Panorama Perspectives

Conversations on Planetary Health

The Philanthropic Funding Landscape for Integrating Health and Environment

Report V · May 2018
The Panorama Perspectives: Conversations on Planetary Health report series aims to inspire new thinking, conversations, and engagement with planetary health and other integrated concepts. Collaboration and open knowledge sharing across sectors are necessary to solve the complex global health and development problems of today.

The Conversations on Planetary Health series is comprised of five reports:

- Planetary Health 101: Information and Resources
- The Planetary Health Landscape: From Concept to Action
- Global Policy Opportunities for Planetary Health: A Review of Existing Policy Frameworks
- Issue and Policy Intersections for Planetary Health: Finding National Entry Points
- The Philanthropic Funding Landscape for Integrating Health and Environment

These reports are intended as practical tools, presenting actionable opportunities to advance planetary health. Each report expands on knowledge gathered from many sources, including analysis of publicly available reports and data; forums and events; group discussions; and individual conversations. All content represents Panorama’s opinion unless otherwise noted.

We welcome continued dialogue on the report topics. To receive the reports directly, please write to info@panoramaglobal.org or visit us at panoramaglobal.org/planetary-health.

Panorama is an action tank working to solve global problems through audacious thinking and bold action. We bring together diverse perspectives to spark new ideas that create change. We partner with ambitious leaders to strengthen their organizations and achieve their goals, and we initiate projects when we see gaps that need to be filled. Our work on planetary health is supported by a grant from The Rockefeller Foundation.

Our partner for this report is the Bridge Collaborative, which is driving a fundamental shift in how we think, plan, fund, and work across sectors to make bigger change faster. We unite people and organizations in health, development, and the environment with the evidence and tools to tackle the world’s most pressing challenges—from air pollution to poverty, biodiversity loss to malnutrition, climate change to inequality. Because there’s only one way to solve the most critical problems we face: Together.
Introduction

Hurricanes, landslides, air pollution, and disease outbreaks – the news is filled with visual evidence of the intricate links between environment and health. New studies and reports regularly corroborate the interconnections between the health of our planet and human health.

This is motivating a growing number of people and organizations to consider new ways to live sustainably that improve our planet and human health today, and safeguard the wellbeing of future generations. Their energy is set against the broader context of the Sustainable Development Goals, which are driving integrated approaches at both global and national levels.

However, the need for aligned health and environmental action far outweighs current investments, presenting an opportunity for philanthropists to play a catalytic role.

To date, foundations and private philanthropists have made only limited funding available for activities that deliver both health and environmental benefits. Instead, the majority of funding is still given within traditional silos, such as health, environment, or development. The planetary health community, and other like-minded communities, are grappling with ways to unlock the needed resources to promote new thinking at the systems level and implement practical programs on the ground.

To inform these efforts, Panorama and the Bridge Collaborative have partnered to assess the landscape of philanthropic donors for health and environment. We hope this knowledge will be a useful resource for people who have great ideas and need funding. Equally, we hope that this report will motivate philanthropic donors to allocate the needed resources to cross-sector areas.

We have focused on philanthropies because they are often more willing to take investment risks than governments or multilateral organizations, and boast leaner and more nimble structures. They are often on the cutting edge of new concepts and can swiftly leverage learnings. Furthermore, recent geopolitical changes have reduced political will for foreign aid, so philanthropies have a more important role than ever in directing attention and resources toward solving complex problems in new ways.

Our report explores these themes in the following sections:

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- Philanthropic Donors Engaged in Cross-Sector Activity ........................................ Page 6
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Landscape of Major Philanthropic Health Donors and Environment Donors

To understand the cross-sector funding landscape, we started by looking at major philanthropies active in the health and environment spaces. These donors are not necessarily investing across sectors at this time, but they have considerable influence in their respective areas.

In March 2018, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) released the most recent and comprehensive report on philanthropic resource flows for development purposes, as well as foundations’ priorities, practices, and partnering behaviors.¹ The report, *Private Philanthropy for Development*, maps global philanthropic giving by sector, including the health and environment sectors. Because of OECD’s unique role in tracking development finance and its unparalleled experience analyzing global datasets on financial flows, this report stands out from all other sources presently available on philanthropic contribution to these sectors.²

The report identified the top 10 donors in the health and environment sectors using data from 2013-2015, as listed in the following table. We have noted the home country for each organization, and included a link to each organization’s website or relevant information source.

### Table 1: Top 10 Philanthropic Donors by Sector and In Order of Giving, 2013-2015

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<th>Health Donors</th>
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<td>5. Bloomberg Philanthropies (US)</td>
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<td>6. Carlos Slim Foundation (Mexico)</td>
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<td>7. William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (US)</td>
<td>7. The Howard G. Buffett Foundation (US)</td>
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<td>8. Tata Trusts (India)</td>
<td>8. Walton Family Foundation (US)</td>
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<td>9. Dutch Postcode Lottery (Netherlands)</td>
<td>9. Helmsley Charitable Trust (US)</td>
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<td>10. UBS Optimus Foundation (Switzerland)</td>
<td>10. John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation</td>
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The investment levels of each of these top 10 donors in their respective sectors, as reported by the OECD, are compared in the following chart.

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² See Appendix I for more information on the OECD *Private Philanthropy for Development* report.
Key Points and Comparisons Drawn from the OECD data

- Between 2013-2015, the health sector received significantly more investment, at $12.6 billion, than the environment sector, at $1.1 billion.
  - Health investments were primarily made in the following areas, in order of investment level: infectious disease control, reproductive health and family planning, nutrition, health care, medical research, health education, and tobacco control.\(^3\)
  - Environment investments were primarily made in the following areas, in order of investment level: biodiversity conservation, environmental research, and biosphere and site preservation.\(^4\)

- The Carlos Slim Foundation and the Dutch Postcode Lottery are ranked as top donors in both health and environment. Six other donors have priority areas in both sectors, but their investment levels do not reach the top 10 in both sectors.
  - These six other donors are noted with an asterisk in Chart 1 and listed below:


\(^4\) Ibid.
However, we note that having priorities in both health and environment is not an indicator that a donor has started to connect the two areas and made coordinated cross-sector investments. At this time, priorities within these organizations are typically pursued separately.

- All of these donors make investments globally, except for the Tata Trusts, which focuses its investments in India, and the Carlos Slim Foundation, which focuses its investments in Latin America.

- Since the publication of the OECD report, the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative and Co-Impact have emerged as major new funding initiatives for the health sector, with commitments of $3 billion and $500 million over the next decade, respectively.

**Philanthropic Donors Engaged in Cross-Sector Activity**

While it is important to have a sense of the separate health and environment philanthropy landscapes, it is even more helpful to understand which philanthropic donors have already been actively investing in joint health and environment topics. Thus, we looked at a series of other information, in addition to the OECD report, to identify:

- Whether these top 10 donors are active in the cross-sector health and environment space; and
- Which other philanthropic donors are, or have been, active in the cross-sector health and environment space.

For the purposes of this report, we focused on donors that 1) invest in more than one country, and 2) are philanthropies, not corporate donors or investment funds.

A primary indicator that a donor is active in the cross-sector health and environment space is whether or not they have made relevant investments. For this report, we focused on investments that have been made in areas that are self-defined as “cross-sector,” intentionally aligning health and environment outcomes.

The seven cross-sector areas we identified are listed below in alphabetical order, along with abridged descriptions. These areas are complementary and have inherent overlaps.

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5 For a complete description of sources and methodology, please see the appendices, which include available links.
• Biodiversity and Health – *Connects human health with healthy ecosystems*
• Climate Change and Health – *Addresses the harmful effects of climate change on human health*
• Environmental Health – *Addresses all physical, chemical, and biological factors that affect human health*
• One Health – *Explores how to optimize health for people, domesticated animals, wildlife, and the environment*
• Planetary Health – *Connects the health of human civilization and the state of the Earth’s natural systems*
• Pollution and Health – *Addresses the harmful effects of pollution on human health*
• Population, Health, and Environment – *Aims to improve access and equity to primary health care services while also sustaining the environment*

We did not focus on broader areas, like sustainable development, nutrition, or urbanization, because while the various communities addressing these issues are beginning to come together, investments in these areas do not yet represent explicit support for cross-sector outcomes. Philanthropies often fund issues like nutrition or urbanization from the perspective of a single sector, such as health, environment, or development, and are looking for outcomes in that sector, rather than intentionally seeking mutual co-benefits across both health and environment.

We reviewed investments in the seven cross-sector areas using investment information from the last ten years, 2008-2017, which is publicly available through philanthropies’ websites, tax filings, and online databases. We also drew on the knowledge that Panorama and the Bridge Collaborative have gathered through our work across sectors. We acknowledge the limitations of this approach, given the volume of philanthropies globally and the varying levels of publicly available information.

Through our review, we identified 49 global, philanthropic donors. Of these 49 donors, the largest number have focused on the issues of Climate Change and Health, and Biodiversity and Health as illustrated in the following chart. This does not necessarily mean that these areas received larger total sums of money, but it does indicate that these areas have resonated more with philanthropic donors to date.

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6 Due to the nature of the investment reporting process, the amount of publicly available information about these investments may be limited, especially information on the most recent investments.
For the 49 philanthropies that have made cross-sector investments, we also looked at whether or not they were engaging in dialogue – in the form of networks, donor collaboratives, and meetings – that intentionally bring health and environment together.

We believe that such dialogue is another indicator of being active in the space for two reasons: First, engagement represents a time and attention commitment by donors, and second, donors often look to peers for knowledge and signals of where to make investments.

Thus, we looked at a variety of relevant closed-door and public-facing groups, such as the Health and Environment Funders Network, the Planetary Health Alliance, and the Bridge Collaborative.

The following table lists the 49 donors, shows the cross-sector areas they have invested in, and indicates whether or not they are engaged in dialogue. Of the 49 donors, we found that 27 are active in both investments and dialogue, based on information available to us.
Table 2: Philanthropic Donors Active across Health and Environment

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<tr>
<th>Donor and Location (alphabetical by organization name)</th>
<th>Biodiversity and Health</th>
<th>Climate Change and Health</th>
<th>Environmental Health</th>
<th>One Health</th>
<th>Planetary Health</th>
<th>Pollution and Health</th>
<th>Population, Health and Environment</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
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**Key:** Green = Investments made; Blue = Participates in dialogue

* Indicates that the donor is on the OECD top ten list for either health or environment
This list represents a variety of philanthropic donors, small and large, because the size of an organization does not indicate whether it is more likely to take up cross-sector work. Thus, each should be equally considered as a potential partner in cross-sector action.

Investment levels for the seven cross-sector areas are not included for this list due to the limited and varying amount of publicly available information for each philanthropy. A deeper study of investment levels could be made, but would require collaboration with philanthropies to ensure accurate and timely information.\(^7\)

**Collaborating on Health and Environment Challenges**

While this report provides a landscape of philanthropic donors who have taken cross-sector action to date, it does not give an indication of future activity. We do think that investment levels will increase over time, but the immediate need for support cross-sector health and environment action is far greater than the investments being made. If we are going to meet the Sustainable Development Goals around health and environment, larger, more strategic, and sustained investments must be made.

To help make immediate progress on filling this gap, we have set out practical steps that organizations seeking funding can take today when engaging donors to co-create projects. We have also laid out recommendations to donors on ways they can think about tackling the complex problems facing the health and environment sectors.

These recommendations, as laid out in the following sections, are drawn from key challenges and opportunities that Panorama and the Bridge Collaborative have observed or experienced when working to unlock cross-sector health and environment funding.

**Recommendations to Funding Seekers**

**Understand Motivations**

When considering cross-sector ideas, it is important to understand the motivations that influence investment decisions. The health and environment communities view cross-sector activity in different ways, depending on primary goals and approaches to the work.

The environment community primarily focuses on environmental impact and co-benefits, and considers human outcomes as important but secondary. However, some in the environment community view human activities as a core part of ecosystem management, and are beginning to integrate human health outcomes into conservation strategies.

Within the health community, the focus is normally on environment as a pathway to improved health and wellbeing. While health practitioners are beginning to acknowledge that human

\(^7\) See Appendix II for more information on our methodology and data limitations.
health relies on the health of our planet, they often still prioritize human health outcomes and view environmental sustainability as a means to that end.

For both communities, it is important to convey the urgency of the situation. Integrated approaches to health and environment present an opportunity to address root causes, instead of surface level solutions, but it can take longer to make measurable progress. Many donors are interested in near-term outcomes, so striking the right balance of near- and long-term results is key. Employ language and framings that demonstrate the potential for helping people and our planet today, as well as for future generations.

Ultimately, taking time to assess the motivations of each community and using them as context or rationale for projects may increase interest and collaboration, and hopefully result in more immediate investments.

**Build a Strong Investment Case**

When considering new cross-sector activities, big and small, it is essential to build a clear and compelling investment case aligned with philanthropic donor interests and priorities. The majority of donors have established priorities where funding is directed. Therefore, an investment case should lay out information in a way that shows how bridging health and environment can add value to existing efforts, help solve challenges, and achieve goals to make lasting change.

A strong investment case will support collaboration between funding seekers and donors and should include the following elements:

- Robust value proposition describing what will be achieved for each sector and why it matters.
- Clear alignment with donor health and environment priorities and needs.
- Expected returns on investment (ROI) for each sector, as well as other benefits the donor and partners will gain, such as good publicity or positioning.
- Clear budget needs and alignment with donor funding cycles or other key milestones.

On a broader level, the economic case being built by The Rockefeller Foundation [Economic Council on Planetary Health](#) may be a big step forward in illustrating the investment value of a cross-sector approach.

**Speak Each Other's Language**

One of the biggest barriers to cross-sector action is the inability to translate knowledge and insights from one community to the other. This is especially relevant when seeking cross-sector funding, where the value of a project must be stated in language that resonates with all parties.

For example, when making the case to a health donor or practitioner that environmental benefits matter, use straightforward, non-technical language that is accessible to people who may be less familiar with the environmental sector. The same holds true when collaborating with an environmental donor or practitioner on a project with health outcomes.
Also, do not assume that potential environmental or health partners are well versed in the other sector when it comes to key aspects like global goals, milestones, major events, or influential leaders. Take the time to explain the context or background to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

Similarly, it is important to lay out assumptions around a potential collaboration, as the health and environment communities have inherently diverse contexts, which can hinder effective and efficient collaboration.

**Align as One Voice**

The more that the health and environment communities can create a shared narrative on the need for cross-sector action, at least on the highest levels, the more potential there is for partnership and investments to achieve cross-sector outcomes. When combined with a strong investment case, a shared narrative will ensure the use of clear, consistent messages on key aspects like the benefits of cross-sector action, ways to overcome challenges, and what effective cross-sector action looks like.

**Recommendations to Philanthropists**

**Connect Health and Environment Priorities**

For philanthropies with both health and environment priorities, one place to start is to consider how to connect investments. Are there ways to start sharing learnings, identifying common goals or solutions, or developing priorities that take both human health and environment into consideration? By answering these questions, programs have the potential for much greater impact, since the challenges we face are interwoven and cannot be solved in silos.

For philanthropies focused on health, it is important to consider integrating environmental factors to help make more holistic, lasting progress in improving people’s lives. For example, synthetic proteins may hold potential to greatly improve nutrition for children and adults worldwide, while also helping to stop environmental degradation from livestock and farming.

The same is true for environment-focused philanthropies. Nearly all of the reasons behind a decline in biodiversity have a link to a human health outcome, either through a shared root cause or through system interactions. For example, as of May 2018, the Democratic Republic of Congo is facing its ninth outbreak of Ebola. Many experts suspect that deforestation is driving infected animals closer to villages and putting more people at risk than ever before. Integrated funding could tackle the problems of forest loss and emergent infectious disease at once.

**Invest in Integrated Health and Environment Ideas**

In addition to connecting existing priorities, new investments that intentionally align health and environment from the outset are greatly needed. These kinds of projects will allow for the exploration and testing of approaches and ideas that can lead to positive outcomes for both
sectors. Integrated projects not only have the potential for maximizing funding and tackling wicked problems, but by also sharing these learnings broadly, philanthropists can help build momentum on cross-sector action.

Already, different models are being tried for health and environment impact, which are pioneering the way for others. For example, the Wellcome Trust’s Our Planet Our Health priority area is focused on learning how food systems, urbanization, and climate change affect the environment and health, then using this knowledge to improve global health. Also, the Schmidt Family Foundation through the 11th Hour Project has taken a human-rights approach to transforming energy, food, and water systems to improve health and natural resources, and build prosperity for people and communities worldwide.

**Galvanize the Donor Community**

Another opportunity for philanthropists to take action is to think about ways to galvanize the broader donor community. Bringing together peers, including other philanthropies, government donors, and private sector donors, will expand the sphere of influence and catalyze change.

For donors who are already involved in existing donor groups on relevant topics, such as climate change or nutrition, there is an opportunity to take the lead in encouraging cross-sector thinking. For even greater impact, there is a need for a more permanent engagement platform where all types of donors can collectively align, accelerate, and increase resources for integrated health and environment action.

**Support Multilateral Action**

At the global and national levels, the Sustainable Development Goals are building political will and driving collaboration to overcome complex challenges. In the past few years, many multilateral organizations have taken great strides to better align health and environment, yet they desperately need resources to move from concept to implementation.

For example, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the World Health Organization (WHO) established an interagency group on biodiversity and health. At the same time, the UN Development Program is drawing organizations together to apply a proven model they call “advocacy through numbers,” to planetary health. Their approach to building investment cases around non-communicable diseases and tobacco use and helping countries create action plans can be applied to the health and environment space.

Other UN agencies – including UN Environment, the WHO, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) – are taking action on the 2016 mandate from environment ministers worldwide to create a coalition on health, environment, and climate change.

With financial support focused on dual health and environment outcomes, all of these agencies have tremendous potential to change people’s lives, considering their collective influence and their reach into countries and communities worldwide.
Conclusion

An incredible opportunity lies before us to change the trajectory of our planet’s health, and therefore, the health of people today and for generations to come. Taking bold steps now to think and act more holistically will be hard, but it will enable progress to overcome the systemic causes of the complex, interrelated health and environmental problems we face today.

Integrated problem solving and funding is not a question of “if,” but a question of “when.” Health and environment outcomes will not continue to improve if the majority of philanthropic efforts stay in silos. The community – philanthropies and practitioners alike – should consider every opportunity to bring new people to the table and help global decision makers, and the people that influence them, understand the links between health and environment and act on the urgent need to co-create tangible solutions.

By stepping out of our comfort zone to see the big picture, looking for near-term opportunities to increase investment and political will, and taking practical steps to improve collaboration, we can tip the scales towards sustaining human health and the health of our planet.
Appendix
Appendix 1 – Resources

Reports and articles addressing philanthropy across health and environment:

- Health Affairs, *Foundations Invest in Environmental Health* (2016)

Networks and Funder Collaborations:

- Bridge Collaborative
- Health and Environment Funders Networks
- Planetary Health Alliance

Resources for learning more about philanthropic donors:

- European Foundation Centre
- Foundation Center
  - Foundation Direct Online grants database
- Foundation Search
- Guidestar
- Inside Philanthropy
  - List of global health donors
  - List of conservation donors
  - List of climate change donors
- WINGS Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support

Cross-Sector Areas:

- Biodiversity and Health
  - Convention on Biological Diversity
- Climate Change and Health
  - Lancet Countdown: Tracking Progress on Health and Climate Change
  - World Health Organization Climate Change and Health Key Facts
- Environmental Health
  - National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
- One Health
  - One Health Commission
  - One Health Initiative
  - Centers for Disease Control
- Planetary Health
  - Planetary Health Alliance
  - Lancet Commission on Planetary Health
- Pollution and Health
  - Lancet Commission on Pollution and Health
- Population, Health and Environment
  - World Health Organization, Public Health, Environmental and Social Determinants of Health
  - Environmental Health Project: Population, Health and Environment
Appendix 2 – Methodology

Methodology
To gather the information shared in this report, we used the following parameters.

All donors listed in the report met two criteria: 1. A donor must invest in more than one country or region; 2. A donor must be philanthropic, not a corporate donor or investment fund.

To identify investments, we looked at a variety of information including websites, tax filings, and online databases. We also referenced conversations and insights gleaned from Panorama and Bridge Collaborative work, and surveyed members of the Bridge Collaborative for their experiences in seeking cross-sector funding.

To identify dialogue, we relied on Panorama’s and the Bridge Collaborative’s knowledge of donor groups, networks, and funders’ meetings that aim to advance cross-sector health and environment action. These included the Health and Environment Funders Network, Planetary Health Alliance, the Bridge Collaborative, and closed-door meetings, which we do not have permission to name.

Limitations
Data collection on philanthropic donors has limitations, so the following research caveats and limitations should be kept in mind when reviewing the report, considering ways to gather additional information, or taking next steps.

- The level of information made available by philanthropies varies greatly from donor to donor.
- Philanthropies do not always clearly categorize funding, so this landscape cannot definitively represent all philanthropic donors.
- The most current information on philanthropic investments is not always available as grants are reported in retrospect, and online information about philanthropies, such as websites and materials, may be outdated.
- In the U.S., non-profit organizations are required to file the 990 tax form and make them publicly available. However, charities in other parts of the world do not have this requirement, so less information is made public.
- Foundation Center, Inside Philanthropy, and the Health and Environment Funders Network are all based in the U.S., which may slant our final results to more heavily represent U.S.-based philanthropies.