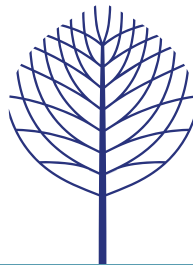
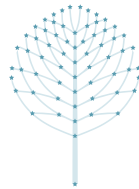




**Burkhard Gnärig**

What do I want to achieve with my support?

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What do I want to achieve with my support?

by **Burkhard Gnärig**

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## Imprint

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Many donors begin their involvement more or less on the spur of the moment – either they stumble on a project which appeals to them, or they are asked for support by friends. While the more morally quantifiable ‘calling’ is integral to philanthropic success, other aspects need to be considered. Among these are objective criteria for the productivity and potential success of your chosen organisation. Equally important are the entirely subjective criteria: Your personal values and goals, whether you want to go it alone or join forces with friends or family, potential family traditions and naturally, what type of and how many resources you want to dedicate. Philanthropy has the greatest chance of success if the project is supported not only financially by the donor – sympathy for the cause and a genuine desire to help are irreplaceable.

These subjective considerations, which should play a part in every charitable cause, form the crux of this brochure. Written by a leading expert on civil society organisations, this guide contains questions about one’s own values and goals, available resources, as

well as preferred launch-points, and comprises them within the question ‘What do I want to achieve with my support?’ While, from a strategic point-of-view, this question offers a good basis for effective philanthropy, it also provides the opportunity to question and reflect upon one’s own involvement. Throughout your philanthropic activities, these considerations can help to review and, if need be, to amend your work.

This brochure is part of an Active Philanthropy series of guides designed to help donors develop a systematic and strategic approach towards their charitable commitment. The focal points and questions of Burkhard Gnärig’s other publications span the topics: choosing a cause and a solid organisation, assessing the work performed by civil society organisations<sup>1</sup>, active participation in the supported project and measuring the impact of the donor’s contribution. These guides can be read both in one go, as well as used as reference, where a particular chapter’s advice is required.

As a non-profit forum, Active Philanthropy supports families and individuals in developing and applying a personal giving strategy. The forum offers a safe-haven for donors to exchange, learn and cooperate, as well as find practical advice for improving the concept of ‘donating’ as a whole. This is made possible through a variety of services: from useful publications, workshops and excursions to administrative support as well as individual consulting. Our activities are themselves made possible by similar means, with the charitable involvement of entrepreneurial families who support Active Philanthropy with words and deeds.

The Active Philanthropy ‘Toolbox’ contains publications concerning choice causes, such as ‘children’ or ‘climate change’, as well as methods and management-themes essential for effective giving. Donors are thereby given a leg-up toward a particular cause and the ability to find their niche – they are given practical advice and step-by-step instructions how to effectively donate. The guides contain one of two approaches – either accounts of successful donors and their stories and advice, or advice and pointers from experts from the respective areas.

Objectivity is fundamental to all our work, including our publications. Some examples and suggestions are drawn from the author’s experience. We would ask you to respect that the approaches and the selection of organisations presented are neither comprehensive, nor have they been subject to any assessment or rating by either Active Philanthropy or the author.

We are grateful to the author, Dr. Burkhard Gnärig, CEO of the Berlin Civil Society Center, for synthesising his 25 years of experience at the forefront of varying civil society organisations in this guide. We owe equal thanks to the donors who read the initial drafts. Without their constructive advice and criticisms the book would lack its current polish. We would be pleased and honoured if this guide were to be able to motivate donors to begin their own cause, or if it supports them in further optimising the realisation of their philanthropic dreams. For this is, we are convinced, the central element for successful cooperation in the charitable field and a start towards solving some of the world’s many problems.



Dr. Felicitas von Peter  
Managing Partner



Michael Alberg-Seberich  
Executive Partner

<sup>1</sup> Civil Society Organisation (CSO): sometimes also called NGO = Non-Governmental Organisation or simply Charity. We use Civil Society Organisation or CSO here because we believe that this is the most comprehensive description of the wide range of organisations that are working to provide services for the benefit of society.

# Welcome

Affluent people often start their philanthropic ‘career’ when friends ask them to support one of their own projects; or when, often by coincidence, they come across a project which needs support; or when a civil society organisation asks them for help and they like what the organisation does – or they do not want to say ‘no’. After some years of such random philanthropic activity many donors feel that they need a more strategic approach to their giving and think about how they can come up with a strategy which quantifies and defines what their engagement is all about.

This paper is the first in a series, which aims at helping philanthropists develop a systematic and strategic approach to their giving. If you are completely new to philanthropy or if you have decided to become more strategic in your approach you should start with this guide and, while you progress in your work, use the other guides to help you with each step in your personal development towards becoming an experienced philanthropist.

The aim of this paper is to guide you through the very first steps in your decision-making process, when you should be thinking about:

- the ethical context of your engagement: Ethics
- your role as a donor: Donor
- the specific resources you have available: Resources
- the specific approach you would like to take: Approach
- the overarching objective you want to attain: Objective
- and the cause you would like to serve: Cause

The sequence in which the different items appear does not indicate the relative importance of the different elements; it follows, rather, a step-by-step decision-making approach which should be appropriate in most cases. At the end of this paper you should be better able to express your own interests through your philanthropic activities, the way in which you want to be engaged and the cause, in very broad terms, you want to support.

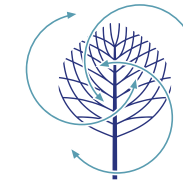
Succinct recommendations at the end of each chapter provide practical advice on how to approach the respective steps.

## Clarity · Openness · Fairness

‘Doing good’ is often seen as being a purely altruistic exercise; and, without any doubt, altruistic motives are an important driver for philanthropic activities. But there are other, fully legitimate motivations for philanthropic giving which are important to clarify and to take into account when making your decisions. Motives like developing your own ethical legacy, identifying a cause for all your family to rally behind, supporting projects which strengthen your company’s reputation, and many others are very legitimate drivers which do not diminish your generosity and altruism. It is very important that you are clear about the points which are of specific importance in your own giving. As the CEO of various Civil Society Organisations I have always encouraged donors to be clear about their motives because I knew that, if my organisation could be of optimal service to the donors, we would have a better chance of developing a long-term partnership.

This takes us to our second point: openness. Once you are clear about your own drivers you should seek ways to communicate these appropriately to the people and organisations you might want to partner with. All too often donors provide resources and receive nothing in return but some rather basic information about the supported activities. In these cases, donors have usually not been clear enough about their motives and Civil Society Organisations have been pleased with the low expectations of their donors. This kind of minimalistic approach often leads to donors becoming frustrated and eventually losing any interest in and stopping their support for the project. Being open about your interests and expectations at the very start is therefore crucial for the long-term success of a partnership.

Finally, fairness is a central element in the ethics of philanthropy. Being clear and open is part of being fair, but fairness also means being realistic in your expectations: a small donation coming with high expectations of services the partners should provide can overchallenge small organisations and increase overheads: the more an organisation has to spend on servicing you the less they can invest in the project you want to support. Being reliable in your support is another crucial element of fairness. Organisations working for ethical causes rarely have the large reserves which would grant them financial flexibility. Once you have pledged your support they should be able to rely on its arrival. All too often I have seen donors publicly pledging support which never materialised – with sometimes dramatic consequences for the activities concerned.



### Recommendations

**Be clear – to yourself in the first instance – about what motivates you in your philanthropy and what – besides the success of the activities you support – you want to achieve with your engagement.**

**Be open towards potential and existing partners about your expectations. Reach clear agreements on what you will commit and what you would like to receive in return.**

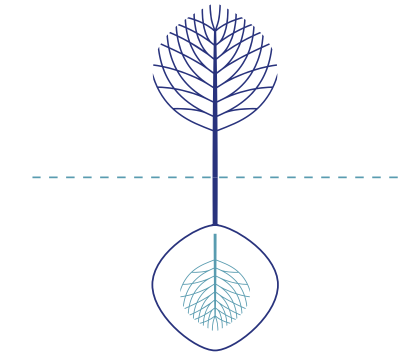
**Be fair in your expectations and reliable in your support.**

## Myself • my Family • my Company

Consciously or not, your personal background will very much determine the philanthropy you undertake. I suggest making the determination of your personal interests a conscientious exercise: What is your professional background? What are your hobbies? What is your social background? Are you a successful manager, wanting to help charitable activities by making your management know-how available? Or, on the contrary, are you looking for a project which takes you completely out of your usual fields of work allowing you to acquire new knowledge? Do your friends talk a lot about their philanthropic work and would you like to find an area in which to engage in order to contribute to the discussion? Do you want to leave a philanthropic legacy? These and many other motives are very legitimate reasons to engage in philanthropic activities. Identify your motives and they will help you identify your project.

Wealthy families often undertake philanthropic activities jointly: parents want to teach their children to share what they have or they want to raise their children's awareness about challenges other children are facing. Parents are increasingly seeing their children's or grandchildren's future threatened by global challenges, like climate change or poverty, and their goal is to help mitigate these threats. In other cases children have a say in the choice of philanthropic projects and may be specifically interested in animal welfare or environmental protection. Families with younger children may be better served with projects in their own home town allowing them to be more closely and more regularly involved in the project while families with teenagers who are about to 'discover the world' may be especially interested in activities overseas. Sometimes families want to develop joint activities different from their commercial ones, activities that can hold the family together in a different way. Family members who are not fully or not at all engaged in the family's business want to develop their own field of work and competency. Again, these are legitimate motives which should be taken into consideration when determining the area of philanthropic activities.

Corporate interests frequently play a part in affluent people's philanthropy. And, as long as philanthropy is not just a marketing gimmick in disguise, there is nothing wrong with this. It is understandable and legitimate that someone who made his wealth producing school equipment wants to support education projects, or that a family owning factories in South-East Asia wants to support projects against child labour in the region. Philanthropists who, through their business, have access to technology, know-how, production or transport capacities and services relevant to social or environmental causes, should consider putting these at the disposition of civil society organisations. If conducted (and communicated) in the right way this can lead to very attractive win-win situations and very stable long-term relationships.



### Recommendations

**Take sufficient time and put some effort into identifying your personal and/or your family's and/or your business's interests in your philanthropic endeavours. Having interests in addition to the one in the project's success is perfectly normal and nothing to be ashamed about. Those cases, in which 'doing good' is also serving your own personal interests are often more successful and more sustainable than cases of 'pure' altruism.**

**Philanthropic activities are well suited to 'keep the family together', motivate the children to care for others and provide them with experiences in fields they are interested in.**

**Business interests can play a positive role in your philanthropic activities: aim for win-win situations in which your engagement serves your project and is useful for your company. But avoid too close a link with your company's marketing.**

## Time • Money • Know-How • Contacts

The question of which resources you can ‘bring to the table’ is another determining factor in identifying the best area for you to engage in. But, whatever you can bring, your own time will be a crucial factor: if you want to do more than transferring a certain amount of money, if you want to understand and eventually influence projects you will have to make some of your own time available. And, depending on how much time you can give, you may be involved in more complex issues or simpler ones, in a more active way or rather as an observer. It is wise to identify how much time

you will have available for your engagement and whether that time will be available regularly in small portions or rather occasionally in larger chunks. The more time you have the more you can do besides giving money. But obviously, if you have a lot of time to give you will need a project which is able to use your time. When starting your decision making about a specific project you should be very clear what the contribution is you will be able to make. Consider drawing up a list of resources you can contribute before you contact a civil society organisation.

Money is the most sought-after resource for the large majority of projects, and only very few potential partners will be in a position to harness your non-financial support without receiving some money as well. The reason being, that any support you may provide, will, in some form or other, create overhead costs, which need to be covered somehow: your frequent or continued presence in a project may require work space or equipment which need to be paid for; staff you are advising or training may have to travel to meet you or they may have to be replaced by others doing their work while they are attending the training etc. If the main contribution you envisage is financial you will be highly welcome with

most potential partners and you will have a very broad choice of what you want to support. Money however is the resource which can most easily be misappropriated and you are well advised to take good precautions against wasting your resources. How to approach this will be discussed at a later stage; here it is sufficient to mention two basic rules: don’t transfer money before you have concluded your due diligence<sup>2</sup> and are confident that you can trust the recipient of your funds; don’t start with large amounts; undertake some pilot activities with limited resources first.

<sup>2</sup> Due diligence: Here, the in-depth assessment of the organisation you are partnering with. For further information, please consult the guide ‘How do I assess the work of Civil Society Organisations?’, by Burkhard Gnärig, Active Philanthropy, 2008



If you want to provide know-how as a key component of your philanthropic giving, your choice of potential projects will be very limited. The main reason for this limitation is that good projects are determined by the needs of the beneficiaries and not by the know-how of the donor. Projects which start from what the donor has to offer and not from the needs of the potential beneficiaries usually fail to deliver benefits to the people in need. So, if you want specifically to provide your own know-how you need to look for partners who need exactly what you have to offer. For example, if you are a lawyer with expert know-how in citizenship, right of residence and similar areas, your advice may be very helpful for organisations working with migrants and asylum seekers. If you are an experienced manager your contributions may be required in an organisation's internal restructuring. If you run a logistics company your company's support could be vital for organisations involved in emergency and rescue operations. As you can see, there are areas where professional support from a donor can be extremely useful and truly welcome. But, whatever the situation, you should look very carefully at what you are really able to provide and whether this really is meeting the needs of the people you want to support.

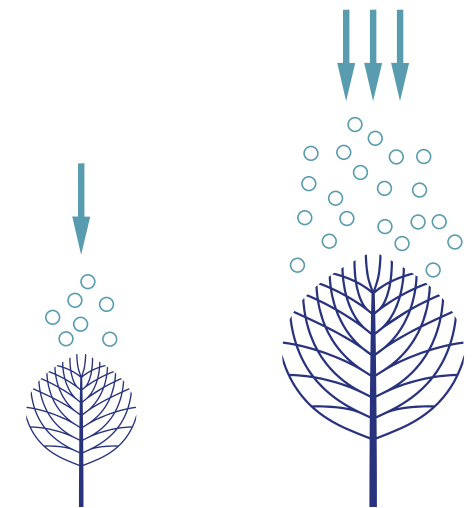
A crucial element, which is often urgently required but in short supply, is useful contacts. Linking those who run projects with those who can help with resourcing these is a very effective way to leave your mark and multiply what you can do for the project. For example: you alone may not be able to provide the funds the projects need, but you may know others who might be interested; you may not have the required know-how, but you may know somebody who does, etc. Bringing others on board as supporters for 'your' project is a very strategic approach which, at the same time, can be very rewarding: if you are joined by friends, colleagues or family in your support for a project, this can lead to all kinds of social connections and activities which are both fun and useful for yourself.

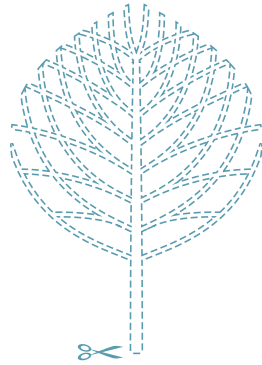
#### Recommendations

**If you have little time to spend on your philanthropic activities, opt for simple projects and focus on financial support. If you are able and willing to dedicate more time you can choose more complex activities with a broader range of inputs from your side.**

**Wanting to contribute mainly know-how significantly reduces the number of potential projects. Make sure you start from the needs of the beneficiaries and not from the know-how you have available.**

**Networking around and for projects is a very important – and often underexplored – field of engagement. Bringing in other philanthropists can be both useful and fun.**





## Establishing Infrastructure · Building Capacity · Creating New Tools or Techniques

The most basic and often most favoured approach to philanthropy is erecting physical infrastructure (so-called bricks-and-mortar projects). Building a school or a health post are – understandably – some of the most popular activities among donors: as a result of your inputs you can see and show a building with a plaque next to the entry commemorating your generosity. Establishing physical infrastructure could be valuable if you can bring technical expertise – as an architect, builder, engineer, project manager etc. But all too often the question of running activities in the building and of maintaining the building are approached in insufficient depth or ignored altogether. I have seen innumerable buildings being used only partly or not at all and gradually deteriorating because there was no money to keep activities going. So, there is nothing wrong with erecting physical infrastructure as long as the follow up has been fully secured before the building is started: who trains the health workers staffing the health post, who pays their salaries, who provides the medical infrastructure, who supplies the pharmacy, which business model secures the sustainable functioning of the health post, who provides managerial capacity and oversight, etc.?

These questions lead us to the capacity building approach: training teachers, nurses, community workers, and others can be very effective ways of supporting sustainable local development. Investing in people is a very rewarding approach, but it has its challenges as well: identifying the right people to train, keeping the newly qualified people at the project and securing the financial basis for their employment are some of the frequently observed challenges. From a donor's perspective, training people is a much less visible contribution to a project but it is often so much more important for the project's success than erecting just another building. As a rule of thumb it can be said that capacity building can usually be done without establishing new physical infrastructure but establishing new physical infrastructure usually requires some capacity building. Under certain circumstances, philanthropists who have the appropriate qualification – e.g. medical doctors, trained teachers etc. – may be able to contribute personally to capacity building with their own relevant experience.

Creating new tools or techniques can be another rewarding approach. I recently came across a project developing techniques which significantly reduce the need for timber in building construction. Located in a mostly deforested area of the Sahel, the project tries to provide local builders with alternatives to the traditional forms of building which require a significant quantity of – now very expensive – timber. Lowering the costs of building new houses the project helps poor people secure their own house at an affordable price. At the same time this technique helps preserve the few remaining trees. The developing world is full of examples of so-called 'appropriate technology' which helps local people improve their lives on the basis of approaches which are affordable, meet people's needs and can be locally applied and maintained. Given the immense challenges poor people around the world are facing as a consequence of urbanisation, deforestation, erosion of arable land and many other threatening factors, new and simple tools and techniques to improve their means of survival are urgently needed. While highly rewarding, developing these tools and techniques requires in-depth knowledge of both the local challenges and the relevant technologies and for each successful solution there are many examples of failed approaches.

### Recommendations

**Erecting physical infrastructure alone is rarely a good idea. In most cases very careful consideration of how to run and maintain the newly built structures is required. Don't start building before you are certain that 'your' building will be appropriately used and maintained in the medium and long term.**

**Capacity building is a core element of most projects. Building exactly the capacities needed at local level is crucial. You should only contribute with your own know-how if it fully meets the local requirements.**

**Supporting the development of appropriate solutions to local challenges requires a full understanding of both, the local needs and conditions and the available technology. If you can offer both you may be in a position to make a valuable personal contribution.**

<sup>3</sup> In other publications on philanthropy this is also called 'Theory of Change'.

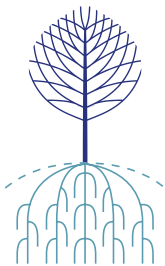
## Securing Survival in Emergencies · Achieving Sustainability · Empowering People · Exploring New Horizons

Due to human activity, our world is changing dramatically and survival is under threat in many places and in a growing number of situations. We are talking here about human survival in man-made or natural disasters or in permanent emergencies in failed states, war situations or in regions which can neither supply enough food nor other resources for people's survival. As both the number of emergencies and the number of threatened people continue to increase, the number of activities addressing short-term emergencies is on the increase as well. Together with its growing importance the sector has also developed much higher professional standards. Today emergency intervention is a field of work for highly qualified and often highly specialised professionals with strong 'can do' and 'hands on' attitudes. By focussing on short-term rescue operations they are increasingly successful in saving people in acute emergencies.

Donors with relevant know-how – e.g. in medicine, engineering, logistics or communication – may find an engagement in emergency operations highly rewarding. Having been involved in various emergencies myself, I was most impressed by the total focus on immediate results these operations have. Many of the challenges that longer-term programmes are facing are being pushed aside or cut straight through because time restraints do not allow for any deviation. While this is a very rewarding experience, from a strategic perspective our focus should be on preventing emergencies, which brings us to the issue of achieving sustainability.

Sustainability of a project means that the project is able to maintain itself without continued external help. For example: a health project generates enough income to continuously pay the salaries of the staff, secure the supply of medicine and maintain the infrastructure; a youth project produces its own young leaders so that it continues functioning at the expected level, benefitting one generation of young people after another etc. Helping a project to achieve sustainability is an ambitious but highly recommendable approach. It strengthens local organisations or communities to the point where they can address their challenges mainly with their own means and in their own responsibility. Supporting local sustainability is a valuable approach for philanthropists who are ready to support long-term projects and patient enough to continue their support until the people in the project have learned how to continue on their own.

Recently the concept of 'resilience' has gained increased attention in experts' discussions. While 'sustainability' means that the project is able to maintain itself in an established environment, 'resilience' refers to a project's continuity in a changing environment. Resilience is defined as 'the capability of a strained body to recover its size and shape after deformation caused especially by compressive stress' and as 'an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change'<sup>5</sup> Resilience of the health project given as an example above might mean that the project is able to reinvent itself and to continue functioning in a situation where the existing funding is no longer available or where a pandemic requires the project to focus on different diseases from the ones treated in the past.



<sup>4</sup> In this chapter we only look at overall objectives. Lower level objectives and goals are addressed in other guides as and when this is most appropriate.

<sup>5</sup> Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/resilience>

Empowering people means enabling people to take their own decisions and to implement their decisions based on resources available to them. Some fields of work are much better equipped for empowering the people than others. Emergency intervention, for example, which aims at providing food, shelter and medical support to a large number of people at very short notice is not well equipped to empower people, whilst projects aiming for sustainability depend on the pro-active participation of the project's potential beneficiaries. For too long North-South cooperation has treated its beneficiaries in a mostly paternalistic way, dropping goods and services on them which experts from the North judged as appropriate. The beneficiaries had to take what they were given otherwise they would not receive anything. Today the understanding that this has been one of the main reasons for failures of many different types of projects is common place.

Empowering people includes giving the recipients a firm and determining role in all decisions which are being taken for their benefit. This is a very demanding objective which requires in-depth understanding of the mechanisms of international cooperation and a high degree of humility on the part of donors who will have to transfer a sizeable part of their decision-making power to – often illiterate – people in the South. But, if we want to achieve significant and durable improvements in people's lives, empowering them is a condition 'sine qua non'.

Exploring new horizons – doing something new and untested – is an exciting and very challenging objective: one only very few philanthropists dare approach. Without doubt, trying something new entails many more risks than copying something tested and proven. Therefore you can see many donors supporting projects which have been undertaken over many years while very few are ready to try something new. Having started a completely new and – to date unique – project in an area vastly unexplored so far, I know from

my own experience how difficult it is to find support for activities never tried before. This lack of courage and vision is deplorable, especially as in a faster and faster changing environment the tested approaches of the past quickly lose their relevance and effectiveness and new ways of approaching old and new challenges are in urgent demand.

For philanthropists who are entrepreneurial in their approach, ready to take calculated risks and visionary enough to grasp challenges and opportunities as they arise, exploring new horizons should be a very exciting and potentially very rewarding objective to follow. Finding the people and organisations at the forefront of developments will not be easy. But once you have developed a basic idea of what the new challenges, the seekers and the visionaries are, you will find the approach, which is most rewarding for you.

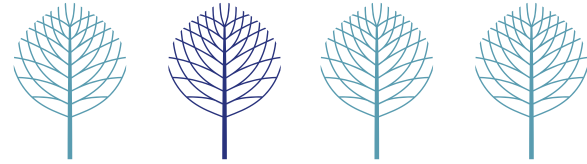
#### Recommendations

**Supporting projects aiming for sustainable solutions which will persist after your support ends is one of the key contributions any donor can make. Securing sustainability means leaving a legacy for many years to come.**

**Empowering people is a crucial requirement for the long-term existence of many projects. Aiming at this objective requires patience, humility and the acceptance of the fact that empowerment means learning on all sides.**

**Entrepreneurial philanthropists, ready to take risks, should support projects exploring new horizons. Given the many new and still uncharted challenges humanity is facing today, we need more vision and courage in exploring ways forward.**

## People • Environment • Animals • Culture



By now you should have designed your own path through the various stages of decision making, broadly identifying your priorities on the way to being an active and strategic philanthropist, so that we can approach the last step in this paper: identifying the cause you want to engage with. In very broad terms there are four areas you may want to consider: people, the environment, animals and culture. All major issues fall into one of these areas: health and education, human rights, development and humanitarian intervention all are people's issues while preserving ancient monuments, supporting the local theatre and providing scholarships to talented musicians are all in support of culture etc.

Supporting people who, either individually or as part of a larger group, are facing major challenges, is an obvious choice for all who want to show human solidarity and/or who are concerned about strengthening social justice in the world. Again, there are projects close to home such as the local shelter for the homeless, projects for women suffering from domestic violence or children being neglected and abused. There are projects supporting the integration of foreigners, caring for old people, providing homework support for children and many others. And there are activities focussing on the poorest people, the most abused and neglected children in countries far away from home. Whether you want to engage with health or education issues, for women or for children, in poverty eradication or human rights protection, at home or in Africa, the choice of challenges and partners in approaching these is enormous. Philanthropists wanting to involve the whole family may want to engage for children or address poverty issues. Those with corporate background and interests may look for specific areas e.g. in education, health or service provision, which are especially relevant for their company, or where they can contribute their company's resources as well etc.

Until a few years ago environmental protection was an area mostly reserved for a small number of experts and special interest groups. But today, as climate change becomes a widely acknowledged fact, environmental questions are accepted as key strategic challenges concerning the future of humanity. Observing the melting ice at both poles and looking at the increasing numbers of devastating storms, droughts and floods, and observing the mostly 'old style', environmentally unfriendly recipes with which we tackle the economic crisis makes the urgent need to act more than obvious. Changing our patterns of production and consumption, changing our system of material values, changing our very culture are requirements we can no longer ignore. These areas are ideally suited for an engagement which starts at one's own doorstep and with one's own behaviour. Philanthropists who want to take a lead in reducing environmental destruction and limiting climate change may do so by 'greening' the company they own, by changing their own consumption patterns and personal habits, by contributing to relevant projects and by communicating the need for changes. For those ready to become serious about environmental protection one can think of very convincing and very effective environmental approaches.

Caring for animals is a very popular cause with broad support throughout many societies. It includes projects in your immediate neighbourhood such as the local animal shelter, rescuing old donkeys and horses from the slaughterhouse and protecting cats from being used to test new medicines, and it goes as far as protecting polar bears or tigers. Children are especially interested in animal welfare and supporting projects in this area may be a good basis for an activity which includes the whole family.

Finally there is the support for culture, which, as public funds for this field are being progressively reduced, becomes increasingly essential for maintaining a rich and pluralistic cultural life. Supporting cultural activities will mostly take place in your own community: sponsoring the local theatre or opera, supporting a Jazz or Rock festival, sponsoring a local artist, financing an exhibition at the local museum and restoring a local monument are some of the many opportunities to be found. Local activities of this kind may also be well suited for family philanthropy and for support with a corporate background.

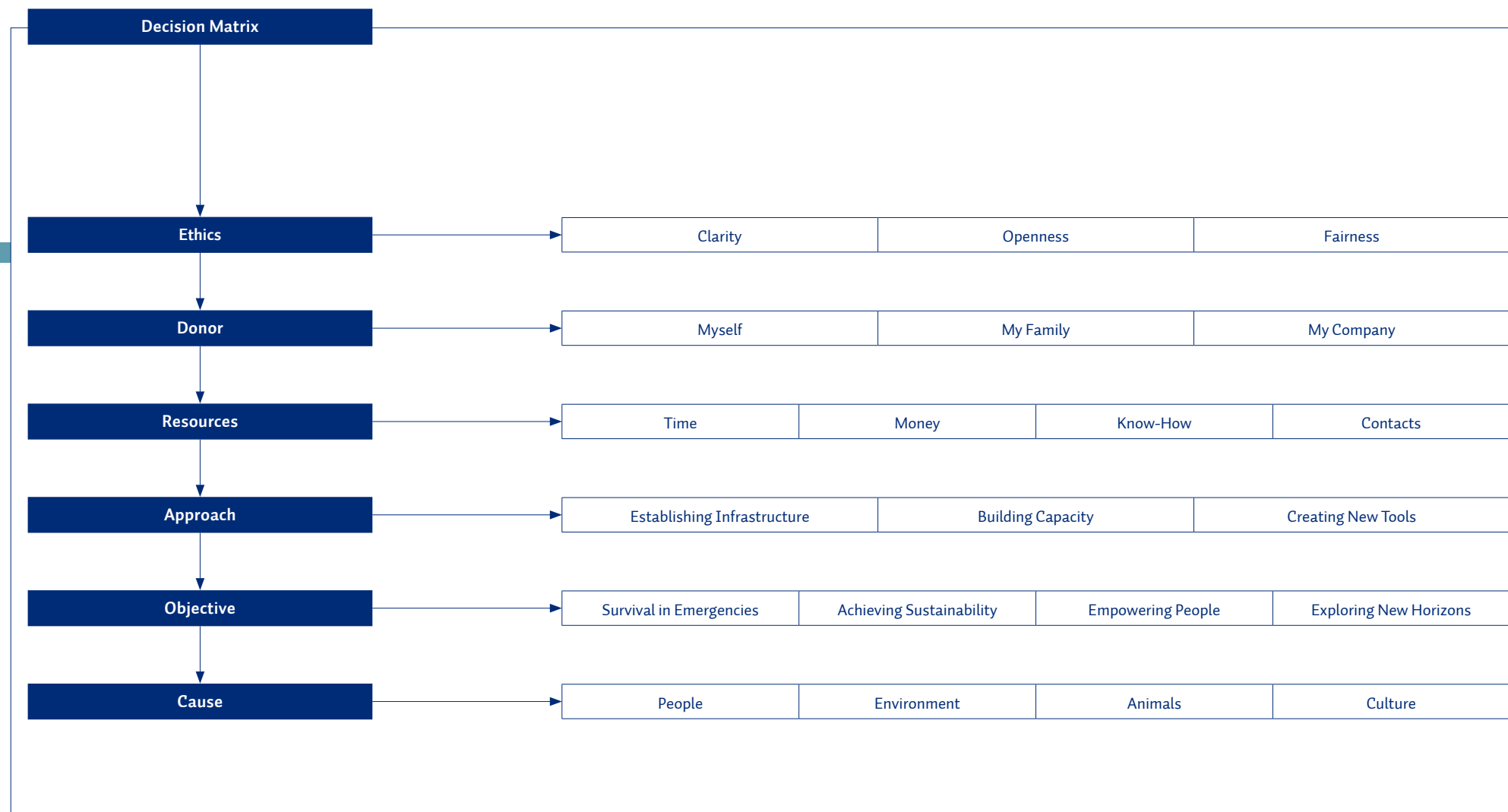
When thinking through these different options you may find it helpful to discuss with friends and family or to involve an expert to advise you in your considerations. Generally it makes sense to define your project area in relatively broad terms and then start looking for concrete projects and potential partners, a process which will probably help you to further clarify your own position. The guide 'How do I find the right Civil Society Organisation to support?' may be of assistance in this process. Another important step once you have identified projects that interest you, is the dialogue with the potential beneficiaries: what do they see as their main challenges? How would they like to approach these? Where do they hope to end up with their project? These and other questions should be helpful in further clarifying the contribution you may want to make. And, whatever your way ahead in identifying your philanthropic engagement, don't forget that you should enjoy delivering your contribution and that it can and should be fun to help.

#### Recommendations

**Families with children who want to engage in joint philanthropy should specifically consider engaging in children's projects or in activities for animal protection and welfare. Local cultural events may also be suitable.**

**Supporting environmental protection and/or managing climate change will be most effective and credible when combined with a holistic approach, especially when the donor is prepared to make some changes in his or her personal life and that of his/her family.**

**Philanthropists with corporate interests should look at sectors where their corporate contribution may be of a specific value, predominantly in activities which improve people's lives.**



### Other Resources

If you found this guide helpful for your own decision making you may wish to consult other texts from the same author:

How do I find the right Civil Society Organisation to support?

How do I assess the work of Civil Society Organisations?

How do I engage with the selected project?

How do I assess the effects of my contribution?

Notes:





ACTIVE PHILANTHROPY

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Dr. Burkhard Gnärig is Executive Director of the Berlin Civil Society Center. As head of the Center he provides management, governance and strategy support to large international civil society organisations. Before establishing the Center he held the positions of CEO of Save the Children, Greenpeace and terre des hommes. He has led both terre des hommes and Save the Children through a redefinition of purpose, reorganisation and significant growth. Burkhard has been a board member or chair of civil society organisations in Germany, Italy, Switzerland, India, Korea and Japan.