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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

International Development Exchange (IDEX) is a nonprofit grantmaking organization that provides long-term flexible funding for initiatives in the most under-resourced communities in six developing countries to empower women, build local economies, and care for the environment. IDEX's grants are augmented with capacity building support and brokering of resources. Currently, IDEX has partnerships with 19 organizations from two to more than 12 years; an additional seven are considered "catalyst" or new grantees.

IDEX's partnership approach to grantmaking turns the cultural paradigm of how international "aid" efforts have been historically conducted upside down by relying on the wisdom and strength of local people who are fighting for a better quality of life in their communities. IDEX's human rights grantmaking promotes an understanding of rights and responsibilities of local people to tackle powerlessness and exclusion. The underlying assumption of this type of human rights grantmaking is about relying on local leaders' insights, knowledge and actions that ultimately bring about lasting changes in attitudes and behaviors needed to shift cultures. Working in this way is not easy or simple. It is not the traditional welfare and charity grantmaking model but about fundamental social change.

The basic evaluation question we seek to answer in this study is **how effective has IDEX's partnership model been from the perspective of its partners?** Sixteen organizations that have been IDEX partners for more than two years in six countries responded to an online survey, which is an 84% response rate and nine partners participated in one-hour individual interviews.

# **KEY FINDINGS**

1. 100% OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS INDICATE THAT IN THEIR EXPERIENCE, IDEX STAFF ARE RESPECTFUL ALL OF THE TIME, AND ARE TRANSPARENT, AND ACT WITH INTEGRITY EITHER ALL OR MOST OF THE TIME.

IDEX receives high marks by its partners for walking its talk, showing genuine respect for partners, and being mindful of the power differential that is often a barrier to building a genuine relationship between a grantor and grantee. These principles are the benchmarks of an authentic relationship that add value to an otherwise transactional association between a funder and its grantees.

In philanthropy, a field that is often littered with self-important practices, IDEX stands out to its partners as a breath of fresh air. IDEX's partners appreciate IDEX staff for practicing its values of respect, open communication, responsiveness and integrity, which are indispensable core ingredients required for an authentic, two-way relationship.

2. EIGHTY-TWO PERCENT (82%) OF PARTNERS FIND IDEX'S PARTNERSHIP MODEL TO BE VERY OR MOSTLY EFFECTIVE. AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT ARE TO INCREASE IDEX'S FUNDING BASE AND NOT DELAY THE RELEASE OF COMMITTED FUNDS.

IDEX's partnership model wins high marks from partners for providing long-term flexible support that funds locally-driven solutions to address the greatest challenges. They appreciate the connections IDEX helps them to make - locally, regionally and especially globally. They welcome IDEX site visits as opportunities to deepen relationships. IDEX trusts its partners to be thoroughly knowledgeable about its local contexts, assets, cultures and needs. IDEX is able to discern effective local leadership and supports their vision for their communities.

Their top concern is for IDEX to grow its own financial success. Moving forward, it bodes well for IDEX to focus more of its efforts in cultivating existing and new donors and growing its grantmaking budget as well as its own endowment.

3. WITH IDEX'S SUPPORT, 75% OF PARTNERS REPORT MEETING ALL, OR MORE THAN HALF, OF THEIR GOALS TO ADDRESS LOCAL NEEDS.

Evidence of meeting local needs cited by respondents include strengthened local leadership, especially of women leaders; facilitated climate change and gender workshops for local youth; increased participation of women in program activities; diversification of food planted in local farms and home gardens; more community members being elected or selected to participate in Self-Help Groups (local organizing bodies) and/or local governments.

This is a significant finding for two reasons. Having 75% of its partners able to meet all, or over half of the self-defined objectives for partners working to address deeply entrenched socioeconomic issues, under any circumstances, is a major accomplishment. Second, IDEX's funding ranges between \$5000 to \$20,000 and are not large grants, but the grants are provided in a long-term basis for a minimal of three years, with some going on ten or more years, to support core operating costs, and can be used flexibly to meet the needs of the local partner. Partners are able to rely on this revenue source and leverage it with other funds to engage in the long-term work of transforming their communities.

4. EIGHTY-EIGHT PERCENT (88%) OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS STATED THEY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DEVELOP LOCAL, COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS, EITHER TOTALLY (7%), OR TO A GREAT EXTENT (81%) SINCE RECEIVING A GRANT FROM IDEX.

IDEX's long-term flexible support to be used by partners in ways they see fit is a highly extolled but unfortunately still rare philanthropic practice. For NGOs, attaining this type of long-term flexible support to sustain its programs is perhaps a most desired objective for social sector fundraising today. IDEX has much to share with other funders and donors why and how providing long-term flexible support leads to community-based solutions that last.

5. SCALING UP: IDEX PARTNERS HAVE BEEN THE MOST SUCCESSFUL IN INCREASING INFLUENCE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES, BUILDING A MORE EFFECTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SYSTEMS, AND EXPANDING GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE. PARTNERS HAVE BEEN LESS SUCCESSFUL IN INCREASING OR DIVERSIFYING OR STABILIZING FUNDING.

Survey respondents indicated that the most important aspects of scaling up were the number of people/families served, depth of services, and geographic area served. However, there are other perspectives about growing the work in depth, impact, and influence and not always about growing in size. There is a role for IDEX



to play in shifting the thinking and expanding the discourse about scaling up – growth is not necessarily the best or only indicator of success.

To address partners' desire to increase and/or diversify funding, IDEX ought to consider making more of a focused effort in helping partners develop deeper relationships with potential new funders. This work may include organizing and hosting regional gatherings of partners, and inviting other funders and their grantees; attending meetings with other funders at the invitation of partners; setting up meetings with other potential funders and/or donors and showcasing the work of partners at conferences and events.

# 6. VISIBILITY AND INFLUENCE ARE RISING FOR IDEX PARTNERS - 53% OF PARTNERS INDICATE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THEIR ORGANIZATION'S PROGRAMS HAS INCREASED GREATLY SINCE RECEIVING IDEX FUNDS.

One-third, or 33%, of partners have experienced a great or moderate increase in local contributions. This is particularly significant given the challenging local conditions in which partners work. When asked about local media coverage, almost half, or 47%, of IDEX partners have experienced great to moderate increase since receiving funding from IDEX. Sixty percent (60%) of IDEX partners experienced either great or moderate increase in their ability to influence decision-makers since receiving funding from IDEX.

IDEX could help harness the lessons learned by partners in increasing community influence by sponsoring regional gatherings where they come together to share stories, practices and successes.

# 7. IDEX PARTNERS HAVE DEVELOPED STRONGER ALLIANCES AND LINKAGES TO SOCIAL CHANGE ORGANIZATIONS AND MOVEMENTS IN THEIR LOCAL AREAS, REGIONS AND INTERNATIONALLY. PARTNERS ATTRIBUTE HAVING STRONGER INTERNATIONAL TIES MORE SO TO IDEX.

Sixty percent (60%) of IDEX partners agree their organizations are better linked with other social change organizations in their local areas.

Sixty percent (60%) of IDEX partners are more engaged with social change movements in their country or region. All respondents identified this as an important or very important priority.

Eighty-five percent (85%) of IDEX partners have developed stronger links with social change movements internationally. Almost all, or 93%, identified this as an important or very important priority area. More than half, or 60%, of respondents attribute this progress to IDEX funding.

Several partners who were interviewed mentioned that IDEX could help convene partner organizations currently and/or previously funded by IDEX to promote peer-to-peer learning in their countries or regions.

# 8. ON IDEX-HOSTED SITE VISITS TO THE U.S., PARTNERS BENEFITTED THE MOST FROM GAINING NEW INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE, AND MEETING OTHER GROUPS WORKING ON SIMILAR ISSUES.

Six of the 16, or 38%, of survey respondents indicated they had participated in a site visit to the U.S. hosted by IDEX. Partners found in-person meetings with allies to be the most helpful, followed by invitations to speak on panels at conferences. This is a practice that ought to continue since partners' experiences seem to suggest they derive great value from IDEX hosted site visits.



9. THREE-QUARTERS, OR 75%, OF IDEX PARTNERS THAT HAVE RECEIVED IDEX SUPPORT FOR THREE YEARS OR MORE SAY THEY CAN MEASURE A SIGNIFICANT AND SUBSTANTIVE POSITIVE CHANGE IN COMMUNITY MEMBERS' LEADERSHIP AND BEHAVIOR.

Examples respondents cited for positive change in community members' leadership and behavior include more women participating in community activities and volunteering to take on leadership positions; overall sanitation, care and hygiene; increased respect for and consultation with women; growing a wider varieties of crops; more health seeking behaviors, care of children and school enrollment.

10. WHEN ASKED, "WHAT MAKES IDEX DIFFERENT?" PARTNERS EMPHASIZED IDEX'S LACK OF EGO AND AGENDA, RESPECT FOR LOCALLY-DRIVEN SOLUTIONS, LONG-TERM, DEPENDABLE SUPPORT AND ABILITY TO BROKER AND CONNECT PARTNERS TO OTHER RESOURCES.

Findings from this learning and evaluation report **affirms IDEX's partnership model**. Its commitment to make long-term flexible grants to support locally-determined solutions is an extolled but still hard-to-find practice in philanthropy. IDEX's partners are able to succinctly articulate the progress they are making locally - empowering more women as leaders, enabling farmers to be sustainable agricultural innovators, and supporting community members as more confident human rights advocates. IDEX's resources are making a lasting difference in the lives of many.

# **CONCLUSION**

IDEX's niche, as perceived by its partners, is its commitment to providing long-term flexible support for locally-determined solutions. IDEX is further recognized for its lack of personal or organizational ego, for being humble and open and transparent. Partners have also made three things clear; partners want (1) IDEX to focus on growing its financial base; (2) IDEX to hold partners more accountable for self-defined results and (3) when IDEX faces a financial constraint, let partners know well in advance, and consider making smaller, incremental grants toward the total committed amount.

Moving forward, it bodes well for IDEX to focus on growing its financial base, growing its influence in the field of international philanthropy by becoming a more visible and vocal advocate for its partnership model and building the capacity of other funders to understand why and how it is practiced. IDEX is well placed to lead this advocacy effort that challenges the traditional welfare and charity approach in support of a transformative, human rights grantmaking model that stops short of nothing but fundamental social change.





I wouldn't measure IDEX in terms of the amount of money we receive from them, that's important, but not the most important. The most important is that [our organization] has relied on IDEX, to which we can go repeatedly for financial assistance and consulting on various local needs and solutions. That kind of partnership is a bit different from others, the kind where we have to apply for a new project in a competitive manner. IDEX's contribution has been relatively small looking at our overall project revenue, but it has been consistent and reliable, which is more important, compared to larger support but is less certain. That's what we cherish with our partnership with IDEX."

# A. INTRODUCTION

International Development Exchange (IDEX) is a nonprofit grantmaking organization that provides funds for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in the most under-resourced communities in six developing countries to empower women, build local economies, and care for the environment. IDEX provides each partner with long-term support grants from \$15,000 to \$20,000 per year, or one-year "catalyst" grants of \$5,000 to new grantees. IDEX's grants are augmented with capacity building support and brokering of resources – connections with other funders and donors, information and knowledge, and peer-to-peer convening opportunities. Currently, IDEX has partnerships with 26 organizations from two to more than 12 years; ten of which are considered "catalyst" partners.

The intention of this evaluation and learning project is to document the impact of IDEX's work over the last decade. In this report, we share findings about what make IDEX's strategies and approaches effective from the perspectives of its partners. By distilling these results, we hope to help IDEX refine its approach and growth.

# **B. CHANGING THE GRANTMAKING PARADIGM**

Fundamentally, IDEX's partnership approach to grantmaking turns the cultural paradigm of how international "aid" efforts have been historically conducted upside down by relying on the wisdom and strength of local people who are fighting for a better quality of life in their communities. Traditional international aid has been, and largely is still based on a framework that relies on outside experts with technical know-how coming in from the West, or Global North to help peoples of under-developed nations of the Global South minimize their deficits.

IDEX's human rights grantmaking, in contrast, promotes an understanding of rights and responsibilities of local people to tackle powerlessness and exclusion. The underlying assumptions of this type of human rights grantmaking is local people have the best understanding of the culture, history and conditions of their communities. They are in the best position to create solutions to address the root causes of poverty, injustice and inequity. IDEX's human rights grantmaking approach is part of a growing movement on the part of individual funders and grantmaking organizations in the Global North to incorporate a more democratic approach in their work. This kind of partnership between a funder and grantee requires a high level of patience, time, persistence and giving up of control on the part of the funder. It is not easy or simple. It is not the traditional welfare and charity grantmaking but about fundamental social change.

<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Funding News, IHRFG e-Newsletter, March 24, 2011

# **B1. CORE EVALUATION QUESTION**

This report represents the findings from the evaluation and learning relative to IDEX's grantmaking and partnership work. The purpose of the study is to explore and assess the impact that IDEX has had on its global partners over the past decade. In other words, the basic evaluation question we seek to answer is, **how effective has IDEX's partnership model been from the perspective of its partners?** It is expected that IDEX will use the evaluation findings to further refine its partnership model and goals and objectives.

# **B2.** REPORT METHODOLOGY

This evaluation is to refine and test IDEX's theory of change using partners' feedback. It is not a report to evaluate partners' progress on the ground. As the evaluation and learning partner, I have read two evaluation reports commissioned by IDEX that measure beneficiary-level outcome, and IDEX's own monitoring and evaluation mechanisms track the progress of each grant with each partner. This evaluation is based on IDEX's theory of change. We began the process by having an all-day session where IDEX internal stakeholders articulated its theory of change. The subsequent evaluation questions are linked to the short- and long-term outcomes that IDEX has articulated. (Please see IDEX's theory of change on page 30.)

- · Rating of the various values that are core to IDEX
- Rating of the effectiveness of IDEX's partnership model
- Impact on partners' capacity to address local needs
- · Effect on partners' ability to scale up
- · Impact on partners' capacity to link up with social change movements locally, regionally and internationally
- · Effect on community influence and
- · Comments, reflections and recommendations.

### The qualitative methods included:

- · Nine individual interviews lasting 40 to 60 minutes with partners in five of the six countries in which IDEX works
- · A review of all 2010 2011 partner workplans, budgets and grant summaries
- · A review of IDEX's monitoring and evaluation matrices and previous monitoring and evaluation reports
- An all-day theory of change session conducted with IDEX's staff, two board members and a partner representative
  to articulate its assumptions, strategies, and expected short- and long-term outcomes and
- · A series of conversations with IDEX program staff.

All of these evaluation activities took place between May and December 2011. The emphasis throughout is on raising IDEX partner voices, giving depth, nuance and meaning to the quantitative data. Where available, we compare results by characteristics of demographics of the group. For example, we compare impact by variables such as by organization geography, budget size, and how long they have been an IDEX partner. Only differences statistically significant at P < .05 are reported. In other words, only differences likely not due to chance are reported. The report includes a description of the sample, strengths and limitations of the study, an introduction to the assumptions that underlie IDEX's work and key findings of the analysis.



# **B3. EVALUATION STUDY PARTICIPANTS**

The online survey invitations were sent to all of IDEX's 19 organizations that have been IDEX partners for more than two years in six countries. Of this sample set, 16 responded to the online survey, an 84% response rate. Survey respondents were asked if they would be willing to participate in one-hour individual interviews. Nine were randomly selected from those who had indicated their willingness and were subsequently interviewed.

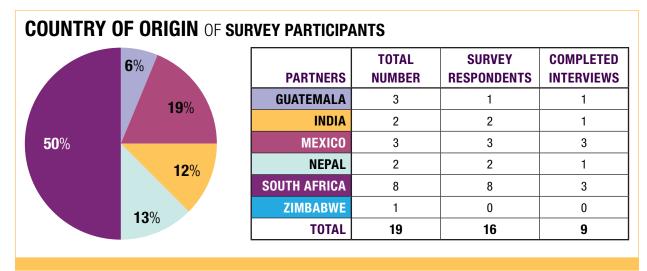


Image 1. Which country do you work in?

# **B4.** WHO RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY AND WERE INTERVIEWED?

Sixteen IDEX partners took the survey, which is an impressive 84% response rate for a survey of this type. As with all evaluation and learning processes that use self-reported data, there is always the concern of biased results favoring the more positive. However, a solid range of feedback, from critical to positive, was received through the survey and interviews; no reason for significant concern regarding sample bias seems to exist.

Of those who responded to the survey,

- Eight, or 50%, have been an IDEX partner for less than three years;
- Four, or 25%, have been an IDEX partner between three and six years;
- Two, or 12.5%, have been an IDEX partner between six and nine years; and,
- Two, or 12.5%, had been an IDEX partner for over 10 years.

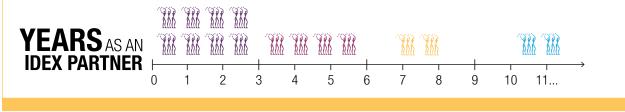


Image 2. How many years have you been an IDEX partner?

• Compared to IDEX's total roster of 19 partners, survey respondents are underrepresented by those who have been an IDEX partner for six to nine years (12.5% who took the survey vs. 16%) and over 10 years (12.5% who took the



survey vs. 21%).

- Of the nine IDEX partner representatives interviewed,
  - Four, or 44%, have been an IDEX partner for three years or less;
  - Two, or 22%, have been an IDEX partner between three and six years;
  - Two, or 22%, have been an IDEX partner between six and nine years; and
  - Two, or 22%, have been an IDEX partner for more than 10 years.

This sample is generally representative of IDEX partners in terms of geography and partnership years.

# **B5. LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTHS OF THE STUDY**

# IDEX'S GOAL IS TO END POVERTY FOR GOOD BY SUPPORTING LOCALLY-BASED SOLUTIONS

International development, by its nature and history, attempts to create the necessary capacity to bring about sustainable, long-term solutions to problems facing developing countries. IDEX's as well as its partners' goals are ambitious. The goal to end poverty necessarily requires taking a multi-disciplinary approach taking into consideration education, healthcare, gender equality, infrastructure, economics, human rights, environment and issues associated with these.

An evaluation of this level of ambitious and transformative work is a complex undertaking. By listening to the voices and perspectives of IDEX's partners, this evaluation honors the values by which IDEX lives, and respects local leaders who have the keenest understanding of what is needed in their communities.

### **SMALL SAMPLE SIZE**

Having 16 survey respondents constitutes a very small sample size for an evaluation study. However, this number represents a vast majority of IDEX's current partners and the findings can be seen as reliably representative of the entire group. While the findings come from a small number of organizations and cannot be generalized for the field of international philanthropy, IDEX's partners are clear about what works.

# RETROSPECTIVE

The current study is a retrospective. The indicators being assessed were not measured at baseline. The data collection on which this report is based relies heavily on the partners' individual opinions and self-reported assessment.

# THE USE OF SELF

As the evaluator and learning partner to IDEX, I am an active part of the learning process as observer, interviewer, data gatherer, participant in field settings, and interpreter. The use of self is embedded throughout this evaluation as I come to this project with my own strengths, world view, cultural biases, experience as an organizer and advocate, and limitations. I do not see myself as a detached "objective" analyzer of information nor is the purpose of this report to render judgment on what is going right and wrong.

This evaluation is done in the spirit of joint inquiry, learning and exploration.



# C. ALL RISE AND SELF RULE

There are two Gandhian philosophies that resonate when it comes to where IDEX works and how it does its work: *Sarvodaya*, or all rise, but the last person first, and *Gram Swarajya*, or village self rule.<sup>2</sup> "All rise but the last person first" resonates since virtually all of IDEX's partners work in the most underdeveloped and under-resourced regions in the world. In these areas, a disproportionate number of barriers to socioeconomic development and women's empowerment, such as drought, extreme poverty, vast imbalance in the social status between men and women and the lack of educational opportunities especially for girls and women are the norm. IDEX partners not only work in the most resource-scarce areas, they work to uplift those whose lives are the most oppressed in those regions: refugee women and their children displaced by war; farmers who lack access to water, irrigable land, education, and are often illiterate; and families including many who live with HIV/AIDS, to name but a few. IDEX has shown its dedication to the "last one rise first" - people on the very bottom of the global society must be uplifted first for fundamental social change to succeed.

The second philosophy of "village self rule" guides how IDEX does its work. IDEX believes in and practices human rights grantmaking, which is done by supporting grassroots solutions, honoring local leadership, relying on local knowledge, and being conscious of the inherent power differential between those who have the money and those who are seeking to get it. As such, IDEX's staff are committed to supporting people's and communities' self determination.



<sup>2</sup> GRAVIS, an IDEX partner in India. http://www.gravis.org.in



# D. KEY FINDINGS

1. 100% OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS INDICATE THAT IN THEIR EXPERIENCE, IDEX STAFF ARE RESPECTFUL ALL OF THE TIME, AND ARE TRANSPARENT, AND ACT WITH INTEGRITY EITHER ALL OR MOST OF THE TIME.

This is an important measure in the sense that IDEX believes in democratic grantmaking, which means equal involvement with partners in decisions; grants made without an imposed agenda; high level of freedom to allocate funds as partners see fit; and monitoring and evaluation carried out democratically. To that end, IDEX staff values, and are accountable to, being respectful; acting and communicating with clarity and transparency; treating partners with equity and integrity; and being responsive and flexible.

IDEX receives high marks by its partners for walking its talk, showing genuine respect for partners, and being mindful of the power differential that is often a barrier to building a genuine relationship between a grantor and grantee. THESE PRINCIPLES ARE THE BENCHMARKS OF AN AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIP THAT ADD VALUE TO AN OTHERWISE TRANSACTIONAL ASSOCIATION BETWEEN A FUNDER AND ITS GRANTEES.

- It is a good horizontal model, because it works in collaboration with its partners and does not impose its own points of view. It establishes personal and direct relationships and a proposal format and results that is both a bit strict but also flexible."
- IDEX has certainly been very helpful in the context of giving us a lot of freedom in implementation of our programs. They're not interfering, and always going back to what the local needs are. Our relationship has been very positive. In various tenures of IDEX's leaders and staff, they've kept that tradition. That certainly creates a positive relationship and atmosphere for organizations like ours to grow. Over the years, IDEX has grown, and has given us increased grants to a very good level. We need these resources; otherwise we can't work with communities. They've been helpful in providing technical support such as advanced technology, internet... that's all been a part of what IDEX has given us. They believe in strong communications with partners."



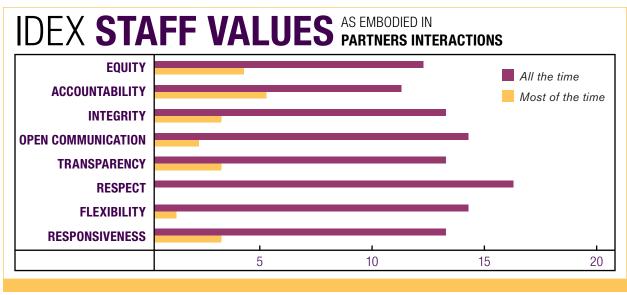


Image 3. Please indicate the degree to which IDEX staff embodies these values in their interaction with you.

# WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Too often we hear NGO leaders complain about funders being directive and enamored with their own "brilliant" ideas, needlessly meddling in what their grantees should be doing, providing what the funder deems important instead of what is needed on the ground, being fickle with its funding priorities every few years, and not providing sufficient core operating support that ensures an effective infrastructure that is behind every high performing program. Lamentably, many funders view its stable of grantees as an assortment of paid vendors, proxies, or superegos – to do or advocate for the things that the funder wishes it could do itself, or as vehicles through which a specific project or service is delivered in a particular way. These funder-grantee relationships can be viewed as one- or multiple-time transactions with a "we pay, you deliver" attitude that does not lend itself to long-term, genuine partnerships.

Given these highly sensitive dynamics between funders and grantees, it is understandable why IDEX's partners appreciate IDEX staff for practicing its values of respect, open communication, responsiveness and integrity, which are indispensable core ingredients required for an authentic, two-way relationship. IDEX is to be commended for getting such high marks from its partners for practicing its values with consistency.

[We appreciate] the engaged, supportive, interested approach [of the staff] – we're 'working together' and 'working off the same page' attitude."

IDEX supported initiatives that we designed according to the needs of our target community. They did not impose their views on us and we're allowed to work with needs that we present to IDEX."

However, IDEX partners have shared a number of constructive feedback for IDEX as well, including the need for it to grow its resources; set a higher bar on holding partners accountable to stated objectives; do not say it's about "democratic" grantmaking if it does not allow partners to have an equal say when funds are released later than promised. We will cover each of these in later sections of the report.

Over time, it would be refreshing to see the philanthropic sector reach more of a balance that includes more long-term funding for community organizing, grassroots leadership development and empowerment, culture shifts, self-determination of people and communities and fundamental transformation that relies on building grassroots power.



# 2. EIGHTY-TWO PERCENT (82%) OF PARTNERS FIND IDEX'S PARTNERSHIP MODEL TO BE VERY OR MOSTLY EFFECTIVE.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT ARE TO INCREASE IDEX'S FUNDING BASE AND NOT DELAY THE RELEASE OF COMMITTED FUNDS.

Thirty-eight percent (38%) of survey respondents find IDEX's partnership model to be very effective, and 44% find it to be mostly effective with room for some strengthening. This is a solid affirmation for IDEX's partnership model that holds itself accountable to (1) supporting grassroots solution free from agendas imposed by governments, corporations, or funding agencies; (2) supporting local knowledge and leadership that encourages sustainable community solutions; and (3) employing a participatory model of international philanthropy that addresses the power imbalance between the donor and grantee. IDEX's partnership model is premised on providing long-term flexible support to support locally-determined solutions.

- IDEX can continue its model that communities determine their own projects according to their needs. IDEX is flexible. They respect what we propose. We get the proposals from the base and IDEX provides the space."
  - We believe that IDEX should continue devoting itself to the partnership model, a difficult task given the corporate model used worldwide."
- Nothing comes to mind [in terms of improvement]. They are finding their own financial situation difficult. One would like to have a strong IDEX that is financially secure so they can continue their work. They've got our support. The way they operate I can't think of anything that they can improve upon."

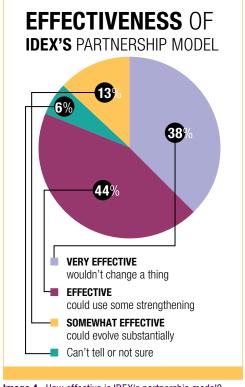


Image 4. How effective is IDEX's partnership model?





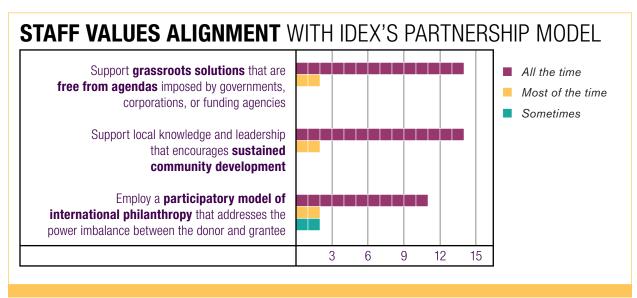


Image 5. To what extent have you observed and experienced IDEX staff behavior align with IDEX values?

From survey responses and interviews, study participants had one resounding feedback for IDEX, which is the desire for IDEX to grow financially. They value IDEX's long term, flexible support. They appreciate the connections IDEX helps them to make - locally, regionally and globally. They welcome IDEX site visits as opportunities to deepen relationships. Their top concern is for IDEX to grow its own financial success.

My view is that IDEX's financial sustainability is most important — everything else seems to be in place."

IDEX partnership model is a great and effective model. It will suffer if either partner cannot honor their part of the agreement; it allows for discrepancies in supporting the people on the ground."

Existing model is good but would be good if the committed funds are released on time. This would increase the organization's trust at the local level."

IDEX's partnership model wins high marks for its combination of providing long-term flexible support that funds locally-driven solutions to address the greatest challenges. IDEX trusts its partners to be thoroughly knowledgeable about its local contexts, assets, cultures and needs. IDEX is able to discern effective local leadership and supports their vision for their communities. Moving forward, it bodes well for IDEX to focus more of its efforts in cultivating existing and new donors and growing its grantmaking budget as well as its own endowment.





# 3. WITH IDEX'S SUPPORT, 75% OF PARTNERS REPORT MEETING ALL, OR MORE THAN HALF, OF THEIR GOALS TO ADDRESS LOCAL NEEDS.

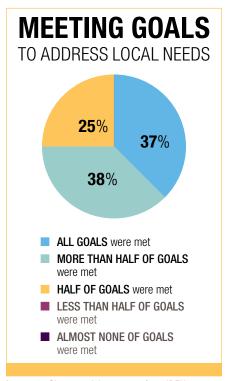
Since receiving an IDEX grant, respondents are making solid and explicit progress toward addressing local needs. Survey respondents were almost evenly split between stating that *all of their goals* to improve local conditions were met (37.5%), *more than half* of their goals were met (37.5%); and 25% stated *half* of their goals were met.

Changing the community itself is a complex process; it's not easy. We can't say we've met all the targets, but not because of IDEX. Sometimes the beneficiaries where we work, the women, they have their own priorities, they cannot gather their group, and get opposed. Local conditions dictate what we can do. Sometimes we cannot meet our goals all the time. But it's not because of IDEX."

Evidence of meeting local needs cited by respondents include strengthened local leadership, especially of women leaders; facilitated climate change and gender workshops for local youth; increased participation of women in program activities; diversification of food planted in local farms and home gardens; more community members being elected or selected to participate in Self-Help Groups (local governing bodies) and/or local governments.

Using IDEX's funds, we have developed grassroots local institutions in the form of cooperatives that have in turn, generated income, improved agriculture and food security, allowed children to attend school, increased economic opportunities for women, and overall improved the general livelihood of the members and communities involved in our economic empowerment models."

This is a significant finding for two reasons. Having 75% of its partners able to meet all, or over half of the self-defined objectives for partners working to address deeply entrenched socioeconomic issues, under any circumstances, is a major



**Image 6.** Since receiving a grant from IDEX, to what extent has your organization met your goals to improve local conditions?

accomplishment. Second, IDEX's funding ranges between \$15,000 to \$20,000 and are not large grants, but the grants are provided in a long-term basis for a minimal of three years, with some going on ten or more years, to support core operating costs, and can be used flexibly to meet the needs of the local partner. Partners are able to rely on this revenue source, leverage it with other funds to engage in the long-term work of transforming their communities.

Providing institutional support, according to Grantmakers Without Borders best practices for international philanthropy is the most strategic support needed to strengthen civil society. "We need money for rent, communications, office equipment, occasional travel and salaries. Without adequate salaries we can neither professionalize our activities nor be held accountable to professional standards of work."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> International Grantmaking Resource Packet, Funding a World that Works for Everyone, Grantmakers Without Borders





IDEX obviously has learned this. There's a lot IDEX and its partners can help other funders understand why and how this practice works.

The partner organizations we were working with would have liked us to take more girls from the communities they work in because there are many more girls who need to be exposed to a world of dreams and opportunity. During the camp, the girls opened up for the first time about issues that they had never spoken about before. The one girl from Soweto opened up for the first time about her rape which had occurred over 10 years ago but her family doesn't speak about it. Basically, the techcamps/workshops brought girls from disadvantaged communities to a central, safe space where they speak about issues that affect them in their communities and households."

Through IDEX's funding of our community leadership program using the self help group [SHG] model leadership has emerged that is now well represented in existing local structures such as ward committees, (e.g. the Ward Committee is chaired by an SHG member), making the self-help groups and their Community Champions an influential force in their wider communities."

[We] have been able to achieve half of our goal of educating 10,000 women on HIV/AIDS through education and awareness campaigns."

There are three things that come to mind - firstly that the shortfall in funding for the community facilitators was filled by IDEX funding - it meant that there was not a period when the facilitators were not receiving their monthly stipend; secondly that a community seed ritual and exchange was funded through IDEX - this was a wonderful affirmative learning event, and thirdly that IDEX funding supports core costs, so that [our] organization can continue to deliver."

Sixty-four percent (64%) of survey respondents attributed their progress in addressing local needs either totally (14%) or to a great extent (50%) to IDEX funding.

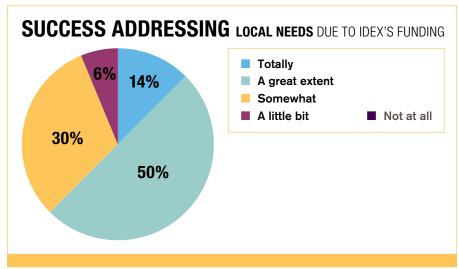


Image 7. To what extent would you attribute this sucess to IDEX's funding?

Respondents from Latin America rated their capacity to address local needs and attributed their results to IDEX slightly higher when compared to other partners.





# 4. EIGHTY-EIGHT PERCENT (88%) OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS STATED THEY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DEVELOP LOCAL, COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS, EITHER TOTALLY (7%), OR TO A GREAT EXTENT (81%) SINCE RECEIVING A GRANT FROM IDEX.

One outcome articulated in IDEX's theory of change is for partners to succeed in developing local, community-based solutions to the issues they face. IDEX partners, working in concert with community members, identify the highest priority issues and develop the solutions to those issues according to local contexts and conditions. Study respondents cited examples of women's empowerment in their service areas through dissemination of health information and services, improved physical safety, psychological care, food security, and access to loans or capital.

Grantmakers Without Borders lists 19 best practices for international grantmaking, the first of which is **LOCAL CONTROL** – "the greater the degree of control the grantee has over priority setting planning, management and a host of other performance issues, the more likely the organization is to become effective." This, and other cited best international grantmaking practices, is one that IDEX is well-versed in and can be regarded as an early innovator and seasoned practitioner.

# IDEX's partners' work, among other things, help transform lives, one at a time.

While there is no shared definition of community-based solutions among the 16 partner organizations that responded to the survey, one theme reverberates in common. Community-based solutions are exemplified one life at a time. The story of Sharswati in the sideline box is an example of an IDEX partner's work that has enabled the full personal transformation of one woman from living in abject poverty to more economic empowerment and self-sufficiency.

Funding received through IDEX was used to establish a support group in the Township [where we work]. It was brought to our attention that women in Sasolburg had little or no access to information, care and support after testing HIV positive. This lead to high suicide levels, high levels of gender based violence and high levels of transmission from mother to child. Using IDEX funds, we were able to organize a series of trainings as well as established a support group for women within the area. We also intend to carry out an education campaign for community leaders, health workers and other relevant stakeholders to ensure community support for the support group."



# A STORY OF PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION AS A RESULT OF IDEX PARTNER'S WORK

Sharswati is a 33 year old motivator of [our organization] and Manager of [name] Saving and Credit Cooperative in Hatia, Makwanpur. She was the eldest among four siblings. She had to face many problems in her childhood due to the poor financial situation. The land they owned was not sufficient to meet the needs to feed the family for an entire year, consequently she started working when she was 10 years old.

Her parents took an extra job working on farms. She used to look after her brothers and sisters and assist her mother in household work. When she was 11, she started selling fire wood by carrying it from the forest, carrying fire wood was a tedious job, it was a two hour walk to the nearest market. It was mandatory for her to sell firewood in order to make a living.

She got married at the age of 15 immediately after completing S.L.C examination mostly because of the poor financial condition of the family. The financial condition of her husband's house was better compared to her maternal home. They had sufficient land but without working on the land it was difficult to survive. So she...

[continued on next page]



4 International Grantmaking Resource Packet, Funding a World that Works for Everyone, Grantmakers Without Borders



### [continued from previous page]

...along with her husband and in-laws worked in the fields. After two years of her marriage, at the age of 17 she gave birth to her first son. Today she has 3 children - two sons and one daughter. Her economic condition improved by mobilizing savings and credit through cooperatives through [our organization's] program.

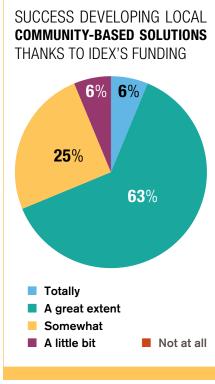
She took loan several times for children's education. She was able to buy a piece of land as well. At the initial stage she took Rs. 1,500 and Rs. 3,000 for admitting her children in the boarding school and at present she has taken Rs. 60,000 from the cooperative to buy land. She has participated in the training on incense making, institutional development, saving, credit and cooperative education, account keeping, cooperative visioning and management, business plan, leadership development, provision on women's legal right, sustainable agriculture, gender and governance trainings provided by [our organization]. Along with this she participated in the train-the-trainers training on cooperative provided by District Cooperative Office of Makwanpur.

After going through the training programs, she is qualified to train other members of the cooperatives on agriculture and cooperative education. She shares that one of the informal group in her VDC was saving from last 8 years but that group was not paying interest to the members, but when her cooperative paid interest on savings to the members, the women raised voice against the non interest paying group. Finally the group provided interest to the members. According to her working with the community is not easy. There are different people with different thoughts, some are supportive and some are not. At this point she has gained confidence and can proudly walk in the village without feeling inferior for being a woman. In the past she had to beg for 10 rupees but today she has access to 100,000 through the cooperative. She is taking loan and paying back with the income earned from the cooperative.

Five local groups comprised of women and men have achieved self-sustainability by managing credits for micro projects. They now work with their own funds, which were initially financed by IDEX for the first group activities. Families and groups established poultry and swine farms that are now sustainable and have facilitated employment for their relatives and neighbors and have improved their income. Agriculture and human health promoters have been strengthened and now serve in their community of origin, supported by the proposals presented to and worked with IDEX."

Sixty-nine percent (69%) of respondents attribute their progress to develop local, community-based solutions totally (6%) or to a great extent (63%) to IDEX.

As with the previous finding, IDEX provides long-term flexible support to be used by partners in ways they see fit is a highly extolled but unfortunately still rare philanthropic practice. For NGOs, attaining this type of long-term flexible support to sustain its programs is perhaps a most desired objective for social sector fundraising today. IDEX has much to share with other funders and donors why and how providing long-term flexible support leads to community-based solutions that last.



**Image 8.** To what extent would you attribute this sucess to IDEX's funding?





5. SCALING UP: IDEX PARTNERS HAVE BEEN THE MOST SUCCESSFUL IN INCREASING INFLUENCE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES, BUILDING A MORE EFFECTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SYSTEMS, AND EXPANDING GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE. PARTNERS HAVE BEEN LESS SUCCESSFUL IN INCREASING OR DIVERSIFYING OR STABILIZING FUNDING.

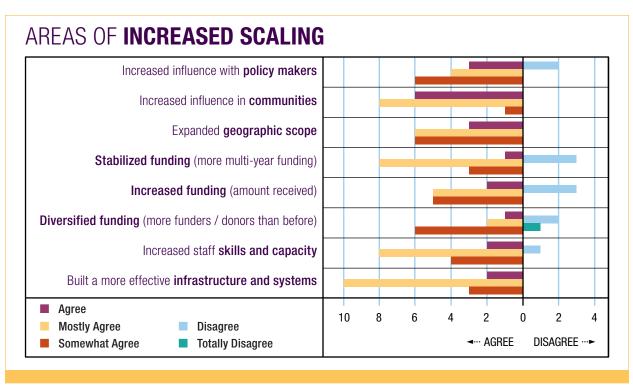


Image 9. Please indicate the degree to which your organization has been able to scale up in the following ways.

Helping partners scale up is another core tenet of IDEX's theory of change. Respondents report that their organizations have been the most successful at scaling up their initiatives through increasing their influence in communities, building more effective organizational infrastructure and systems, expanding their geographic scope, followed by increasing staff skills and capacity.

Meaningful change in communities requires individuals to act as role models and catalysts for change and with IDEX's support we have been able to focus on nurturing and mentoring locally-based leaders who can play this role in their communities. They support their self-help groups which in turn builds the critical mass of support needed to shift communities."





The case management fund contribution by IDEX allowed us to expand our geographic scope. IDEX funds [also] assisted us in employing an advocacy officer who supported the organization in increasing its influence with policy makers."

Respondents indicated that the most important aspects of scaling up were the number of people/families served, depth of services, and geographic area served. However, there are other perspectives about growing the work and not always about growing in size but in depth, impact, and influence.

Thinking about scaling up in the future, we think as a small organization. We don't think about becoming a huge organization. We plant seeds that can serve as an example to other people. We work with 10 communities that have about 30 groups — these can be the examples. We teach them to value their work, how to work in harmony with nature. We confront the problem of migration by creating solutions so that they don't have to leave and can work in their own place. Now we are working in a zone we have not worked on before. There is interest there. This is how we see impact and interest.

People have economic needs and others offer credit. But we want to be different. We don't want 300-400 groups. We want the ones who are interested in something else: ecology, leadership development, democracy. When our impact increases, they will work with other people which are not part of the groups. They will then have inspiration. Leadership development is important so that they can influence the community, even those who don't work with us."

Without a doubt there are different perspectives about the importance of, and even the definition of scaling up. There is a role for IDEX to play in shifting the thinking and expanding the discourse about scaling up – growth is not necessarily the best or only indicator of success.

In the recent global economic downturn, one of the most challenging aspects of scaling up for NGOs is diversifying funding. Diversifying funding is defined as increasing the number of funder and/or donors, and stabilizing funding by having more multi-year funding. In a recent blog by Center for Effective Philanthropy, it cites the most frequent assistance beyond the grant request foundation staff receives from grantees is to help raise money from other sources. "The typical foundation goes beyond simply suggesting other funders for only 12 percent of its grantees. However, when foundations do more, either by introducing grantees to other funders or attending meetings with other funders, it makes a difference. Grantees rate the impact of this assistance securing funding higher than grantees not receiving these activities." 5

In light of this need, IDEX ought to consider making more of a focused effort in helping partners develop deeper relationships with potential new funders. This work may include organizing and hosting regional gatherings of partners, and inviting other funders and their grantees; attending meetings with other funders at the invitation of partners; setting up meetings with other potential funders and/or donors and showcasing the work of partners at conferences and events.

Our community coverage increased from 22 communities to 75 communities in the Agriculture Program, and 135 communities in the Health Program. We got closer to communities and community groups. We coordinated with municipal authorities and local organizations with similar purposes."

We supported communities in the South Zone: built a gathering space, kitchen, dry toilet, cellar, water collection tank, pump for pumping water, and for training of agroecology promoters."



<sup>5</sup> http://www.effectivephilanthropy.org/blog/tag/fundergrantee-relationships/

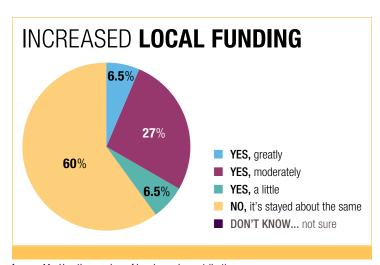
# 6. VISIBILITY AND INFLUENCE ARE RISING FOR IDEX PARTNERS - 53% OF PARTNERS INDICATE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THEIR ORGANIZATION'S PROGRAMS HAS INCREASED GREATLY SINCE RECEIVING

More than half of IDEX partners indicate that the number of people interested in participating in their organizations' programs has increased greatly since receiving funding from IDEX.

[There are now] many more requests for [our organization's] support; in one of [our] project sites, an agricultural extension officer from the provincial department of Agriculture has been assigned to learn and work with this group and an "Agro-Ecology learning ward" has been identified by the Department to try out agro-ecological approaches [that we've developed]."

**IDEX FUNDS.** 

[Our organization] has been able to expand its influence beyond meeting in support groups and with clinics but to also conducting home based care and also meeting with heads of schools, community police departments as well as church leaders."



**Image 11.** Has the number of local people contributing money or donations of food, materials, services to your organization increased since receiving funding from IDEX?

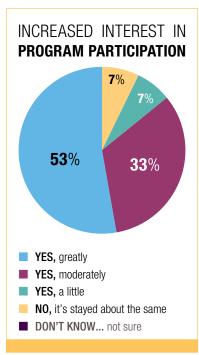


Image 10. Has the number of people interested in participating in your organization's programs increased since receiving funding from IDEX?

As IDEX partners' visibility and influence have grown, the number of local people contributing money or donations of food, material, or services has mostly stayed about the same (60%). The good news, however, is that one-third, or 33%, of partners have experienced a great or moderate increase in local contributions. This is particularly significant given the challenging local conditions in which partners work.





When asked about local media coverage, almost half, or 47%, of IDEX partners have experienced great to moderate increase since receiving funding from IDEX.

With the training and exposure, the village women are becoming more confident in expressing their concerns in front of policymakers and media as they realize that their voices hold national significance. Many more women in the villages are nominated to the decision-making committees. As a result of [our organization's] media exposure, I received a nomination from the development committee of the government."

Sixty percent (60%) of IDEX partners experienced either great or moderate increase in their ability to influence decision-makers since receiving funding from IDEX.

The women group members approached with Village Development Committee (VDC), Women Development Office for more support to them. Many women represented in the local committees such as school management committee, water supply users' group, etc. The women nowadays are being consulted for any community development activities."

When asked to rate their organization's influence in their communities since receiving funds from IDEX:

- 7 91% of respondents agree or mostly agree that more community members are participating in local advocacy;
- 7 82% agree or mostly agree that more community members are taking an active role in improving their and their families' livelihoods;
- 7 82% agree or mostly agree that more community members are aware of some of the challenges women in particular face, such as domestic violence, discrimination in pay, etc.;
- 7 73% agree or mostly agree that more community members are aware of their human rights;

- 7 73% agree or mostly agree that more community members are aware of the ways in which women and men may not have equal opportunities;
- 7 64% agree or mostly agree that more women have leadership roles within the community;
- 7 64% agree or mostly agree that more community members have the capacity and tools to improve livelihood conditions of others in the community;
- 7 56% agree or mostly agree that more women have leadership roles at home; and,
- 7 55% agree or mostly agree that more community members are leading self-sufficient lives.

In all of these measures of visibility and influence, IDEX partners in Latin America self-rated lower when compared to other survey respondents.

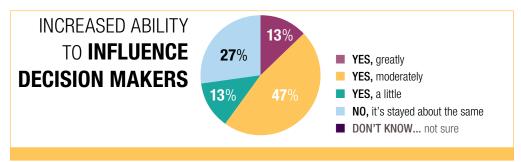


Image 12. Has your organization's ability to influence decision makers increased since receiving funding from IDEX?



There is a lot to celebrate here. Community members seem to be engaging in local advocacy efforts, taking an active part to bring about better conditions for themselves and others, and have a broader awareness of the unequal social status of women.

The frequency and interaction with like minded people, public representatives, government officials, banks, Panchayats and other like minded non-governmental organizations has increased."

More people visit us from other communities who had never visited. The municipality sends us visiting organizations so they can coordinate with [us]. [Our organization] has acquired a better reputation in our work."

Respondents indicate that since receiving funding from IDEX, more women have leadership roles within the community, and more community members are taking an active role in improving their and their family members' livelihoods.

The women groups organized various campaigns and awareness activities at the local level. Due to sustainable agriculture and market linkage, the women are economically and socially empowered. Their status in the family and community has changed. Many of them [now] have decision-making roles in the family."

When asked about how IDEX's funding has contributed to this progress, partners responded by saying:

IDEX's support of our work means improved livelihoods for community members as well as opportunities for community members to participate in training such as marketing and leadership training."

The funding resources provided by IDEX have enabled us to organized regular meetings, trainings, exposures and workshops to enhance the vision and capacity of the people."

...the presentation to South African parliament on the Domestic Violence Act and how legislation, while fantastic on paper, does not translate sufficiently when implemented. IDEX funds have supported our organization in covering some administrative costs which enabled us to pay for operational expenses while undertaking project work."

IDEX funding has helped us scale up our education and awareness campaigns as well as training of community members to support women living with HIV/AIDS."

While policy advocacy is not an explicit stated theory of change for IDEX, its practice of providing long-term, flexible support has enabled partners' work on the ground to persist over the long haul. IDEX partners, on the whole, are reportedly gaining a higher community profile and more influence over decision makers. This higher community profile is most likely due to a combination of factors: effective work with constituents, solid track record, leadership with a high degree of interpersonal skills, credibility earned through time and performance, and strategic communications that deliver focused messages to target audiences.

IDEX could help harness the lessons learned by partners in increasing community influence by sponsoring regional gatherings where they come together to share stories, practices and successes.



7. IDEX PARTNERS HAVE DEVELOPED STRONGER ALLIANCES AND LINKAGESTO SOCIAL CHANGE ORGANIZATIONS AND MOVEMENTS IN THEIR LOCAL AREAS, REGIONS AND INTERNATIONALLY. PARTNERS ATTRIBUTE HAVING STRONGER INTERNATIONAL TIES MORE SO TO IDEX.

Sixty percent (60%) of IDEX partners agree their organizations are better linked with other social change organizations in their local areas.

Nearly all respondents, or 93%, identified this goal as an important or very important priority. Thirty three percent (33%) attribute this progress to a great extent to IDEX funding.

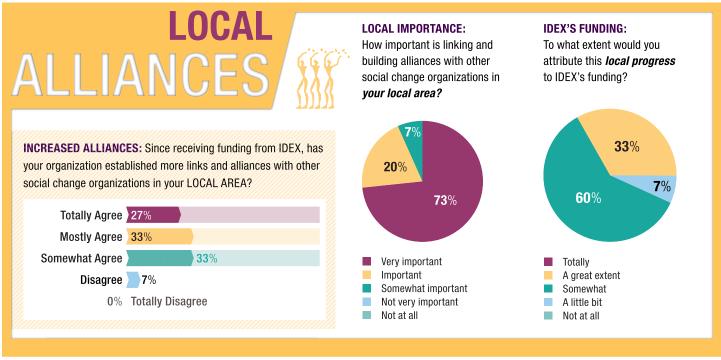


Image 13. Local Alliances have increased since receiving IDEX funding.



Sixty percent (60%) of IDEX partners are more engaged with social change movements in their country or region. All respondents identified this as an important or very important priority. Forty-six percent (46%) attribute this progress totally or to a great extent to IDEX funding.

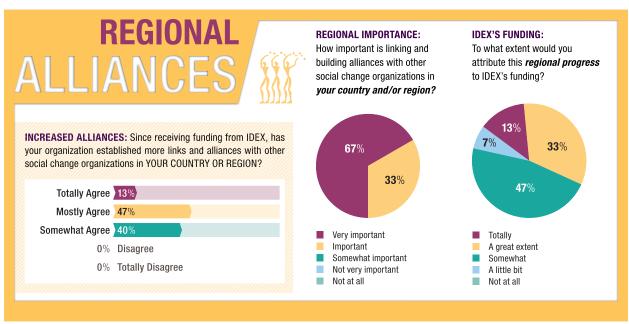


Image 14. Regional Allianceshave increased since receiving IDEX funding.

**Eighty-five percent (85%) of IDEX partners have developed stronger links with social change movements internationally.** Almost all, or 93%, identified this as an important or very important priority area. More than half, or 60%, of respondents attribute this progress to IDEX funding.

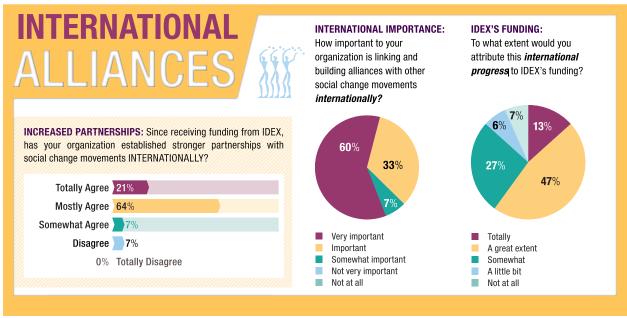


Image 15. International Allianceshave increased since receiving IDEX funding.

IDEX partners attribute having stronger international ties to IDEX.

LINKS AND ALLIANCES	STRONGER TIES	IMPORTANT To US	ATTRIBUTABLE To IDEX
LOCAL	60%	93%	40%
REGIONAL	60%	100%	46%
INTERNATIONAL	85%	93%	60%

This data shows IDEX partners value having stronger linkages and alliances with social change organizations and movements locally, regionally and internationally equally. They have developed stronger ties across the board and most notably with organizations outside of their countries internationally; comparatively, they attribute their success to IDEX more directly. This is to be expected since IDEX has hosted a number of site visits for partners in the global setting, and partners seem highly adept at forming stronger linkages with social change organizations and movements in their local areas and regionally.

IDEX partners made a number of suggestions about how IDEX can help them link with others and build alliances.

- [IDEX can help] by sharing information about other social change movements [that are] partnering with IDEX."
  - IDEX can... provide opportunities [for us] to share our experiences and to learn about other organizations' experiences."
    - IDEX could give grants jointly to organizations that they think could work together."
- Promote meetings with other partners local, national and international. Allocate resources to support this process from the grassroots, to share experiences of social transformation and struggle."

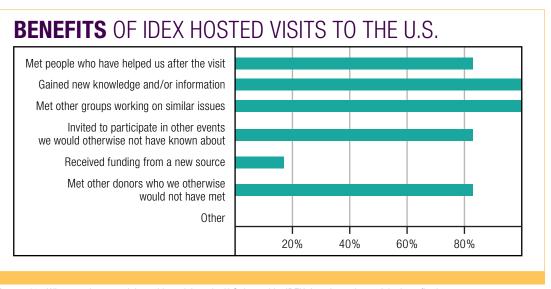
Several partners who were interviewed mentioned that IDEX could help convene partner organizations currently and/or previously funded by IDEX to promote peer-to-peer learning in their countries or regions. This seems to be a past practice that partners have missed.





# 8. ON IDEX-HOSTED SITE VISITS TO THE U.S., PARTNERS BENEFITTED THE MOST FROM GAINING NEW INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE, AND MEETING OTHER GROUPS WORKING ON SIMILAR ISSUES.

Six of the 16, or 38%, of survey respondents indicated they had participated in a site visit to the U.S. hosted by IDEX. Gaining new knowledge and information and meeting other groups working on similar issues benefitted them the most from these visits, followed by participating in events and meeting donors they otherwise would not have known about or met.



**Image 16.** When you have participated in a visit to the U.S. hosted by IDEX, how have those visits benefited your organization?

Partners found in-person meetings with allies to be the most helpful, followed by invitations to speak on panels at conferences. This is a practice that ought to continue since partners' experiences seem to suggest they derive great value from IDEX hosted site visits.





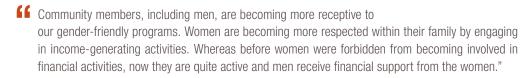
# 9. THREE-QUARTERS, OR 75%, OF IDEX PARTNERS THAT HAVE RECEIVED IDEX SUPPORT FOR THREE YEARS OR MORE SAY THEY CAN MEASURE A SIGNIFICANT AND SUBSTANTIVE POSITIVE CHANGE IN COMMUNITY MEMBERS' LEADERSHIP AND BEHAVIOR.

Just as many, or 78%, indicate community members' behaviors are changing for the better. Most, or 75%, indicate that IDEX funding has contributed to a great extent to this progress. Examples of behavior changes for the better are represented in the following quotes:

- [We know] by noting the increased number of community members especially women participating in community activities and volunteering to take up leadership positions."
  - [We have seen] improvements in many aspects such as overall sanitation, care and hygiene, hand washing, respect and consultation to the women, growing varieties of crops, health seeking behaviors, care of children, school enrollment, etc."
- The women group formed five years before nowadays has their own community building, they can lead for their rights. They advocate for women's rights and education to children. Women's participation in decision making and inclusion in local CBOs/NGOs increased."



**Image 18.** To what extent do you think community members' behaviors are changing for the better?



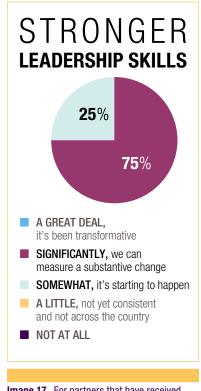
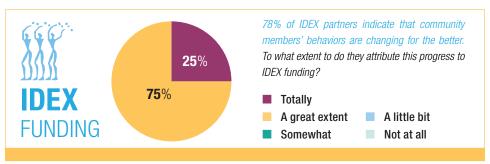


Image 17. For partners that have received three or more years of IDEX funding, to what extent do you think community members see themselves as leaders with stronger leadership skills?





[We know community members see themselves as leaders] because the established projects are operational and are providing a service to the community. Qualified persons are serving the community. The majority of people that have used credit have developed productive projects that have helped their families. Women's groups have been empowered and several of them now work alone. We have developed credit and savings."



**Image 19.** To what extent would you attribute progress in community members' leadership and behavior to IDEX's funding?

In two communities, various groups engage in organic farming and encourage others. They are already sensitized to practices of inclusion, respect for differences and women's rights and participation and they are involved a lot more. Women are in roles of leadership."



**10.** WHEN ASKED, **"WHAT MAKES IDEX DIFFERENT?"** PARTNERS EMPHASIZED IDEX'S LACK OF EGO AND AGENDA, RESPECT FOR LOCALLY-DRIVEN SOLUTIONS, LONG-TERM, DEPENDABLE SUPPORT AND ABILITY TO BROKER AND CONNECT PARTNERS TO OTHER RESOURCES.

Partners were very consistent in their feedback, both positive and negative, for IDEX. On the positive end, IDEX is commended for its lack of organizational or personal egos and agendas, and a profound level of respect for local leadership and locally-determined solutions. **IDEX's flexible support is seen as more important than the funding size and partners expressed a resounding desire to see IDEX's financial base expand.** IDEX's staff is seen as genuine, personable, and "would be greatly missed as a friend" if they left IDEX.

The following quotes lifts up the voices of IDEX partners and express what they appreciate about IDEX's practices.

IDEX works at a grassroots level continuously. Other funders will disappear within one or two years. IDEX, however, continues to play an active role in the formation and delivery of our programs."

Flexibility in the use of funds; strong and responsive communication; respect for local needs and values; and focus on remote areas and needs."

The great thing about IDEX is they are always concerned about the org, not like other funders who give them the money and hear back from them a year later. IDEX is interested in checking in on progress, and how else they can help, even if they don't have money to give us, but recommend to us other funding possibilities or other affiliates... they're always looking out for the best of the organizations. That's what makes them really different from other organizations."

I have had discussions with other funders, when you work in a specific environment, and you know what your community wants, and your vision, mission, and you know exactly how to go about how to do that... funders will come and say you have to do other things to get our funding. With IDEX, it's very different. I don't have to change my vision to get their money. IDEX said this is a good project to support, and I can ask them how can you support me, and this is what I want to do, I don't have to twist my project to fit your criteria."

Areas for improvement were also identified. **Most partners indicated more funding was needed from IDEX and hoped for IDEX's expansion.** Several respondents stated that funding was released later than anticipated in 2011, which was problematic for their programs and risked losing the trust of community members. Others suggested IDEX be stricter in holding partners accountable for stated results. Partners had the most to say about the delayed release of promised funds.

The economic hard times have affected us. Can small funds be disbursed instead of the entire amount committed? This would help to relieve some of the needs. Is there another way to administer the disbursement of funds?"





- If you see this cloud, I would appreciate advanced warning, if there's going to be a problem. It's important for donors to communicate their situation, and timeliness of the grant, and not surprise us. Communicate with us in advance. If there's a problem this year, because of this and that... then I can figure out how to keep my program open during that period. IDEX is very far away from us, but we constantly communicate by email, and would appreciate advanced notice from my donor."
  - IDEX values a participatory model of international philanthropy that addresses the imbalance of power between donor and recipient. If this is real, the decision to send late the agreed or spoken about funds should not be done in a unilateral manner. We understand the economic crisis may be happening, but how to prevent the partner from being affected? Why not talk about things with enough time and try to find a solution together?"
    - The partnership model can be more effective by delivering what is proposed, for both parties to be able to reach agreements in a dialogue."

Partners also commented on the reporting requirements and suggested that IDEX hold partners more accountable for results.

- The evaluation forms/ reports could be less repetitive. They are pretty simple but some questions are repetitive in the evaluations. Also, for future proposals, we don't need to fill out all the sections since IDEX already has our organizational information."
  - If IDEX has proposed to track these outcomes in a work plan for x time, it needs to follow up to see what achievements and impact it has had."
- Another thing that can be measured is to see if the funds have been applied correctly, if a lot was accomplished with little or vice versa, and why. If among its partners there is a relationship of exchange, if there is a synergy between the partners and to what extent IDEX is contributing to this."
- Freedom does not mean that IDEX should not ask for work plans. That is important to improve our work. IDEX is very open when we have to change our plans. In general, it's positive."
- **IDEX** can help connecting us to other organizations in the country which are doing great work. They have done it in the past to exchange ideas and resources. Sometimes we do not know other organizations and others outside the country have databases and know other organizations that work in the same field and have successful experiences."

Partners also had suggestions for IDEX regarding making site visits, connecting partners to each other and those they may not already know, and making funding decisions based on needs, not time.

- IDEX has this concept of time-based funding assistance... the relationship may remain active, but funding is allocated to a certain number of years. Please look at that, keeping geography and local needs in view. Not necessarily link financial assistance to years, but community needs."
- The visits have been very important. Not everything can be shared by writing. It's important to come see us, meet the people. Communications have been very good."

IDEX's niche, as recognized by its partners, is its commitment to providing long-term flexible support for locally-determined solutions. IDEX is further recognized for its lack of personal or organizational ego, for being humble and open and transparent. Partners have also made three things clear; partners want (1) IDEX to focus on growing its financial base; (2) IDEX to hold partners more accountable for self-defined results and (3) when IDEX faces a financial constraint, let partners know well in advance, and consider making smaller, incremental grants toward the total committed amount.



# E. CONCLUSION

Findings from this learning and evaluation report **affirms IDEX's partnership model** from the perspectives of its partners. IDEX's commitment to make long-term flexible grants to support locally-determined solutions is an extolled but still hard-to-find practice in philanthropy. Its funds have clearly contributed to a wide variety of programs that have brought about community change in the six countries in which it has built solid partnerships. IDEX's partners are able to succinctly articulate the progress they are making locally - empowering more women as leaders, enabling farmers as sustainable agricultural innovators, and supporting community members as more confident human rights advocates. IDEX's resources are making a lasting difference in the lives of many.

Through this study, IDEX's partners have affirmed that they experience **IDEX staff embodying the values it holds dear** – treating partners as equals, respecting local leadership and solutions, and paying attention to the inherent power differences between a funder and fund recipient. The ability to practice what one says they value is a most critical element of integrity; IDEX is to be applauded for its ability to truthfully and authentically be what it wants to see in the world.

IDEX's niche, as perceived by its partners, is its commitment to providing **long-term flexible support for locally-determined solutions.** IDEX is recognized for its lack of personal or organizational ego, for being humble and open and transparent. Partners have also made three things clear; partners want (1) IDEX to focus on growing its financial base; (2) IDEX to hold partners more accountable for self-defined results and (3) when IDEX faces a financial constraint, let partners know well in advance, and consider making smaller, incremental grants toward the total committed amount.

Moving forward, it bodes well for IDEX to **focus on growing its financial base**, growing its influence in the field of international philanthropy by **being a more visible and vocal advocate for its partnership model and building the capacity of other funders** to understand why and how it is practiced. IDEX is well placed to lead this advocacy effort that challenges the traditional welfare and charity grantmaking approach in support of a transformative, human rights grantmaking model that stops short of nothing but fundamental social change.



# F. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommendations for IDEX to consider:

- Reward and acknowledge its staff for being humble, authentic, and transparent. In philanthropy, a field too often littered with self-importance, IDEX stands out as a decidedly different funder that takes partnership building to a next level. IDEX's partners appreciate IDEX staff for practicing its values of respect, open communications, responsiveness and integrity, which are indispensable core ingredients required for having an authentic, two-way relationship. Practicing the values it professes is one of IDEX's most valued hallmarks. This serves IDEX well as these values have become one of its most recognized brand promises.
- CARRY ON WITH ITS PARTNERSHIP MODEL of providing longterm flexible support that funds locally-determined solutions to address the greatest community needs. IDEX trusts its partners to be thoroughly knowledgeable about its local contexts, assets, cultures and challenges. It is able to discern effective local leadership and supports their vision for their communities. Two things IDEX can consider doing more of, one is to hold partners more accountable to their own stated objectives and results, and second is to define "long-term." IDEX may consider ten or fifteen years as long-term.
- 3. They are unequivocal in commending IDEX for its lack of organizational or personal egos and for a profound level of respect for local leadership and locally-determined solutions. IDEX's flexible support is seen as more important than the funding size, however, most partners expressed an explicit desire to see IDEX's financial base expand.

- IF AND WHEN COMMITTED FUNDS ARE DELAYED, LET PARTNERS KNOW WELL IN ADVANCE. That way, partners can make plans to fulfill their community commitments. IDEX can also consider making smaller, incremental grants toward completing the total committed grant amount.
- Make a focused effort in helping partners to develop deeper relationships with other funders.

  BEING A FUNDER MAKES IDEX ONE OF THE BEST FUNDRAISERS FOR ITS PARTNERS. If IDEX believes a partner organization is effective, help them bring in other funding. This work may include organizing and hosting regional gatherings of partners, and inviting other funders and their grantees; attending meetings with other funders at the invitation of partners and/or setting up meetings with other potential funders and/or donors.

- Using Grantmakers Without Borders' best practices in international philanthropy as a guide, supporting local control and enabling grantee partners to have the final say "over priority-setting, planning, management and a host of other performance issues, the more likely the organization is to become effective." IDEX excels in supporting local control, is well-versed in its practice, and can be seen as an early innovator and seasoned practitioner in this regard. IDEX could help advance the field by WRITING AND SPEAKING MORE ABOUT ITS PRACTICE AND HELPING BUILD OTHER FUNDERS' CAPACITY IN THIS AREA.
- Providing institutional support is another Grantmakers Without Borders' best practices for international philanthropy as the most strategic support needed to strengthen civil society. "We need money for rent, communications, office equipment, occasional travel and salaries. Without adequate salaries we can neither professionalize our activities nor be held accountable to professional standards of work."7 IDEX is a veteran in this practice. Again, there is much IDEX and its partners can help other funders understand why and how providing long-term flexible institutional support works. This is an opportunity for IDEX TO BECOME A MORE VOCAL AND VIS-IBLE ADVOCATE AND BUILD A POSSE. OR COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS, WITH-IN THE FIELD OF PHILANTHROPY.

- Currently, there is much discussion about scaling up effective social sector practices. However, there are different perspectives about the importance of, and even the definition of scaling up. There is a role for IDEX to play in SHIFTING THE THINKING AND EXPANDING THE DISCOURSE ABOUT SCALING UP growth is not the best or only indicator of success.
- IDEX could help harness the lessons learned by partners by sponsoring regional gatherings where they come together to share stories, practices and successes. These PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING EXCHANGES help build capacity, reduce the feelings of isolation, and can serve as strategic thinking sessions to advance social movements.
- Continue to HOST SITE VISITS FOR PART-NERS IN GLOBAL SETTINGS. Make use of in-person meetings with allies that are deemed to be the most helpful to partners, and inviting partners to speak on panels at conferences.
- REACH OUT TO AND ASSESS IDEX'S IN-FLUENCE ON DONORS. How has IDEX influenced their giving culture? How else might they engage with IDEX partners? What are their passions and ideas on increasing their connections to IDEX? Learning more about IDEX's influence on donor behavior will help IDEX fully appreciate the effect it is having on donor practices.

<sup>6</sup> International Grantmaking Resource Packet, Funding a World that Works for Everyone, Grantmakers Without Borders

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

# **MIDEX THEORY OF CHANGE**

# INPUTS

- 870 current funders and
- 26 current CBO partners
- \$1 million budget
- 25 year track record
- members who are passionate Dedicated staff and board about the work

# **ASSUMPTIONS**

- including small farmers, indigenous peoples, women, rural communities, and slum Existing economic and political systems exclude and marginalize populations
- local skills and capacities, to link and mobilize resources, and to create/innovate Community-based organizations (CBOs) organizations have the power to build new systems to end poverty.
- their power as leaders and game changers; philanthropy to adopt more egalitarian practices and to balance learning between global south and north that engenders IDEX exists to shift power dynamics - individuals and communities to step into hopefulness; raise resources and facilitate connections. IDEX adds value by leveraging and increasing access to resources, acting as a multiplier effect.

# STRATEGIES

- Identify innovative, locally-based organizations and engage in partnerships over 3-10 years with flexible financial resources (\$5-\$20K/year)
- Broker and/or provide capacity building support
- Broker connections to other funding sources
- between leaders and movements globally Intentionally build strong ties
- Advocate for grassroots-led development, local leadership and initiative
- Work to inform/influence practices of funders and donors

Civil society partners have INCREASED CAPACITY TO ADDRESS LOCAL NEEDS by:

- and develop indigenous solutions 1. Meeting self-defined goals to alleviate local conditions
- at all levels of the community 2. Developing local leadership
- Civil society partners have INCREASED CAPACITY TO SCALE UP due to:
- 3. Expanding and/or improving services 4. Expanding geographically 1. having more effective infrastructure, systems, skills and capacity

2. Having more diversified and stable

- 5. Increasing influence in communities and with policy makers
- Partners' VISIBILITY AND INFLUENCE are increasing. Increased alignment with other community groups. Joint strategies are pursued

Donors, foundations and affinity groups: change in ATTITUDES, BEHAVIORS,

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE TO MOBILIZE RESOURCES for grassroots groups and community-driven solutions.

# **LONG - TERM**

Community members see themselves as leaders

INTERIM

and have STRONGER LEADERSHIP SKILLS to improve their own and others' livelihoods.

- manage natural resources, own economic inputs, and create viable livelihoods within communities. sustained. GREATER LEVELS OF CAPACITY to Measurable changes in communities are
- capacity to provide specific services and to hold Stronger, more SUSTAINABLE AND EFFECTIVE governments accountable for delivery of public COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS have the

Community partners SERVE MORE PEOPLE AND influence and visibility to strengthen civil society.

FAMILIES. Expanded programs yield greater

Community partners link increasingly WITH OTHER SOCIAL CHANGE MOVEMENTS LOCALLY, REGIONALLY AND GLOBALLY.

Behaviors of community members are changing

for greater self-reliance.

- more equitable. SOCIAL CHANGE MOVEMENTS Policies that impact resource distribution are ARE MORE CONNECTED and vibrant.
- INCREASED PHILANTHROPIC DOLLARS channeled to grassroots groups through culturally competent practices.

PHILANTHROPIC ADVOCATES and partners with

More ACCESSIBLE, EFFECTIVE

joint initiatives.

global southern grassroots groups.

Stronger policy influences, especially through

# VISION

Robust civil societies in the global south, with effective CBOs that are building new, alternative systems & holding governments accountable to ensure systems work for the excluded and marginalized.

working in alliance regionally to impact national policy change, and mobilize broad CBOs are grounded in local communities, public participation globally for justice.

Philanthropy works to serve community-led initiatives through forging learning partnerships with grassroots groups.



BIOGRAPHY
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Shiree Teng has worked in the social sector for 30 years as a social and racial justice champion – as a front line organizer, network facilitator, capacity builder, grantmaker, and evaluator and learning partner. Shiree brings to her work a lifelong commitment to social change and a belief in the potential of groups of people coming together to create powerful solutions to entrenched social issues.

Shiree has an intimate understanding of the issues and challenges related to working in communities of color and dynamics of class, culture and power. Having spent her life in the social sector, Shiree comes to the work from the perspective of building capacity. For the past thirteen years, Shiree has worked as a Program Officer and Consultant to Packard Foundation's Organizational Effectiveness program. She is a member of the national consultant pool for Building Capacity for Organizational Resilience and Renewal (BCORR) supported by a collaborative group of social justice funders. She is a member of the RoadMap consulting team, with roots in French American Charitable Trust's Management Assistance Program. She has worked in the Mid-South Delta region and Benton Harbor, Michigan with Omowale Satterwhite, founder of NCDI. Shiree was the lead evaluator for Rockwood Leadership Institute, and continues to support RLI's learning and reflection process. Shiree leads by serving, using a culturally-based approach and relying on core competencies of strategic thinking, listening and synthesizing, connecting, and mobilizing action.

Shiree chairs the board of Ella Baker Center for Human Rights. In 2008, Shiree received the Alliance of Nonprofit Management Capacity Builder of the Year Award, and was a member of Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO) National Conference Planning Committee.

Born and raised in Hong Kong, Shiree is fluent in three Chinese dialects. Having lived and worked in Watsonville and Salinas with cannery and farmworkers, Shiree has a functional understanding of Spanish. She holds degrees in Social Welfare and Psychology from the University of California, Berkeley and is a doctoral student in Human and Organizational Development at Fielding Graduate University. She lives in the Fruitvale District in Oakland.



# EX EVALUATION AND LEARNING REPORT

# FOR IDEX'S DECADE-LONG GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP WORK

**BY SHIREE TENG,** Independent Strategy and Evaluation Consultant shireeteng@earthlink.net

With assistance from, and special acknowledgements and gratitude for:

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