plan.

The report also found that employers implementing automatic enrollment had significantly higher employee participation rates.

Despite facing the same cost and administrative challenges as small for-profit businesses, nonprofit employers are currently barred from SECURE 2.0 tax credit incentives due to their tax-exempt status.

The bill's supporters claim that extending the SECURE 2.0 tax incentives for for-profit employers to nonprofits via a payroll tax credit through the bill would:

- Lower the cost barrier for small nonprofits to offer retirement plans.
- Promote retirement security for underserved workers.
- Level the playing field between for-profit and nonprofit employers.

Additional cosponsors of the bill in the House include Reps. Blake Moore (R-Utah) and Brad Schneider (D-Ill.).

Source: <https://www.napa-net.org/news/2025/7/new-bill-incentivizes-small-nonprofits-to-offer-retirement-plans/>



Singapore private investigators see spike in work injury claim cases; NGOs warn against generalisations

Non-governmental organisations say they have witnessed cases where low-wage migrant workers with genuine injuries were unable to get compensation.



Matthew Mohan



Davina Tham

SINGAPORE: Demand is rising among private investigation firms in Singapore, for a different type of surveillance: To verify whether work injury claimants have genuine injuries.

While fraudulent work injury claims have been put under the spotlight in recent days, non-government organisations told CNA that such cases were extremely rare among low-wage migrant workers.

They urged against making sweeping generalisations, pointing out they have witnessed instances where injured workers were unable to get fair compensation.

The issue was sparked by the [death of Ms Jane Lee, owner of local business Sumo Salad](#), who had published Facebook posts about a foreign employee who allegedly filed a false work injury claim to get compensation.

The Manpower Ministry (MOM) subsequently said it had been in

communication with Ms Lee before her death, and that investigations into the claim were ongoing.

The worker involved was covered under the Work Injury Compensation Act (WICA), and MOM said it was working with the employee's insurer to "assess the validity of the case".

On Thursday (Jul 24), Minister of State for Manpower Dinesh Vasu Dash reiterated that MOM was probing the matter and working with the insurer.

He said that in cases of "egregious" behaviour by employees, action has to be taken; but added it was also important to find incentives for workers and employers "to model the right behaviour" for their health, safety and well-being.

Last year, 26,843 work injury claims were awarded. The total compensation payout was S\$138.2 million (US\$108.4 million).

CNA has asked MOM for data on the number of fraudulent work injury claims detected, and how officers go about verifying work injury claims.

CNA has also reached out to multiple insurers for more information on how they typically verify work injury claims.

MORE ENQUIRIES, MORE CASES

Three private investigation firms – Asia Top Investigation, Detective Don PI and Eyes Private Investigator – told CNA they have recorded a surge in requests to investigate potentially fraudulent work claims.

They said the cases come mostly from the construction sector, with some in the food-and-beverage and service-related industries.

Mr Ivan Tan, operations manager and investigator at Asia Top Investigation,

said his firm dealt with 15 such cases last year.

Five years ago, the agency would get about five enquiries a year. Last year, they received two to three enquiries a month.

Mark (not his real name), the director of Eyes Private Investigator, said that in the past one-and-a-half years, his firm has received four to five enquiries every week and taken on an average of two cases a week.

Previously, they used to take up one to two cases every fortnight.

Four out of nine investigators at Eyes focus on work injury cases. Mark estimated that he alone has handled 50 to 60 such cases, which he said mostly involved foreign workers.

The private investigators CNA spoke to said their work can take anywhere from a day to two weeks.

Mr Tan from Asia Top charges S\$1,800 for up to eight hours of surveillance on weekdays, and S\$2,100 on weekends.

Two licensed private investigators will follow the subject to gather photo and video evidence of his or her activities, and produce a report for the client which can also be submitted to court as evidence, said Mr Tan. Investigators are sometimes also called to testify in court to back up their report.

"We don't try to force the narrative into one direction. However, if let's say the worker indeed is faking injury, what we do is we try to focus on that specific body part which she claims is injured and is not functioning well," he said.

One case he worked on involved a dishwasher with a finger injury who was found moonlighting as a waitress. "Her fingers are working fine because (she) can serve food, (she) can carry plates," said Mr Tan.

Then there was an administrative worker in a private clinic who resigned and took extended medical leave citing "different ailments". But investigators

found her working for her employer's competitor during her notice period.

According to Mr Tan, in all 15 cases his firm investigated last year, there was evidence that the injuries were feigned.

For Mark, he recalled one to three cases out of his firm's entire portfolio where no such evidence was found.

The investigators said that after submitting their reports, they typically do not keep track of cases all the way to resolution.

But Mark has received feedback from some clients, of employees withdrawing their work injury claims after being confronted with the evidence.

Lawyer Ray Louis told CNA he once advised an employer in a dispute with a cleaner, who filed a claim for a back injury from a fall. An investigator followed her and obtained evidence of her moving around "normally".

Mr Louis said that while this employer still could not prove that the worker's injury was fake, he was able to show that it was not as serious as she had made it out to be. "It forced the claimant to settle at a lower amount," said the lawyer.

CNA has also contacted business associations to ask if fraudulent work injury claims are an issue among its members.

The last known case to be publicised was in 2021, when two foreign workers were convicted for making fraudulent WICA claims in 2019. According to an MOM release, one was found to have staged a fall, while the other said his injury was sustained at work when it did not.

"A REAL DROP IN THE OCEAN"

Under WICA, employees in Singapore who are injured in work accidents or suffer diseases due to work

can make claims without having to file a civil suit under common law.

According to MOM, one remains eligible to claim for compensation even if he or she no longer works for the employer or their work pass is cancelled.

Workers can claim medical leave wages; medical expenses including hospital bills; and a lump sum compensation for permanent incapacity, current incapacity or death.

Speaking to CNA, Transient Workers Count 2 (TWC2) vice-president Alex Au said the NGO sees more than a thousand injury cases a year, with no more than “one or two” cases where they have doubts over the veracity of the claim.

“We are talking about a real drop in the ocean,” he said.

If anything, low-wage migrant workers in particular often find that the “balance of proof” is stacked against

them when they suffer injuries at the workplace, said Mr Au.

This could be due to employers who “control” various forms of evidence which could have been used by workers to make legitimate claims, he added. As a result, the subsequent insurance report would state that the injured worker’s account was not corroborated by any evidence.

“These are the reasons why we think that the percentage of invalid claims is probably higher than really fraudulent claim(s),” said Mr Au.

Ms Dipa Swaminathan, founder of charity and migrant worker advocacy group ItsRainingRaincoats, warned against painting all workers with the same “tainted brush”.

“Every single time they have an injury ... if there’s going to be an assumption that they’re making it up, can you imagine how hard their life is?” she said. “We have seen the other side

of the story, where even for genuine workplace injuries, they’re not able to get any compensation.”

Ms Swaminathan said her organisation has never seen a fraudulent case in 10 years of working with migrant workers.

Former Nominated Member of Parliament Anthea Ong, a council member of a [community initiative helping migrant workers pay for critical illness treatments not covered by their mandatory insurance](#), was concerned about the potential fallout from WICA coming under the spotlight.

“If every employer is now going to be a little bit suspicious and don’t act on it when their workers have met with an accident at the workplace, that might mean that those workers who really, genuinely need immediate emergency attention may not get that and that could put their lives at risk,” she said.

“We must take care not to have one bad actor make everyone else bad.”

Source: <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/singapore/work-injury-claim-scam-fraud-private-investigator-migrant-workers-5256151>

Nonprofit Center Launches Wellness Series for Nonprofits

GREAT BARRINGTON, Mass. — The Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires (NPC) aims to assist nonprofit leaders in improving their wellbeing and thus their ability to continue having a meaningful impact in our community.

On July 28 from 12:30 – 2:00 p.m., instructor Susan Taylor will host a 90-minute, online Masterclass in which participants will explore how to identify and shift limiting mindsets that contribute to overwhelm and depletion — and instead cultivate mindsets that foster vitality, resilience, collaboration, and purpose.

Entitled “Wellbeing Matters: Shifting Mindsets for Sustainable

Impact,” the Masterclass is ideal for executives as well as frontline staff, changemakers and community leaders who want to serve others without sacrificing their own wellbeing.

NPC’s associate director McCaella Donovan said, “This program is especially valuable for those navigating rapid change, expanding organizational reach, and recovering from periods of high stress.” Participants will learn how mindsets affect effectiveness, how to recognize limiting beliefs, apply strategies to cultivate resilience, and create the beginnings of a personalized action plan to prioritize wellbeing.

According to a press release:

Susan Taylor is a coach and facilitator with more than 30 years of experience working with some of the most renowned thought leaders in emotional, spiritual, and leadership intelligence. She is passionate about empowering clients to unlock their potential and achieve meaningful results in both their personal and professional lives.

The cost of the “Wellness Matters” Masterclass is \$50. Register online at npcberkshires.org. Additional wellness workshops, some in-person, will take place in the fall.

Source: <https://www.iberkshires.com/story/79778/Nonprofit-Center-Launches-Wellness-Series-for-Nonprofits.html>

NGO moves to uplift indigent Abuja natives

A non-governmental organisation, Mai Jagora Peace and Development Initiative has taken steps to uplift the indigent Abuja original inhabitants across the six Area Councils of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

This follows an advocacy visit by the NGO to the Abuja headquarters of Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), recently, on the need to explore areas that will help in pushing for economic empowerment of the original inhabitants.

Speaking at SMEDAN’s office, President and founder of the NGO, Muntasir Maijagora, said the group is committed to partnering with bodies that would assist in deepening the mission of addressing the longstanding marginalization of the OIs since the relocation of Nigeria’s capital from Lagos to Abuja.

He explained that the body is committed to seeking institutional support for inclusive development and economic sustainability of the people through SMEDAN’s programs and interventions.

Maijagora said, “The visit aimed to explore strategic partnerships that would enhance economic empowerment for the FCT Original Inhabitants through SMEDAN’s various programs and interventions.

“The advocacy visit aligns with our broader mission of addressing



the longstanding marginalization of the OIs since the relocation of Nigeria’s capital from Lagos to Abuja, and seeking institutional support for inclusive development and economic sustainability.

“We want the support of SMEDAN and seek partnership opportunities, also highlight the socio-economic challenges faced by the Original Inhabitants, especially in the area of economic exclusion”.

On her part, the FCT manager of SMEDAN, Mrs. Mary Kolawole appreciated the initiative and expressed her agency’s willingness to collaborate with credible organizations to uplift marginalized communities.

She acknowledged the economic challenges of the Original Inhabitants and emphasized that SMEDAN is committed to supporting individuals with genuine business interest

Source: <https://authorityngr.com/2025/07/25/ngo-moves-to-uplift-indigent-abuja-natives/>

Nonprofits: The Scam of the NGO is Bigger Than You Think

The NGO network is the beating and fraudulently bleeding heart of a massive movement to seize all power for the progressive left.



Richard Moore

Making a Mountain out of a Mountain

This may come as a shock, but sometimes Elon Musk gets carried away when he makes some of his claims, such as when he said the Wisconsin Supreme Court race last year could affect the entire destiny of mankind.

Not that he was out of the ballpark altogether. The election of Susan Crawford likely won't bring western civilization as we know it to an end, but it just might be the end of the line

for prosperity and freedom here in Wisconsin for a long, long time. After the court's most recent decision, all of us in Wisconsin are living in a giant bureaucratic jail cell, and the wacko court is your new parole board.

So yeah, Elon was onto something.

He was also onto something back in March when called government-funded nonprofits "a gigantic scam, like one of the biggest, maybe the biggest scam ever."

On this one Musk was not only in the ballpark, he smashed a home run. In

fact, this time Musk may be understating the threat. Government-funded NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) are not only swindling the American taxpayer by heisting billions of dollars out of our pockets to directly support a hefty menu of left-wing parlor games, they have also come to represent what has been correctly called a fifth branch of government.

They are central to the scheme of money laundering that keeps the bureaucratic collectivist state lubricated and humming along.

At long last, in the new Trump administration, a day of reckoning may be coming. At least the dirty laundry of NGOs is being brought out of the closeted hamper. To be sure, it's been a rough few months for left-wing nonprofits since Musk made his remarks, and it doesn't look like things are going to get any better for them any time soon.

There may be a set of rogue federal judges trying to desperately prop up the quickly degrading myth that most government-funded nonprofits are neutral and dedicated organizations

providing valuable services to needy communities, but that line of defense is rapidly crumbling.

Rather, the fact that many of the largest nonprofits are cogs in a gigantic political machine whose very existence poses a lethal threat to democratic governance is being exposed in multiple venues. In June, Congress's DOGE (Department of Government Efficiency) committee zeroed in on nonprofits and substantiated many of Musk's claims. The Trump administration has also tried to whack billions in contracts with nonprofits, and, while a few federal judges have sidetracked some of those efforts so far, the briefs in the case show without question that many nonprofits are merely vehicles for taxpayer-funded pursuits of radical, extremist agendas.

Last week the volley continued when the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Oversight held yet another hearing to display just how the well-oiled machinery works—"How Leftist Nonprofit Networks Exploit Federal Tax Dollars to Advance a Radical Agenda"—and examined a paper trail of corruption that leads right back to globalist grifters.

All well done, but here's the most important point of this column: None of this is new. It has all been exposed, and buried, before. Way back during the Obama administration, the GOP-minority staff delivered a blistering report exposing the same network, but nothing ever happened. That's partly because Barack Obama was president and Donald Trump wasn't, and because the corporate media's credibility had not yet imploded in such spectacular fashion.

This time, this fraudulent scheme must not only be exposed but the network demolished. The point about the survival of this vital cog in the bureaucratic machine goes way beyond demonstrating the depth and resiliency of the deep state, and the degree to which the federal treasury has been pilfered. It goes to the way the left is deconstructing democracy itself through gaslighting and graft.

To say it another way, the NGO network is the beating and fraudulently bleeding heart of a massive movement to seize all power for the progressive left. The constitutional stake must be driven right through it.

That guy again

On July 15, right at the outset of the hearing on leftist nonprofits, subcommittee chairman Jefferson Van Drew (R-New Jersey) offered a sweeping indictment of the government's grant economy and its nonprofit infrastructure.

In just a few short minutes, he laid out the essentials of what we really need to know.

"Today's hearing will expose how leftist nonprofit networks hijack and exploit your federal tax dollars to advance a radical agenda," Van Drew said. "Your tax dollars, your money, money that you earned and you worked hard for have been funneling into left-wing nonprofits pushing extremist causes."

That assertion wasn't just speculation, Van Drew asserted.

"It's not just an idea," he said...

"It's a pattern and it's the truth. Under Democratic leadership, federal agencies awarded hundreds of millions of dollars in grants to supposedly neutral nonprofit organizations. But those nonprofits just so happened to be run by their political allies. And they used your money, your money to fund policies you never voted for and probably in most cases the majority of Americans strongly oppose."

"It's a pattern and it's the truth. Under Democratic leadership, federal agencies awarded hundreds of millions of dollars in grants to supposedly neutral nonprofit organizations. But those nonprofits just so happened to be run by their political allies. And they used your money, your money to fund policies you never voted for and probably in most cases the majority of Americans strongly oppose."

Regardless of what one's opinion of the ideology is, Van Drew said, it is an abuse of power, and one that has been quietly restructuring American society in ways no one asked for and they certainly never voted for.

"The last administration dispersed \$3 billion to a migrant housing group whose employees were accused of sexually abusing children," he said. "Nearly \$1 million went to a group linked to riots in Los Angeles. Over \$1.8 million meant for women's safety overseas was instead used to promote gender ideology through LGBTQ+ grants."

Van Drew fingered globalist billionaire George Soros as a ringleader in the non-profit scheme.

"And then there's the biggest culprit of them all, the mastermind, the guy behind the curtain, the guy in the dark, George Soros," he said. "Who is he? What's he about? He's not just another billionaire with strong opinions. We got plenty of them. He's the architect of an international leftwing influence machine. His Open Society Foundation sits at the center of a global web of nonprofits, grant recipients, political operatives, and shadow partners."

Despite his vast wealth, Van Drew said, Soros also takes our tax dollars.

"The Vera Institute of Justice, Soros connected, received over \$60 million in federal contracts from Democrats," he said. "Impact Justice, also Soros connected, took in over \$30 million to push weak-on-crime agendas instead of prosecuting criminals."

Beyond the efforts of Soros, Van Drew said Democrats funneled over \$1 billion in DEI-related (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) grants through the Department of Education.

"They sent taxpayer funds to anti-Israel groups and climate radicals determined to dismantle American energy independence," he said.

Van Drew said the hearing wasn't just about spreadsheets. He then got to the real point about the existence

of the NGO network: "It's not just about budget line items. It's about who controls the country. Unelected billionaires or the people who live, vote, and work here. It's about restoring accountability and ending ideological freeloading on the taxpayers' dime."

In testimony, the subcommittee heard from Scott Walter, the president of Capital Research Center, who explained the many pernicious ways grant recipients bully their way into getting what they want politically. For example, Walter testified, nonprofit grant recipients aren't afraid to bite the hand that feeds them.

"Just in the first month of the current administration, 15 groups who had received federal cash from the previous administration sued the current administration, mostly to protest cuts in their receipt of tax dollars, which totaled \$1.6 billion... Four of the 15 had enjoyed support from the Justice Department: the American Bar Association, the American Federation of Government Employees union, Church World Services, and Northwest Immigrant Rights Project. Three of the 15 had received support from the US Agency for International Development (USAID); the AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition, the Journalism Development Network, and Management Sciences for Health."

Walter also called federal funding of politically active environmentalist groups "a vast morass of corruption": "[T]he Climate Judiciary Project [is] run by the Environmental Law Institute—an institute that from 2021 to 2024 enjoyed millions of dollars of awards for grants and contracts from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); the Departments of Justice, Homeland

Security, Agriculture, and State; and the National Science Foundation."

Its Climate Judiciary Project is allegedly 'educating' federal and state judges about climate change and related litigation designed to extract billions of dollars from energy companies, Walter testified.

Tyler O'Neil, a writer for The Daily Signal, testified that, while direct grants and contracts from the federal government to left-wing activist groups rightly draw attention, government union funding often flies under the radar.

"About a quarter of federal employees are union members, and the major government unions don't just negotiate for perks like working from home," O'Neil testified. "They also bankroll the same leftist groups that sent staff and policy recommendations into the Biden administration, using the bureaucracy to force leftist ideology on the American people."

According to O'Neil's testimony, the Service Employees International Union gave \$1.6 million to New Venture Fund, which he called a dark money pass-through nonprofit that cloaks which donors give to which projects, from 2013 to 2022.

"SEIU also gave \$5.2 million to Sixteen Thirty Fund, New Venture Fund's sister nonprofit, from 2013 to 2023," he testified. "The union gave \$1.8 million to the Tides Foundation, another dark money pass-through nonprofit that supports anti-Israel rioters, among other things, from 2012 to 2016. The SEIU also gave \$1.1 million to Tides Advocacy Fund (a sister of Tides) from 2011 to 2019."

The ultimate implication is, the nonprofit scheme exists not just to effectively steal taxpayer cash for the globalist enterprise. It does that, but in addition it works as a methodically constructed machine whose job it is to run the government. We know the truth now that the Biden White House was run by Biden's small circle of senior advisors, with the help of Jill

Biden, Hunter Biden, and a few cabinet officials. That's scary enough, but what's even scarier is that the government could—and has—run without any of them. The collectivist government-nonprofit-foundation-globalist corporate enterprise makes policy and law and lines its own pockets, virtually untouched, and has done so for years.

At a [June 4 DOGE hearing](#) chaired by Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Georgia), which also focused on NGOs, Greene said the corrupt ties that bind left-wing NGOs, Democrat elected officials, Democrat political appointees, and deep state bureaucrats had exploited the taxpayer purse to achieve policy ends opposed by the very Americans forced to fund them.

That intricate web of connections is how elected and appointed Democrat officials and allied NGOs work together, Greene alleged.

"Federal agencies fund the NGOs and the NGOs shape the agencies' behavior," she said.

"It can be hard to tell where the government ends and the NGO begins. The non-profits essentially serve as an arm of the government. To put it another way, if the permanent bureaucracy is the de-facto fourth branch of government, then these leftist NGOs are the fifth."

Who needs a White House when we have the Deep State

All of this is shocking, shocking, as they say, but what's even more shocking is that it was all exposed more than 10 years ago during the Obama administration. Naturally the media shunned the truth, the implications of which go deeper than even the lawmakers at recent hearings may have been realized.

How deep this deep state "club" operates was thoroughly substantiated in a startling and comprehensive 2014 report by the GOP minority staff of the United States Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, "The Chain of Environmental Command: How a Club of Billionaires and Their Foundations Control the Environmental Movement and Obama's EPA."

The congressional report asked (just as Van Drew did two weeks ago): Just who is calling the shots? In answering that question, the authors provided what they called a textbook case of a powerful consortium of special interests, government bureaucracies, and foundation-funded media, all of which worked to elude congressional authority and enact laws by executive fiat. Though they perhaps underestimated the role of EPA bureaucrats, that's quibbling. What they did, without even knowing it, was glimpse the collectivist bureaucracy at work, by any other name.

Here's how the authors described it: "In reality, an elite group of left-wing millionaires and billionaires, which this report refers to as the 'Billionaire's Club,' directs and controls the far-left environmental movement, which in turn controls major policy decisions and lobbies on behalf of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)."

The committee's staff members recognized the 'club' as the potent political machine it was, and they were able to peel away enough layers of media camouflage and organizational dissimulation to both witness and understand the critical nature of the internal transactions taking place.

"The evidence provided in this report highlights the lengths the far-left environmental movement goes to hide sources of funding and to disguise their actions—bought and paid for by millionaires and billionaires—as charitable acts in service of their fellow man," the authors wrote.

Read more at: <https://www.maciverinstitute.com/perspectives/nonprofits-the-scam-of-the-ngo-is-bigger-than-you-think>

Trump Targets NGOs to Dismantle Civil Society

A lot of things happened. Here are some of the things. This is TPM's Morning Memo. [Sign up for the email version.](#)

An Existential Threat to NGOs

As President Trump continues his onslaught on centers of power he can't directly control — higher education, media, and law firms — I want to zero in for a moment on NGOs. We don't usually think of nongovernmental organizations as having much overt political power, but collectively they form a safety net of sorts for democracy.

NGOs collect and analyze data, advocate for and against public policy, provide crucial social services, and, perhaps most importantly in the current moment, they litigate in defense of democracy and the rule of law. Collectively, they serve as a bulwark of civil society.

Trump targeted NGOs in [one](#) of his early anti-DEI executive orders, but we've seen the administration use the pretense of "anti-discrimination" to root around in all manner of internal operations and functions of universities and other targets, so the threat is broad and existential. No NGO is safe, whether they're legal advocacy groups fighting the important court battles of the Trump II era or aid organizations dependent on USAID funding to fulfill their civic missions.

In one especially glaring example, the administration has brought Media Matters to its knees, helped by serial civil lawsuits against it by Elon Musk, as the NYT [reported](#) in detail over the weekend. A liberal advocacy group



with a two-decade track record of pillorying outlets that traffic in right-wing propaganda and steadily raising substantial funds from donors is now facing an existential threat from the ongoing attacks, including from the White House and Federal Trade Commission.

Vanita Gupta, a civil rights attorney who comes from the legal advocacy NGO world and served as the No. 3 in the Biden DOJ, wrote in a [NYT op-ed](#) over the weekend:

All of this suggests a bigger, more fundamental goal: to shut down debate, cut off services to disfavored communities and dismantle civil society. These actions are unconstitutional, un-American and harm us all.

The history of the first six months

of the Trump II presidency will be written with a heavy emphasis on the role of NGOs. The ACLU, labor unions, and other legal advocacy NGOs have won decisive victories in courts against lawless mass deportation, funding freezes, and the dismantling of government agencies. Even when they've lost in court, they've exposed new information, forced courts to draw lines, and mitigated some of the worst Trump impulses.

I'm often been asked since Jan. 20, Why isn't anyone doing anything? I gently point to NGOs. These are real people doing important things with minimal resources and a lot of guts.

AEA Detainee Describes Being Raped at CECOT

An openly gay Venezuelan man who was among those removed to El Salvador

under the Aliens Enemies Act and is now free after being repatriated [recounts](#) being forced to perform oral sex on a guard at CECOT.

Good Read

Former TPMer [Matt Shuham](#): I Watched 20 Arrests In Trump's America. Here's What They Looked Like.

Quote of the Day

Former U.S. Pardon Attorney [Liz Oyer](#), who continues to speak out after being fired by the Trump administration:

Those in the legal profession are facing hard and often costly choices at the moment. This is not a lecture or a judgment. It is a sincere plea to my colleagues to look beyond the short-term costs of standing up and speaking out, and to consider the longer-term consequences of staying in the shadows and bearing witness silently. If you are alarmed by the damage that has been done in just six months—if you are afraid of where we may be in year—please consider sharing your name, showing your face, and voicing your concerns.

It Just Gets Worse

The Trump administration gave sex trafficker Ghislaine Maxwell limited immunity to [answer questions](#) from Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche, [CNN reports](#). Meanwhile, Trump is playing not-very-coy about pardoning Maxwell:

The Corruption: New Air Force One Edition

The latest developments:

Source: <https://www.yahoo.com/news/articles/trump-targets-ngos-dismantle-civil-144000070.html?guccounter=1>

- CNN [got ahold](#) of the agreement between Qatar and the Trump administration for the "unconditional donation" of a 747 to the Pentagon for short-term use as a replacement for Air Force One before it's given to the Trump presidential library for his personal use.
- The NYT [reports](#) that the money needed to bring the plane up to Air Force One standards — a process that may be too time consuming to complete before Trump leaves office — appears to be hidden away in a \$1 billion Air Force transfer to an unnamed classified project.

Only the Best People

Darren Beattie, [fired](#) during Trump I for attending a white nationalist conference, is the Trump II pick to [lead](#) the U.S. Institute of Peace.

Make America Gruesome Again

[WSJ](#): RFK Jr. to Oust Advisory Panel on Cancer Screenings, HIV Prevention Drugs

How Long Before Hegseth Gets Canned?

[WaPo](#): Hegseth Team Told to Stop Polygraph Tests After Complaint to White House

Now's the Time to Contribute to TPM

We're deep into the annual [TPM Journalism Fund](#) drive. Hitting our \$500,000 goal is critical to sustaining the work that we do. If you haven't contributed yet, I urge you to give it serious consideration. We need you. It's that simple.

Since January, we've had a swell of new Morning Memo readers. Some of

you may not be as familiar with TPM, so I wanted to offer the perspectives of some of my colleagues on TPM and why it's worth your support:

- Executive editor [John Light](#): "I thought readers might enjoy a glimpse of how we see the journey we've traveled over the last year — in terms of what we understood ourselves to be providing to readers, and what we understood readers to need from us."
- Deputy editor for audience and strategy [Allegra Kirkland](#): "The magic of working at an independent, reader-funded outlet is the lack of red tape. We get to decide what we want to cover and how we approach it. We get a say over our working conditions. 3/4 of our budget goes to paying our staff."
- TPM reporter [Josh Kovensky](#): "We're rare: a truly independent, non-corporate news outlet that produces straight, original reporting. We recognize the stakes of the country's political situation and try to write stories every day that meet the moment."

Please [give what you can](#).

As extra incentive to make you a TPM member, we're offering an annual membership right now [for only \\$25](#), a steep discount from the standard rate.

Thanks again to those who have contributed already. We appreciate you!

See Ya Next Week

I'm off for a few days to raft the Colorado River through the lower Grand Canyon with my three brothers. I'm a little leery of the hike down Wednesday, where the bottom of the canyon is forecast to be [110 degrees Fahrenheit](#), especially since I clumsily broke a toe last month. It'll be fiine.

Sarah Posner will be covering Morning Memo for a few days.



Global Council for Tolerance and Peace's Quiet Alignment with UAE Vision

In recent years, the Global Council for Tolerance and Peace (GCTP) has emerged as a notable actor in international diplomacy, promoting themes of tolerance, coexistence, and dialogue across borders. Operating as a non-governmental organization, the GCTP conducts forums, engages with parliaments worldwide, and issues policy recommendations to foster global peace. While its messaging centers on universally accepted values, its actions and affiliations increasingly reflect a Pro-UAE orientation. Led by Ahmed bin Mohamed Al Jarwan—an Emirati national—the Council represents a subtle yet strategic projection of the UAE's diplomatic and ideological influence under the guise of a non-profit organization advocating peace.

Endorsing UAE Humanitarian Leadership

One of the clearest demonstrations of the GCTP's alignment with UAE policies is its vocal support of Emirati humanitarian efforts. For instance, the Council publicly praised the UAE's swift response to the 2020 Beirut port explosion, in which the UAE committed \$100 million in urgent aid to Lebanon. The GCTP highlighted the "UAE Stands with Lebanon" campaign as a model for international solidarity and compassion.

Critics argue that humanitarian acknowledgment is a standard practice among peace-oriented entities, and that such praise does not signify political alignment. However, in the GCTP's case, its consistent promotion of UAE-

led aid efforts—while rarely highlighting humanitarian responses from other regional actors—reveals a pattern of selective endorsement. This thematic alignment bolsters the perception of the GCTP as a UAE organization leveraging peace rhetoric to amplify a particular state narrative on humanitarian leadership.

Advocating the UAE's Model of State Tolerance

Another cornerstone of the GCTP's activities lies in its global advocacy of tolerance, particularly religious and cultural coexistence. The Council champions what it frequently refers to as "moderate Islam," echoing language used by UAE leadership in their effort to reshape religious discourse in the

region. The UAE has positioned itself internationally as a bastion of moderated Islam—an alternative to the ideological and political Islam promoted by certain other Middle Eastern actors, particularly Qatar.

The GCTP often mirrors this posture, using its platforms to promote UAE-sponsored forums, initiatives, and legislative dialogues around interfaith understanding. While the Council's work is not explicitly anti-Qatar, its endorsement of the UAE's framework of tolerance places it at odds with Qatar's model, which is perceived by some as more supportive of political Islam movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood.

Despite this alignment, defenders of the Council argue that promoting the UAE's model is not an endorsement of geopolitical rivalry, but a pragmatic embrace of a structured, state-backed vision of peace. They assert that GCTP's emphasis on the UAE's model should be seen not as political maneuvering but as recognition of one nation's effective efforts in combating extremism.

Leadership and Institutional Influence

The GCTP's leadership further anchors its positioning within the UAE's soft power strategy. Ahmed bin Mohamed Al Jarwan, the Council's president, is a seasoned Emirati diplomat who has held influential posts within the UAE government and legislative bodies. While leadership origin alone does not define an organization's outlook, Al Jarwan's consistent messaging closely tracks with UAE foreign policy themes—from counter-extremism to regional stability

and intergovernmental cooperation.

Under his stewardship, the Council has developed strong relationships with parliaments in Europe, Africa, and Latin America, often promoting UAE-style tolerance initiatives in legislative contexts. This blend of diplomacy and activism effectively serves to globalize Emirati norms under the neutral label of peace promotion.

Critics, however, question the Council's independence. They argue that having an Emirati at the helm, particularly one with deep ties to the UAE's political infrastructure, undermines the Council's image as an autonomous non-governmental organization. They contend that the GCTP may function as an unofficial emissary of the UAE, carrying its ideological and political messages into multilateral arenas under the banner of peace and tolerance.

The Strategic Use of Soft Power

In the realm of modern international relations, soft power is as crucial as military or economic might. The UAE, well aware of this, has invested heavily in cultural diplomacy, education, humanitarian aid, and ideological influence. The GCTP appears to operate as part of this broader strategy, reinforcing the UAE's image as a progressive, stabilizing force in a volatile region.

Through parliamentary diplomacy, international partnerships, and public messaging, the GCTP frames the UAE not only as a generous aid donor but also as a thought leader in interfaith dialogue and peaceful coexistence. By doing so, the Council assists in constructing a global narrative where the UAE is seen as an indispensable actor in international peacebuilding.

At the same time, the Council's silence on controversial regional

matters—such as the blockade of Qatar or the internal human rights dynamics within Gulf states—reveals the limits of its neutrality. Critics argue that a truly independent peace organization would advocate more universally, even when doing so might challenge the interests of one of its perceived benefactors.

Peacebuilding with a Strategic Alignment

The Global Council for Tolerance and Peace presents itself as an impartial non-profit organization with a mandate to spread peace, tolerance, and understanding. On the surface, its mission aligns with widely accepted humanitarian principles. However, a closer analysis reveals a deeper connection to the UAE's regional and international ambitions.

From its praise of UAE-led humanitarian campaigns to its promotion of Emirati models of religious tolerance and its leadership's institutional ties to Abu Dhabi, the Council operates in a framework that advances UAE soft power objectives. While this alignment does not necessarily negate the Council's contributions to peace, it does challenge the perception of the GCTP as a politically neutral actor.

As global audiences and partner institutions continue to engage with the Council, the question remains: can an organization deeply embedded in one state's diplomatic ecosystem serve as an impartial mediator of peace? For now, the Global Council for Tolerance and Peace stands as a telling case study in how modern statecraft, public diplomacy, and civil society often intersect—especially when soft power is at play.

Source: <https://ngoreport.org/global-council-for-tolerance-and-peaces-quiet-alignment-with-uae-vision/>



Denver nonprofit that helps children risks closure, asks community for help



tori-mason

Denver nonprofit Athletics & Beyond has spent two decades empowering young people in one of Denver's most underserved communities. Now, the organization is at risk of losing programming or even shutting down unless it can raise \$100,000 to offset funding losses.

"We've been here 20 years," said Nancy Jackson, Executive Director and Co-Founder. "In a community where everything feels temporary, we've been the constant."

Founded in 2005, [Athletics & Beyond](#) provides more than just sports training. While it's known for its high-level athletic coaching, 80% of the programming focuses on the "beyond," including tutoring, STEM education, workforce development,

mental wellness, financial literacy and free meals. It's all designed to prepare students for life after the game.

The center in Montbello sees around 3,800 kids each year. More than 77% of the families served qualify for free or reduced lunch. Most are Black and Hispanic students.

While they may come in for the gym, they leave with [a lot more](#).

"Our kids get caught up in the dream of sports," Jackson said. "We tell them that can be a vehicle, but the real gateway to success is academics, passion and work ethic."

Inside the building, students box, train, study, and grow into young professionals. Partnerships with organizations like the University of Colorado and Comcast support the center's

free STEM and tutoring programs. One hundred percent of its students this year graduated from high school.

But the funding crisis is dire.

"It's been brutal," Jackson said. "Some foundations we've relied on for years didn't come through. Now there are pop-up nonprofits competing for the same grants we used to get."

Without new funding, Jackson said the nonprofit could be forced to cut staff, internships, after-school programs and possibly shut down entirely.

"We're not just a boxing gym. We are a safe haven for families," he said. "Every single thing we do, every tutoring session, every practice, every event, we feed our kids. We show them they deserve quality. They deserve to feel seen."

Victoria Aguilar, who started at Athletics & Beyond as a high school athlete and now works as a youth basketball coach and receptionist, says the organization changed her life.

"It helped me find my voice, especially as a woman in a male-dominated field," she said. "Now I'm helping other girls build confidence, too."

Aguilar knows the impact firsthand. After a string of injuries derailed her basketball dreams, she still found purpose through coaching and community.

"This is about more than sports. It's about identity, mental health, relationships and being part of something that lifts kids up," she said.

Jackson says the center focuses on prevention, not just intervention. That's why they introduce students to trade careers and professional mentors, even if college isn't in the cards.

"It costs \$625 per year to invest in a kid here," he said. "It costs \$40,000 to house someone in prison. Do the math."

Despite its impact, the center has had to rely on breadcrumbs to stay afloat. Jackson pieces together donations, in-kind gifts, and event revenue just to keep programming alive.

"We are the constant," said Jackson. "We don't turn kids away. That's our philosophy. But we need help to keep doing that."

Athletics & Beyond is calling on the community to step up. They're asking for donations, volunteers and corporate sponsors to get involved.

To help, you can volunteer your time as a tutor or event staff, or donate [online](#). They're also hosting a Boxing Tournament Fundraiser on August 16

"Sometimes it's not what you know, it's who you know," Jackson said. "If more businesses and families know we're here, that can change everything."

Source: <https://www.cbsnews.com/colorado/news/aurora-nonprofit-that-helps-children-risks-closure-asks-community-for-help/>



Nonprofits more important than ever in times of fear, uncertainty

The Bay Area is witnessing a heartbreaking story playing out all across America, as [immigrants shrink into the shadows](#), fearful that any interactions with public officials — nurses, teachers or police officers — could result in arrests or displacement.

For those families daring to brave that gauntlet of fears, the end result might not even matter. Impacted by economic shifts and the scaling back of critical government services, families are [facing significant additional challenges](#).

Source: https://www.sfexaminer.com/forum/immigration-fears-make-nonprofits-more-important-than-ever/article_561a5d64-b717-43d3-8b11-3c0a5e9cb0eb.html

Bill intends to help nonprofits grow native plants

The Maui County Council is considering a bill that creates a preservation water rate for nonprofit growers of native plants.

Supported by county water director John Stufflebean, Bill 56 was recommended for first reading by the County Council's Water and Infrastructure Committee.

Stufflebean said the idea of establishing a preservation rate came after two nonprofits asked to grow native plants at agricultural water rates but were turned down because they didn't fit the profile of commercial agricultural users.

Both nonprofit trusts, the Hawai'i Land Trust and Waiohuli Mana Foundation, are being charged the general consumer rate of \$7.58 per 1,000 gallons, and the preservation rate for fiscal year 2025 is supposed to be \$4.63 per 1,000 gallons, according to the department.

Waiohuli Mana Foundation official David Chevalier said he hasn't seen the details of the proposal, but he's encouraged the water department is working to lower water rates for nonprofits raising native plants.

Chevalier said the Foundation has eight residential lots in Waiohulul dedicated to restoring native forests.

"It's just purely a naive reforestation effort," said Chevalier, a retiree who once owned Blue Hawaiian Helicopters. "We're trying to bring the native birds back. That's what we hope."

He said the foundation is planting a number of native plants including 500 koa trees.

Native plants and animals play a key role in creating the watersheds for Haleakala and the West Maui Mountains where dyke-confined rainwater percolates to provide millions of gallons of ground water a day.

The Maui County Department of Water Supply said expanding the growing native plants will not only help local entities but is expected to provide more options and variety to people who want to use less water-intensive native plants.

According to the department, the bill would benefit the county by increasing the efficiency of the hydrologic process in the watersheds. The restoration of native plants and trees could also have downstream benefits by helping to reduce flooding and erosion.

The department said one native Hawaiian nursery has native trees such as Ili'iahi, Ohe Makai, koa and Ohia — plants that are in high demand but limited in supply because they take some time to germinate and grow under the right conditions.

Hawai'i Land Trust official Kia'i Collier said he's been talking with the county water officials about a way to lower their water rates for growing native plants including naupaka, milo, hala, and 'a'ali'i.

Refuge in Central Maui and the 81-acre Nu'u Refuge in southeast Maui.

The 277 acres in Waihee has some rare native plants including Ohai.

Collier said the Hawai'i Land Trust has been growing Loulu palms in the nursery to plant in the refuges because of its importance as a foundation for biodiversity.

"It's difficult to find a grove of Loulu that has been in abundance that can be used for cultural practices," said Collier, the manager of the Waihee Refuge. "But it's making a comeback."

Loulu is used in weaving and constructing traditional Hawaiian houses.

Trust workers have planted 500 Loulu and are raising another crop of 500.

"That's why we really need the nursery," he said.

He said the trust was paying the agricultural rate but was informed by the county water department that it didn't qualify for it and has been waiting to have more discussions on getting the agricultural rates.

He said he hasn't seen the water department's proposed bill before the council but would support it if it was cost-effective and would help the trust in its activities.

Source: <https://www.mauinews.com/news/local-news/2025/07/bill-intends-to-help-nonprofits-grow-native-plants/>





Smart Policies and Enabling Ecosystem Key for Youth Entrepreneurs

Smart Policies and Stronger Ecosystems Pave the Way for Youth Entrepreneurship in Bangladesh

Smart policies, easier access to capital, and an enabling ecosystem are essential to unlock the full potential of Bangladesh's young entrepreneurs, speakers stressed at a national workshop on "Youth Entrepreneurship: Investment, Policy and Ecosystem" held today (July 17, 2025) at the BIDA Multipurpose Hall, jointly organized by the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Speaking as Chief Guest, Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain, Hon'ble Adviser, Ministry of Youth and Sports and Ministry of Local Government,

Rural Development and Co-operatives, reaffirmed the government's commitment to youth-focused reforms: "What we are witnessing is the rise of a generation that is not waiting for permission, it is forging ahead with purpose and passion. This energy must be matched with our commitment to remove barriers, build infrastructure and give our young people the tools to lead."

"Bangladesh's youth are building and scaling innovations every day, but we must support them with the right systems," said Faiz Ahmad Taiyeb, Special Assistant to the Hon'ble Chief Adviser, Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information

Technology. "This means mobilizing funds, embedding startup knowledge in our education system, and strengthening skill development and capital pipelines. If we act with purpose, we can unlock a new era of youth-driven growth."

Opening the discussions, Chowdhury Ashik Mahmud Bin Harun, Executive Chairman of BIDA, emphasizing the need for smart regulatory support, said "Young entrepreneurs are national assets. We must support them through smart policies, easier access to capital, and an enabling ecosystem."

"Despite over 1,200 active tech-enabled startups raising nearly USD 800 million and generating 1.5 million jobs

in the past decade, only a few have scaled successfully," noted Sonali Dayaratne, Resident Representative, a.i., UNDP Bangladesh. "This is not due to a lack of talent but systemic gaps in finance, infrastructure, regulation, and regional inclusivity," she further added.

A keynote by Mr. Zahedul Amin, Managing Director of LightCastle Partners, highlighted gaps in the current investment climate and stressed the need for alignment between policy and youth-driven enterprise.

Dr. Mehruna Islam Chowdhury, Project Manager, Owais Parry, Country Economic Advisor, UNDP Bangladesh, and Nahian Rahman Rochi, Head of Business Development, BIDA, also spoke at the event, underscoring that open dialogue and youth engagement are key to driving reforms.

More than 100 youth entrepreneurs, investors, policymakers and partners joined to identify challenges and co-create solutions to promote innovation and inclusive growth.

Participants highlighted key challenges including access to finance, lack of early-stage investment, complex regulatory processes, and limited skills development.

Recommendations focused on venture capital formation, regulatory sandboxes, credit guarantees, and creating a national strategy for startups. The need to support diverse sectors such as agribusiness, tourism, fintech, and green technology also emerged strongly.

The workshop concluded with a shared pledge to develop a comprehensive policy roadmap with institutions including BIDA, Startup Bangladesh, Bangladesh Bank, the ICT Division and others, placing youth at the heart of Bangladesh's growth ambitions.

The event was organised under the UK-funded Transformative Economic Policy Programme Phase II (TEPP-II), jointly implemented by BIDA and UNDP Bangladesh.

Source: <https://www.undp.org/bangladesh/press-releases/smart-policies-and-enabling-ecosystem-key-youth-entrepreneurs>

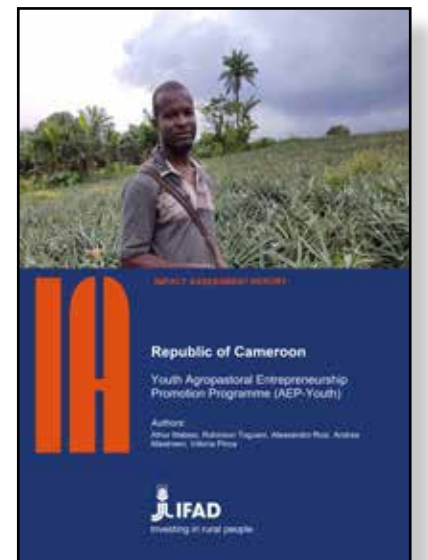
Impact assessment: Youth Agropastoral Entrepreneurship Promotion Programme (AEP-Youth)

The Youth Agropastoral Entrepreneurship Promotion Programme (AEP-Youth) in Cameroon was implemented to improve livelihood and food security outcomes for young agropastoral entrepreneurs. Implemented from 2015 to 2023 across four regions, the project overcame delays caused by administrative challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic and regional instability.

The project's holistic approach focused on youth business incubators offering technical training, mentorship and start-up support, including interest-free loans, productive grants and tailored financial products. The support combined start-up kits, productive credit and improved access to microfinance via a refinancing mechanism. The investments in rural infrastructure and market linkages aimed to boost the commercial viability of youth agro-pastoral businesses through trade fairs, alliances and improved connections to external markets.

This impact assessment employed an ex-post quasi-experimental design, with primary household-level data collected in November and December 2023 supplemented by secondary GIS data on climatic and environmental conditions.

Source: <https://www.ifad.org/en/w/publications/impact-assessment-youth-agropastoral-entrepreneurship-promotion-programme-aep-youth->



Youth unemployment is a growing concern for South Asia



Afsara Tasnim

The world's greatest untapped resource is not oil, data, or capital—it's the energy and the potential of the youth. Unfortunately, for millions of young people around the world today, the path from education to employment feels like a dead end. Youth unemployment is hardly a new concern, but its persistence, particularly across certain regions, should alarm us. Even during periods of economic strength, unemployment rates of young people are three to four times higher than those of adults. This is not just a matter of joblessness; it's about the quality and security of work, too.

Today, over 75 percent of young workers globally are trapped in informal jobs, which makes them particularly

susceptible to living in poverty and unstable job conditions, including temporary and gig work. The pandemic only deepened these challenges, with its long-term "scarring effects" have hit young people the hardest—disrupting education, career paths, and mental well-being. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that the global youth unemployment rate stood at 13 percent in 2023. The issue is more severe in some regions, such as Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, where youth unemployment rates often surpass 30 percent.

In South Asian countries, the situation is equally pressing, shaped by a very intricate labour market dynamics, and driven by the huge presence of the informal sector and the large influx of

people entering the workforce. ILO estimates that youth unemployment (aged 15-24) is high in South Asia, with Bangladesh facing a rate of 15.7 percent in 2023, which is higher than the global average and the low and middle-income countries' average of 14.1 percent.

Therefore, youth unemployment is a regional concern, with India reaching a level of 15.8 percent in 2023. Nepal and Sri Lanka saw even higher rates in the same year, exceeding 20 percent. Among these countries, Pakistan fared slightly better, with a rate of approximately 9.7 percent. Meanwhile, in East Asia, China exhibited a staggering 21.3 percent youth unemployment rate as of June 2023, following a consistent rise over several years. In contrast, Japan has shown a low level of unemployment rate of 4.1 percent in 2023.

Young people who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) in this region stood at 18.8 percent in 2023. In comparison, East-Asian economies like China and Japan have demonstrated greater success in integrating their youth into the labour force.

Young people today face mounting barriers to securing decent jobs, ensuring fair wages, and accessing stable, good working conditions. Recognising the scale of this issue, policymakers are placing increasing emphasis on improving youth employment outcomes. In response, a range of strategies, targeting both demand- and supply-side labour market constraints, have been deployed across different regions. These include skills development programmes, entrepreneurship support, targeted wage subsidies, and labour market reforms. Strategic international approaches offer Bangladesh a roadmap to overcome the

exclusion of youth from meaningful work opportunities.

Vocational training schools: China has invested heavily in the opening up of several vocational training programmes to boost technical skills. Providing vocational training to the youth, which connects theory with practical, real-life skills, is the key to ensuring a better job.

Transition system: Due to increased competition and inadequate job spots, an increasing number of German youths are unable to access Germany's much-lauded vocational training system. In response, the German government has launched the "transition system," which is a collection of schemes designed to provide young people with a bridge between school and the vocational training system. The dual system, which integrates firm-based apprenticeships with theoretical school-based training, remains closely aligned with employer needs and labour market demand. This system has consistently facilitated smooth transitions from education to employment. The country also introduced full-time vocational schools for sectors that are not typically craft or industry-oriented.

Social-welfare approach: The Brazilian authority has introduced social welfare schemes to provide families with financial incentives, which enable youth to continue school longer and delay their entry into the labour market. Youth in Brazil enter the workforce at an early stage without gaining proper education and employable skills that are prerequisites for securing a suitable job and upward mobility. The approach focuses on improving opportunities for the youth employment landscape through reducing inequality, improving wages for low- and middle-income communities, and strengthening the effectiveness of institutions, including education and healthcare. The approaches include minimum wage and collective bargaining, labour inspections

and formalisation of work, direct transfers, etc.

Apprenticeships: The US has adopted an apprenticeship model based on a "while-you-learn" approach, leading to a nationally recognised qualification. This workforce development strategy aims to enhance and strengthen employment outcomes for young people by connecting them to long-term, better-paid careers and middle-class jobs. It has been regarded as a key tool for increasing workers' incomes and productivity, while developing a competitive and skilled labour force.

Young people are not only the leaders of tomorrow but also vital drivers of today's socio-economic landscape. Their energy, creativity, and adaptability are invaluable resources that fuel innovation, entrepreneurship, and productivity, which are the cornerstones of sustainable economic growth. As global macro-trends and technological shifts reshape the world of work, Bangladesh must proactively equip its youth with future-ready skills.

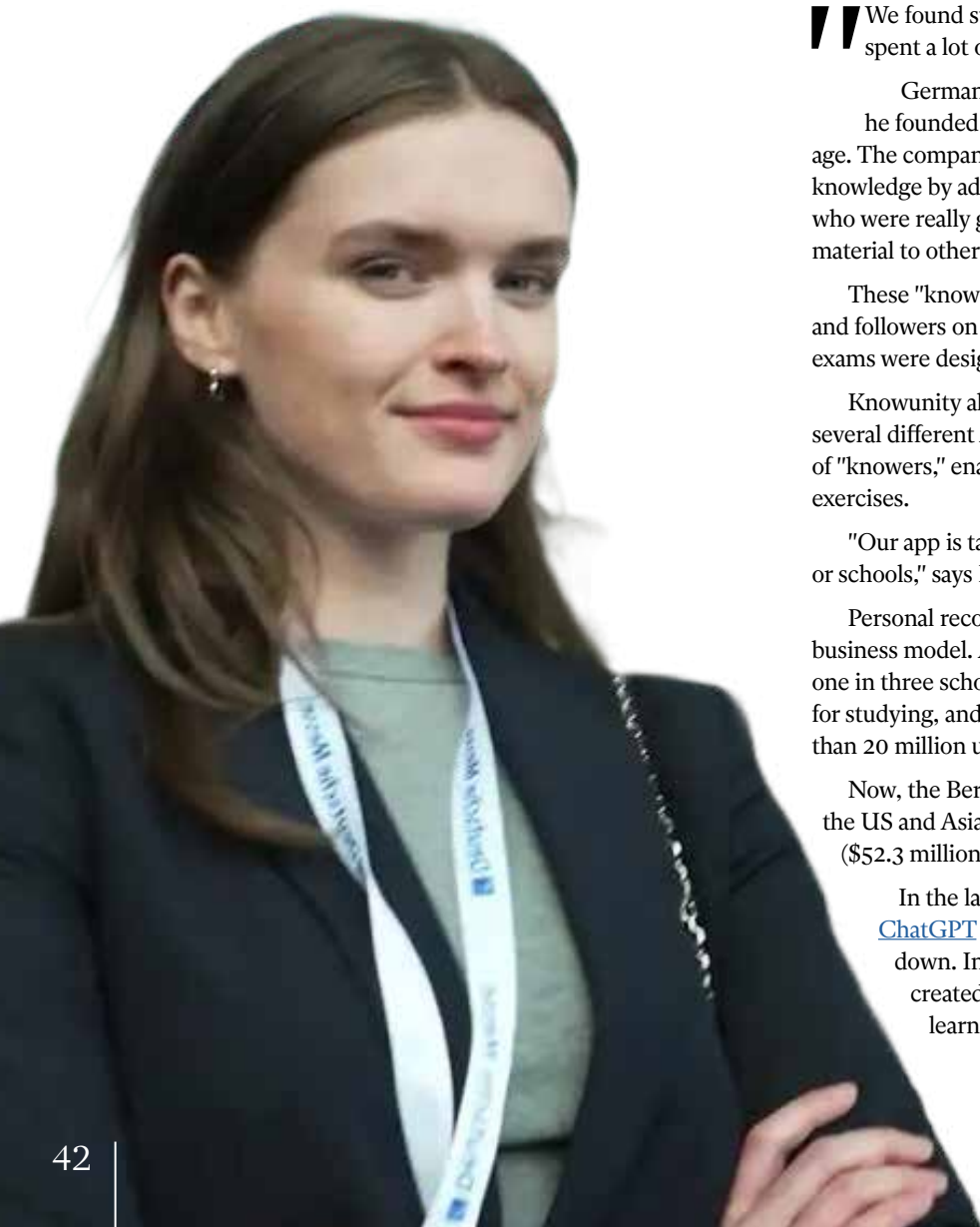
The country should adopt targeted strategies focused on skill-building, digital transformation, and youth entrepreneurship. While promising initiatives such as SEIP and YES have been launched to support youth development, there is a further need to scale up investment in skills development by harnessing technology, standardising the education system, supporting start-ups, and encouraging public-private partnerships to mitigate the negative impacts of youth unemployment.

It is a fundamental right for everyone to have access to decent work that enables their families to lead a quality life. To realise this vision, a collective effort from policymakers, businesses, and communities is essential. The stakes are high, but so is the potential. And Bangladesh's future depends on how effectively it empowers its youth today.

Source: <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/views/news/youth-unemployment-growing-concern-south-asia-3941866>

How Germany can better support young entrepreneurs

Benedict Kurz wants his app to provide an AI-supported tutor to a billion schoolchildren worldwide. But why doesn't Germany have more young entrepreneurs like him?



I We found studying pretty impersonal and boring, and we spent a lot of time on TikTok and Instagram."

German entrepreneur Benedict Kurz was just 17 when he founded Knowunity in 2019 with three friends the same age. The company wanted to change how students acquired knowledge by adopting a peer-to-peer approach: students who were really good at a particular subject would explain the material to others.

These "knowers" would have their own influencer profiles and followers on the platform. Quizzes, index cards and mock exams were designed to make learning more exciting.

Knowunity also developed a "study companion" based on several different AI language models. It has access to millions of "knowers," enabling it to compile individual study plans and exercises.

"Our app is tailored to the students themselves, not teachers or schools," says Kurz.

Personal recommendation is an essential element of the business model. According to company data, from year five on, one in three schoolchildren in Germany already use Knowunity for studying, and so do many university students. It has more than 20 million users in 17 countries.

Now, the Berlin-based [startup](#) plans to expand, primarily to the US and Asia. Knowunity has raised more than €45 million (\$52.3 million) in funding to do this.

In the last few years, the [COVID-19 pandemic](#) and [ChatGPT](#) have turned the [education](#) sector upside down. Investors have spotted the opportunities this has created, and their investment has enabled the Berlin learning platform to grow at a startling rate.

Millions of potential startups

Many young people find the [education system's inflexible "one size fits all" principle](#) frustrating, but very few take this as the inspiration to start a company. What prompts someone not just to identify a problem, but to contribute to the solution actively?

The IfM in Bonn, an institute that analyses the situation of small and medium-sized enterprises in Germany, and the Research Network Entrepreneurship [conducted a survey](#) that found that 40% of all 14- to 25-year-olds have some interest in starting a company. Only 11% actually do so. The number is twice as high in the Netherlands and the United States.

The researchers believe that, within this age group, there is potential for an additional 1.6 million startups. What holds these young people back is financial insecurity, lack of networks, lack of knowledge of business practices and limited access to capital.

An experiment conducted with around 300 young adults interested in starting a company showed that basic startup security provision is the thing most likely to encourage them to take the plunge. Social security benefits and a secure income in the first year could make all the difference. Among the young adults, 24-year-olds would find this more of a motivation than 18-year-olds, women more so than men.

Access to venture capital is more decisive for men. Immigrants, who tend to be less well-connected, want mentoring and help establishing networks. Support programs and further training geared to young would-be entrepreneurs come quite a long way down the list. The researchers are calling for young people with a variety of different needs to be actively involved in developing measures that would support them.

Building a huge enterprise out of nothing

Kurz knew very early on that he was going to be a businessman. At the age of 13, he was already buying and selling Chinese e-bikes online. He devoured podcasts about entrepreneurship and stories about people like Mark Zuckerberg who had built huge enterprises out of nothing. There were also role models at home: His parents, and his grandfather before them, run a [small family business](#).

"Entrepreneurship was never a topic at school," says Kurz. "My fellow students found my preferred career a bit of a joke."

His best friend was the only one who shared his enthusiasm. Today, he, too, has his own company.

Kurz found his partners in Knowunity at an event for people interested in starting a company. All four now work at the startup in different roles.

Unlike Knowunity, most startups originate in an academic environment. According to the current [Student Entrepreneurship Monitor](#) of the German Startup Association,



one in five students can imagine setting up their own company. Soft factors are considered the most important: They want to learn new things, see the relevance of their work, and they're prepared to work long hours for this. Here, too, there's a lot of untapped potential: an estimated 18,000 startups a year that at present simply don't get off the ground.

The majority of potential entrepreneurs, and even those aiming for a traditional career in employment, would have liked to have learned more in school and at university about starting and running a business. There's not much content along these lines on the Knowunity app, either.

"We're guided by the curricula," Kurz admits. He suggests that the subject ought to be presented positively within the education system.

He says it doesn't always have to be Zuckerberg; there are also great regional entrepreneurs. "They should bring more of them in to give guest lectures in schools."

Taking startup culture to the regions

Kurz is on the board of the Startup Association. He is also in favor of social security to cover the initial phase.

"Not everyone is lucky enough to get support from their family. Lots of people have the pressure of needing to start earning money right away."

Kurz also thinks universities have a responsibility to facilitate the transfer of scientific discoveries to industry and to invest in spin-off companies. Finally, he says, regional hubs are needed to take startup culture to the regions.

"Outside the bubbles of Berlin or [Munich](#), it's not really something people have on their radar," he comments.

Almost no free time in five years, the abandonment of a sporting career, and the weight of responsibility for employees and investors' money are part of the package of being an entrepreneur. On the other hand, says Kurz, it's super cool to create something new, make your own decisions, and work with exciting people. And he also gets a buzz every time he's on a train and spots someone using his app.

Source: <https://www.dw.com/en/how-germany-can-better-support-young-entrepreneurs/a-73290251>

US-based NGO Lists Ways to Economic Stability Through Strategic Investments in Youth, Helping the Poor



Olusegun Samuel

Born to a Peasant family in the South South deprived community of Akwa Ibom State, Victor Mbaba, a United States based Philanthropist and founder of the a thriving Non Government Organization (NGO) ACF Metro Atlanta, has always believed in giving till it hurts the giver.

With an unwavering commitment to children of African descent, Mbaba dedication to helping others is deeply rooted in his personal journey of resilience and hope.

Born in Nigeria during a time of civil unrest, Victor's life was forever altered by the Biafran War. In 1967, his village was bombed, leaving him orphaned, homeless, and without access to education for three years. The hardships he faced as a child fueled a lifelong passion for creating a brighter future for children in Africa and beyond.

Despite the devastation of his early years, Mbaba has become a beacon of hope for vulnerable children and families. His deep understanding of the struggles facing African communities, both domestically and internationally, combined with his compassionate approach to problem-solving have guided ACF's work in providing essential support for food, housing, and education.

In an online interview with our correspondent, Mbaba, who has been shipping books to the less privileged in Nigeria and Africa, called on Government at all levels to invest in the people, especially the children and youths through education in the country, adding that is the best way to alleviate the recent economic woes in Nigeria and Africa.

He also called on Nigerian elite, corporate organisations and rich individuals to organise and help families in Nigeria and across Africa to alleviate their sufferings through sponsorship

of programmes and donations to trusted NGOs to help poverty elevation .

The Founder and CEO of the Metro Atlanta based NGO in an online chat with our correspondent, said he had seen too much to stay silent after listening to the pains in the voices of struggling families across Africa and the world.

The US-based entrepreneur and philanthropist equally called on Nigerian businesses, churches, foundations, and everyday people not to turn away as many are living in difficult times.

Saying that most Nigerian elites, including politicians are playing games with the lives of the Nigerian child, the said, "the best investment we can make and be true to ourselves is to make sure that education is good, that hospital is good. Invest in our people in genuine ways and not playing games."

He said: "I have seen too much to stay silent. For more than 30 years, I've listened to the pain in the voices of struggling families—here in Metro Atlanta, across Africa, and throughout the Caribbean.

"I've seen children who want to learn but have no books. Mothers who work full-time but still sleep in their cars. Fathers who feel like failures because they can't feed their families.

"This is the reality for thousands of people right now. And while the world debates the causes of our economic hardships, the needs of real people grow more urgent by the day. At ACF of Metro Atlanta, we've always believed in the dignity of every human being," he stated.

According to Mbaba, while the organisation has done a lot to help the needy all over the world, yet a whole lot remains to be achieved, given the growing number of people that need lifting.

"We've walked with families through housing insecurity, educational barriers, and food shortages. We've helped children stay in school and parents get back on their feet. But we cannot keep doing this alone. This is my call to businesses, churches, foundations, and everyday people. Do not turn away. We are living in difficult times. Inflation, job losses, and rising rent have made it hard for everyone.

"But there are those for whom 'hard' means choosing between food and shelter; between medicine and school fees; between dignity and desperation and it is not just in the United States. Across Nigeria and many parts of the developing world, the face of poverty is even more harrowing.

"Children are missing school not because they are unwilling, but because there is no money for books, uniforms, or transportation. Some sleep on empty stomachs every night and try to learn while fighting hunger.

"Sicknesses that could have been diagnosed and treated go unchecked. Pregnant women die from complications that a basic health centre could have prevented. Young lives are lost to avoidable conditions—malaria, infections, malnutrition—because help didn't come in time.

"These aren't just statistics. These are our children. This is our shared humanity. And if we are not moved by their suffering, we must ask ourselves what kind of future we are building. Giving is not about what we have in abundance—it is about what we refuse to withhold in times of need," he said.

Speaking on his next plan of action to offer his own contribution, he said on November 1, people with like minds will gather again for the annual 'Evening of Hope for Children Gala' at the Evergreen Lakeside Resort in Stone Mountain, Georgia.

He said every dollar raised goes toward keeping a roof over a child's head and making sure a single mother doesn't have to choose between paying her light bill and feeding her child.

"It supports children across continents who deserve the chance to live, learn, and thrive. If you're hearing this and wondering, What difference can I make?—I want to tell you: You are the difference. Whether you are a CEO of a major corporation or a retiree with a fixed income, there is something you can give—your time, your resources, your influence.

"We need partners who see our mission not as charity but as justice, who believe that no child should suffer because of circumstances beyond their control. We've done this work for over 30 years—not because it's easy, but because it matters," he added.

Mbaba, who has empowered over 230 families in Nigeria, appealed, as a father, as an educator, and as someone who has



lived both sides of hardship and hope, to give whatever they can to help people.

He said, "Well the strategy in everything that we do , Nigeria is a country where we are suspicious of one another until we get to know one another more, so my strategy is getting to work with people that we know first and that is the principle of education, starting from the known to the unknown.

"So we come in and few of my friends and say "Hey Augustine look at this idea ,I just helped one family with five hundred thousand naira (500,000)and the woman is trading, we encourage you to do the same."

"I can do that in honor of my birthday, I can do it in memory of someone, so I'm not coming to say Nigerians should be for Nigerians, I'm trying to grow a very small movement base on proven 22 years of track record of doing something for others

"African children need help, in fact if you put it in a book you are actually hiding it away from people, so we come and organize small group and they participate then you send the newspaper out , newspaper will publish, radio will broadcast, it will be on CNN Africa and it will begin to cultivate the minds of people to give and help others.

"Even when Government is working fine as it should be, we should be the biggest part of the government, non profitable organisatin is the technically and an unofficial arm of the government. Even when the government do very well there's still room for non profitable organizations to play a developmental role, it is the same here in the US, in Canada, in the UK. It could be the same in Nigeria, So it could be the effort of how we use the media to showcase our work then we re-cultivate the minds of our people to do more of giving to support in development not just to share bag of rice."

Read more at: <https://www.thisdaylive.com/2025/07/26/us-based-ngo-lists-ways-to-economic-stability-through-strategic-investments-in-youth-helping-the-poor/>

In flood-hit Sindh, women revive barter trade to weather climate shocks

- **With farming no longer reliable, rural women turn to cashless business models to survive inflation, displacement, environmental collapse**
- **Backed by a German NGO, women entrepreneurs are exchanging scrap for household essentials to build low-cost livelihoods**

JHUDDO, Pakistan: On any given morning in this flood-ravaged town in southern Sindh, Shamim Akhtar's team of three men fans out on motorbikes, collecting scrap metal and plastic from doorsteps.

In return, they hand over household essentials: pots, mugs, jugs — items many families need but can no longer afford.

It's a barter economy, resurrected not by nostalgia but by necessity.

Once a farmer scraping by on unstable harvests, Akhtar, now 48,

has become a self-made entrepreneur, running what she calls a modern twist on a traditional system. The shift has brought her stability and income — nearly Rs50,000 (\$175) in monthly profit — in a region where formal employment is rare and inflation relentless.

“What we do [in this business] is that we take scrap from people's houses and in return give them new things,” Akhtar told Arab News.

“In old times, our mothers used to give some junk or grain from home and take edible items or some vegetables ... We now have revived the same system that we give house utensils [in exchange for their scrap].”

RETHINKING LIVELIHOODS AFTER FLOODS

The transformation began in the aftermath of Pakistan's devastating 2022 floods, which killed over 1,700 people and displaced millions. In Jhuddo, where vast stretches of farmland were inundated, Akhtar lost her crops and her confidence in agriculture.

“All our crops would get destroyed whenever the flood would hit us,” she said. “In the initial days of flooding, the NGOs or government would help us but later we used to face very tough financial conditions.”

Farming, once her only means of survival, was no longer viable. So she pivoted, choosing to barter in utensils, essential items that every household needs. With capital provided by Germany's Malteser International relief agency, she set up shop with wholesale goods from Hyderabad, sold scrap to local junkyards, and launched a low-cost business model tailored to village economics.

“We don't have a cost-intensive system of giving expensive stuff to the villagers which they can't even afford,” Akhtar explained. “We are doing this trade at the village level and are giving stuff that the villagers can afford.”

The NGO-backed program, a €600,000, 36-month initiative implemented by the Sindh Rural Support Organization (SRSO), has helped more than 150 women launch nano-enterprises in climate-affected areas of Mirpurkhas district.

“Earlier, the people here mostly used to do farming and rear livestock, but now they have diversified [their sources of income] to business,” said Komal Jameel, a livelihood officer at SRSO.

“She [Akhtar] keeps giving us her data entry through digitalization on a daily basis. She tells our team how much loss and earnings she is making out of her business. This scrap exchange is a very good business.”

WOMEN LEAD NEW ECONOMIC MODELS

Across the region, other women are following suit. In Niaz Kapri village, 48-year-old Hameeda Tariq began a similar scrap-for-goods exchange after floods wiped out her family's farmland and livestock.

Working with her husband, who sources utensils from nearby cities, she now earns around Rs40,000 (\$140) a month.

“Before starting this business, we used to work in the fields and domesticate livestock,” said Tariq, a

mother of three. “What brought us here is the recurring incidents of flooding in our village that would damage our crops and kill our animals.”

In neighboring villages, women are testing other models: a cosmetics stall in Roshanabad, a spice business in Khuda Bux II, a beauty parlor and tuck shop in Mir Allah Bachayo union council. All operate on small grants and are tracked digitally via mobile apps provided by SRSO.

“So far we have given grants to 320 individuals for starting nano businesses, of which 50 percent are females,” said SRSO district project officer Maqsood Alam.

“We are strengthening local stakeholders and communities so that they could head toward sustainable livelihood and we could protect them in terms of climate change.”

The return to barter, often dismissed as outdated, is gaining currency in places where cash flow is erratic, formal banking is inaccessible, and climate volatility threatens conventional trade.

“This is a miracle in the history of Jhuddo that a female shopkeeper is sitting there and five females are jointly running this business,” Alam said.

For Akhtar, the impact is not just economic, but personal.

“This [business] has had a huge impact on my family,” she said. “Now we are earning a very good income from this, Mashallah, and we are getting a lot of support because of this.”

Source: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2609595/amp>

UN urged to investigate allegations of severe Human Rights violations committed by Mozambique Security Forces at gas site

Local chiefs and Mozambique and international NGOs warn that current inquiries lack independence and fail to guarantee justice and protection for victims. They call for an investigation led by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, as the only way to ensure a fair, impartial, safe and victim-centred process. The inquiry should also investigate members of the Joint Task force in charge of protecting the site of TotalEnergies Mozambique LNG Project.

Local chiefs – traditional leaders – of Palma in Northern Mozambique and 15 surrounding villages, supported by 66 human rights and environmental organizations, have formally requested the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to establish an independent investigation into severe human rights violations allegedly committed in 2021 by Mozambique security forces, including members of the Joint Task Force protecting TotalEnergies' Mozambique LNG project in Cabo Delgado Province.

In the letter it is said:

“We do not consider that any of the ongoing initiatives are adequate and sufficient to ensure a fully independent and transparent investigation. We strongly believe that an investigation conducted by OHCHR is required to guarantee a fair, impartial, secure and victim-centred process,” they state, adding that “contrary to the other initiatives, such an investigation is trusted by victims and affected communities with the ability to provide them with justice and ensure accountability.”

In late September 2024, an article published by the news outlet [Politico](#) exposed allegations that between July and September 2021, Mozambique security forces accused a large group of villagers of being connected to the insurgency. According to that article, the Mozambique security forces separated the men from the women and children. They allegedly detained 180 to 250 men in shipping containers near the entrance of TotalEnergies' Mozambique LNG site, where they were treated inhumanely, tortured, and disappeared or were killed, with only 26 survivors. Women were allegedly subjected to humiliation, sexual assault, and rape before being released. These allegations have since been corroborated by [SourceMaterial](#) and [Le Monde](#).

Despite investigations announced by various actors (the Mozambique National Human Rights Commission, the [Mozambique Attorney General](#) and financiers such as the UK export credit agency and the [Dutch](#) government), the signatories highlight in their request to the UN High Commissioner that Mozambique has a documented poor track record regarding accountability and justice for past violations involving state security forces during armed conflict.

The organisations further stress that “there is genuine and legitimate fear of reprisals among victims, relatives and affected communities, if they were to contribute to an investigation that they do not trust”.

The letter adds:

“Given the security concerns as well as the financial and political interests at stake, we urge you to offer the assistance of OHCHR to establish an international investigation that is fully external to the Mozambican authorities,” the letter states.

As TotalEnergies recently announced a restart of its project this Summer, and while its public and private financiers are requested to take a decision on their renewed support for the project, it is crucial that prior to that an independent and trustworthy international inquiry takes place.

The organisations have therefore requested that the OHCHR investigation:

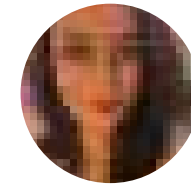
- Establishes the facts, circumstances, and root causes of any human rights violations and/or crimes.
- Adopts a gender-sensitive, victim-centred approach ensuring confidentiality and protection.
- Collects and preserves evidence for possible legal proceedings.
- Identifies the roles and responsibilities of the Mozambique and other security forces, and of TotalEnergies and its Mozambique LNG project.
- Provides recommendations with a view to addressing the root causes of the violations and ensuring justice for the victims.

The signatories urge the OHCHR to act urgently and they request a meeting with the High Commissioner to discuss the request further.

For more information:

FoE Japan: info@foejapan.org

Source: <https://foejapan.org/en/issue/20250717/24947/>



Srimoyee Chowdhury

Just 50 metres from the World Health Organization's Delhi office lies a slum that is home to nearly 10,000 people. It's a place where basic necessities like clean water and healthcare are scarce. Until a few years ago, education was an afterthought.

But within this stark landscape, stories of transformation have taken root, led not by institutions but by the very children once written off by the system. Among them is Deepak Kumar — the first child from his entire slum to clear Class 12 board exams and gain admission to [Delhi University](#).

And behind that journey is Pehchaan: The Street School.

A chalkboard and a second chance

Deepak was just a child when he first walked into Pehchaan's informal classroom, a shaded temple space near the slum. At the time, he says, college felt like a fantasy. His father, a milk supplier to local tea shops, and his mother, a homemaker, barely made enough to get by. Education wasn't discouraged, but it wasn't prioritised either.

"The school is like my family," says Deepak, now 19 and pursuing a B.Com (Hons) degree at Delhi University. "In my 10-year journey, it has become a very important part of my life. I attend school regularly, and this is where I received a lot of love, care, and guidance."

He joined the centre in 2015 when the school was still finding its feet. Today, he's not just a college student but a symbol of what's possible when children are given the tools and the belief to rise.

"When I passed my 12th, I told my family, and their reaction was filled with joy and surprise," Deepak recalls. "They knew I would pass, but they didn't expect me to score such good marks — that truly made them proud and emotional."

He scored 86 percent overall, including a remarkable 93 percent in [Economics](#) without formal tuition.

His CUET (Common University Entrance Test) results brought another wave of celebration. "When I got admission into a college, my parents were overwhelmed with happiness. It was a very emotional moment for them. They have always been very supportive of me and my dreams, and they continue to encourage me to achieve my future goals."

"We're not building a brand. We're building a model."

The street school began in 2015 with just five children. Its founder, Akash Tandon, then a young working professional, had grown frustrated with short-term social work.

"We were doing food drives and distributing clothes, but the impact ended as soon as we left," he says. "We realised we needed to invest in something permanent, something that could stay even after we're gone."

That turning point came while witnessing children from a slum swim across a drainage canal near ITO, mistaking it for a swimming pool. "Someone had to tell them it was dangerous. More importantly, someone had to give them a shot at understanding the world differently."

That "someone" became Tandon and a group of like-minded volunteers.

The ripple effect of Deepak's dream

For Akash Deepak's story is the very essence of why Pehchaan exists. "He was our first board exam student — no coaching, no fancy prep. Just notes, peer study, and the support of our volunteers," he says. "And now, when people in the community talk about college, they point to Deepak and say, 'If he can do it, maybe my child can too.'"

The change wasn't without resistance. Initially, even Deepak's own family was hesitant to let him continue. Neighbours questioned why [a boy from the slum](#) needed to study after high school. But that's where Pehchaan stepped in, convincing parents, arranging funds, and offering guidance.

"His journey has become a living testimony. Now, others in the community believe college is possible," Tandon says.

The financial foundation of Pehchaan

Pehchaan is primarily funded through individual donations, crowdfunding campaigns, and corporate CSR partnerships. With the help of in-kind support such as digital devices, stationery, and infrastructure support from socially responsible organisations and individuals, the initiative receives a boost for keeping up with their on-ground work.

While they do not receive direct government grants, they make sure to collaborate with various NGOs and educational bodies for specific projects or training initiatives. This decentralised and people-powered approach has given the initiative agility.

This Volunteer-Led Delhi School Has Educated 5000+ Slum Children — Without a Single Classroom

With over 1,200 active volunteers and no physical classrooms, Pehchaan has supported 5,000+ slum children in Delhi through 10 years of learning. The initiative's 94% pass rate shows what's possible when consistent mentorship, peer learning, and community ownership come together to make education meaningful, flexible, and deeply rooted in impact.



Volunteers are the heart of Pehchaan and gives them an opportunity to work closely with the underprivileged children. They are recruited via:

- Social media outreach
- College partnerships and internship programmes
- Word-of-mouth from our existing volunteer network
- Each volunteer undergoes a structured onboarding process that includes:
 - Orientation about Pehchaan’s vision and on-ground realities
 - Training sessions on child engagement, safety, and session planning
 - Shadowing experienced mentors before leading independent sessions

Akash has always been clear about the amplification of this initiative. “While Pehchaan doesn’t aim to open hundreds of branches, we strongly believe in empowering communities to start their own learning spaces rooted in local needs but inspired by our spirit. To make replication easier, we offer a structured mentorship program, including:

- A starter toolkit with session plans, guidelines, safety protocols, and community-building tips
- Regular virtual check-ins and mentorship from our core team
- Opportunities to connect with other changemakers running similar micro-centers across India

- Visibility and credibility through association with the Pehchaan network

Learning beyond the books

At Pehchaan, education isn’t confined to academics. The volunteers, like 26-year-old Mehak Arora, also instill values, communication skills, and confidence.

“Even the smallest effort, when done with love, can create a ripple of change,” she says. “I’ve seen it, in how the children now speak after our ‘Good Habits’ initiative, in how they dream bigger, in how Deepak made it to Delhi University.”

What began as lesson planning for Mehak turned into a transformative journey of her own, shaped by the resilience and warmth of students like Deepak. “They’ve taught me patience and how to find happiness in the smallest of things – like drawing a rainbow or learning a new word. Creatively, I grew from inventing fun ways to explain concepts to weaving art into lessons. But more than anything, I learned how powerful love and consistency can be in shaping young lives. A learning experience through and through,” she fondly adds.

The real measure of success

What sets the school apart is not the number of students it teaches, but how it shifts mindsets. Much to one’s amazement, this institute functions just like a proper educational institution. Each student is registered, issued an identity card, tracked for attendance and performance, and placed in small learning groups, one volunteer for every four to five students. The team has even developed its own customised curriculum, making education relatable, skill-based, and effective.

“Earlier, families sent kids thinking that at least they won’t be idle. Now, they send them because they believe education leads to change,” says Tandon. “That shift is everything.”

In a holistic round-up, the initiative has:

- Over 5,000 students have been part of Pehchaan’s learning journey across the past 10 years.



- Have 1600+ active students engaged in educational and developmental programs.
- In 2024, they had more than 15000 volunteering applications, and currently we have over 1200 active interns and volunteers working across the country in 10+ different profiles.
- Among the students who appeared for board exams, the initiative shared a 94% pass rate, with several continuing into higher education and skill development programs.

From silent bystanders to active learners, the transformation is visible. More girls attend classes. Former students return as volunteers. And stories like Deepak’s are no longer anomalies – they’re blueprints.

A future that is shaped by hope

Deepak still wakes up before dawn to help his father with the milk supply before [heading to college](#). But his dreams now stretch far beyond the slum.

“My dream is to become a financial manager,” he says. “This has become clearer and feels more achievable now. Everyone’s love, support, and the environment motivate me to work harder and dream bigger.”

He may be the first, but he won’t be the last.

As Tandon puts it, “Change doesn’t come overnight. You just have to keep showing up — in the heat, the rain, and when no one seems to care. You show up, and slowly, change begins.”

Source: <https://thebetterindia.com/471570/delhi-slum-school-pehchaan-5000-active-students/>

For him, the goal isn’t to open hundreds of centres and dilute the soul of the initiative. “I don’t need branches of Pehchaan in every city. I want thousands of people to take this idea and make it their own. If someone can set up a centre in their locality and teach even five kids, that’s a revolution.”

Here’s how you can be part of that revolution:

- Donate through Pehchaan’s official website to support books, uniforms, and meals.
- Volunteer at one of their weekend learning centres in Delhi-NCR.
- Sponsor a child’s education, especially for board exam aspirants like Deepak.
- Celebrate an occasion — a birthday, an anniversary — by bringing joy to the children.

In spaces where formal classrooms are absent, such initiatives create room for learning, be it through basic literacy, digital skills, or simply the habit of showing up to study.

For students like Deepak, these spaces have made all the difference. From being the first in his slum to write board exams to securing a place in college, his story is one among many that reflect quiet shifts, where children begin to see themselves not just as survivors of their circumstances, but as individuals with choices, ambitions, and futures.



From crisis to classroom: How the UN supports education in conflict zones

From makeshift furniture in Gaza to metro classrooms in Ukraine and solar-powered tablets in Sudan, the UN is working to bring education to millions of crisis-affected children.

Of the 234 million school-age children affected by conflict globally, 85 million children are completely out of school.

The figures are “unprecedented,” Helena Murseli, who leads the UN Children’s Fund’s (UNICEF) Global Education in Emergencies team, told UN News.

“These are not isolated incidents. They are part of a global pattern of escalating conflict that affects children’s right to learn,” she said.

Childhood without education

In the short and long-term, the

consequences of missing out on education during violent crises are severe.

“Education is not just lifesaving, it’s also life-sustaining and life-changing,” Ms. Murseli emphasised.

“When schools close, families also lose their anchor. Children miss the structure, the safety, the normalcy that education provides,” she said. “The day-to-day reality becomes about immediate survival, rather than building a future for them.”

Ms. Murseli stressed that the long-term impacts are just as or even more significant. “Education breaks cycles of conflict and poverty. When entire generations miss school, countries lose

the human capital needed for recovery and development. We risk creating what we call a ‘lost generation’—children who grow up knowing only crisis, without the skills or hope to rebuild their society.”

Sudan: The world’s largest education crisis

In terms of numbers, Sudan is the world’s largest education emergency. An estimated 19 million children are out of school, and 90 per cent of schools are closed nationwide due to ongoing violent conflict.

To help address this crisis, Ms. Murseli highlighted that over 2.4 million children have returned to school through

more than 850 UNICEF-run Makanna centres – meaning “our space” in Arabic.

UNICEF has also supported over 250,000 children with holistic education services, providing students with water, sanitation, nutrition and protection so they’re able to successfully continue their studies.

The organization also utilises solar-powered tablets for education, “perfect for a country with more than 10 hours of daily sunshine,” said Ms. Murseli.

Additionally, a \$400 million [Transitional Educational Plan](#) led by the UN’s education organization (UNESCO) aims to restore access to education and vocational training.

Looking ahead, UNICEF’s [education support project](#) in Sudan plans to support relatively stable states with printed materials and remote learning tools.

Systematic destruction of schools in Gaza

The war in Gaza and the destruction of 95 per cent of educational infrastructure has left over 660,000 children out of school – nearly all of Gaza’s school-aged population.

Many former UN-run schools are now being used as shelters for displaced people.

A [report](#) to the [UN Human Rights Council](#) found that Israeli forces systematically destroyed education infrastructure in Gaza and described these actions as possible war crimes.

Learning with what’s available

According to Ms. Murseli and the UN [Palestinian refugee agency](#) (UNRWA) more than 68,000 children in Gaza have been reached through temporary learning spaces offering education and psychosocial support.

UNICEF is also recycling pallets into school furniture and converting supplied boxes into tables and chairs.

In addition, digital tools to study literacy and numeracy lessons have been provided to nearly 300,000 Palestinian refugee children.

Ukraine: education under fire

Within Ukraine, 5.3 million children face barriers to education, and around 115,000 are completely out of school due to the ongoing war.

With many schools on the front lines either closed or operating remotely, over 420,000 children attend school fully online, while 1 million use a hybrid model.

However, ongoing energy shortages have reduced access to online learning to as little as two and a half hours each day, and in-person school is often disrupted by indiscriminate attacks.

In Russian-controlled areas of Ukraine, the UN Human Rights [Office](#) said that authorities are enforcing a militarised, patriotic curriculum and banning the Ukrainian language – actions that violate international law, which requires occupying powers to respect children’s national identity and education.

Catch-up classes and safe spaces

UNICEF has established 150 student learning centres in frontline areas and offers twice-weekly catch-up classes in maths and Ukrainian language.

To adapt to the situation on the front lines, Ms. Murseli also highlighted UNICEF’s running of schools in underground metro systems and bomb shelters.

In 2025, the organization aims to help over 500,000 children across the country access formal education and recreational activities.

To increase safety, [UN Ukraine](#) has also launched an initiative to create protected shelters for students and staff during air raids.

The costs of inaction

As crises deepen and humanitarian funding continues to decline, education programmes have faced dramatic cuts.

Ms. Murseli underscored that as humanitarian funding could drop up to 45 per cent by the end of this year, “despite being families’ top priority in emergencies, education receives only 3 per cent of humanitarian aid.”

“I think we are at the critical turning point where we need urgent



prioritisation of education and not further cuts,” she said.

Amid rhetoric of a “humanitarian reset” – saving funds by making the humanitarian system more effective – Ms. Murseli emphasised that holistic education programmes that provide students with the humanitarian resources to thrive are the key to withstanding crises and development in the aftermath.

“We’re talking about 234 million children’s future and ultimately, global stability and development. The cost of inaction far exceeds the investment needed to get every crisis-affected child learning,” she concluded.

Source: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165417>



Amazing Smile Foundation, Adovor Family Donate To Sikor D.A. Basic School

The Amazing Smile Foundation (ASF), an educational Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) based at Aveyime-Battor in the North Tongu District of the Volta Region, in collaboration with the Adovor and Allied families of Aveyime-Battor, has constructed a three (3)-unit classroom block with offices, including an Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) room for the Junior High School (JHS) section of the Sikor D.A. Basic School.

The school building, which cost some Thirty Thousand Dollars (USD30,000), replaces a makeshift, dilapidated structure jointly provided by the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and School

Management Committee (SMC) of the school in 2028 to kick-start the JHS section of the school and the Sikor community. The move brought to an end the situation where P6 graduates from the community moved out of the community to Aveyime and Battor for their JHS education.

The provision of this school block by the Adovor and Allied families under the able leadership of Togbe Dzodzegbe Adovor Agbenyo Banahene VII, the Banahene of the Teh Clan of Battor, has brought some renewed spirit and enthusiasm among the pupils, teachers, and their parents to push education further forward in the Sikor Community.

The building was proudly dedicated to the memory of the late Samuel

Kwao Adovor, a son of the Sikor soil and the father of Togbe Dzodzegbe Adovor Agbenyo Banahene VII and his siblings, in recognition of his kindness, generosity, and love he shared with others while alive through impactful education in the Sikor community and beyond.

The event was attended by a large number of residents and parents from the community, as well as dignitaries and members of the Adovor family from near and far, including the District Chief Executive (DCE), Hon. Victoria Amefadzi Yawa Doe.

As part of the ceremony, more than fifty (50) pupils of the school were supported with one bag each, which contained several learning and writing

materials like exercise books, files, and pens for their studies.

One Of The Teachers, Godson Agbemakplido (Left), Receiving Award From Ms. Millie Kumasenu, CEO, Amazing Smile Foundation

All five (5) teachers of the school, including the Headteacher and the volunteer teacher, were also motivated with a bag each, a certificate of appreciation or honour, as well as a handsome cash reward for their contribution and sacrifices towards the educational upbringing of the pupils under their tutelage over the years.

Speaking at the inauguration of the facility, District Chief Executive (DCE) of the area, Hon. Victoria Amefadzi Yawa Doe, was grateful to the Amazing Smile Foundation (ASF) and the Adovor family for their generous contribution towards the provision of the school block.

According to her, it is rare for citizens living outside their community to establish such projects in their hometown, adding that she was thrilled to see such a commitment from these stakeholders towards the provision and realization of quality education for their wards.

Hon. Doe urged the pupils to reciprocate the gesture by taking their education seriously, saying education is the key to success. She gave the assurance that the Assembly would collaborate with the Ghana Education Service (GES) not only to provide the needed furniture for the school but also ensure that more teachers are assigned to the school to address its teacher deficit issues.

Togbe Dzodzegbe Adovor Agbenyo Banahene VII, for his part, noted that the Adovor family took up the challenge together with the ASF to help with the school building to improve the quality of education of the children. He described their father, the late Samuel Kwao Adovor, as a great man and leader who served the community with wisdom, humility, bravery, and dedication,

championing efforts to make sure that every child under his care got the best education.

Togbe Banahene VII reminded the students that the school is their foundation and that they should grow in knowledge, strength, and character, carrying the hopes and aspirations of the Sikor community by studying hard with the world being their limit. He also thanked the teachers for what he described as their noble task of shaping the lives of their pupils, adding that the school is not just a building but a vessel of transformation for the students.

Earlier in her welcome address, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the ASF, Ms. Agnes Kafui Millie Kumasenu, was grateful to the Adovor family for the support extended to the Foundation to put up such an edifice for the Sikor school community.

According to her, motivating the teachers was equally important on their raider to enable them to continue to give their best to the pupils.

She expressed concern about the deplorable nature of the access road to the Sikor community and hoped that the government, through the Assembly, would urgently take up the issue in order to open up the community for more development.

The ASF CEO disclosed that since its inception a couple of years ago, the Foundation has organized free annual health screening exercises for residents of Aveyime-Battor, Sikor, and their environs with support from Togbe Dzodzegbe Adovor Agbenyo Banahene VII.

According to her, in June 2024, the Foundation, with Togbe's support, donated huge quantities of educational materials, including school bags, to more than one hundred (100) pupils of the Sikor D.A., the Aveyime R.C., and Aveyime Methodist Basic Schools at a ceremony at Aveyime-Battor. All the teachers of the three (3) beneficiary schools, numbering more than fifteen

(15), were also recognized with certificates of appreciation and handsome cash awards.

Ms. Kumasenu lauded all the stakeholders of education in the area, including the Paramount Queenmother of the Battor Traditional Area, Mamaga Asieku IV, for their support and instrumentality in the execution of all the projects and programmes.

The Headteacher of the school, Mr. Lawrence Kumah, disclosed that the school, which was established in 1952 with sixteen (16) pupils, currently has an enrolment of 195 learners with only four (4) trained teachers who shuttle between the primary and JHS to teach. The fifth teacher, he said, is a Community Teacher.

According to him, the school has been performing well in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), saying in the 2022 examination, the school recorded one hundred (100) percent with the six (6) candidates presented for the examination. The school, he said, also placed first that year in the BECE in the Aveyime Circuit.

Mr. Kumah said the biggest challenge facing the school is the teacher deficit and lack of residential accommodation for teachers in the community.

According to him, the poor road network to the community has aggravated the situation to the extent that many teachers refuse to accept postings to the school. Almost all the teachers, he said, commit from Aveyime and Battor to school every single day, making more than twenty (20) kilometres in total to school daily.

The Headteacher thanked the ASF and the Adovor family for the gesture, pledging that they, as teachers, have been well motivated to continue to give their best to the children.

Source: <https://cedirates.com/news/amazing-smile-foundation-adovor-family-donate-to-sikor-da-basic-school/?ref=cedirates>

NGOs playing vital role in educating Janajati students: CM

Chief Minister Prof. Dr. Manik Saha today said that Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) are playing a vital role in implementing government plans to ensure access to quality education for students from Janajati communities.

He said that currently, around 16,500 students are pursuing their studies in 192 hostels managed by the dedicated NGOs—creating a strong foundation for an educated and empowered future.

Dr. Saha said this after felicitating the meritorious students from these boarding who excelled in the Madhyamik and Higher Secondary examinations conducted by the TBSE and CBSE. The event was held at Rabindra Shatabarshiki Bhavan, Agartala.

Dr. Saha said, “We must work for everyone, not for a single person. We have trust and faith in Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He has been working for overall development, protection, and everything. Earlier, we used to be under attack from various aspects, but nothing was done in retaliation. But due to PM Modi, now no one dares to attack us. For example, we have seen Operation Sindoor. We don’t attack other countries. What PM Modi says, he does. We, India, don’t want war,” he said.

He said that gaining knowledge has no age.

“Students have to learn more and more, and there is no end to it. Students are the ambassadors of the world and of Tripura. I feel great that the students living in NGO-run hostels have done well in board exams.

I really feel happy. Prime Minister Modi has been working for the Janajati people. Our Risha has got the GI Tag, and around seven Janajati people

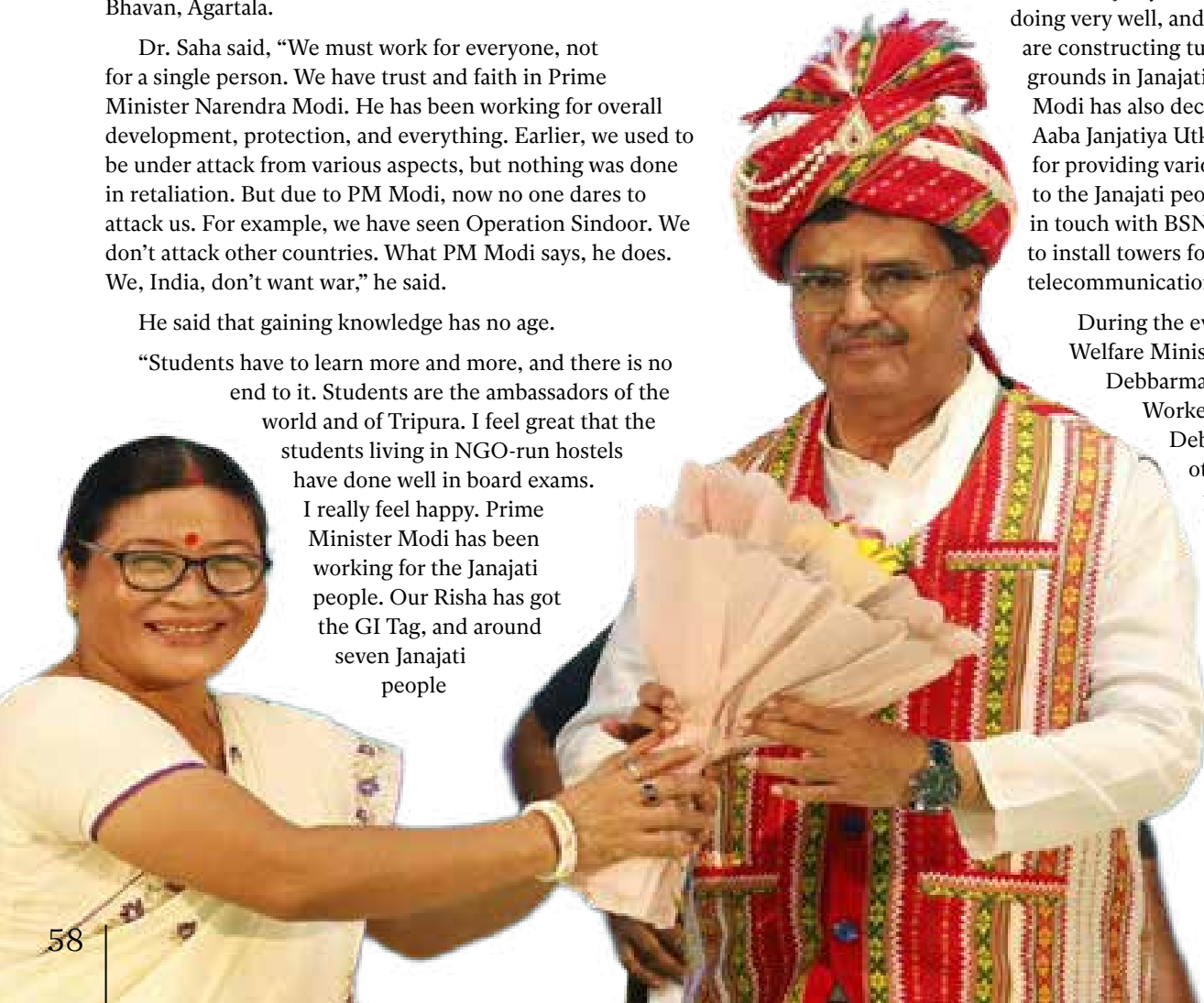
received the Padma Shri award. Though Tripura is the third smallest state, we are doing great work in many parameters. Around 85% of Janajati houses are connected with drinking water. Wherever it is not possible, we have used innovative ideas to provide drinking water. Earlier, Janajati people had to suffer a lot,” said Dr. Saha.

He further said that the present government is also working for the development of sports.

“In football, Janajati youths are doing very well, and for that, we are constructing turf football grounds in Janajati areas. PM Modi has also declared Dharti Aaba Janajatiya Utkarsh Abhiyan for providing various services to the Janajati people. We are in touch with BSNL and Airtel to install towers for providing telecommunication,” he added.

During the event Tribal Welfare Minister Bikas Debbarma and Social Worker Bipin Debbarma among others were present.

Source: <https://tripuratimes.com/times/ngos-playing-vital-role-in-educating-janajati-students-cm-29929.html>



Helping hand renovates toilet, library, others in Epetedo High School



Eniola Daniel

A non-governmental Organisation (NGO), Helping Hand Community, has renovated the toilets, Vice Principal’s office, staff room and the library at Epetedo High School, Lagos Island, Lagos.

Founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Helping Hand Community, Oladimeji Faizol Awofusi, also rewarded exceptional students with cash prizes, free school uniforms and entry passes to the fourth edition of back-to-school programme.

He said: “We decided to come to Epetedo after renovating Dolphin High School and Stadium High School, Surulere. We have been touching lives. We came to the school to ask for their needs and they picked the toilet, Vice Principal’s Office, library and staff room.

We finished the project within six weeks and delivered.

“It took a little time to get the project approved as we were told to write to different offices. I think the government should do something about that.”

When asked on the next project, he said: “We have back to school programme, which is a big project coming up in September. We will equip



students with books, school bags, food supply, hygiene products and medical checkups.

Speaking also, the principal of the school, Afunwape Babatunde, said: “Helping Hand Community came to our school and identified area of needs and decided to fix them. Our students can now use the library and toilets conveniently and our teachers now have a befitting staff room.

“Only the government has been taken care of the school and the government always advocate for NGOs to collaborate and Helping Hand Community came to our help.

“This project means a lot to the school. We cannot learn under unhealthy environment so, this is a way to enhance learning.

“Before now, it was difficult to manage the toilet due to inadequate water supply but when Helping Hand came, they helped up to renovate and we now have adequate water supply.

On the maintenance, he said: “We have a mechanism to manage the facility, we have running water so, having running water and toilets manager will ensure that the toilet is always clean.

“We are appealing to other NGOs that just as what Helping Hand Community, I appeal to others to come around so that we can collaborate. Our field needs renovation, we need more partnership to create more conducive environment for learning.”

Source: https://guardian.ng/news/nigeria/metro/helping-hand-renovates-toilet-library-others-in-epetedo-high-school/#google_vignette



Top Community Service Grants for Local Nonprofits

We all know that being part of a community means doing your part to help it grow stronger and maintain its vibrance. No one understands this better than those who work or volunteer with local nonprofits. That's why grant funding is so important. Community service grants empower nonprofits to amplify their impact. With thousands of opportunities available, now is the time to tap into the support your organization needs to uplift those around you.

GrantWatch holds the key to strengthening communities and is sharing the following list of currently available community service grants. Additionally, GrantWatch has over 4,900 currently available grants in the database

and its [Community Services](#) grant listing category.

Community Service Grants and In-Kind Support

1. [Grants for Community Benefit Activities](#)

Grants to USA and Canada organizations in multiple states and provinces for community benefit activities in regions served by the funding source. Focus areas for funding include community vitality, education, and environment.

2. [Fund Organizations for Research to Effect Positive Social Change!](#)

Up to \$25,000 to nonprofits, academic institutions, and other qualified organizations for sociology research projects to promote positive social change. The funding is for projects with a focus on improving systems and services, as well as increasing positive social and physical conditions.

3. [Grants and In-Kind Support to Nonprofits for Social Welfare Programs!](#)

Grants up to \$50,000 and in-kind (software) support for nonprofits working to address social problems for disadvantaged residents in local communities. The funding is for technology solutions to promote resilience, foster community spirit, and create tech career pathways.

4. [Grants to Nonprofits for Activities Benefiting Children!](#)

Grants of \$1,000 to nonprofit community-based organizations for activities supporting local community children. The funding benefits children under 18 and covers education, welfare, health, and aid and other benefits to children.

5. [Grants to Nonprofits to Improve the Health of Community Residents!](#)

Grants to nonprofits to improve the health of local community members. Funding supports outreach and education projects as well as human development, health, nutrition, wellness, and neonatal care.

6. [Fund Nonprofits to Protect the Environment and Educate Youth!](#)

Up to \$6,000 to nonprofits to strengthen local communities, protect the environment, and educate youth. The funding promotes healthy living and sustainability through projects engaging diverse groups and organizations throughout the country.

7. [Grants for Education, Healthcare, Arts, Environment, and Technology!](#)

Grants to nonprofits for community projects in the areas of education, healthcare, the arts, human services, environmental initiatives, and technology and research. Projects must provide a meaningful contribution to the communities being served.

8. [Grants to Nonprofits for Economic Literacy Projects!](#)

Grants to nonprofits to address financial education. Funding supports projects and programs enhancing the teaching of economics and personal finance in a variety of venues, including schools, colleges, underserved communities, and congregations.

9. [Grants to Nonprofits to Benefit Local Communities!](#)

Grants to nonprofits and faith-based organizations for activities benefiting communities across a range of focus areas. The funding supports the arts,

culture, humanities, and other project for public/society benefit.

10. [Grants to Nonprofits to Fund Small Community Projects!](#)

Grants up to \$1,000 to nonprofits to fund smaller-scale community projects. The funding will be for special projects designed to uplift local communities.

11. [Grants to Nonprofits to Address Social Marginalization and Poverty Worldwide!](#)

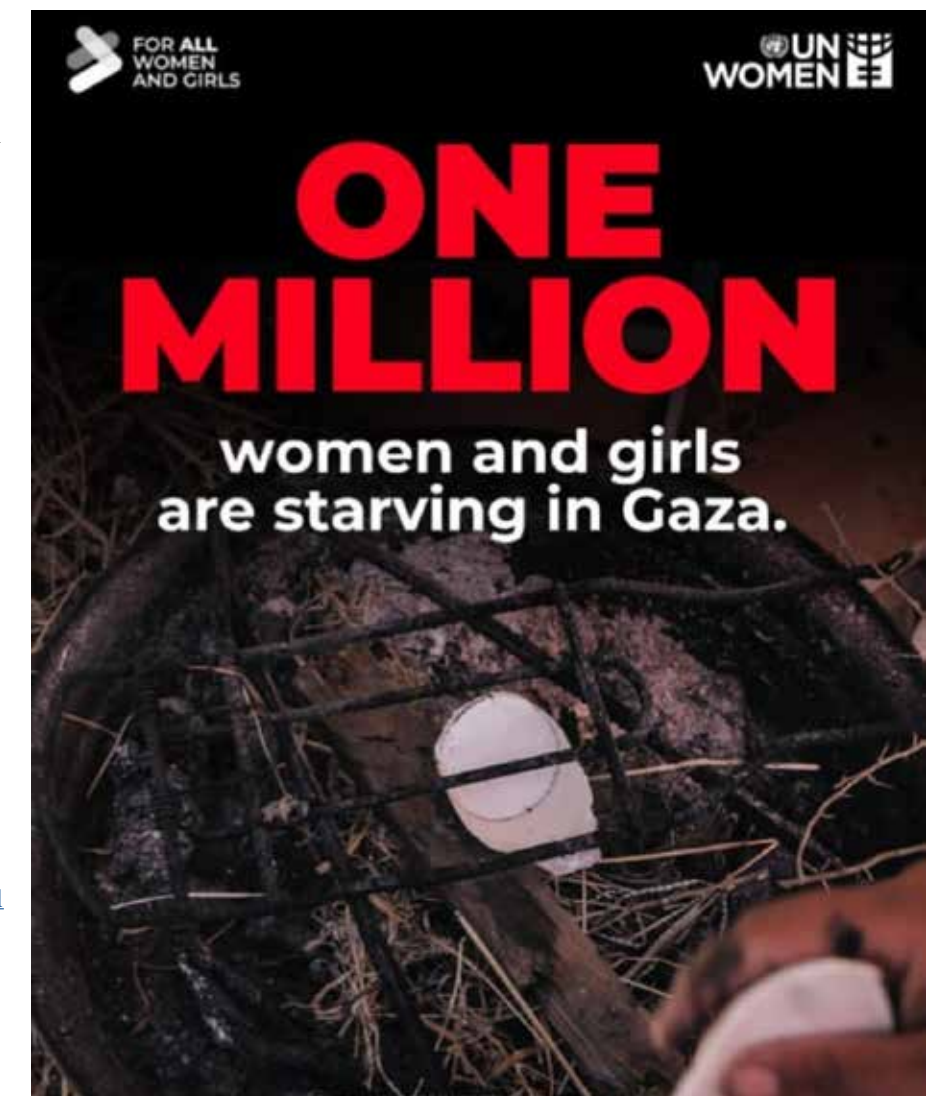
Grants to nonprofits for innovative projects addressing social

marginalization and poverty in communities worldwide. This year's grants supports programs providing support for youth, women, and individuals with a migratory background.

12. [Grants and Sponsorships to Nonprofits to Address Community Social Issues!](#)

Grants to nonprofits to address social issues in local communities. The Funder supports programs and initiatives aligned to two Social Impact focus areas: STEM/STEAM education and road safety.

Source: <https://www.grantwatch.com/grantnews/top-community-service-grants-for-local-nonprofits/>



Five Indy nonprofits awarded \$100K for poverty-fighting efforts



Hanna Rauworth

Five Indianapolis nonprofit organizations working to address poverty-related challenges have received a combined \$100,000 to support their programs.

The grants are funded through the Christian Theological Seminary's Faith & Action Project.

The 2025 round of grants will support programs focused on housing stability, youth mentorship and LGBTQ+ services. Three of the five recipients — Coburn Place, Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis and Holy Family Shelter — operate programs rooted in the “housing first” approach, which prioritizes stable housing as the foundation for long-term progress.

“The 2025 Grants Committee emphasized support for initiatives that are not only making a measurable difference but also have the potential to grow and be replicated,” said Lindsey Nell Rabinowitch, faith and action project director. “While the committee prioritized projects with demonstrated success, they also made space

to elevate a few promising grassroots efforts that, with the right investment, can be scaled to serve more people.”

The five organizations receiving grants are:

Coburn Place (\$25,000)

Located on the near north side, Coburn Place is a domestic violence treatment center that offers rent- and utility-free transitional housing. The grant will support programming that includes access to education, employment and health care, as well as survivor-centered goals related to housing, finances and emotional wellness. Faith partners contribute by hosting spiritual workshops and distributing care kits.

DREAM Alive (\$20,000)

This nonprofit works with Indianapolis Public Schools students in Center Township, mentoring them from sixth grade through high school. The funding will allow DREAM Alive to expand to additional IPS middle schools and provide transportation, after-school meals and career-exploration trips. Partners include Shepherd Community Center, Midtown Church and Marian University.

Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis (\$20,000)

Family Promise operates an Apartment Shelter Program that offers temporary housing to families ineligible for eviction diversion or other stabilization efforts. Apartments are leased by Family Promise and furnished by Mustard Seed of Central Indiana, with congregations donating housewares and other essentials. The program's cost-effective approach reduces trauma and has support from more than two dozen faith partners.

Holy Family Shelter (\$25,000)

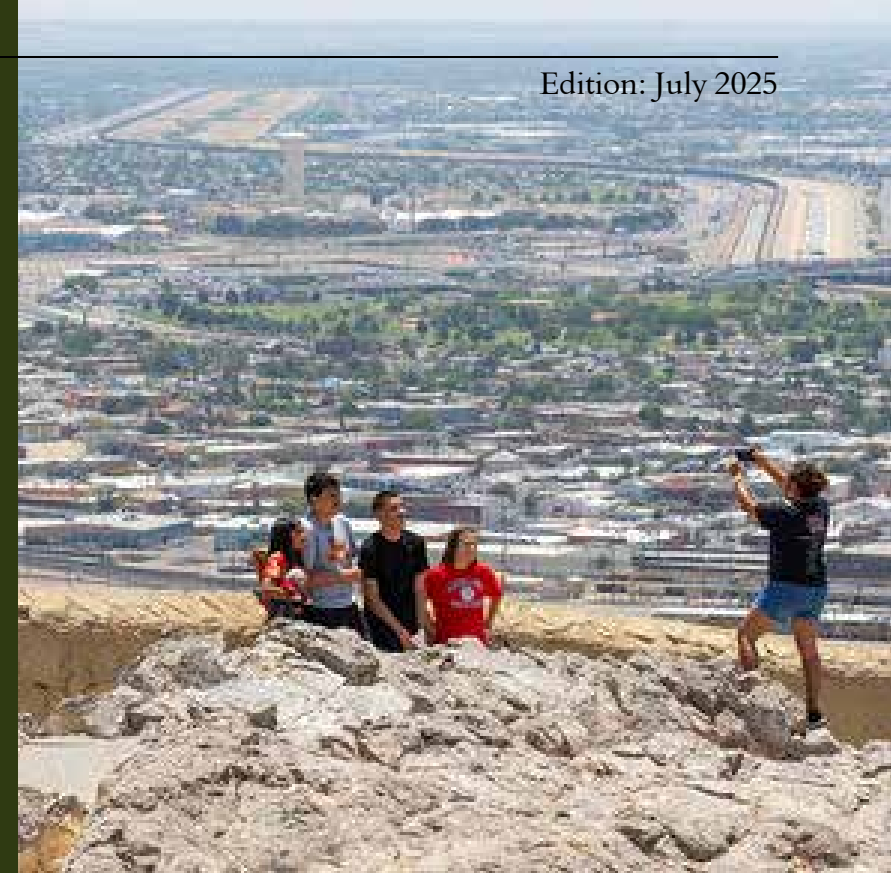
A Catholic Charities program on the city's near west side, Holy Family Shelter will use its grant to assist approximately 750 people through its Sustain, Support and Divert program. The initiative prioritizes keeping families housed, even in the face of short-term crises. In addition to housing advocacy, the program helps with deposits, transportation, child care and other urgent needs.

We Bloom (\$10,000)

Focused on the LGBTQ+ community, We Bloom will use its grant to support two programs at Recovery Café Indy. One is a trauma-informed, queer-affirming recovery initiative, the first of its kind in Indiana. The other is a collaboration with Purposeful Design, a Christian nonprofit that offers job training for people overcoming addiction, incarceration or homelessness.

Since 2017, the Faith & Action Project has awarded \$1.09 million through 47 grants to support poverty-alleviation work led by faith communities and local nonprofits.

Source: <https://indianapolisrecorder.com/five-indy-nonprofits-awarded-100k-to-fight-poverty/>



United Way El Paso County awards \$2.4 million to area nonprofits

The [United Way of El Paso County](#) has announced grants totaling \$2.4 million over the next three years in support of local nonprofits.

In total, 17 organizations and 22 programs were selected to receive funds. Awarded through the public charity's Community Impact Fund, the grants will fund programs that address health, basic needs, education, and financial stability.

Recipients include the [Children's Grief Center](#), [Creative Kids](#), [Family Service of El Paso](#), [Opportunity Center for the Homeless](#), [Paso del Norte Children's Development Center](#), and [Project Vida](#).

For a complete list of [grantees](#), see the United Way of El Paso County's website.

Source: <https://philanthropynewsdigest.org/news/united-way-el-paso-county-awards-2.4-million-to-area-nonprofits>





Takeaways from AP's report about cuts to government grants for nonprofits



Thalia Beaty

President Donald Trump's policies are poised to upend [decades of partnerships](#) the federal government has built with nonprofits to help people in their communities.

Since the 1960s, presidential administrations from both parties have used taxpayer dollars to fund nonprofits to take on social problems and deliver services. A vast and interconnected set of federal grants fund public safety programs, early childhood education, [food assistance](#) and [refugee resettlement services](#) in every state.

In January, the Trump administration sought to [freeze federal grants and loans](#). Nonprofit groups immediately challenged the move and won [a court-ordered pause](#). But in the six months since, the administration has cut, frozen or discontinued many federal grant programs across agencies.

An analysis by the Urban Institute provides a sense of the scale and reach of government support for nonprofits. Published in February, the data comes from the tax forms nonprofits file where they report any government grants they receive.

In response to questions about the cuts to grant funding, White House spokesperson Kush Desai said, "Instead of government largesse that's often riddled with corruption, waste, fraud, and abuse, the Trump administration is focused on unleashing America's economic resurgence to fuel Americans' individual generosity."

How much support does the government give to nonprofits?

The Urban Institute found [\\$267 billion was granted to nonprofits](#) from all levels of government — federal, state and local — in 2021, the most recent year a comprehensive set of nonprofit tax forms are available.

That figure underestimates the total funding nonprofits receive from the government. It includes grants, but not contracts for services nor reimbursements from programs like Medicare. It also excludes the smallest nonprofits, which file a different, abbreviated tax form.

The data includes all tax-exempt organizations that file a full tax return from local food pantries to universities and nonprofit hospitals. But government funding does not just go to the largest organizations. A majority of nonprofits in the dataset across every sector, from the arts to the environment to human services, report receiving government grants.

In most places, the typical nonprofit would run a deficit without government funding. The Urban Institute cautions that just because a nonprofit would run a budget deficit without government funding, it does not necessarily mean the nonprofit will close.

Even in wealthy areas, nonprofits would struggle without government support

In only two Congressional districts — one that includes parts of Orange County, California, and one in the suburbs west of Atlanta — would typical nonprofits not be in the red if they lost all of their public grant funding, the analysis found.

However, funders in Orange County warn that nonprofits are not as optimistic about their resiliency.

Taryn Palumbo, executive director of Orange County Grantmakers, said local nonprofits "are seeing their budgets getting slashed by 50% or 40%."

Last year, a large local foundation, Samueli Foundation, commissioned a study of nonprofit needs because they were significantly increasing their grantmaking from \$18.8 million in 2022 to an estimated \$125 million in 2025. They found local nonprofits reported problems maintaining staff, a deep lack of investment in their operations and a dearth of flexible reserve funds.

The foundation responded by opening applications for unrestricted grants and to support investments in buildings or land. Against this \$10 million in potential awards, they received 1,242 applications for more than \$250 million, said Lindsey Spindle, the foundation's president.

"It tells a really stark picture of how unbelievably deep and broad the need is," Spindle said. "There is not a single part of the nonprofit sector that has not responded to these funds. Every topic you can think of: poverty, animal welfare, arts and culture, civil rights, domestic abuse."

Private donations can't replace government support

The nonprofit Friendship Shelter helps house and support 330 people in Laguna Beach, California, which falls within Orange County. Dawn Price, its executive director, said the organization has an annual budget of about \$15 million, \$11.5 million of which comes from government sources.

Price said the government funding is "braided" in complex ways to support different programs and fill in gaps. Private donors already subsidize their government grants, which she said pay for 69% of the actual program costs.

"We are providing this service to our government at a loss, at a business loss, and then making up that loss with these Medicaid dollars and also the private fundraising," she said.

Even in a wealthy place like Orange County, Price said she does not believe private donors are prepared to give five, six or eight times as much as they do currently if new cuts to government grants occur or programs are not renewed.

Source: <https://halifax.citynews.ca/2025/07/22/takeaways-from-aps-report-about-cuts-to-government-grants-for-nonprofits/>



Can AI offer the SDGs a lifeline?

SDGs

With the global sustainability agenda critically behind schedule, a new AI-powered platform offers a novel approach to accelerating progress

The ambition set by the United Nations in 2015 – to achieve 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 – is, by all accounts, flagging. A mere 17 percent of SDG targets are on track. Nearly half show minimal or moderate advancement, and over one-third have stalled or even regressed since 2015. A new artificial intelligence-powered platform promises to coalesce disparate global efforts into a unified approach towards sustainability.

Competing priorities

The sluggish pace can be partially attributed to a pervasive and insidious problem: fragmentation. Global efforts to tackle monumental challenges, from climate change to entrenched inequality, have largely operated in isolation.

Systemic fragmentation is a fundamental risk to SDG success and is multifactorial: a lack of coordination among stakeholders, siloed approaches, and competing priorities that undermine holistic solutions. This can lead to disjointed policymaking, duplication of efforts and missed synergies. The SDGs are deeply interlinked, yet policies often treat them in isolation.

The hidden cost of fragmentation

Fragmentation poses three critical challenges to SDG progress. First, policy incoherence creates unsustainable trade-offs: while synergies exist, for instance, between climate action and clean energy, fragmented approaches often pit goals against one another—such as rapid decarbonization exacerbating poverty or intensive farming boosting food production while degrading ecosystems.

Second, economic inefficiencies arise from duplication, where isolated projects (e.g., standalone water initiatives) miss opportunities for integrated, cost-saving approaches like the water-energy-food nexus while competing funding streams dilute impact.

Third, governance failures perpetuate silos: divided ministerial mandates (e.g., environment vs. economy) obstruct cross-sectoral solutions and fragmented data systems hinder adaptive policymaking.

Together, these challenges underscore how fragmentation undermines the systemic transformation required to achieve the SDGs. If unaddressed, fragmentation could lead to the failure of SDG achievement by 2030, increased costs, policy backlash and ecological collapse.

The World Bank estimates that average annual spending needed to address the global challenges of climate change, conflict, and pandemics are US\$2.4 trillion per year for developing countries between 2023 and 2030. This is stated as a small cost compared to not addressing these issues. The UN projects that between US\$5 trillion to US\$7 trillion per year to achieve a set of SDGs globally.

The issue is compounded by a complex array of regulatory frameworks across jurisdictions, creating significant friction for effective international collaboration.

This deficiency in a unified, collaborative mechanism highlights a need for tools to bridge these chasms.

A matchmaker for the planet

A new initiative aims to coalesce disparate global efforts into a unified,

accelerated drive towards sustainability. Conceived by the Global Coalition on Sustainability in partnership with the United Nations, SustainChain functions as a public service, designed to facilitate collaboration on a global scale. A partner in this ecosystem is AE4RIA, which provides academic rigour and policy expertise.

SustainChain is an AI-driven hub designed to connect a diverse array of stakeholders: businesses, scientists, activists, policymakers, and investors. Conceptually, it marries the networking capabilities of professional platforms with the algorithmic precision of specialised applications and the informational architecture of leading search engines.

SustainChain's diverse user base spans private companies, academic institutions, and global alliances, including the UN Global Compact.

The value of the platform lies in its capacity to impose order upon the often-chaotic landscape of initiatives. It centralises fragmented projects and resources into a single, searchable database. This eliminates redundant efforts and maximises the visibility of ventures that might otherwise remain overlooked and obscured. By dismantling traditional silos, the platform cultivates “collective intelligence,” a crucial ingredient for driving holistic progress towards the SDGs.

With just five years remaining until 2030, the traditional fragmented approach is proving demonstrably insufficient. Such tools offer mechanisms to foster collaboration at the speed and efficiency the planet urgently demands.

Source: <https://www.hardnewsmedia.com/2025/07/can-ai-offer-the-sdgs-a-lifeline/>

UN forum affirms stronger commitment to achieve sustainable development

The High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) has concluded at United Nations Headquarters in New York following a week-and-a-half of substantive discussion between Member States, civil society representatives and UN agencies.

At the end of the conference on Wednesday, Member States adopted a Ministerial Declaration by a vote of 154-2-2, with the United States and Israel voting against the document and Paraguay and Iran abstaining.

“We strongly reaffirm our commitment to effectively implement the [2030 Agenda](#) [which]... remains our overarching roadmap for achieving sustainable development and overcoming the multiple crises we face,” the text said.

Junhua Li, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, commended Member States for adopting this Declaration as a “powerful reaffirmation of multilateral resolve.”

“Let us leave this HLPF with a renewed resolve, shared sense of possibility, and a reinvigorated sense of responsibility to lead the way forward,” he said.



15 years of HLPF

The HLPF has happened on an annual basis since 2010 and is convened by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to discuss the progress, or lack thereof, on the [17 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), which were adopted in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda and aspire to create a more equitable and inclusive world.

This year, the forum focused on five of these goals: [good health](#) and wellbeing, [gender equality](#), [decent work](#) and economic growth, life below water and [partnerships](#).

Negotiations regarding the ministerial document were led by representatives from Czechia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, who highlighted the significance of the proceedings.

“This year’s deliberations have held particular significance. Ten years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, a range of interlinked and persistent challenges continues to jeopardise the full realisation of the SDGs,” said Jakub Kulhánek, permanent representative of Czechia and one of the two lead facilitators of the declaration.

The clock is ticking

In the ministerial declaration, Member States said that time is running out to achieve the SDGs, which remain severely off track.

According to the Secretary-General’s report on the Goals, which was [released](#) on the first day of the HLPF, only 18 per cent of the SDGs are on track to be achieved by 2030, with over half making progress that is too slow.

While the ministerial declaration addressed each of the five SDGs in the spotlight at the forum, Member States particularly emphasised the role of poverty in impeding sustainable development and the worsening climate crisis that is threatening all aspects of the development agenda.

The declaration called both of these issues some of the “greatest global challenges” that the world faces.

In keeping with SDG 16, which underlines the role that institutions like governments must play in promoting peace, Member States also affirmed that strong governance and partnership is essential to realising peace as a prerequisite for development.

“We recognise that sustainable development cannot be realised without peace and security, and peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development,” it stated.

Plan of Action

In the midst of challenges to multilateralism, Member States said that the declaration was an affirmation of the UN’s

commitment to multilateralism, which is celebrating its 80th anniversary this year.

“At a time when serious doubts about the future of multilateralism persist, your steadfast commitment has been both reassuring and inspiring,” said Mr. Kulhánek.

Member States, in the declaration, affirmed a commitment to urgently working towards the SDGs in order to achieve a better world.

“We will act with urgency to realise its vision as a plan of action for people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership, leaving no one behind.”

ECOSOC High-Level Segment

The Declaration also was adopted a day later during the closing of the ECOSOC High-Level Segment, which included the three-day HLPF [ministerial segment](#).

Mr. Li noted that the proceedings took place at a time of profound global uncertainty, but also immense possibility.

He praised the Council’s efforts to respond to global challenges “not with despair, but with determination and decisive action, highlighting how it has brought together governments, the UN system, and other stakeholders to advance dialogue on issues such as financing for development, artificial intelligence, displacement, and the empowerment of women and girls.

Differences, dialogue and solutions

ECOSOC President Bob Rae acknowledged that the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration was achieved after much hard work, and the differences of opinion expressed must not be ignored.

“Let’s be clear,” he said. “Equality among all of us – regardless of gender, race, colour or creed – is foundational to sustainable development, to human rights and to the credibility of our multilateral system.”

Mr. Rae stressed the urgent need for renewed dialogue, which requires courage and leadership. He pointed to the [UN Charter](#), saying it “strikes a balance between the rights of sovereign states and the universality of other freedoms and rights, and that is the balance that we must continue to strike.”

This is why ECOSOC must lead, he said, not just as a platform for dialogue but “as a driver of solutions, of implementation and results,” especially for those members of the global community who are the furthest behind.

“There are so many who today are living in stress, on the edge of poverty and in the midst of starvation,” he said. “We need to understand that our task, and our hearts and our minds, must always be those who are living on the margins.”

Source: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165486>

Reimagining Sustainable Development for a Fractured World

As developing countries' investment needs become increasingly urgent, the resources to meet them are steadily dwindling. With public finances under strain worldwide, the European Union's approach aims to mobilize private capital by de-risking investment and supporting local initiatives.



Jozef Sikela

BRUSSELS – “Poverty,” Aristotle famously observed, “is the parent of revolution and crime.” History has repeatedly proven the point: inequality often fuels political and social instability, giving rise to conflict and despair.

Today, in the face of widening economic disparities and climate disruption, international cooperation on sustainable development is no longer just an expression of solidarity – it is a strategic imperative. Yet just as development challenges grow increasingly urgent, the resources to confront them are steadily declining.

In 2015, world leaders adopted the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), outlining a shared vision for a more equitable, low-carbon future. Since then, however, overlapping global crises – from the COVID-19 pandemic to

rising geopolitical tensions and escalating climate change – have reversed much of the progress made over the past 25 years.

The realities of our increasingly multipolar world call for a shift in mindset. Policymakers must focus on doing more with less, which means fostering effective partnerships between the public and private sectors. This was my main takeaway from the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) in Seville, Spain: to meet climate and social targets, we must rethink how development is financed – and by whom.

While every country relies on access to financing to manage crises, support growth, and provide essential services, this need is especially acute in developing countries, where investment in infrastructure and human capital is crucial to long-term progress.

To achieve the SDGs, developing countries will need to raise roughly \$4 trillion annually. With development budgets under pressure globally, it is clear that public funding alone is not enough, and that closing today's investment gap requires mobilizing private capital.

Public budgets should serve as a catalyst, not a substitute, for private investment. That's the thinking behind the European Union's Global Gateway initiative, which focuses on creating the conditions necessary for sustainable financing. By combining guarantees, grants, and long-term loans, it aims to reduce risk, unlock private capital, and enable transformative investments in high-quality infrastructure projects, with a strong focus on education, job training, health, and climate resilience.

At FfD4, for example, we signed a €75 million (\$88 million) guarantee agreement with

Spain's COFIDES to expand off-grid energy access in underserved regions across Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Projects like these often cannot move forward without effective risk mitigation. By reducing financial exposure, EU guarantees help make long-term financing viable and more accessible.

We are also developing innovative financing vehicles such as the Digital Leap Fund, which uses grants, guarantees, and first-loss equity to attract private investors to projects they might otherwise avoid. The goal is to mobilize up to €500 million for digital infrastructure, including 5G networks, data centers, and broadband connectivity.

At the same time, we are working to remove barriers to investment. As a former international banker, I understand that investors tend to seek safe, long-term returns – the kind that well-designed development projects can offer. But they also need predictability, transparency, and robust regulatory frameworks.

Our local partners, for their part, need the capacity to build value chains that align with their strengths and priorities. Too often, developing countries that produce or extract highly sought-after resources retain only a fraction of their final value. A cashew grown in Africa may be shipped to Asia for processing and then exported to Europe, delivering limited benefits to local communities while imposing a high environmental cost.

The EU's value-based model tackles this imbalance head-on by focusing on three key areas: job creation and investment in skills, education, inclusion, and sustainability; high-quality infrastructure; and supporting local ownership, governance reform, and stable investment conditions.

This approach is already being implemented in Angola and Zambia, where we are helping to transform the Lobito Corridor – an EU-backed project to renovate the railway linking Angola

to landlocked, mineral-rich regions in Zambia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo – into more than just a trade route for critical raw materials.

To ensure that the economic benefits remain in the region, we are supporting vocational training, education, and local processing. In Zambia, we are using grants to strengthen sustainable agriculture, combining value-chain development with technical training in beekeeping, agro-processing, and rural entrepreneurship. Meanwhile, in Angola, we are investing in vocational programs tailored to the transportation, logistics, and energy industries.

Achieving lasting impact requires long-term planning, which is why our approach is demand-driven, skills-oriented, and focused on creating good jobs and promoting local ownership. The Namibia Green Hydrogen Program, which aims to help Namibia realize its green hydrogen potential while supporting Europe's energy transition, is a prime example. Led by national institutions and developed with private partners like Hyphen Hydrogen Energy, the project provides specialized training for workers in the hydrogen and electricity sectors.

In fragile settings, the stakes are even higher. When institutions and basic services break down, instability and unrest often follow. With nearly one-quarter of the world's population living in areas affected by conflict, natural disasters, and displacement, initiatives like the Global Gateway help bridge the gap between humanitarian aid and long-term development by working to restore essential services and build resilience where it is needed most.

Europe has the tools to lead this effort, but lasting progress depends on local ownership, commitment, and resolve. National governments and local communities must take the lead on meaningful reform, effective governance, and sustainable development. Our role is to stand beside our partners and provide reliable, transparent support.

Source: <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/achieving-sdgs-depends-on-catalyzing-private-investment-by-jozef-sikela-2025-07>



Global Policy Dialogue highlights roadmap to SDGs: Invest in youth, protect people, transform economies

Experts tout inclusive policies as key to restoring trust, advancing the SDGs

2 5 July 2025 - At this week's UN DESA [Global Policy Dialogue](#), development experts emphasized the urgent need to strengthen social protection systems, invest in young people and support economic transformation. These strategies, they argued, are essential to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under review at this year's [High-level Political Forum \(HLPF\)](#).

The event, hosted by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and supported by the UN Peace and Development Trust Fund, brought together eight leading voices in economics and sustainable development to chart a path forward amid mounting global challenges.

Social cohesion at risk

According to the [World Social Report 2025](#), over half of the global population today reports having little or no trust in their governments.

Such a decline of public trust "strains the foundation of social cohesion in societies" and "strains the foundation of multilateralism and trust here, in the United Nations, and our ability to get together as nations and come to important agreements," said Ms. Bjørg Sandkjær, UN DESA's Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination.

With a clear need to address the erosion of trust, experts shared their solutions at the panel, focusing on

boosting social protections and eradicating inequalities.

"This trust had been eroded in recent decades as people have really felt the social contract basically failing with these inequalities, more precarious unemployment, and with essential social services under threat," said Tatiana Moclean, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Europe. "So this is what we have to target and to work on specifically."

Parfait Elondou-Enyegue, a professor of global development at Cornell University, advised the change should start by supporting the world's youth.

Youth mentorship key in regaining public trust

"Transition into work is actually becoming a very important element in that trust-building and inclusion, because increasingly you have massive levels of youth unemployment and enormous differences in the opportunities to enter the labour market for young adults who are completing their education," said Professor Elondou-Enyegue. "So the challenge now is to make sure that we give these young adults, these adolescents, similar opportunities to get a foothold in the labour market but also have a healthy transition into adulthood."

The best way to support youth is for states to regulate not only the economic sphere but also the social sphere, providing not only economic opportunities but also mentoring, he added.

The UN Major Group on Children and Youth focal point on health Poorvaprabha Patil's story echoed the sentiment.

"We need to start talking about how there is actually such little support in finding these mentorship opportunities and finding these systems that make this process of navigating through these complexities even in your professional life much easier," she said. "I think as a woman, it's even more difficult, so having a strong woman mentorship, a strong mentor has been more critical for me than having any other form of support in advancing my career."

To Dr. Patil, a surgeon in training, another urgently needed solution is treating inequalities as interconnected issues.

Intersectional approach needed

"If I see a woman—which is so often the case—that has walked 12, 13 kilometers to come to the hospital in need for surgery that she should have gotten five years ago but could not because of

social neglect, because of issues of not being able to come to those hospitals, I often wonder: We have programmes, but we're still failing," Dr. Patil said. "And the only reason that is happening is because we're thinking of things in different boxes and verticals. We are not thinking of them collectively."

A successful example of an intersectional approach to addressing inequalities is the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and UN Development Programme's [Multidimensional Poverty Index](#) which complements the traditional monetary measurements by capturing the overlapping deprivations in health, education and living standards that people in poverty experience.

And real-life examples illustrate the importance of looking beyond monetary markers and using metrics to drive practical change.

"In Nepal, they found that the poorest regions were not necessarily the poorest by monetary poverty, so they could reallocate and support them," said OPHI Director Sabina Alkire. In Panama, the index helped identify that Indigenous comarcas, or regions, had a poverty rate of over 90 per cent, compared to Panama City's 8 per cent, a disparity not visible from the income figures.

"When you have these data, you can act better and with less money," she added.

Economic transformation needed to address inequalities

With metrics to identify populations most affected by multidimensional poverty, experts identified another missing element in eradicating poverty and inequality: economic transformation.

"There should be no doubt that developing countries need to do productive development policies,"

said José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. "Because there is no way that social policies alone – as important as they are – can do all the heavy lifting for all these figures that we have about unemployment and the size of the informal economy being 50 per cent on average in Latin America."

To Jayati Ghosh, a professor of economics at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, the productive development policies come in the shape of ceasing to focus on export-led growth alone, putting an emphasis on blended finance, ending the debt-driven cycles that developing countries go through, and ending inequalities.

"Fiscal policies that are progressive, taxation of the ultra-rich, of multinational corporations that currently pay a fraction of the taxes that domestic companies pay -- all of these are essential parts of a broader transformation that really we have to do if we want to generate the good jobs," Ms. Ghosh said. "And that would give us the possibility of the public revenues that we could spend on health, on education, which incidentally are also big job creators."

And policymaking needs to supplement economic measures.

Ms. Sandkjær recommended that the social lens guide such policymaking, which should focus on investing in people "more and better," ensuring universal access to adequate social protections, and redistributing wealth through taxation systems.

"We need to have that hope with us that policymaking works, it makes a difference what decisions policymakers make, and it makes a difference when we get together as coalitions to effect that transformation and that change that we are looking for," she said, wrapping up the event with a message of hope.

Source: <https://www.un.org/en/desa/global-policy-dialogue-highlights-roadmap-to-sdgs>

UN High-Level Forum Rallies Nations To Deliver On SDGs

The 2025 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development has concluded with a strong call for urgent and coordinated global efforts to fast-track progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Held from 14 to 23 July under the auspices of the ECOSOC, the HLPF came at a critical time as countries strive to address intersecting global challenges from protracted conflicts and economic instability to the escalating climate crisis.

“The Sustainable Development Goals are not a dream,” said United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in his opening remarks on 21 July. “They are a plan. A plan to keep our promises — to the most vulnerable people, to each other, and to future generations.”

Over the course of two weeks, the Forum brought together over 6,000 in-person participants, including governments, youth, civil society, scientists, the private sector, and other key partners, to share experiences and spotlight innovative, inclusive solutions to advance SDG implementation.

“The SDGs represent the common sense of humanity,” said Bob Rae, President of the UN Economic and Social Council.

He further noted that “strengthening national ownership of the SDGs is essential. That means integrating them into national development plans, budgets, and policies—not as an add-on, but as the core of how Governments serve their people.”

He added that “We need to reaffirm the UN’s relevance through results—by showing that multilateralism delivers



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

real, tangible benefits for people at every level of society.”

SDG Reviews

Discussions focused on integrated responses to today’s most pressing issues under the theme “Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for leaving no one behind.” The SDGs reviewed in-depth were Goals 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), 5 (Gender Equality), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 14 (Life Below Water) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

Building on the outcomes of the third UN Ocean Conference in Nice and the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in Sevilla – that ended with a call to urgently address the \$4 trillion annual shortfall in financing needed to achieve the SDGs – the progress made at the HLPF will help inform discussions at the upcoming 80th session of the UN General Assembly.

The recently launched Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025 revealed that significant progress has been made in global health, education, and sustainability: new HIV infections have fallen nearly 40 per cent since 2010, malaria prevention has saved over 12 million lives since 2000, and social

protection now reaches more than half the world’s population.

Yet only 35 per cent of targets are on track or making moderate progress, while nearly half are advancing too slowly and 18 per cent have regressed. More than 800 million people continue to live in extreme poverty, while billions lack access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene services.

Temperatures reached 1.55°C above pre-industrial levels in 2024, making it the hottest year on record. Conflicts led to nearly 50,000 deaths that same year, and forced displacement affected over 120 million people worldwide.

At the same time, low- and middle-income countries faced record-high debt servicing costs of \$1.4 trillion in 2023.

The report called for action across six priority areas where intensified efforts could deliver transformative impact: food systems, energy access, digital transformation, education, jobs and social protection, and climate and biodiversity action.

Voluntary National Reviews

Thirty-five countries presented their Voluntary National Reviews at the Forum — highlighting the actions they have taken to achieve the SDGs.

Source: <https://von.gov.ng/un-high-level-forum-rallies-nations-to-deliver-on-sdgs/>

Palestinian NGO is providing specialty medical care

Occupied Palestinian Territory, Gaza. Two of Ibrahim’s children were killed when their Gaza neighbourhood was hit by airstrikes. Ibrahim, his wife, and their two other children were severely injured.

The journey to Al-Shifa hospital – just 6 kilometers away – was harrowing. Ibrahim, whose leg was crushed, was left untreated for days as the hospital struggled to keep up with trauma injuries. His leg became infected. After two weeks, he was moved to Al Ahli Arab Hospital, where doctors had to amputate his left leg. Ibrahim remained in hospital for 40 days, battling infection and other complications.

In October 2024, Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) launched a wound care unit within MAP’s Solidarity Polyclinic, with the support of the [occupied Palestinian](#)

Source: <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/palestinian-ngo-providing-specialty-medical-care>

Businesses and NGOs Call on EU to Save Green Claims Directive

A broad coalition of businesses, advertising industry bodies, certification schemes and civil society organisations today urged EU Member States to maintain strong support for the Green Claims Directive (GCD). The coalition expressed growing frustration felt among companies that have already taken steps to comply with the proposed Directive – the progress of which has faltered in recent weeks.

In a letter sent to Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and Environment Minister Magnus Heunicke, over 30 signatories have asked the Danish Presidency of the EU Council to unite Member States to secure the Directive’s future and deliver clear, enforceable rules that businesses need to make credible environmental claims.

“Today, half of environmental claims on the market are either misleading or misuse methods of substantiation,” said Katie-

Source: <https://www.clientearth.org/latest/press-office/businesses-and-ngos-call-on-eu-to-save-green-claims-directive/>

territory Humanitarian Fund (oPt HF). The wound care unit specializes in providing post-operative and wound care for people injured in the conflict.

The Solidarity medical team addressed the complications from Ibrahim’s amputation. And for the first time, Ibrahim was supported by a social worker, who helped him navigate his recovery. As he progressed, he was referred to the physiotherapy unit to prepare for a below-knee prosthesis, restoring mobility and independence.

“Before coming to the clinic, I was afraid of further complications. I had already been through so much from the neglect and the worsening of my wound after my first amputation. But with each dressing change, I noticed small improvements, and over time, I began to feel a little more at ease. The dedicated wound care team have helped me manage the pain and my lingering fears.”

Ibrahim is one of thousands of people in Gaza now receiving critical care through MAP’s emergency health interventions. MAP’s mobile teams and their partner, Al Awda Hospital, in Nuseirat camp, have delivered life-saving wound care and primary health services for over 23,000 people, helping address some of the dire gaps in health-care in Gaza.

Scarlett Wetherall, Lawyer at ClientEarth. “The Green Claims Directive sets clear rules for how companies can back up what they say. This letter urges action to ensure fair competition for companies that do the right thing and protects consumers from empty promises.”

The Directive would establish robust new rules requiring companies to properly substantiate environmental claims and for more complex claims to undergo external verification. These requirements build on existing EU consumer protection law.

Instead of adding red tape, the Directive would reduce legal uncertainty for businesses. Many companies already spend large sums on legal advice to manage greenwashing risks because national enforcement varies widely. Clear EU-wide rules would give businesses a single standard to follow, making compliance easier and more predictable.

Signatories of the letter include business associations such as Ecopreneur (which represents over 5,000 sustainable SMEs across the EU); sustainability-focused companies like Back Market and advertising industry bodies such as the Conscious Advertising Network, Creatives for Climate, Good-Loop and Unitmode.

Certification schemes in support include Rainforest Alliance and Aquaculture Stewardship Council. CSOs such as We Mean Business Coalition, Carbon Market Watch, European Environmental Bureau, ISEAL Alliance, Environmental Coalition on Standards and Fairtrade Advocacy Office also added their voices.

UN



UNDP joins the African Union and Partners to launch the Continental Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP) for Africa

Nairobi, 17 July 2025– The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) joined the African Union Commission (AUC), the European Union (EU) and a coalition of strategic partners in launching the Continental Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP) for Africa 2024–2034. The plan aims to support Africa’s shift toward a circular economy that promotes green growth, resource efficiency and inclusive development.

The CEAP, developed under the leadership of the AUC with co-funding from the EU and the technical assistance from Trinomics and the African Circular Economy Network Foundation (ACEN Foundation), provides a strategic framework to address the continent’s pressing sustainability challenges. Key partners in the development of the Action Plan included the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Expert Working Group on Circular Economy.

It proposes a shift away from the linear “take-make-dispose” model toward a regenerative approach that creates jobs, reduces waste and strengthens resilience. It targets eight () priority sectors including water, waste, energy and agriculture, and four cross-cutting enablers: inclusivity, trade, education and finance. It promotes sustainable growth, local value creation and environmental resilience through coordinated action by the AU, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Member States.

The Continental Circular Economy Action Plan marks a pivotal step in Africa’s journey toward a resilient, inclusive and sustainable future. It reflects our collective commitment to transforming our economies, empowering communities and safeguarding our environment through circular innovation. We warmly invite all partners, governments, private sector, civil society and development agencies, to join us in turning this vision into action.

H.E. Mr. Moses Vilakati, African Union Commissioner in charge of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment.

During the launch, UNDP reaffirmed its commitment to providing targeted technical assistance, fostering innovation and mobilizing climate and environmental finance to support the implementation of the CEAP and help accelerate Africa’s transition to a circular economy.

By joining forces, we can align policy, finance and innovation to turn circular ambitions into systemic change across the continent

Dr. Mathias Naab, Director of the UNDP Regional Service Centre for Africa.

With a presence in 46 sub-Saharan countries, UNDP brings extensive expertise in policy coherence, development programming, technology transfer, and stakeholder engagement and coordination. Through flagship initiatives such as the Climate Promise, Nature Pledge and Zero Waste programmes, UNDP will continue to support African governments in integrating circular economy priorities into key national development plans.

The launch event, held in Nairobi on the margins of the 2025 Africa Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN), brought together ministers, policymakers, private sector leaders and civil society.

UNDP’s contribution reflects its role in advancing the circular and inclusive economies in line with the Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.



Source: <https://www.undp.org/africa/news/undp-joins-african-union-and-partners-launch-continental-circular-economy-action-plan-ceap-africa>

Pakistan reels under monsoon deluge as death toll climbs

Pakistan’s monsoon emergency deepened on Thursday as authorities declared disaster zones across parts of eastern Punjab province after lethal cloudbursts and flash floods killed dozens in a single day.

Punjab, Pakistan’s most populous province, reported at least 63 casualties and 290 injuries in the past 24 hours, pushing the nationwide toll since the seasonal rains began on 26 June to over 120 fatalities, according to the National Disaster Management Authority.

The unfolding crisis – rising rivers, forecasts of further downpours, fragile rural homes collapsing and transport links severed – has revived stark memories of the catastrophic 2022 floods that submerged a third of the country and affected more than 33 million people.

More intense rainfall is forecast over parts of central and northern Pakistan in the next 72 hours. Weather forecasters have warned of “exceptional high” flood levels of up to 450,000 cusecs at some locations along the Jhelum River. One cusec equals one cubic foot of water – equivalent to 28.4 litres or 7.5 gallons – per second.

There are also fears of glacier lake outburst floods in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit Baltistan regions.

Wider UN contingency – major stock gaps

Managed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

(OCHA), the UN presence in Pakistan released an [inter-agency monsoon contingency plan](#) earlier this month.

The plan lays out response triggers, sector roles and arrangements for floods, storms and landslides – under the leadership of the Government.

However, pre-positioned aid supplies remain far below projected need, with key sectors such as protection, nutrition, and shelter and non-food items facing severe gaps.

These shortfalls underscore the urgency of pre-positioning relief items and securing rapid financing if the rains intensify.

Building resilience

Amid the emergency, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the Government of Pakistan this week launched a climate-risk project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa’s Buner and Shangla districts.

The [initiative](#) will establish early warning systems, train communities

in safe evacuation and strengthen local capacity for disaster response.

“Recurring climate shocks are a driver of hunger and malnutrition, threatening lives, livelihoods and entire food systems,” said WFP Country Director Coco Ushiyama.

“This project represents a multi-layered investment in early warning systems and action.”

Flashbacks of 2022 devastation

The escalating disaster once again reveals [Pakistan’s vulnerability to climate shocks](#).

In 2022, [unprecedented monsoon floods](#) killed more than 1,700 people, displaced millions and devastated water systems, leaving millions more in desperate need. The disaster also inflicted immense economic damage estimated at nearly \$40 billion, and reversed years of development efforts.

Experts warn that erratic monsoon patterns, amplified by climate change, are hitting the country – and others across southern Asia – harder each year.

Source: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165422>

Trump’s Billions in Climate Cuts Have Nonprofits Scrambling to Survive

From clean energy and research to advocacy, nonprofit groups are struggling as federal dollars dry up. Foundations say they won’t be able to fill funding gaps.



Emma Court



Olivia Raimonde

If any nonprofit epitomizes the whiplash experienced by climate advocacy groups in the US over the past few years, it’s Rewiring America.

Founded in 2020 shortly before former President Joe Biden was elected, the organization focuses on shifting US homes from fossil fuel-powered appliances to electric ones like heat pumps — a prime goal of [Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act](#) when it was passed in 2022. Rewiring America was poised to receive nearly \$500 million from a \$27 billion program created by that law.

In February, the group was blocked from accessing those funds, and the Environmental Protection Agency, which administers the program, has since terminated \$20 billion in grants because of “substantial concerns” about “program integrity, the award process, programmatic fraud, waste, and abuse, and misalignment with [the] agency’s priorities.” The program is under investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, according to the agency. Meanwhile, grantees have sued over frozen bank accounts. (The government has since walked back some of its claims in court. “To be clear, we’re not accusing anybody of fraud,” Justice Department lawyer Yaakov Roth said at a hearing in May.)



Source: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2025-07-28/trump-s-billions-in-climate-cuts-have-nonprofits-scrambling-to-survive>

UN Climate Change Launches New Report on Advancing a 'Just Transition' in Climate Policy

UN Climate Change News, 15 July 2025 – As the world accelerates action to address climate change, the question is no longer whether to pursue a just transition—but how to embed it meaningfully into national climate strategies.

To help answer that question, the [Katowice Committee of Experts on the Impacts of the Implementation of Response Measures \(KCI\)](#), with the support of the UN Climate Change Secretariat, released a technical paper today: [Just Transitions in National Climate Frameworks and Climate Policies: Experiences in Alignment, Planning and Progress Tracking](#).

The report tracks progress on just transitions and examines how countries are integrating its principles into their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategies (LT-LEDS).

The concept of a just transition acknowledges that while the shift to a low-emission economy is necessary to combat climate change, it can also create significant challenges for certain regions, industries, and workers. So a just transition means managing the shift to a low-emission economy in a way that is fair and inclusive, ensuring that no one is negatively impacted by the transition.

"Climate action and just transition pathways are not separate endeavors but intrinsically linked components of broader sustainable development goals," writes UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Simon Stiell in the report's foreword.

The report reviews how just transition appears in national climate strategies both explicitly and implicitly, with the reference to specific themes that fall under the multidimensional concept of just transition - including

jobs, gender, youth, economic diversification, inequality, and stakeholder engagement.

The report also examines policy actions in high-emission sectors like coal, oil and gas, and mobility—highlighting national and private sector approaches to support just transition, to identify best practices and foster shared learning.

To help track progress and ensure accountability, the report introduces a comprehensive monitoring framework for just transition. This new tool supports governments and companies in evaluating their efforts across the four dimensions: distributional, procedural, restorative and recognition.

Originating from the labour movement in the late 1970s, the concept of a just transition has gained traction over the past decade as countries seek to address the social and economic implications of climate action;

however, evidence suggests that while the ambition is widely recognized, its practical integration into national climate planning remains uneven. For instance, the paper finds that only 26% of NDCs explicitly reference just transition, and few elaborate beyond a basic mention. In contrast, 65% of LT-LEDS refer to it more directly, though the depth varies widely.

The report addresses a key gap in climate policy planning, where socioeconomic impacts and just transition considerations often remain secondary due to limited capacity and resources. Many countries continue to face challenges in translating just transition principles into concrete policies that are inclusive, actionable, and measurable.

The paper is available [here](#), offering open access to all stakeholders working to advance inclusive, long-term climate strategies.

This initiative reflects UN Climate Change's continued commitment to supporting Parties in designing response measures that are fair, data-informed, and rooted in real-world needs—ensuring that no one is left behind in the transition to a low-carbon future.



NGO rallies support for community-driven health tech in Africa

eHealth Africa, a non-governmental organisation focused on strengthening health systems through technology, has called for deeper investment in local talent, infrastructure, and public trust to drive meaningful digital health transformation across the continent.

The call comes ahead of the 2025 edition of its flagship Insights Learning Forum (ILF), scheduled to hold on July 30 in Abuja.

Now in its third year, the forum serves as a platform for experts, policymakers, and innovators to explore how digital networks can deliver lasting improvements in public health — particularly in low- and middle-income countries.

This year's theme, 'Local Investments for Connected Communities: The Power of Digital Health Networks in Public Health Transformation', reflects growing concern that too many digital health initiatives remain donor-driven, fragmented, or ill-suited to the on-the-ground realities of African communities.

In a statement on Wednesday, Ota Akhigbe, director of partnerships and programs at eHealth Africa, noted that digital health in Africa must go beyond sleek apps and

dashboards to deliver solutions that are resilient, inclusive, and grounded in the lived experiences of frontline workers and patients.

"Despite the growing momentum around digital health in Africa, the promise won't be realised without deeper investment not just in tools, but in the systems that support and sustain them," she said.

"Local investment means funding, yes, but also something deeper: policy ownership, institutional strengthening, talent development, and public trust."

She noted that while many digital health platforms are technically sound in theory, they often fail in practice due to lack of infrastructure, limited digital literacy, or misalignment with cultural and systemic realities.

"Too often, these tools are slick in presentation but clunky in practice.

They fail to account for limited infrastructure, low digital literacy, cultural nuance, and the overstretched capacity of frontline workers.

Even the most elegant platform can become irrelevant or unusable under these conditions," she said.

Akhigbe also criticised the fragmented and often externally driven nature of many digital health interventions across Africa, warning that without true community participation and national leadership, these initiatives may do little to address persistent gaps in access and quality.

"Digital health in Africa often reflects good intentions but poor execution. Tools are imported, not adapted," she said.

"When countries and communities have a stake in the systems being built, they are more likely to shape them in ways that are relevant, inclusive, and enduring."

The upcoming forum will bring together voices from across the public and private sectors to explore how African-led investments and strategies are already helping reshape national health systems.

Through a mix of keynote addresses, interactive panels, case studies, and workshops, participants will examine what it takes to scale digital health interventions that are equitable, affordable, and sustainable.

The event also aims to create new partnerships focused on strengthening digital public goods, leveraging open-source tools, and expanding training and capacity for frontline workers across the continent.

Source: <https://www.thecable.ng/ngo-rallies-support-for-community-driven-health-tech-in-africa/>

Discrimination of high-risk communities hinders HIV prevention efforts, say NGOs

The Federation of Reproductive Health Associations Malaysia says their marginalisation makes outreach challenging.

PETALING JAYA: Discrimination against high-risk communities will hinder HIV prevention efforts, says a coalition of NGOs, following the recent raid on a sexual health event in Kelantan.

The Federation of Reproductive Health Associations Malaysia (FRHAM) said the marginalisation and societal disadvantages faced by such communities make outreach challenging.

While it lauded the health ministry for reducing the number of new HIV cases through the national Needle and Syringe Exchange Programme, it said the epidemic has since shifted to sexual contact as a primary mode of transmission within the last decade.

"This necessitates a change of focus to effective prevention services," said the federation's acting chairman, Dr Annuar Husainy Hussein.

"HIV prevention services include testing, treatment and safer sex practices, as well as the use of HIV medication.

"These services are essential public health initiatives, especially for populations at increased risk of HIV, including men who have sex with men, transgender persons, people who inject drugs and sex workers.

Source: <https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2025/07/25/discrimination-of-high-risk-communities-hinders-hiv-prevention-efforts-say-ngos>



"FRHAM takes the stand that the harassment and persecution of the affected communities must cease, and that experts in the field be granted the necessary space to accomplish their work."

Last Saturday, Kelantan police chief Yusoff Mamat said more than 20 men were arrested at a bungalow in Kota Bharu, allegedly for attending a "gay party".

However, several groups and doctors later clarified that it was a health event organised to provide sexual health and HIV-related information, condoms, and voluntary testing to promote safer sexual health practices.

They said the event included talks by healthcare providers, including doctors. It was to have ended by midnight, but about 20 attendees were still at the event awaiting their test results.

Why Disability Pride Month is needed more than ever

PWD

Patient liaison group co-chair Emma Beeden reflects on the urgent need for systemic and cultural shifts to improve accessibility and representation of disabled people

As a child I always knew I was disabled and therefore different. I would walk into rooms and be unable to reach light-switches or see into bathroom mirrors, and have random strangers stare and ask me if I was an Oompa Loompa – in reference to the fact I have dwarfism and am therefore shorter.

I couldn't wear the same clothes as my friends and had to get all my shoes specially made by an orthotist, which was a particular sticking point for me. Not only did my body look different – I had to wear clothes that I didn't like and were different to my peers.

Going into hospital was a common occurrence growing up due to having kidney failure, a growth condition and chronic psoriasis. However, hospital buildings were surprisingly inaccessible – examination beds couldn't be bought down low enough, doors weren't wide enough for my wheelchair to fit through and at times, call buttons were left out of reach.

These regular trips to hospital combined with pain and the staring of random strangers meant disability was never something I was unaware of. However, over time it has come to be something I am neutral and sometimes even positive about.

Don't get me wrong, I still wish I didn't have joint pain simply after walking round the supermarket or have my psoriasis flare up the moment the weather changes, but I also wouldn't change my disabilities and conditions for anything. They make me who I am.

Embracing disability

As I've gotten older, I've lived by the mantra 'if they're going to stare, make it worth their while'. Instead of hiding behind my clothes or shying away from people, I choose every day to wear bright clothes, makeup and jewellery.

Being disabled has also led to so many incredible opportunities. I wouldn't have travelled across Europe and worked with other young adults to make resources for chronically ill people about sex and relationships. I wouldn't have written my master's dissertation on hospital youth forums, and I certainly wouldn't be co-chair of the patient liaison group.

Without growing up in an inaccessible, ignorant and at times hostile world, I probably wouldn't be as politically active and passionate as I am.

Shifting narratives

In my 24 years, I have seen the public's perception of disability shift several times. As a young child, I very rarely saw people that looked like me in the media. It was limited to caricatures or fantasy versions, usually oversexualised, angry and with little to no agency.

This all shifted with the London 2012 Paralympics when the likes of Ellie Simmonds were being celebrated as superheroes on our screens and on posters up and down the country. However, as with most things, this wasn't a fully positive thing. In the same way not every non-disabled person can be an Olympian, not every disabled person can be a Paralympian.

We are also certainly not superheroes, we are ordinary people going about our lives with education, work, friends, hobbies and challenges that everyone faces. Having our disabilities labelled as a superpower also minimises the negative impact they can have.

Despite being proud to be a disabled person a lot of the time, being disabled does make my life harder. The chronic pain, extra costs, being stared or laughed at and much more aren't superpowers. They have a real impact on my day-to-day life.

Recently, in discussions about the Government's Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment Bill, disabled people are being portrayed as lazy, relying on benefits and a burden on society. It's important to say that receiving benefits is not a negative thing. They help people to live and in some cases be independent and thrive.

Benefits such as PIP (Personal Independence Payments) are not

dependent on whether you have a job, they help you be independent and cover some of the over £1,000 extra it costs per month being disabled.

The solution to the number of people not working is not forcing them into work by taking their benefits away. That will simply lead to more people living in poverty, and at risk of worsening health. Plus, the people pushing for these reforms seem to forget that there are many disabled people like me who do work full time but still rely on benefits to cover disability-related costs such as buying paracetamol, the cost of taxis when walking is too painful, creams that the NHS no longer prescribe and certain foods such as pre-cut fruit.

These messages – and in some cases lies – being pushed by the media and by politicians is deeply harmful. No one's worth should be based on whether they can contribute to the economy.

Disability pride

Disability Pride Month is needed more than ever. It's an important reminder of how far we've come in terms of representation, rights and accessibility but also a time to reflect on the past and what more needs to be done.

Disabled people are not a monolith, and intersecting inequalities mean some disabled people face more oppression than others.

Although the lives of many disabled people have improved massively in the last decade, this is not the case for everyone in the UK or around the world.

My hope for this Disability Pride Month is that all disabled people know their worth is not tied to their ability to work and that by coming together, we will make the world kinder, fairer and more accessible for all.

Emma Beeden is a queer, disabled and chronically ill woman. She is a co-chair of the patient liaison group



Source: <https://www.bma.org.uk/news-and-opinion/why-disability-pride-month-is-needed-more-than-ever>

'Unforgivable': Damning report finds death of learning disabled man was 'entirely preventable'

Paul Scriven says his nephew Myles' death must be a watershed moment in how people with learning disabilities are treated in the health service, as ITV News Investigations Editor Daniel Hewitt reports

A coroner has issued a damning report against an NHS hospital trust following the entirely preventable death of a 31-year-old autistic man with learning disabilities, branding the attitude of doctors "dismissive and complacent".

The inquest into the death of Myles Scriven in Huddersfield found multiple opportunities to save his life were missed by staff at Calderdale Royal Hospital and his GP practice, after he died from an entirely treatable blood clot in his leg.

Myles' uncle Paul Scriven, who is a Liberal Democrat peer in the House of Lords, told ITV News his nephew's death is "unforgivable", and accused the Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust of being "more concerned with defending its reputation than preventing the deaths of people with learning disabilities".

Lord Scriven said Myles' death must be a watershed moment in how people with learning disabilities are treated in the health service.

Myles became unwell in late 2022 with shortness of breath and a blood clot in his leg. He was prescribed



Rivaroxaban - a blood thinning medication - but despite taking the pill every day as prescribed, months later he was still unwell.

A consultant haematologist recommended switching Myles' medication to a different blood thinner - Warfarin - but Myles' doctor instead assumed Myles was not taking the drug and opted to keep Myles on Rivaroxaban.

When in March 2023, Myles was again suffering with shortness of breath,

his GP surgery offered him a telephone consultation, despite Myles' stated issues with communication.

Myles was struggling to breathe normally but he was not referred to A&E. He was seen again by the GP three days later but was again not sent to hospital.

Three weeks later, Myles collapsed and was rushed Huddersfield Royal Infirmary, where he later died from a pulmonary embolism.

Despite his family flagging with healthcare professionals that he had a

learning disability and was autistic, and would require help to make medical or treatment decisions, his two uncles - who were his stated medical advocates - were never contacted by the hospital or GP either in late 2022 or spring 2023.

"For all intents and purposes, other than his learning disability and autism, Myles was physically well," said David Black, Paul's husband and Myles' uncle.

"There's lots of different things that can be done, but unfortunately these opportunities were never afforded to Myles, merely because he wasn't believed and because he was learning disabled and autistic, he wasn't really able to engage in decisions about his treatment."

On July 11, 2025, the coroner in Bradford found that both a lack of adjustment for Myles' learning disability and autism and neglect contributed to his death.

He found healthcare professionals had a 'complacent and dismissive attitude towards Myles and his learning disability', clinicians were 'blind' to his needs, and did not make sufficient reasonable adjustments for his disability.

Speaking in his first television interview to ITV News about Myles' death, Lord Scriven said "there is no doubt" that Myles would still be alive if he did not have a learning disability.

"Hearing that this was preventable - that Myles could have been saved on at least three occasions - was really, really difficult," he said.

"If we had been called, we would have been able to support Myles in making a decision that would have probably saved his life."

During the inquest, the NHS Trust tried to argue Myles did have mental

capacity to make his own decisions regarding his medical treatment.

"David knew Myles for 28 years of his life. I carried Myles in the first few hours of his life, and I carried him on my shoulder in his coffin to his grave," said Lord Scriven.

"He didn't have capacity. They were trying to tell us that people who had been with him for ten minutes knew him better than us."

"It is unforgivable."

"It was trying to save their reputation rather than reflecting and trying to save peoples' lives with learning disabilities."

Official data shows that men with a learning disability die 20 years earlier than the general population in the UK. Women with a learning disability die on average 23 years younger.

Professor Sara Ryan researches social care with a specialism in learning disabilities and autism. Her own son, Connor Sparrowhawk, who was learning disabled, autistic and had epilepsy, died in 2013 whilst in the care of an NHS assessment facility.

"I was struck by how similar Myles' death was to Connor's in that he died through the most woeful failings of healthcare," she told ITV News.

"Connor was left to drown in a bath in a hospital unit, and he had diagnosed epilepsy."

"We have to remember that people with learning disabilities aren't ill," Professor Ryan said.

"There's no reason why people should be dying so early. You have got a tsunami of evidence that says we know why people are dying, we know how people are dying, and we are doing nothing about it."

Outside Bradford Coroner's Court, Myles' uncles reflected on the judgement.

"It was very raw listening to the full list of times Myles could have been saved."

"We now want to do something positive in the legacy of Myles. To say that Myles' death will not be in vain, and other families do not have to go through what we've been through," Paul said.

Brendan Brown, Chief Executive of Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust, said: "My sincere condolences go out to Myles' family and his loved ones. We have formally apologised to Myles' family, but we fully acknowledge that no apology can compensate for the profound impact of what has occurred, nor for the failings identified within the Trust.

"We accept the coroner's findings in full. We will ensure these are used to build upon the changes made as a result of the Trust's internal review and the clinical lessons learned from Myles' sad death.

"We acknowledge the concerns that there is more which we could have done to involve Myles' family in his care and are acting on this as a Trust."



Source: <https://www.itv.com/news/2025-07-16/unforgiveable-report-finds-death-of-learning-disabled-man-was-preventable>

UK taskforce calls for disability training for all airline and airport staff

Report led by former Paralympian Tanni Grey-Thompson warns of 'sometimes catastrophic' treatment of passengers

Airline and airport staff should have mandatory training in disability and accessibility awareness, a government taskforce has urged, to ease the stress, confusion and harm experienced by the growing numbers of passengers requiring assistance to travel.

A report from the group, led by the crossbench peer and former Paralympian [Tanni Grey-Thompson](#), said the experience of flying for disabled people "can be ad hoc, inconsistent and sometimes catastrophic".

It said clearer information and standard practices should be adopted across the industry for mobility equipment and guide dogs, along with improved accessibility and complaints procedures.

Disabled passengers had given "multiple examples of being treated in an undignified manner" by airport security staff and said security was a "key area of anxiety and concern", the taskforce said.

A series of stories of disabled passengers being [badly let down](#) by airlines and airports have hit the headlines in recent years. The BBC security correspondent Frank Gardner described last October how he had to "[crawl to the toilet](#)" on a flight and said he had been left stuck on landed planes at least four times. In 2022 an elderly man requiring assistance [fell down an escalator](#) at Gatwick and later died.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jul/16/uk-taskforce-calls-for-disability-training-for-all-airline-and-airport-staff>



Lady Grey-Thompson's report warns of "a clear gap in the training and awareness of security staff in the treatment of disabled passengers and their equipment", and it says ground staff need training to "understand the importance of equipment and the impact of damage on passengers".

It highlights widespread confusion for passengers in booking and airline policies on seats, companions and assistance dogs, or travelling with health conditions

that require medical equipment such as oxygen or medication. The group also found there was limited awareness of non-visible impairments, contributing to "unintentional exclusion and undignified treatment".

They said more work was needed to address mobility aids, with many stowed in the hold and damaged, and passengers sometimes denied boarding due to battery safety requirements, causing "significant stress, inconvenience and in some cases physical harm".

Grey-Thompson said there were "tough challenges" but the scope for action was limited by the international nature of aviation, meaning following the 19 key recommendations in the report would owe more to goodwill than enforcement.

The former wheelchair athlete, who has herself been left stranded on planes [and trains](#), added: "Some of the cases of poor experiences hit the media headlines but the reality is most do not."

According to data from the Civil Aviation Authority, 5.5 million passengers requested assistance at a UK airport in 2024, approximately 1.9% of all passengers – a proportion 40% greater than just before the pandemic, and double that in 2010.

The transport secretary, Heidi Alexander, said: "Everyone should be able to travel with dignity and be respected at every stage of their journeys, including disabled passengers. That's why we established this group in November last year, and I welcome this report's findings which will clear the runway for greater accessibility in aviation. I know industry is working hard to make services more inclusive for all and I look forward to seeing these proposals becoming a reality."

Tim Alderslade, the chief executive of Airlines UK, said: "As demand for assistance services continues to increase, airlines remain committed to removing barriers so that flying is accessible to all."

Karen Dee, the chief executive of AirportsUK, said: "The recommendations in this report will help build on the work already being done by airports and the wider sector to ensure air travel is accessible to all."

AI chatbot launched for persons with disabilities

Offers confidential guidance on disability rights, job opportunities & legal aid

ISLAMABAD: The Special Talent Exchange Programme (STEP) has officially launched Pakistan's first AI-based chatbot for persons with disabilities.

This initiative has been developed in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA), and with generous support from the European Union (EU).

The launch event took place at the National University of Science & Technology (NUST), where representatives from government, civil society, and academia were present.

The chatbot is launched under the theme "An Initiative for a Peaceful and Inclusive Society." Designed as a multilingual and accessible digital support tool, NOORAI is the first-of-its-kind in Pakistan. It addresses the specific needs of persons with disabilities, especially women, who often face systemic exclusion in accessing vital services. The chatbot also offers confidential, rights-based guidance on disability rights, inclusive education, employment opportunities, legal aid, gender-based violence (GBV) protection and awareness around preventing violent extremism (PVE).

In his opening remarks, STEP Executive Director, Muhammad Atif Sheikh, called NOORAI "an empowering digital platform for women and youth affected by disability and marginalisation.



Sharing insights from STEP's broader initiative, "Empowering Women with Disabilities in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE)," especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he pointed out how national action plans and CVE policies in Pakistan often overlook disability, despite the double marginalisation that women with disabilities face - both due to their gender and their disability.

"NOORAI is not just a chatbot; it's a peace-building tool. It addresses gaps in digital access, legal awareness, and psychosocial support, all of which are critical to inclusive resilience," he noted.

STEP Director Programmes, Abia Akram, emphasised the urgency of disability-inclusive policy reform in Pakistan. She stressed the need to ensure that persons with disabilities are not only beneficiaries but also leaders in digital and peacebuilding spaces.

Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2556082/ai-chatbot-launched-for-persons-with-disabilities>

Civil society challenges Indonesian deregulation law over rights and environment

ENVIRONMENT



Hans Nicholas Jong

- Indonesia's controversial Job Creation Law is facing new legal challenges from civil society groups who say it weakens environmental protections and human rights.
- One lawsuit targets provisions that restrict public involvement in environmental impact assessments and remove key legal tools for opposing harmful projects.
- A second lawsuit challenges special privileges granted to large-scale infrastructure projects, accusing the law of facilitating forced evictions and land grabs.
- A case study cited in the legal battle is the Rempang Eco City project, which residents say has displaced Indigenous communities without their consent and through the use of violence.

JAKARTA — Indonesian civil society groups are challenging a controversial law they say enables forced evictions, weakens environmental protections, and encourages elite-driven megaprojects at the expense of ordinary citizens.

Two major coalitions of NGOs and affected individuals have filed separate lawsuits with the Constitutional Court. Both suits, known as judicial reviews, take aim at Indonesia's sweeping 2020 "omnibus law," which critics say facilitates environmentally harmful and socially unjust megaprojects across the country.

The omnibus law, formally the Job Creation Law, was introduced by then-President Joko Widodo as a deregulation package intended to attract investment. Passed in October 2020, it amended more than 70 existing laws covering sectors such as labor, environment, and business licensing.

Despite near-universal opposition from environmental groups, labor unions, academics and students, the government pushed the law through parliament in just [167 days](#), during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Critics warn it rolled back protections for workers and the environment in favor of business interests.

In 2021, the Constitutional Court ruled the law "procedurally unconstitutional" because of the way it was rushed through, citing a lack of transparency and public consultation. Instead of scrapping the law, however, Widodo issued a regulation to reintroduce it. Parliament ratified this version in March 2023 — effectively re-legitimizing a law previously deemed unconstitutional, and reigniting legal and civil society opposition, including the two new judicial reviews.

Lawsuit 1: Eroding environmental safeguards

The first lawsuit, filed June 5 — World Environment Day — comes from a coalition that includes the Indonesian Forum for the Environment (Walhi), Indonesia's largest green group. It challenges 13 articles in the law's environmental section, which the plaintiffs say undercut long-standing protections.

One major concern is the narrowing of public participation in environmental impact assessments (known as AMDAL in Indonesia). Under the new law, only people deemed "directly affected" can participate — excluding environmental groups and broader civil society.

Previously, NGOs and impacted communities could join a committee that reviewed AMDAL documents. That body has now been replaced by an "Environmental Feasibility Testing Team" made up solely of government officials and certified experts, effectively removing independent oversight.

"This makes it even clearer that public space for overseeing environmental disputes has been restricted," said Mulya Sarmono, a member of the plaintiffs' legal team.

Walhi executive director Zenzi Suhadi added, "Environmental damage is not just caused by bulldozers, but by policy decisions — by a pen."

The plaintiffs also criticize how the law eliminates environmental permits, replacing them with a self-declared "environmental approval" system on the part of developers. This shift removes a critical legal avenue that communities could previously use to challenge environmental permits in court.

"NGOs and the public no longer have legal avenue to challenge environmental decisions," Mulya said, even if an approved project can be demonstrated to cause ecological and social harm.

And if an environmental approval does violate regulations, the law merely states that it can be revoked — not that it must be. Worse, the revocation no longer guarantees a project's shutdown, as was the case under the previous environmental law.

As a result, there are even fewer mechanisms to cancel a project even if it's found to be harming the environment, Mulya said.

Lawsuit 2: 'Strategically important' projects

The second lawsuit, filed July 4, targets provisions related to so-called projects of strategic national importance, or PSN. These are large-scale infrastructure and industrial developments such as toll roads, airports, power plants, and even Indonesia's new capital city, Nusantara capital.

The omnibus law strengthens legal protections for PSNs, fast-tracks licenses, and weakens safeguards around land rights and environmental impacts, critics say.

Eight NGOs and several affected individuals are suing to challenge nine articles that they say allow PSNs to bypass public interest regulations. Among their demands: removing special privileges for PSNs, restoring stronger definitions of "public interest," and reinstating previous safeguards.

"In fact, almost all PSN projects involve alleged human rights violations, land grabbing from Indigenous peoples,



refusal to recognize Indigenous communities, and inadequate compensation without genuine agreement,” Roni Saputra, director of law enforcement at environmental NGO Auriga Nusantara, one of the plaintiff organizations, said at a recent press conference in Jakarta.

A key point of concern is Article 123 of the omnibus law, which expands the definition of “public interest” to include privately run and/or foreign-controlled industrial zones — placing them in the same category of “public infrastructure” as roads, ports and airports.

Then there’s Article 173, which allows private entities — not just the government — to acquire land in the name of public interest. Under the previous law, only the state had this right of eminent domain.

“We seek to return the concept of public interest to its true essence, which rests on three key principles,” said Edy Kurniawan, advocacy deputy at the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI), one of the plaintiff organizations. “It must serve the people’s welfare, it must involve public participation, and it must respect the rights of communities.”

Rempang: A flashpoint case

The second lawsuit cites seven controversial PSN projects as examples, including the Rempang Eco City development in the Riau Islands, off the eastern coast of Sumatra.

Announced by the government in August 2023, the project would transform 7,000 hectares (17,000 acres) of Rempang Island into an industrial and tourism hub, including an \$11.6 billion glass and solar panel factory by Hong Kong-based giant Xinyi International Investment. The project also includes an ecotourism resort and upscale housing estate. The development is also tied to a deal with neighboring Singapore to export 3.4 gigawatts of solar electricity to the city-state by around 2030.

The development calls for the eviction of most of Rempang’s approximately 7,500 residents, including many Indigenous seafarers, without their free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), residents say.

“When the government designated the PSN, there was no communication with the community — no consultation on whether or not the people agreed to having the PSN imposed,” said Miswadi, a resident of Rempang. “They simply declared it a PSN without involving us at all.”

[Protests broke out](#) in September 2023, and again in late 2024, and were met with [violent crackdowns](#) by private and state security forces. Police fired rubber bullets and [tear gas](#), including at a middle school, and arrested more than 40 people.

In one incident, in September 2024, Siti Hawa, a 67-year-old grandmother, suffered a broken wrist after trying to

Source: <https://news.mongabay.com/2025/07/civil-society-challenges-indonesian-deregulation-law-over-rights-and-environment/>



protect fellow residents from being assaulted by a security guard. She is now one of the plaintiffs in the lawsuit — despite [facing criminal charges](#) herself for her role in the protests.

Though the Rempang Eco City project [is no longer listed](#) among the 77 PSNs under Widodo’s successor, President Prabowo Subianto, it hasn’t been officially cancelled.

“For nearly a year, our economy was paralyzed because we were fighting for our rights and for our ancestral land,” said Miswadi, the Rempang islander. “For a whole year, we couldn’t go out and earn a living. We had to split our focus between putting food on the table and fighting for our rights.”

Though not a plaintiff in the lawsuit, Miswadi said he supports the judicial review.

“We were already living well — why do we need to be ‘made prosperous’ again through a PSN?” he said. “Why not preserve what we already have? If the government truly cared about our welfare, they would modernize and support the farmers who are already feeding this region — not displace them in the name of investment.”

AI Conference planned for non-profits

Nonprofits across the Eastern Shore are invited to attend “Fundraising Forward: AI-Powered Relationship Building for 2025,” a hands-on, fundraising-focused AI workshop led by nationally recognized speaker Patrick Kirby of Do Good Better Consulting on Thursday, October 23, at Eastern Shore Community College.

This workshop marks a new collaboration among the Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Foundation, United Way of Virginia’s Eastern Shore, Eastern Shore of Virginia Chamber of Commerce, and the Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Commission—a shared commitment to better support the nonprofits doing the hard work of improving lives across the Shore.

“We know our local nonprofits are chronically underfunded and stretched thin,” said Monika Bridgforth, Executive Director of the Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Foundation. “By joining forces, our goal is to equip these

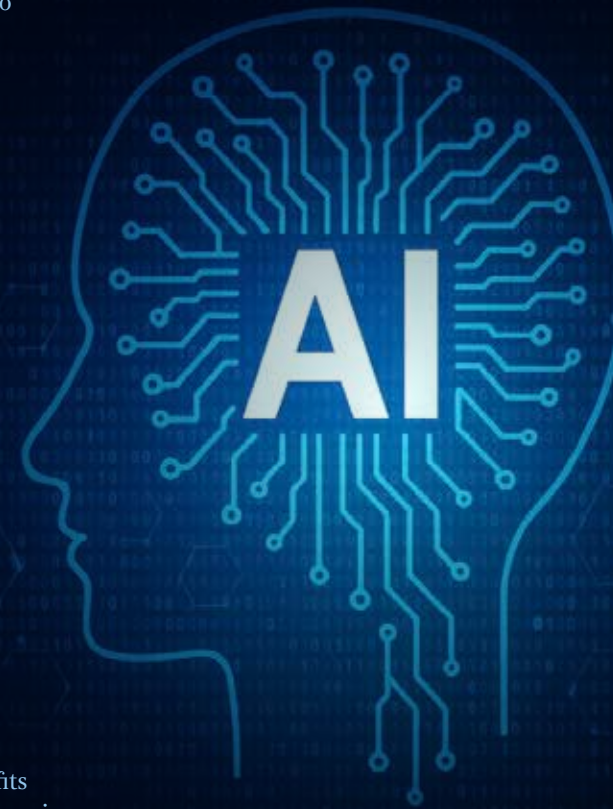
organizations with fresh tools, renewed energy, and smart strategies to help them thrive.”

copywriting lab over lunch.

The core workshop runs from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, with an optional deep-dive session from 2:00 to 4:00 PM.

Registration opens August 4 at www.esvachamber.org. Seats are limited, and the \$30 fee includes lunch.

This event is made possible through financial and in-kind contributions from Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Foundation, The Eastern Shore of Virginia Chamber of Commerce, United Way of Virginia’s Eastern Shore, David Landsberger and Eastern Shore Community College, helping ensure broad access for our local nonprofit community.



Workshop highlights include: fundraising strategies for 2025; live demos of AI tools like Otter and ChatGPT and a “plug-and-polish”

Source: <https://shoredailynews.com/headlines/ai-conference-planned-for-non-profits/>

These Animal Welfare NGOs Put 150 Hackers in A Room. These Are the AI Tools They Built

In a hackathon hosted by AI-for-good organisations Electric Sheep and Open Paws, around 150 coders came up with compassionate tools for animal justice.



Anay Mridul

What do you get when you put 150 young hackers in a room to develop tech-led solutions for animal welfare and climate justice?

That was the basis of the hackathon organised by Electric Sheep and Open Paws on the sidelines of the Vegan India Conference in Mumbai this month.

Called Code 4 Compassion, it was the third such hackathon after events in San Francisco and London earlier this year. The series focuses on building technical infrastructure for animal advocacy, with participants collaborating to create automations, AI prototypes, and no-code tools to support animal protection and food system innovation efforts.

In Mumbai, the event grouped young software engineers, coders, and mission-driven developers from across the country in 25 teams to solve problem statements around cruelty, animal-related policies, and veganism over a 24-hour period.

“From what we’ve seen and done here, it’s clear that India is rapidly becoming the epicentre of AI for impact,” Electric Sheep CEO Ash Singh told Green Queen. “Electric Sheep and Open Paws are excited about the work of these brilliant young developers and what they can do for animal protection and climate change. The change starts here.”

India’s coders create a diverse range of advocacy tools

Code 4 Compassion’s aim was to uncover real-world AI tools for

NGOs, civil society organisations, and citizen-led movements – and many of the resulting prototypes garnered international investors.

One team created RescueRadar, an AI-led cruelty report processing system that categorises cruelty incidents, extracts key details, and scans complaints for the most urgent cases that need the attention of rescue organisations and the appropriate authorities.

Another group developed SufferingWatch, which leverages machine learning to monitor regulatory filings and flag potential animal welfare violations in industries like meat and dairy. AnimalParliament, meanwhile, is a natural language processing system that tracks animal-related state and national bills and monitors news.

The coders also created SaferStrays, a digital interface to map stray animals and connect citizens with local rescue centres, while building a census database for welfare programmes.

Plus, the hackathon led to the creation of VeganMe, a culturally adapted chatbot that provides round-the-clock support for people transitioning to plant-based diets, and IndiaForAnimals, a multilingual content generation platform to build animal welfare education.

Developers also built software and websites like FirstHello, a cold outreach automation system that identifies leaders of target organisations and generates personalised advocacy messages for corporate engagement campaigns. Another team built Profilr, a fundraising agent that analyses potential donors’ philanthropic histories to generate compelling outreach pitches.

Organisers in talks to integrate AI tools in real-world applications

The event was co-hosted by Craigslist CF, ProVeg, Kickstarting for Good, Stray Dog Institute, People for Animals and Bharat Accountability Initiative, and is part of a push to integrate India’s AI prowess with social justice movements that remain underfunded and overstrained.

“This is India’s moment to lead,” said Sam Tucker-Davis, executive director of Open Paws. “We’re not just mentoring coders – we’re brokering lifelong collaborations between India’s tech community and movements that need AI the most.”

He added: “The mentorship model we’ve developed allows participants to achieve remarkable results, and the solutions created here will have lasting impact across the movement.”

Open Paws and Electric Sheep are now planning to make several of the new tools open-source, launch an AI-for-impact incubator, and conduct future events in the cities of New Delhi and Bangalore, according to the Deccan Chronicle. They’re also in talks with civic organisations and advocacy groups to integrate some of these solutions into governance and public outreach systems.

There’s already precedent for this: a prototype from the Code 4 Compassion event in San Francisco has been adopted by a British NGO to oppose the construction of new factory farms.

“The innovation and ingenuity that these young coders demonstrated represent a quantum leap in how technology can serve animal and climate advocacy,” said Electric Sheep’s Singh. “India’s combination of tech talent and mission alignment can drive impact as we’ve never before seen. We’ve worked in Silicon Valley and across Europe, and India’s AI talent is right up there in terms of proficiency and creativity.”

Source: <https://www.greenqueen.com.hk/code-4-compassion-open-paws-electric-sheep-animal-ai-hackathon/>

How Nonprofits Can Help Shape AI Governance

As an industry being developed largely within the private, for-profit sector and with little regulation, the governance of artificial intelligence—the values, norms, policies, and safeguards that comprise industry standards—has been left in the hands of a relative few whose decisions have the potential to impact the lives of many.

And if this leadership lacks representation from the communities affected by automated decision-making, particularly marginalized communities, then the technology could be making the issue of inequity worse, not better.

So say various legal experts, executives, and nonprofit leaders who spoke with NPQ about the future of “AI governance” and the critical role nonprofits and advocacy groups can and must play to ensure AI reflects equity, and not exclusion.

A Lack of Oversight

The potential for AI to influence or even change society, in



Jennifer Johnson

ways anticipated and not, is increasingly clear to scholars. Yet, these technologies are being developed in much the same way as conventional software platforms—rather than powerful, potentially dangerous technologies that require serious, considered governance and oversight.

Several experts who spoke to NPQ didn’t mince words about the lack of such governance and oversight in AI.

“Advancements are being driven by profit motives rather than a vision for public good.”

“There is no AI governance standard or law at the US federal government level,” said Jeff Le, managing principal at 100 Mile Strategies and a fellow at George Mason University’s National Security Institute. He is also a former deputy cabinet secretary for the State of California, where he led the cyber, AI, and emerging tech portfolios, among others.

While Le cited a few state laws, including the [Colorado Artificial Intelligence Act](#) and the [Texas Data Privacy and Security Act](#), he noted that there are currently few consumer protections or privacy safeguards in place to prevent the misuse of personal data by large language models (LLMs).

Le also pointed to recent survey findings showing public support for more governance in AI, stating, “Constituents are deeply concerned about AI, including privacy, data, workforce, and society cohesion concerns.”

Research has revealed a [stark contrast between AI experts and the general public](#). While only 15 percent of experts believe AI could harm them personally, nearly three times as many US adults (43 percent) say they expect to be negatively affected by the technology.

Le and other experts believe nonprofits and community groups play a critical role in the path forward, but organizations leading the charge must focus on community value and education of the public.

Profit Motives Versus Public Good

The speed at which AI capabilities are being developed, and the fact that it is being developed mostly in the private sector and with little regulation, has left public oversight and considerations like equity, accountability, and representation far behind, notes Ana Patricia Muñoz, executive director of the International Budget Partnership, a leading nonprofit organization promoting more equitable management of public money.

The people most affected by these technologies, particularly those in historically marginalized communities, have little to no say in how AI tools are designed, governed, and deployed.

“Advancements are being driven by profit motives rather than a vision for public good,” said Muñoz. “That is why AI needs to be treated like a public good with public investment and public accountability baked in from the moment an AI tool is designed through to its implementation.”

The lack of broader representation in the AI field, combined with a lack of oversight and outside input, has helped create a yawning “equity gap,” in AI technologies, according to Beck Spears, vice president of philanthropy and impact partnerships for Rewriting the Code, the largest network of women in tech. Spears pointed to the lack of representation in decision-making with AI.

“One of the most persistent equity gaps is the lack of diverse representation across decision-making stages,” Beck told NPQ. “Most AI governance frameworks emerge from corporate or academic institutions, with limited involvement from nonprofits or community-based stakeholders.”

“If nonprofits don’t step in, the risk isn’t just that AI systems will become more inequitable—it’s that these inequities will be automated, normalized, and made invisible.”

Complicating this problem is the fact that most commercial AI models are developed behind closed doors: “Many systems are built using proprietary datasets and ‘black-box’ algorithms that make it difficult to audit or identify discriminatory outcomes,” noted Spears.

Solving these equity gaps requires, among other things, much broader representation within AI development, says Joanna Smykowski, licensed attorney and legal tech expert.

Much of AI leadership today “comes from a narrow slice of the population. It’s technical, corporate, and often disconnected from the people living with the consequences” Smykowski told NPQ.

“That’s the equity gap....Not just who builds the tools, but who gets to decide how they’re used, what problems they’re meant to solve, and what tradeoffs are acceptable,” Smykowski said.

Smykowski’s experience in disability and family law informs her analysis as to how automated systems fail the communities they were built to serve: “The damage isn’t abstract. It’s personal. People lose access to benefits. Parents lose time with their kids. Small errors become permanent outcomes.”

Jasmine Charbonier, a fractional chief marketing officer and growth strategist, told NPQ that the disconnect between technology and impacted communities is still ubiquitous. “[Recently], I consulted with a social services org where their clients—mostly low-income families—were being negatively impacted by automated benefit eligibility systems. The thing is none of these families had any say in how these systems were designed.”

How Nonprofits Can Take the Lead

Nonprofits can and already do play important roles in providing oversight, demanding accountability, and acting as industry watchdogs.

For example, the coalition EyesOnOpenAI—made up of more than 60 philanthropic, labor, and nonprofit organizations—recently urged the California attorney general to put a stop to OpenAI’s transition to a for-profit model, citing concerns about the misuse of nonprofit assets and calling for stronger public oversight. This tactic underscores

how nonprofits can step in to demand accountability from AI leaders.

Internally, before implementing an AI tool, nonprofits need to have a plan for assessing whether it truly supports their mission and the communities they serve.

“We map out exactly how the tool impacts our community members,” said Charbonier, addressing how her team assesses AI tools they might use. “For instance, when evaluating an AI-powered rental screening tool, we found it disproportionately flagged our Black [and] Hispanic clients as ‘high risk’ based on biased historical data. So, we rejected it.”

Charbonier also stressed the importance of a vendor’s track record: “I’ve found that demanding transparency about [the company’s] development process [and] testing methods reveals a lot about their true commitment to equity.”

This exemplifies how nonprofits can use their purchasing power to put pressure on companies. “We required tech vendors to share demographic data on their AI teams and oversight boards,” Charbonier noted. “We made it clear that contracts depended on meeting specific diversity targets.”

Ahmed Whitt, the director of the Center for Wealth Equity (CWE) at the philanthropic and financial collaborative Living Cities, focused on evaluating the practical safeguards: “[Nonprofits] should demand vendors disclose model architectures and decision logic and co-create protections for internal data.” This, he explains, is how nonprofits can establish a shared responsibility and deeper engagement with AI tools.

“Decision-making power doesn’t come from being ‘consulted.’ It comes from being in the room with a vote and a budget.”

Beyond evaluation, nonprofits can push for systemic change in how AI tools are developed. According to Muñoz, this includes a push for public accountability, as EyesOnOpenAI is spearheading: “Civil society brings what markets and governments often miss—values, context, and lived realities.”

For real change to occur, nonprofits can’t be limited to token advisory roles, according to Smykowski. “Hiring has to be deliberate, and those seats need to be paid,” she told NPQ. “Decision-making power doesn’t come from being ‘consulted.’ It comes from being in the room with a vote and a budget.”

Some experts advocate for community- and user-led audits once AI tools are deployed. Spears pointed out that user feedback can uncover issues missed in technical reviews,

especially from non-native English speakers and marginalized populations. Feedback can highlight “algorithmic harm affecting historically underserved populations.” Charbonier says her team pays community members to conduct impact reviews, which revealed that a chatbot they were testing used confusing and offensive language for Spanish-speaking users.

William K. Holland, a trial attorney with more than 30 years of experience in civil litigation, told NPQ that audits must have consequences to be effective: “Community-informed audits sound great in theory but only work if they have enforcement teeth.” He argues that nonprofits can advocate for stronger laws, such as mandatory impact assessments, penalties for noncompliance, and binding consequences for bias.

Nonprofits should also work at the state and local levels, where meaningful change can happen faster. For instance, Charbonier said her team helped push for “algorithmic accountability” [legislation in Florida](#) by presenting examples of AI bias in their community. (The act did not pass; meanwhile, similar measures have been proposed, though not passed, [at the federal level](#)).

Beyond legislative lobbying, experts cite public pressure as a way to hold companies and public institutions accountable in AI development and deployment. “Requests for transparency, such as publishing datasets and model logic, create pressure for responsible practice,” Spears said.

Charbonier agreed: “We regularly publish equity scorecards rating different AI systems’ impacts on marginalized communities. The media coverage often motivates companies to make changes.”

Looking Ahead: Risks and Decision-Making Powers

As AI tech continues to evolve at breakneck speed, addressing the equity gap in AI governance is urgent.

The danger is not just inequity, but invisibility. As Holland said, “If nonprofits don’t step in, the risk isn’t just that AI systems will become more inequitable—it’s that these inequities will be automated, normalized, and made invisible.”

For Charbonier, the stakes are already high. “Without nonprofit advocacy, I’ve watched AI systems amplify existing inequities in housing, healthcare, education, [and] criminal justice....Someone needs to represent community interests [and] push for equity.”

She noted that this stance isn’t about being anti-technology: “It’s about asking who benefits and who pays the price. Nonprofits are in a unique position to advocate for the people most likely to be overlooked.”

Source: <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/how-nonprofits-can-help-shape-ai-governance/>

World Youth Skills Day marked with ‘Pakistan Youth Development Dialogue’

ISLAMABAD, Jul 15 (APP): The Pakistan Youth Development Dialogue 2025 marked an inspiring celebration of World Youth Skills Day, bringing together a powerful mix of policymakers, corporate executives, nonprofit leaders, and youth advocates.

The core message of the conference centered on empowering young people through digital skills, inclusive education, and climate leadership to help shape a resilient and sustainable future for Pakistan, said a press release.

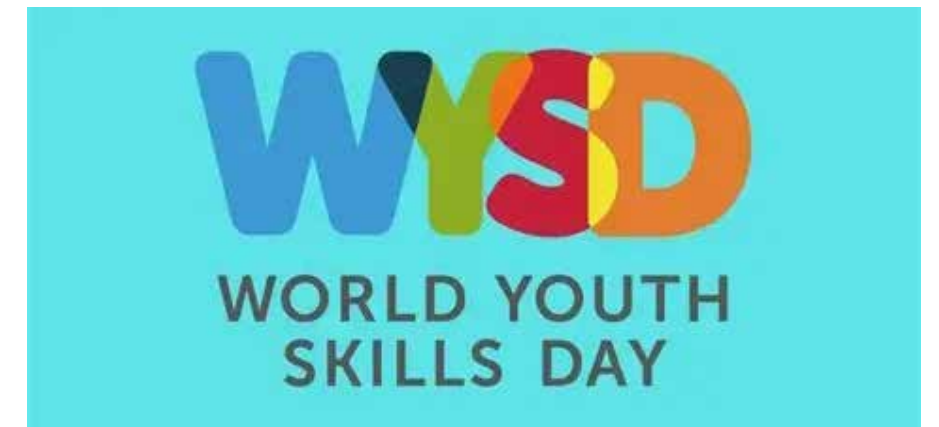
The conference was organized by Development Communications Network (Devcom-Pakistan) on Tuesday at a local hotel.

Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, in his keynote address as the chief guest, emphasized the government’s commitment to creating an enabling environment for youth to thrive as contributors to national growth.

He said that youth are the most valuable asset of Pakistan, and investing in their skills and entrepreneurship is the only path toward sustainable economic development.

“Today’s rapidly evolving global economy demands a workforce that is adaptable, tech-savvy, and innovative. We need to align our national policies with this reality and ensure that our young population is not left behind,” he noted.

Sheikh further highlighted the importance of public-private



partnerships in building a strong foundation for youth empowerment.

He appreciated initiatives like the Pakistan Youth Development Dialogue and the newly launched Pakistan Youth Development Network for offering a strategic platform where government, corporate, and civil society stakeholders can come together for collective action.

Founder of the Pakistan Youth Development Network and Executive Director of Devcom-Pakistan, Munir Ahmed, in his address, underscored the urgent need for a unified and inclusive approach to youth development in Pakistan.

He stated that while the youth make up over 60 percent of the country’s population, they often remain disconnected from policy processes and development planning.

“We cannot afford to let this demographic dividend turn into a liability. The Pakistan Youth

Development Network is a step toward creating a nationwide platform that links young people to skills development, policy engagement, and leadership opportunities,” he said.

Munir Ahmed also emphasized the importance of equipping youth with digital, entrepreneurial, and climate resilience skills to meet the challenges of the 21st century. He called on government institutions, the corporate sector, and development organizations to work collaboratively in empowering youth from all backgrounds, including marginalized and remote communities.

“We are not just celebrating World Youth Skills Day — we are launching a movement that aims to make skills, innovation, and inclusion the cornerstone of national development,” he concluded.

Source: <https://www.app.com.pk/national/world-youth-skills-day-marked-with-pakistan-youth-development-dialogue/>

Your Story, Our Platform: The NGO World Welcomes Your Contributions

SUBMIT YOUR STORIES

Unleash Your Impact: The NGO World Awaits Your Input

At “The NGO World” magazine, we believe in the power of collective knowledge and shared experiences. We invite our valued readers to become contributors and actively participate in shaping the content of our magazine. Your insights, stories, and perspectives are essential in fostering a sense of community and driving positive change.

If you have a compelling story related to humanitarian work, development initiatives, or social impact that aligns with the diverse sections we cover, we encourage you to share it with us. Whether it’s a firsthand account of your involvement in an NGO project, an innovative solution you’ve come across, or an issue you’re passionate about, we want to hear from you.

By actively engaging with “The NGO World,” you play a crucial role in expanding our community’s knowledge and fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges and solutions within the humanitarian and development sectors.

Together, we can amplify the voices of those working toward positive change and inspire others to make a difference. We look forward to receiving your contributions and continuing our shared mission of creating a better world.

Please send your content submissions via email:

editor@thengoworld.com

ensuring that your submission aligns with one of the sections provided below.

Sections of Magazine:

Here’s an expanded list of potential sections for the magazine “The NGO World” to cover a wide range of topics related to humanitarian work, development, and social impact:

Featured NGO Spotlight: Highlighting the work of a specific NGO, sharing their success stories, challenges, and impact.

Global Development News: Covering the latest developments in international development, policy changes, and global issues.

Local Initiatives: Showcasing grassroots projects and initiatives making a difference in local communities

NGO Innovations: Exploring innovative approaches and technologies used by NGOs to address pressing issues.

Humanitarian Crises: In-depth coverage of ongoing humanitarian crises and the response efforts.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Articles focusing on progress and challenges related to achieving the UN’s SDGs.

Women Empowerment: Stories of women-led initiatives and efforts to empower women and girls

Youth Engagement: Highlighting the role of youth in driving social change and their involvement in NGOs.

Environment and Conservation: Covering environmental issues, conservation efforts, and climate change initiatives.

Education for All: Articles on educational programs, access to quality education, and innovative teaching methods.

Health and Well-being: Discussing healthcare initiatives, disease prevention, and public health campaigns.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): Examining the CSR efforts of businesses and their impact on communities.

Refugee and Migration Issues: Coverage of refugee crises, resettlement programs, and the experiences of displaced people.

Tech for Good: Exploring how technology is used for humanitarian purposes, from apps to drones.

NGO Profiles: Brief profiles of various NGOs, their missions, and achievements.

Volunteer Stories: Personal accounts from volunteers who have contributed to NGOs and their experiences.

Funding and Grants: Updates on available funding opportunities for NGOs and how to apply.

Policy and Advocacy: Discussions on policy changes affecting NGOs and their advocacy efforts.

Impact Assessment: Articles on measuring and evaluating the impact of NGO projects and programs.

Partnerships and Collaborations: Exploring successful partnerships between NGOs, governments, and businesses.

Disaster Response and Preparedness: Coverage of disaster relief efforts, preparedness strategies, and recovery stories.

Microfinance and Economic Empowerment: Exploring initiatives that empower communities economically.

Indigenous Rights and Cultural Preservation: Articles on efforts to protect and preserve indigenous cultures and traditions.

Human Rights and Social Justice: Discussions on human rights issues, social justice movements, and advocacy work.

Arts and Culture for Change: Showcasing how art and culture are used as tools for social change and awareness.

Inspirational Interviews: Exclusive interviews with prominent figures in the humanitarian and development sectors, sharing their insights, experiences, and visions for positive change.

Philanthropy and Impactful Giving: Exploring the impact of philanthropic efforts, featuring interviews with philanthropists and discussions on effective giving strategies.

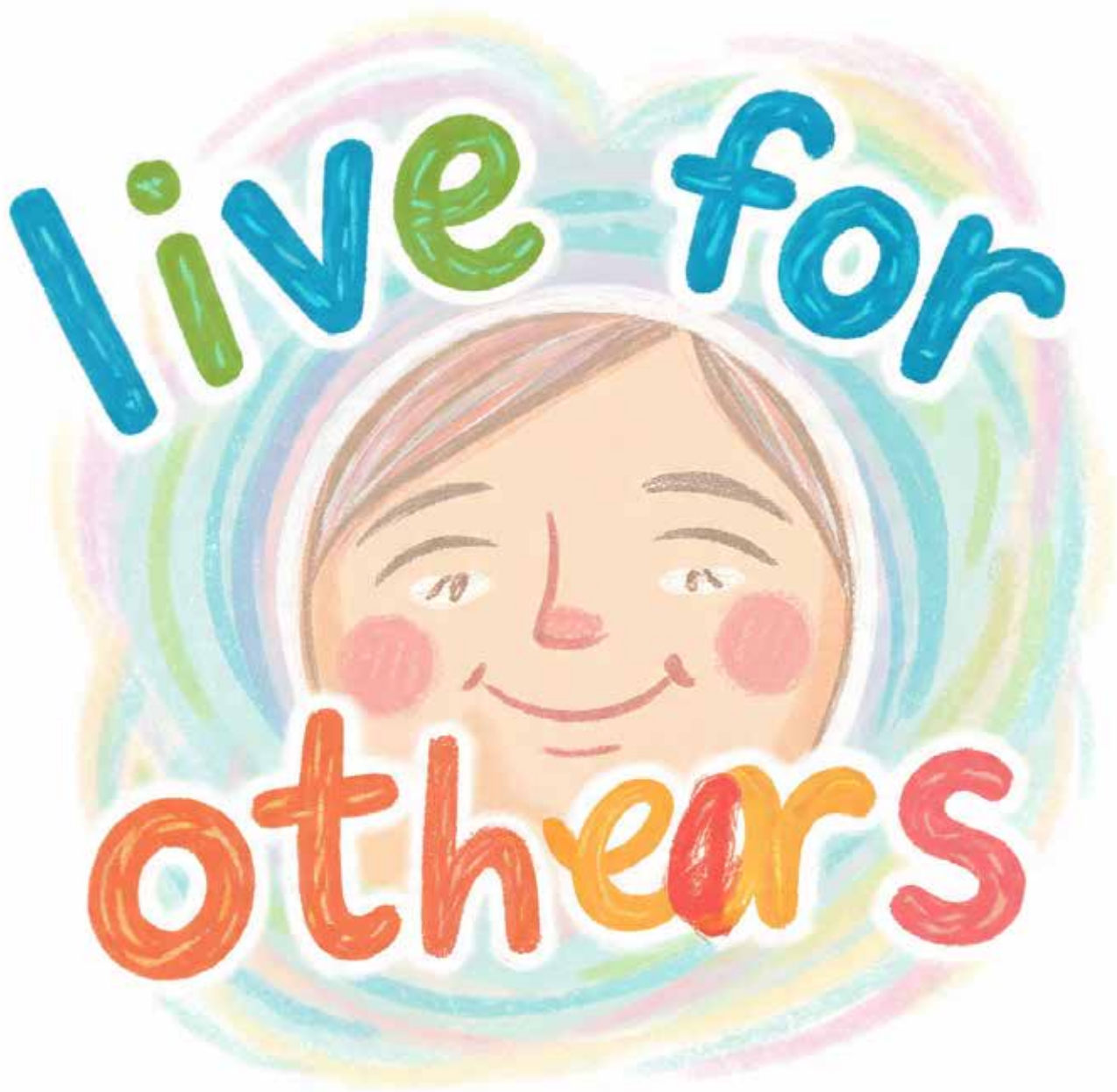
NGO Leadership and Management: Articles on leadership skills, management practices, and organizational development within the NGO sector, providing insights for NGO professionals and leaders

These sections offer a comprehensive view of the multifaceted work being done in the realm of humanitarianism, development, and social impact.

Submit your stories for upcoming edition & for queries, suggestion, feedback

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