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US Foundations in Brazil and the Funding of the Human Rights Field – Data and Trends from 2003 to 2012

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to describe and analyze the presence of US philanthropy in Brazil with regards to the field of human rights from 2003 to 2012, using data from the Foundation Center on 1896 grants totaling \$336M. Human rights NGOs are especially important in Brazil. Despite recent growth and development, it is a country that still faces many social, political and human rights challenges. But the local field is still largely dependent on international funding, and US foundations play a traditional and vital role in this scenario, thus it is important to understand recent changes on American foundations priorities. The numbers indicate that the US investment in Brazil is concentrated in few areas (environment and human rights account for 50% of the amount invested), and these priorities are clearly different from those in the Brazilian philanthropic agenda (more focused on education, income generation, youth and community development). When we focus on human rights, we must underline that the investment in human rights by American foundations is quite notable. Not only is Brazil the country in which there were more investments in this topic in the last 10 years, but human rights is also the second field of priority in the country, right after Environment. When examining the collected data, there are four large patterns emerging: dependence on big donors, relevance of the strategy of “many small grants”, incipient grants in advocacy and possible existence of thematic niches. Of all these issues, the main challenge is that the field is very dependent on a few very large donors: Ford Foundation, Kellogg Foundation and the Global Fund for Women account for over 65% of the grants and 89% of the amount in US dollars.

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The Kellogg Foundation has already left Brazil to concentrate on other geographic priorities; should the Ford Foundation take a similar decision, the field of human rights in Brazil might even collapse, since Brazilian donors do not yet demonstrate enthusiasm for the subject.

Keywords: international philanthropy, human rights, Brazilian Civil Society, American philanthropy

Introduction

This paper aims to describe and analyze the current presence and role of US philanthropy in the Brazilian Human Rights field, based on data provided by the Foundation Center. This analysis should help us understand this particular relation and additionally give some insight on public policy implications for the Brazilian context.

American foundations have a long history in Brazil. Not only have they funded Brazilian NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) but also established local offices and developed ties with social leaders and communities. This scenario might just be changing, as Brazil is increasingly regarded as an emerging leader and many US and European foundations have shifted their attention from Brazil to other developing countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia (Nogueira et al. 2012). This shift in priorities may also be the result of changes in US foreign policy, which could also influence international philanthropy (Spero 2010).

Although the Brazilian redemocratization in the 1980s and 1990s led to the expansion in size and complexity of the country's civil society, some areas are presently facing serious challenges, such as Human Rights. NGOs and research organizations in Brazil have relied on international funding for the last decades as a main source of institutional sustainability (Vilhena 2005; Gouveia and Daniliauskas 2010; Mendonça, Alves, and Nogueira 2014). While there are almost 300 thousand CSOs in Brazil, the human rights field is much smaller than this, in estimates ranging from 1 thousand to 10 thousand organizations (IBGE 2012; Landim 1988). Incidentally, this is one of the main challenges of working and doing research in Brazil: the lack of good and reliable statistics. This paper is a small contribution in this sense, revealing and analyzing unexplored data.

If American foundations are actually changing their geographical and program priorities, this may be a critical time regarding the funding of Brazilian human rights organizations – a topic that has generated several debates and events amongst practitioners, but has not yet been sufficiently studied in academic circles. Despite consistent economic growth over the past decade in

Brazil, social inequality is still persistent. Human rights struggles in Brazil, should not be misinterpreted by international donors (Milani 2014; Araújo 2013).

Brazilian human rights NGOs have been historically dependent on international funding, particularly from bilateral cooperation agencies and development organizations linked to churches and political parties in the Northern Hemisphere. This support dates back to the early 1960s. Many of these NGOs are members of Abong, the Brazilian association of NGOs. The reports they issue are one of the only sources of data from this field, a clear indication of the aforementioned dependency. One of the latest reports estimates that in 2010 international funding was still essential to more than 50% of Abong members – and it represented more than 80% of the budget of 20% of its members, who are therefore completely dependent on this funding source (Gouveia and Daniliauskas 2010). This report and others also disclose that this funding source has been diminishing: over the past decade (chiefly after the 2008 financial crises) many traditional human rights donors dropped their support by over 60% (Nader 2013; Gouveia and Daniliauskas 2010).

For the US philanthropy field, discussing recent trends and challenges in international grantmaking might just help them reflect about issues such as *phasing out* and on how to promote an enduring legacy.

The main source for this study comes from the Foundation Center database. This organization gathers information from tens of thousands of US foundations, each year compiling data regarding foundation grants, figures and grantees.

We begin this paper by briefly presenting the field of human rights and Brazilian civil society. The subsequent section will present the data and analyze some of the descriptive statistics, and then on to final remarks, including some implications for public policy.

The Field of Human Rights Organizations

To retrace human rights organizations history is to examine the emergence of human rights within the scope of international relations.

Although the issue of human rights and its importance can be traced back to the Age of Enlightenment, it only took shape after the Second World War, precisely so as to avoid the repetition of violations committed by totalitarian regimes such as Fascism and Nazism. Accordingly, it is in the international field that the first and most important international statutes to protect such rights emerge, more notably the establishment of the United Nations Organization and the Universal Declaration of human rights (1948).

As Boaventura de Sousa Santos (1997, 20) has reminded us:

The Western mark, or better yet, the liberal-Western mark of the dominant discourse within human rights can be easily identified in many other examples: in the Universal Declaration of 1948, drafted without the participation of most populations in the world; in the exclusive acknowledgement of individual rights, with the sole exception of the collective right to self-determination, which, however, was restricted to the peoples that were subjugated to European colonialism; in the priority granted to civil and political rights over economic, social and cultural rights and in the acknowledgement of the right of property as the first, and for many years, the only economic right.

Due to the Cold War, the discussion on human rights was cleft by the ideological, political and sometimes military friction between capitalism and socialism, which made it difficult to foster a more comprehensive agenda on human rights, despite several international conferences on the topic. The strength of the two superpowers led to the overshadowing of Human Rights by national sovereignty. For this reason, the Latin American continent withstood a rough period from the sixties to the eighties, with suppression of civil and political liberties and the emergence of military dictatorships allied with American interests.

In addition, the Cold War was concurrent with the decolonization of African and Asian territories – a process marked by conflicts (political, religious and ethnical) and its consequences extended beyond the seventies (period of the last colonial wars of Portuguese-speaking Africa). The decolonization process was based on the principle of the people's self-determination and on the right to development, both of which led to the formation of an unaligned countries bloc and the division of the world based on the concepts of developed and under-developed countries (an expression which turned into developing countries).

It was in this context that the expression “Non-Governmental Organizations” (or simply NGOs) emerged. The term was used often, in developing countries, to designate organizations dedicated to promoting social and economic development, typically at base and community levels (Gardner and Lewis 1996).

In the nineties there was plenty of literature on NGOs, almost always dedicated to the issues of these organizations' involvement in economic development (Farrington and Bebbington 1993; Korten 1990; Carrol 1992), in international humanitarian aid (Hulme and Edwards 1997) or in social transformation (Clark 1991; Fisher 1994). For this literature, regardless of the headquarters of the organizations (London, Stockholm or Katmandu), the only organizations labeled as NGOs would be those that worked in developing countries (in the “global South”), with local development issues, defense of rights and humanitarian aid and assistance (Lewis 1998). The other organizations would be simply called voluntary, nonprofit, charitable organizations etc.

In Latin America, the moniker NGO was adopted to designate organizations that emerged from social movements and struggles against the dictatorships that prevailed in the continent during the sixties and seventies (Landim 1988; Fernandes 1994). For this reason, in this region, *NGO* acquired a much more political connotation than in other parts of the world. According to Fernandes and Piquet Carneiro (1991), the byname began to be applied sometime during the eighties, to designate several organizations that, having originated from the various social movements of the seventies, were then gathering members from diverse ideologies, such as Marxism and Christianity, and then began to rely on close cooperation with international non-governmental organizations. The key topic for these organizations was defending social transformation by means of education, inspired mostly by the works of Paulo Freire, as opposed to the ongoing paternalistic approach of charity organizations (Lehmann 1990). Harris-Curtis (2003) highlights the fact that this action anticipated the perspective of the rights-based approach to development.

After the Cold War, working in developing countries meant addressing the struggles for both development and human rights. The divide between organizations working towards development and those defending human rights became incongruous, as the debate converged both themes. A consensus was formed and it states that in order to change the status quo in developing countries, it is necessary to alter the balance of power in those societies, by means of affirming, acknowledging and protecting rights (Harris-Curtis 2003).

From then on, the discussion involved not only the classic human rights of 1948, but also new contemporary rights, inspired by both the women's emancipation and civil liberties movements of the sixties in the United States. We are undergoing a time of transformation in the struggle for rights extending beyond a mere issue of redistribution (rights connected with development and justice) and acknowledgement (identity rights) (Fraser and Honneth 2003). Therefore, it is not coincidence that contemporary social movements have begun to deal with the transversal aspect of rights in the current struggle for citizenship (Scherer-Warren 2006).

We may then conclude that the field of organizations that work with defending rights must not be construed as static. This field is dynamic and expresses the transformations undergone by Brazilian and worldwide rights in recent years.

Broaching organizations that work with defending rights, particularly in the field of international cooperation and social movements, is to lead the discussion towards the term "rights approach". Although there is no definitive concept on what the rights approach implies for NGOs, the concept is certainly based not

only on the struggle for human rights and gender equality (Harris-Curtis 2003), but also on the struggle for freedom, as posed by Amartya Sen (2000) and his emphasis on the intrinsic importance of human beings, their role and effect on economic development and their constructive role in the creation of values and priorities. Iorio (2002) points out that the rights based perspective seeks the connection between different rights, equity, equality, accountability (broadly interpreted), empowerment, participation, nondiscrimination and attention to vulnerable groups.

Human rights violations (in preventive and remedial contexts) occur due to inadequacies in legislation, failures in checks and balances mechanisms and devaluation in cultural and political contexts. For this reason, the rights based perspective is established on the need for constant strengthening of its organizations, creation of new skills and abilities, improvement of self-esteem and values and the construction of connections and alliances with different sectors (Iorio 2002).

The approach of NGOs and international foundations, as well as of local organizations and social movements for the defense and promotion of rights, is reflected in the alternative practices of development that assert the need for a fairer globalization process, as opposed to the neoliberal ideal.

Methods and Data

Data collection for this research took place in two stages. The first stage began in February 2013. After a meeting with the Foundation Center's leader, we collected data from the database available at <http://crossborder.foundationcenter.org>, which gathers data on grants made by US grantmakers to non-US recipients/grantees. Access to the data was made possible thanks to a temporary password given to the authors (as this is usually a paid service).

The data period extends from 2003 to 2012 and the database is updated weekly. We collected some additional data in July of 2013, in order to update the figures regarding 2012 (which led to including US\$ 12.4 million not previously ascertained in February).

The research was made according to several parameters, varying as to period, place, donation and organizations involved:

- Grantmaker: donor names, amount donated, type of donor (corporate or independent);
- Grantees: name of recipients, amount received, field in which the organization works (with a focus on human rights);

- Grants: by field (using the Foundation Center's own classification), by type of support (for programs, institutional, for research, for scholarships etc.);
- Place: country to which the donation was sent (with a focus on Brazil).

We were thus able to produce a database consisting of several interlinked tables (based on hundreds of grants, recipients and donors). We used descriptive statistics and cluster analysis to evaluate the data, as detailed in the following section.

It is important to clarify that this study does not exhaust the philanthropic relationship between the United States and Brazil. The Foundation Center's database is certainly the most complete and updated tool for mapping this relationship, but it still has some relevant gaps. It does not cover all US foundations, though it does provide a very significant sample; it does not include international philanthropy carried out by American companies established in Brazil (only those that originate from US-based foundations); and it does not include grants that were ultimately destined to Brazil via a larger grant to an international organization located elsewhere (e.g., a grant to the World Health Organization, located in Switzerland).

Despite these limitations, this research is justified by its innovative approach, given that it was the first time that a scholarly and in depth examination of this database was implemented for Brazil, and by the database quality, particularly regarding reliability of the information and its constant and regular gathering. Attaining this level of data consistency is usually a challenge when gathering information about world philanthropy (Johnson 2010).

American Philanthropy in Brazil: Data from the Foundation Center

Data: Main Figures

The United States is the country with the largest international philanthropy program in the world; in 10 years, it has invested approximately U\$ 18 billion to 20,444 recipients through 1,802 grantmakers. Brazil has received a little over U\$ 355 million from American foundations, which places it as the 10th country that most received American philanthropy resources between 2003 and 2012. Details of this investment can be seen in Table 1, in which amounts are separated by field. A noteworthy aspect of the table is the field of human rights, second only to environmental issues regarding amounts donated by American

Table 1: Investment of American foundations in Brazil between 2003 and 2012.

Field	Amount (US\$ M)	%	Grantees	%	Grants	%	Donors	%
Environment	110.8	31.2	125	18.5	418	22.0	39	33.6
Human rights	69.4	19.5	142	21.0	264	13.9	19	16.4
International Affairs	29.4	8.3	68	10.1	152	8.0	23	19.8
Health	27.5	7.7	79	11.7	143	7.5	40	34.5
Education	22.6	6.3	86	12.7	159	8.4	29	25.0
Public Affairs	21.6	6.1	52	7.7	117	6.2	10	8.6
Others ^a	74.3	20.9	404	59.9	643	33.9	32	27.6
Total	355.6	100	675	141.6	1896	100	116	165.5

Note: ^aOthers include: agriculture/food, arts and culture, community development, human services, philanthropy/voluntarism, social sciences and youth development.

foundations to Brazil, that has the largest number of grantees. The amount of donors, on the other hand, is relatively low, compared to other fields such as Environment, Health and Education. These indicators will be addressed in depth with the data detailed in the ensuing tables.

When this data is broken down into years (Figure 1), a few aspects become apparent. The rhythm of donations had been increasing at a compound annual growth rate of 10.5% between 2003 and 2008, followed by a rise of 58.2% in 2009. In the three subsequent years, there is a decreasing tendency, returning to the amounts of 2006 (possibly due to the crisis of 2008).

Figure 1: Investment of American foundations in Brazil between 2003 and 2012, by field.

As we can perceive, the large increase in 2009 is mainly due to the field of human rights. This is explained by the largest donation registered in that period: U\$ 25M donated by the Kellogg Foundation to enable the creation of an independent fund for reducing racial inequality. In other years, the investment in human rights varies from U\$ 1.5M (2004) to U\$ 9.2M (2010), with an average of U\$ 3.6M.

Donors

The list with 116 donors contained information regarding amounts donated and number of grants. Based on this information, we performed a cluster analysis and arrived at the seven groups of donors below. The amounts shown above are greatly influenced by a small number of donors – the eight that donated the most account for 85.4% of the entire amount invested Table 2.

Table 2: Amounts, number of grants and averages per donor category – 2003 to 2012.

Donor category ^a	No. of donors	%	\$ (M)	%	No. of grants (avg.)	% (No. of grants)	\$ per grant (avg. \$k)
1. Top3 donors	3	2.6	265.6	74.7	325.0	55.8	264.7
2. Big donors	5	4.3	38.0	10.7	35.2	10.1	209.7
3. Big grants	9	7.8	19.8	5.6	2.3	1.2	914.3
4. Medium donors	10	8.6	16.3	4.6	6.5	3.7	243.1
5. Many small grants	20	17.2	12.6	3.6	19.2	21.9	32.1
6. Small donors	23	19.8	2.8	0.8	3.3	4.2	37.0
7. Very small donors	46	39.7	0.6	0.1	1.2	3.1	9.1
Total	116	100	355.6	100	15.3	100	197.7

Note: ^aThe name of each category refers to the types of donations made in Brazil. The category of Medium Donors or Small Donors does not necessarily indicate that they are small-sized foundations, but that their donations to Brazil in the specified period are small when compared to the average or total amounts.

In order to better understand the traits of each category, Table 3 presents their definitions and some comments on who they are and on which topics they focus.

Table 3: Description of donor categories.

Category (Amount in US\$ M; number of grants – #)	Examples of donors	Traits
1. Top3 donors (\$ > 40M; # > 80)	Ford F., Kellogg F. and Moore F.	All have independent governance and stand out due to the regularity with which they donate, and the amounts donated. Focus on fields such as human rights, environment, international and public affairs
2. Big donors (\$ > 4M; # > 20)	Hewlett F., Packard F., Mott F., Microsoft F. and Alcoa F.	Clear focus on environment and education. Two of them have corporate governance, with a strong business presence in Brazil
3. Big grants (1–5 large grants)	Gates F., NIKE F., UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality	Main focus on health, followed by education, agriculture and community development. Few and large grants – highest average amount per grant: US\$ 914k
4. Medium donors (\$400k–3M; # 4–8)	Skoll F., MacArthur F., Silicon Valley Community F., Open Society Institute	Large independent and corporate foundations, perhaps making “test-donations” before deepening their relationship with Brazil. Great contributors in fields such as philanthropy & voluntarism
5. Many small grants (\$ below AVG; # > 10)	Koch F., Grassroots Int., JP Morgan F., Global Fund for Children, Global Fund for Women, Global Greengrants	Second highest number of grants, but with the second lowest average amount, with projects aimed at grassroots organizations. Focus on fields such as human rights, environment and education
6. Small donors (\$ < 350k; # < 10)	Dow Chemical Company F., BP F., Levi Strauss F., Pfizer F.	Many corporate foundations, of which several operate in Brazil. Focus on environment, health, international affairs
7. Very small donors (\$ < 50k; # < 5)	Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Baobab Fund, Cogan Family F., Jackson Family F.	Many family or independent foundations. Focus on human rights, human services, international affairs.

In addition, we were able to analyze how the different categories of donors distributed their grants by field. Table 4 also shows, in the final column, the proportion of the donations made by the Top3 foundations relative to the total amounts donated in that field – with especially high amounts in fields such as human rights, International affairs and Public affairs. We can also observe how the field of education is a concern for many different types of donors, but it is the field in which the Top3 donors invest proportionately less.

Table 4: Amounts invested by field, by donor category (in US\$ M).

	1. Top3 donors	2. Big donors	3. Big grants	4. Medium donors	5. Many small grants	6. Small donors	7. Very small donors	Total	% (Top3/total)
Environment	75.5	25.3	0.6	5.1	3.6	0.6	0.1	110.8	68.1
Human rights	61.9	–	6.0	0.1	1.1	0.1	0.1	69.4	89.3
Intl. Affairs	26.0	0.9	–	1.2	0.7	0.4	0.1	29.4	88.7
Health	18.1	0.7	5.5	1.8	0.7	0.6	0.1	27.5	65.8
Education	12.0	2.8	2.6	2.9	1.8	0.4	0.0	22.6	53.3
Public Affairs	18.9	2.4	–	–	0.3	–	0.0	21.6	87.4
Others	53.1	5.9	5.0	5.1	4.3	0.8	0.1	74.2	71.5
Total	265.6	38.0	19.8	16.3	12.6	2.8	0.5	355.6	74.7

Recipients

Now we present the data on recipients – the organizations registered as beneficiaries of the grants made by the foundations. We also performed a cluster analysis to understand patterns found in the 672 grantees Table 5.

Similarly to what we observed with donors, recipients also present large concentration, albeit to a lesser degree than grantmakers. Thus, the 55 largest recipients (8.2%) correspond to 58% of all amounts donated. We also perceive two categories similar to the donor categories – the recipients that receive “big grants” (few grants of high amounts) and those that receive many small grants (19% of the grants but only 8.5% of the amounts).

Regarding the thematic fields, we are unable to perform the detailed analysis as we did with the donors due to lack of available data. The only exception is in the field of human rights, which is the focus of this paper and will be analyzed later on.

Table 5: Amounts, number of grants and averages per recipient category – 2003 to 2012.

	No. of grantees	%	\$ (M)	%	No. of grants (avg.)	%	\$ per grant (avg. \$k)
1. Top 10 recipients	10	1.5	102.60	28.9	18.0	9.5	569.99
2. Big recipients	45	6.7	103.29	29.1	7.6	18.1	301.14
3. Big grants	119	17.6	46.11	13.0	1.2	7.3	331.69
4. Medium recipients	93	13.8	56.85	16.0	3.6	17.9	167.69
5. Many small grants	48	7.1	30.22	8.5	7.5	19.0	83.93
6. Small recipients	102	15.1	10.87	3.1	2.1	11.3	50.56
7. Very small recipients	258	38.2	5.62	1.6	1.2	16.9	17.55
Total	675	100	355.54	100	2.8	100	187.52

Finally, it is interesting to note that few organizations have a constant relationship with American donors. Only 27 recipients (4%) received at least 10 grants in the research period, while 348 (51.6%) received only one grant.

Types of Support

Another way to understand the donations made by US-based foundations is by examining the type of support that is given. Proportionately speaking, there is a clear emphasis on Program development and Research. The total exceeds 100% as each grant may have been classified as more than one type of support Table 6.

It is significant that advocacy, one of the main strategies for projects in the field of human rights, corresponds to only 2.9% of the grants, or a little over U\$ 10M in 59 grants, all since 2008. Only four donors invested in advocacy, especially Ford and Mott Foundations, which respectively donated 82% e 16.2% of the amount invested in this type of strategy.

Human Rights

We shall now present the data specifically related to the field of human rights in Brazil, beginning with the following overview. The exceptional year of 2009

Table 6: Amounts of grants per type of support given to the grantee organization.

Type of support	\$ (M)	%
Program development	263.6	74.1
Research	98.6	27.7
Continuing support	44.2	12.4
Endowments	28.7	8.1
General/operating support	23.0	6.5
Management development/capacity building	18.9	5.3
Conferences/seminars	13.8	3.9
Advocacy	10.2	2.9
Publication	9.9	2.8
Program evaluation	8.4	2.4
Others ^a	48.7	13.7
Total	355.5	159.7

Note: ^aInclude electronic media/online services, technical assistance, in-kind gifts, faculty/staff development, income development, curriculum development, awards/prizes/competitions, fellowships, among others.

clearly stands out, as Kellogg Foundation's outlier donation alone accounts for 36% of all human rights donations. In the recent years although the amounts have not significantly decreased, there is a comeback to dependency on fewer donors: after a peak of ten foundations in 2009 and 2010, there were only two in 2012 Table 7.

Table 7: General data on donations to the field of human rights – 2003 to 2012.

Year	Amount (in US\$ M)	Recipients	Grants	Donors
2003	2.4	17	17	2
2004	1.5	16	16	3
2005	2.4	12	14	3
2006	3.6	32	37	7
2007	6.2	18	18	4
2008	2.3	13	15	4
2009	31.3	32	41	10
2010	9.2	37	43	10
2011	5.4	26	30	4
2012	5.1	31	33	2
Total	69.4	142	264	19

When we analyze donors for human rights, three categories stand out:

- The Top3 donors, which correspond to 64.8% of the grants and 88.8% of the amount invested;
- The Big grants, as two foundations donated a grant of US\$ 3M each, corresponding to 8.6% of the total amount;
- The Many small grants, with six donors making 79 grants (29.9%) for a total of 2.1% of the amount donated.

The remaining donors jointly correspond to 4.5% of the grants and 0.4% of the amount donated. It is a field in which few are regular donors: only Ford (10 years), Kellogg (9) and Global Fund for Women (5) made grants in at least three years. When presence is measured by number of grants, in addition to the Ford (143), Global Fund for Women (32) and Kellogg (25), there are also Grassroots international (15) and Global Greengrants Fund (13) as the only organizations with over 10 donations since 2003.

Information on the 142 recipients is presented in Table 8, showing lesser concentration than with donors. There are proportionately more Top and Big recipients in the field of human rights than in general (14.8% against 8.1%) and less small and very small recipients (43.7% against 53.3%), indicating a greater concentration of large organizations in this field.

Table 8: Amounts, number of grants and averages per category of recipient in human rights – 2003 to 2012.

	Grantees	%	Amount (US\$ M)	%	No. of grants	%	Avg (\$k)
1. Top 10 recipients	4	2.8	29.0	41.9	8	3.0	3,629.8
2. Big recipients	17	12.0	18.9	27.2	53	20.1	355.9
4. Medium recipients	25	17.6	8.6	12.4	54	20.5	158.9
3. Big grants	21	14.8	6.1	8.9	24	9.1	255.9
5. Many small grants	13	9.2	4.2	6.0	37	14.0	112.6
6. Small recipients	18	12.7	1.7	2.4	35	13.3	48.5
7. Very small recipients	44	31.0	0.9	1.3	53	20.1	16.6
Total	142	100	69.4	100.0	264	100.0	262.8

Table 9: Amounts of donations in human rights, distributed by category of donor and by category of recipient (in US\$ k).

	1. Top 10 recip.	2. Big recip.	3. Big grants	4. Med. recip.	5. Many small grants	6. Small recip.	7. Very small recip.	Total
1. Top3 donors	29,038.3	15,742.0	3,141.5	8,500.0	3,457.2	1,308.5	446.0	61,633.5
3. Big grants	–	3,000.0	3,000.0	–	–	–	–	6,000.0
4. Medium donors	–	–	–	–	93.7	–	30.0	123.7
5. Manysmall grants	–	72.0	–	82.5	595.5	338.5	393.6	1,482.1
6. Small donors	–	50.0	–	–	–	–	–	50.0
7. Very small donors	–	–	–	–	20.0	49.0	12.0	81.0
Total	29,038.3	18,864.0	6,141.5	8,582.6	4,166.4	1,696.0	881.6	69,370.3

Table 9 presents the categories of donors crossed with the categories of recipients.

While it is clear that larger recipients (categories 1, 2, 3 and 4) prioritize relationships with larger donors, recipient categories 5, 6 and 7 seek alternatives within a greater diversity of donors – particularly those from the Many small grants category, although the Top3 donors are still the most relevant considering amounts. The smaller the recipient, the lower the proportion of resources that comes from the Top3. In particular, for Small and Very small recipients, the donor category of Many small grants is very important: of 62 different organizations, 23 were financed by Top3, while 36 others were financed by donors from Many small grants. The average amounts donated, however, still point to the greater donating power of the larger ones: US\$76.3k (Top3) against US\$20.3k (Many small grants).

The evolution of the investment in human rights can be tracked year by year, as demonstrated in Figure 2. The first one clearly shows the preponderance, in absolute amounts, of the large donors in the field – Ford, Kellogg and the UN Women’s Fund for Gender Equality, as well as the exceptionality of 2009.

Figure 3 shows all of the other 16 donors in human rights (excluding the three highlighted above), now grouped by donor category. In this manner, the importance of the Many small grants category is highlighted.

Figure 2: Investment in human rights with focus on main donors, per year.

Figure 3: Investment in human rights excluding main donors, per year.

Data Analysis and Findings

The data that was collected and analyzed describes a scenario in which US philanthropy in Brazil continues to be relevant, but seems to be changing in both amounts and priorities.

General Situation – International Philanthropy of American Foundations in Brazil

The numbers indicate that the investment is concentrated in few areas (environment and human rights account for 50% of the amount invested), and these priorities are clearly different from those in the Brazilian philanthropic agenda (more focused on education, income generation, youth and community development – GIFE 2013).

The high turnover of grantmakers (those that make only 1, 2 or 3 donations) makes it difficult to predict a tendency of increase or decrease in the number of grantmakers, but we can observe a decrease in the amounts donated after a peak in 2009. This can be due to the crisis of 2008 (which takes a few years to be felt, since foundations' budgets and commitments are planned more than a year ahead of time) as well as due to changes in American priorities, since Brazil may now be seen as medium-rich country.

This perception of a new Brazilian reality is also seen in Brazilian philanthropy, which has advanced considerably in past years, both in the field's development, professionalization (Nogueira and Schommer 2010; Alves, Nogueira, and Schommer 2013) and in numbers. Recent mappings point to organized Brazilian philanthropy investing close to US\$ 1 billion per year (almost 20 times more than the donations researched in this study). This field has a corporate nature, thus limiting the broadness of strategies and themes – which may help to explain the small focus on human rights by Brazilian donors (Rossetti 2010; Vilhena 2005).

Philanthropy and Human Rights

To begin with, we must underline that the investment in human rights by American foundations is quite notable. Brazil is the country with most investments in this field in the past ten years, and it is a top priority, right after Environment. On assessment of the collected data, there are four large patterns that emerge: dependence on big donors, relevance of "Many small grants", incipient grants in advocacy and possible existence of thematic niches.

Dependence on Big Donors

Data from the Brazilian case suggests that Ford Foundation, with the weight of its investment and its unique protagonism, had already been acting as a

“regulator” of the flow of resources. Its activity was key in forcing the creation of two different groups of grantees – the Big recipients and the Small recipients. The prominence of a few big donors constitutes a risky situation, especially considering that the other big donor of the decade – the Kellogg Foundation – decided to leave the country and focus on the United States and on the other countries on a smaller scale. As Brazilian donors do not yet demonstrate enthusiasm for the subject (Nogueira 2014), one can only fear for what would happen to the field – and its funding – should the Ford Foundation adopt a similar path.

Relevance of “Many Small Grants” Donors

Among the categories of donors in the field, the only one that demonstrated any regular growth was the Many small grants category – a group of eight donors that made on average 9.9 grants of about U\$ 18.8 k for human rights organizations. Despite the low amounts, these grants are relevant because they dedicate the overwhelming majority of their donations to small organizations (Many small grants, Small recipients and Very small recipients), thus valuing the logic of diversity – both of topics and forms of action – that is typical of the human rights field. As Araújo (2013) points out, many “vibrant organizations dealing with multiple aspects of human and social development have emerged from the democratization process”, contrasting with large human rights NGOs based in metropolitan areas. Granting funds for both types of organizations is important to reach vulnerable groups and minorities, such as indigenous people and traditional populations; landless peasants; women and children; juvenile and adult inmates; Afro-Brazilians; the LGBT community, among others.

Incipient Investments in Advocacy

As we have seen, few donors invested in advocacy actions, one of the main strategies of human rights organizations. Given the amounts invested (average of U\$ 177k per grant) and the fact that a recipient rarely received more than one grant for advocacy, it is difficult to imagine consistent, sustainable actions and campaigns that actually impact laws or the harsh Brazilian reality of human rights. Nader (2013) further points out that it is not only about dollars: a greater grant predictability and duration are also very important.

Existence of Thematic Niches

Another aspect suggested by the data that would require further investigation is the existence of thematic niches within the broader field of human rights. Issues such as race, gender and indigenous populations are predominant with the recipients that receive most resources, but even within these topics we could be even more specific, exploring the evolving specialization that might result from continuous attention. For example, in 2006 Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice made three small donations to Brazilian feminist organizations and, in at least one case, a lesbian rights organization. However, the foundation did not repeat this investment in subsequent years, and there is no record of the same type of action by other donors within the researched period. New organizational niches – comprehending new organizational forms – would be affected by the amount of attention – resources, time, alignment to the mission (see, Austin 2010) – directed at identity attributes by sector participants (Ruef 2000).

Final Remarks

Brazil has spent the last 20 years in relative stability and marked social and economic development, with tens of millions escaping extreme poverty. Many scholars note, however, that our development is still incomplete and we suffer from persistent inequality. This is highlighted most clearly in the field of rights: “There was widespread perception that with the transition to democracy [1980s and 1990s] human rights violations would diminish, especially for the poor and most vulnerable, but this did not happen.” (Vilhena 2005).

Old problems persist. According to Amnesty International (2015), some of Brazil’s main challenges in the field of human rights are the following:

- Excessive use of force by the military police (one of the most lethal in the world);
- Inhumane and degrading conditions in prisons;
- Ill treatment given to the population living in slums and poor communities;
- Land ownership conflicts in the rural areas of the country and little respect for the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights;
- Violation of workers’ rights, especially in the agricultural sector.

To address these and other issues, philanthropy has been playing an important role over the last decades. In human rights, however, the topic remains essentially on the US agenda from few large foundations, with little repercussion

among Brazil's philanthropic field. Recent years have shown some attempts (including Kellogg, Ford and others – Lessa and Hopstein 2014) to build a legacy and influence the work of local philanthropists, particularly using strategies of endowment funds and investment in local funds. Given the limits of the organizational niche that this paper has found, we question whether such strategies are sufficient.

Public Policy Implications

Public policies could help us tackle some of the challenging issues for the funding of human rights NGOs, particularly from the Brazilian Government. There seem to be two complementary strategies. The first is to create a public fund or endowment to finance human rights issues. The second is to reform and improve the existing laws that affect civil society, especially incentives for donations by companies and individuals.

The first idea, a public fund, has long since been advocated by social movements and networks such as Abong (Gouveia and Daniliauskas 2010). The main challenge is balancing legitimacy, accountability and public interest, as there is a risk that such a fund could only be used to finance some particular NGOs or could even be used as a corruption gateway. One alternative to deal with such problems is to create shared governance between government and civil society representatives, as well as having clear and transparent rules and procedures. Alas, as human rights initiatives in general are badly perceived by a large part of the population – who holds a very conservative view on the subject¹ (Ibccrim 2014) – it is difficult to imagine that such a fund could be established anytime soon.

The second idea seems a little more likely. Although Brazil has a very complex and challenging legal system, over the last 20 years there have been some interesting reforms of the “Civil society legal framework” (*Marco Regulatório*). We still have much to improve on fiscal and tax-related incentives for donations,² and this could be an interesting way to generate greater interest from local philanthropy, both from large Brazilian foundations and individuals (Dora and Pannunzio 2013).

¹ There is a popular conservative saying in Brazil that “human rights” should be only granted to the “right humans”, meaning that the “wrong ones” – criminals, for instance – do not deserve them.

² Estimates show that only about 10% of companies and individuals are able to use tax breaks to donate to civil society organizations. A quite simple reform might greatly expand this number (Dora and Pannunzio 2013).

An Agenda for Future Research

This first examination of the Foundation Center's data certainly does not exhaust the research possibilities. Many other issues need to be addressed in depth, such as those listed below:

- What could a deeper analysis of the grantees' profile reveal, both in terms of grantmaker priorities and of technical and political fundraising capacity of the recipients?
- The information available in the donor database could be complemented with data regarding size, date of establishment, existence or not of an office in Brazil, for instance – all questions that could enrich our analysis;
- It is essential that we have a better understanding of the “super-donor” role (Foundations Ford, Kellogg, Moore, Gates.³), particularly regarding their ability to direct a philanthropic or even a public agenda in a given field;
- The existence of “one-hit wonders” – foundations that make few and large donations (of hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars) – is a curious aspect. What drives this behavior?
- Essentially, US philanthropy in Brazil is different from general US philanthropy worldwide and different from Brazilian philanthropy. Why is this so? Does this occur as a response to local demands or to a specific US agenda for Brazil?

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³ Data from the Foundation Center shows that in 2010 the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation was responsible for 31% of all American international philanthropy solely with their investments in health. How should one address such expressive outliers?

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