Challenges in communicating community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice

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Presentation of the Giving for Change collection

The Giving for Change collection was conceived by the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice and launched in 2021, within the scope of the Giving for Change program. Focusing on South-South cooperation and funded by the Dutch government, the program develops actions to strengthen community philanthropy and philanthropy for socio-environmental justice. Within the Network, it will serve the purpose of reinforcing those agendas among its members and partners at the local, regional and international levels, promoting advocacy actions, challenging the long-established philanthropy systems, and encouraging debates and projects concerning local power, freedom of expression and the giving culture, among other correlated issues.

In this sense, the Giving for Change collection aims to create a space for reflection and debate, publishing works promoting community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice as a strategy to achieve community-led development, championing the claiming of rights with a focus on political minorities. The label intends to publish works resulting from theoretical debates, reinforcing capabilities, and sharing of experiences, as well as other work resources, while offering free access and distribution with translations to other languages.

Summary

Presentation

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This publication is a collection of four articles, prepared with the communicators*** that work in the member organizations of the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice (Network). These pieces are the result of collective interviews held in mid-2020 with the aim of mapping and reviewing the communication challenges faced by community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice, as well as highlighting the communication strategies developed by community and issue-oriented funds comprising the Network.

In addition to those articles, we have published two analytical papers. The first, written by Ana Leticia Silva, describes the methodology and approach developed for the interviews to be held and their main findings. In the final reflection, titled "Communication as a Bridge", Mariana Belmont sustains that the role played by communication must be understood as a core element for both the transparency of the local processes and the mobilization, engagement, and connection of the actors. She further notes that in the past few years, "popular communicators, who live in favelas and working-class suburbs, people who were raised in the communities that redefine the narratives promoted by the main-

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***Interviews were conducted with the following communicators and/or representatives of the Network's member organizations: Andrea Blum (Redes da Maré); Andreia Coutinho (who was then a member of the Institute for Climate and Society's team); Attilio Zonin (Casa Socio-Environmental Fund); Fernanda Lopes (Baoba - Fund for Racial Equity); Harley Nascimento (Fundo Positivo); Ivanderson Pinheiro (Baixada); Larissa Amorim (Casa Fluminense); Méle Dornelas (Institute for Society, Population and Nature - ISPN); Mônica Nóbrega (Brazil Human Rights Fund); Renata Saavedra (who was then a member of the ELAS – Social Investment Fund's team); Silvia Dias (Baoba - Fund for Racial Equity); Simone Amorim (Tabôa Communitarins Strengthening Association); Stefani Ceolla (ICOM - Instituto Comunitário Grande Florianópolis).*

stream media, (…)" started to gain visibility. Mariana stresses that recognizing the power and relevance of those voices as they also lead communication efforts is critical to ensure wide access to communication and broaden the scope of the organizations' work in and with those communities.

Considering the structure, contents and approaches described herein, this publication does not intend to be a finished work: its purpose is to ignite some questions and reflections capable of engaging a variety of players, while also contributing to discussions on the strategies, practices and challenges affecting communication in the field of community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice.

In this publication, dialogue and questions are the key elements to address problems and stir transformative reflections. Paulo Freire notes that the philosophy of the question – as the ideal philosophical outlook to be pursued – puts dialogue and criticism as fundamental resources for liberation, allowing people to achieve objective awareness, i.e., a greater understanding of their own struggles. He takes it further by adding: "I think that we intellectuals have to have the opposite approach: we must begin with the actual situation, the actions which we and the people engage in day by day – since we are all involved in daily life in one form or another – reflect on that, and then generate ideas in order to understand it. And such ideas will no longer be ideas that are models, but ideas being generated out of real life situations"*.

Based on the idea that communication is a crucial element for reinforcing the fight to ensure rights and democracy, we believe this publication offers an important reflection for both the field of philanthropy and Brazilian civil society. It is as necessary as it is spontaneous. Spontaneous because it is the result of an organic process that has developed within Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice to address a concern expressed by its members. And necessary because it has reflected a pursue for partnerships and sharing among the Network's communicators, essentially motivated by a common challenge: **how should community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice communicate?**

In this sense, this publication reflects an issue that is at the core of the field of community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice. Not communication itself, but a form of communication that is part of a strategy for the development of an agenda for community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice, an agenda which reinforces and builds up the fight for a fairer society and universal human rights and implies the leadership of civil society organizations.

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* FREIRE, Paulo; FAUNDEZ, Antonio. Learning to Question: A Pedagogy of Liberation. New York: Continuum, 1989. p. 29-30.

A form of communication that brings up meanings, decodes concepts, situates organizations, collective and individual agents. A form of communication that tells stories of groups, collective societies, leaderships, impacted persons. Not just a form of communication that raises individual awareness, but collectively drives the field. That affects the ecosystem. That speaks of building bridges, as well as leaderships and rights. That mobilizes resources, as well as people, partnerships, and ideas. A form of communication that effectively combines online and offline engagement, reaching leaders and communities. Ultimately, a form of communication that values its beneficiaries.

Reinforcing this agenda for philanthropy for social justice and community philanthropy, with advocacy actions focusing on the Brazilian philanthropic ecosystem as well as the global one, is one of the goals driving Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice's work. And strengthening civil society, communities, and grassroots organizations is a strategic action of the Giving for Change program*, which emerged within the fight to give a voice, rights, and leadership to political minorities. It is worth noting that this publication presents the Giving for Change label, which will bring forward a collection of stories, reports, articles, books, and work documents developed by the Network within the scope of that program.

Communication, as well as the assessment of results and impacts, is an important pillar for building an agenda for advocacy. Therefore, none of those processes should be executed isolatedly. Communication, just like assessment, should engage with each organization's primary activities. It should assist in the construction of the narratives, which are the inputs for defining advocacy strategies, in order to influence the field and extend the support to all of those fighting for rights.

This publication, which stemmed from our dialogues with communicators and representatives of the organizations comprising the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice, makes it evident that effective communication, combined with impact assessment strategies advised by local agents, is a key element for shaping a strong, powerful advocacy strategy, capable of repositioning community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice within the Brazilian agenda.

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* For more information about the Giving for Change program, please see: https://www.redefilantropia.org.br/post/a-rede-anuncia-um-novo-programa-com-apoio-do-minist%C3%A9rio-de-relacoes-exteriores-da-holanda

Trends and courses for reflecting on communication in philanthropy for social justice

Ana Letícia Silva

This publication consists of a series of reflections on the challenges faced in communicating for community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice. It is based on interviews held with communication and program-area professionals who work in Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice's member organizations.

Recognizing the relevance of communication to achieve visibility, acknowledgment, and strength for the field of philanthropy as well as the member organizations, the Network has proposed this joint reflection, which was carried out in June 2020, based on the following questions:

How is the work done by Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice's organizations important to society? How do those organizations' communicators perceive this work, and how do their perspectives reveal the meaning of community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice for society?

Which challenges have those professionals faced in communicating the meaning of the work done by the Network's organizations to society?

The reflections were produced in writing or in audio recordings which were later transcribed. The answers were compiled and systematized as a conversation, originating the series of articles brought together in this publication. These stories had already been published in the Network's communication channels and shared on other platforms relevant to the field.

The communication challenges faced by the field of community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice have also set the order of the topics addressed in the articles. The structure is as follows: first, there is an overview

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of those challenges. Following, the articles address the importance of communication for mobilizing resources and, thereafter, the power and reach of the narratives. Lastly, the publication addresses the power of networked communication to influence public policy.

Philanthropy for social justice believes that, in order to settle and be recognized in Brazil, it is necessary to address communication as a core issue. Establishing a form of multiple-action philanthropy, which reaches the leading edge in many ways: this was the major challenge reported by the communicators of the organizations that make up the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice.

Many of the topics broached in the field of community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice are associated with the human rights field. Both are sufficiently comprehensive to challenge their communication permanently and to reach society as a whole, which is generally unfamiliar with both fields. In addition to that, there is the challenge of mobilizing resources so that they reach the organizations and initiatives operating in the grassroots, at the edge. Due to this, and because of how philanthropy itself has ultimately been seen in Brazil in the past decades, there is some confusion in the sense that philanthropy is associated with paternalism, which are quite unappreciated in Brazil.

In light of these many aspects, the communication of community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice, considering both its concept and its forms of operation, emerges as a complex challenge which, once overcome, is sure to broaden the field's existence, contributions, and impacts, allowing it to take its rightful place within the philanthropy practiced in the country and the assurance of rights. This specific communication must be delivered on several fronts – which, in turn, risks fragmenting it and weakening its potential.

According to the interviewees, communication in the field of philanthropy for social justice and community philanthropy involves the following challenges: how best to communicate the concepts of community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice? What is the connection between those concepts and socially relevant issues such as the assurance and defense of rights? How best to conceive institutional communications involving the organizations engaging in the field, and in order to mobilize resources? How best to communicate the collective impacts produced by the organizations, movements, groups, leaderships? How best to communicate to donors and partners the results achieved, and influence the culture of giving? How best to mobilize specific resources to aid communication? In addition, the interviewees stressed the need for net-

worked communications and communications capable of influencing the field of public policy at multiple levels, as well as the importance of producing and basing communications on specific information, building narratives from true stories, in order to reach diverse audiences.

The challenge of producing narratives for community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice has proven so critical that it prompted the execution of a specific workshop by the Network, in September 2020, within its Capability Building Program ("Programa de Fortalecimento de Capacidades"). With a rich process of sharing among peers and reflecting on the experiences presented by member organizations, **the meeting established the correlation between the production of narratives**, their reach, and contributions, not only to raise awareness among various audiences and provide visibility for the work done by the supported initiatives as a critical field that effectively contributes to the assurance of rights in Brazil, but also as an important tool for the mobilization of resources and the monitoring and assessment processes.

We are speaking of a communication that can be seen as a tool to help unlock a fairer world, which contributes to the assurance of rights and to make spaces and language more accessible, including and reaching the voices of ordinary people as protagonists and leaders of their own actions, and reinforces the organizations' ability to mobilize resources and build bridges between mainstream philanthropy and civil society organizations (involving not only local and nationwide funds but also grassroots groups and institutions), assisting in the widespread understanding of important notions to boost advocacy. A communication, at last, that becomes networked from a perspective of philanthropy that adds up equity, inclusion, and justice to an approach from the perspective of the defense of rights. It is a communication committed to bring up conversations in order to debate an expansion of social and human rights and the transformation of public policy, strengthening the entire field of social justice.

1. Challenges in communicating community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice

"A major challenge to establishing and consolidating philanthropy in Brazil lies in the intersection between communication and social justice."

The subjects that are at the core of community philanthropy and social justice intertwine with a pro-human rights narrative, amplify the voices of activists, organizations, and grassroots groups across the country, and strengthen civil society's narratives to spread this form of philanthropy. A major challenge to establishing and consolidating this field in Brazil lies in the intersection between communication and social justice. This is what the communicators from the organizations that make up the Philanthropy Network for Social Justice say. According to them, who face the difficulties and opportunities for the recognition of the field on a daily basis, the key to defeating the notion associating philanthropy with paternalistic welfare assistance is telling the real stories of groups, associations, leaders, and organizations supported by the Network's operations.

"All the statistics and theories become real in true, human stories," believes the Baoba - Fund for Racial Equity. Casa Fluminense, another organization comprising the Network, claims that its main goal is to "achieve a communication that helps materialize, but which also needs to be nourished by harvesting effects." Those statements corroborate the understanding that communication is not an end, but a tool that helps to decode the unique importance of each organization for the construction of a fairer world. Communication is a core issue that must be addressed if community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice are to be recognized and consolidated in Brazil.

A special, multiple-action philanthropy that reaches the grassroots, the leading edge, in many ways. This was the major challenge presented by the communicators working in the organizations that make up the Network, who point to the importance of telling stories featuring the groups, associations, leaders, and supported organizations, that is to say, stories from the grassroots, to understand their actual reach and meaning.

Producing narratives that raise awareness about donating and while also reporting results was mentioned as those professionals' main goal.

When their usual roles were reversed, from interviewers to interviewees, the communicators stressed the importance of translating the exact meaning of philanthropy for social justice in a wildly unequal country such as Brazil. For the ICOM, the responsibility lies in communicating the organization's role as a "bridge". "The unrelenting challenge is to explain the workflow clearly – who is giving and where the resources end up. Further, it is always crucial to communicate that our role is to act as a bridge connecting the donors and the organizations operating at the 'other end', promoting those causes," noted the interviewee.

Baixada, in turn, highlights the role played by the organization in the "territorial development of the Baixada Maranhense region, in the actual search for public notices enabling the support of initiatives that collaborate towards the development of the territory." Along the same lines, the Institute for Climate and Society asserts that "this is philanthropy's key role. To push organizations to take the lead in their causes with the common goal of changing the scenario in Brazil in the most democratic, lasting, wide, systemic manner".

THE MEANING | It is important to produce narratives that raise awareness in people and organizations about the importance of giving; to report results in order to keep donors engaged; and to reach informal social movements and groups.

THE CHALLENGE | Our current times, when discourses going against the respect for basic rights are widespread, call for the production of an efficient and engaging counter-narrative to overcome the discourse that equates human rights with the rights of so-called "criminals". It is a matter of crisis management and how to respond to potential reputation attacks.

A NEW CONTEXT | The additional challenges posed by the current conjuncture are associated with the access to and consumption of new information and communication technologies.

New dynamics and languages

New information and communication technologies (ICTs) have caused profound changes and renewed social demands. For this reason, the communicators interviewed have highlighted the relevance of engaging with new emerging languages and dynamics, especially from the youth.

Baixada explains that it has had to redesign its communication strategies, going beyond the mere production of institutional contents. In order to effec-

tively reach the new generations, they say they had to pursue different ways of establishing a relationship with the public, such as participating in community meetings, seminars, and youth associations.

The interviewees have also remarked their work in a multitude of different communication channels, such as WhatsApp and Telegram groups, pamphlets, posters, and loudspeaker cars and bicycles. For the Institute for Climate and Society, it is crucial to "broaden the language we use and pay close attention to the multiplicity of organizational profiles that we have."

Baixada notes that "the digital reality is still a crucial element in the access to information." They have also mentioned the scarcity of "media that used to be more present in the territory, such as popular radio stations" as a present difficulty. According to them, radio stations within the institute's operating region have a great potential to provide access to information and knowledge.

2. Communicate to mobilize. But what does that mean?

"Information society" is a notion that dates back to the XX century. The term describes a historical moment when communication technologies had already started to show their capacity to change collective life.

The key intellectuals behind the idea of "information society" and the global optimism around the advent of ICTs, however, were not able to predict what would happen in 2020. In March 2020, in the same statement by which the World Health Organization (WHO) anounced the "pandemic" of the novel coronavirus, experts warned about the risk of an "infodemic" – that is to say, a misinformation pandemic. Since then, the world has already reached the regrettable mark of 1 million deaths, and fake news still runs rampant on social networks. This scenario has raised a red flag in the communicators of the organizations making up the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice.

"Our investments in communication were greatly intensified in 2020, when we were faced with the covid-19 pandemic. We conceived a strategic campaign around the pandemic consisting of positive communication, which has led the Fund to start producing communication tools, radio spots, podcasts, posts for social networks, weekly live presentations. This has taken center stage in the execution of communication actions," says the Fundo Positivo.

The testimonies gathered to produce this book show that the organizations find in the present scenario, marked by an "infodemic" and intense polarization, some of the biggest challenges to their work. But they see an opportunity in the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice and in collaborative communication: "We find it difficult to mobilize and appeal to the community itself, which we address constantly with campaigns that help broaden our notions about the importance of remaining connected in networks, which in turn helps to expand on the discussions about philanthropy and giving," believes Instituto Baixada. "This is a time to rethink the communication surrounding the Casa Fluminense Fund. We will come closer to the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice, in order to put our heads together, but it will be a moment to rethink Casa Fluminense Fund's position," says Casa Fluminense.

The communication scenario during the pandemic helps us to reflect: what kind of communication do we want? In the interviews, the communicators spoke about the communication they envision for the field and the difficulties to build a dialogue **that mobilizes resources** – all kinds of resources, partners, networks, volunteers, and donations.

"Our work goes beyond raising funds that allow us to empower the players engaged in this cause: it includes identifying where we should act, which means, the primary issues of the fight against structural racism," notes the Baoba - Fund for Racial Equity.

With whom should we communicate?

Target audience is a concern. After all, according to the testimonies, mobilizing resources does not equate seeking for funding. It is, above all, about engaging assets from society, the organizations, and people, to promote social justice. So, the communicators made a point of stressing the need to build bridges between different groups.

"It is a challenge to communicate without seeming to be endorsing paternalistic welfare assistance, but rather in a way that raises awareness in society to the fact that our actions are structural, calling attention to the importance of these peoples. Furthermore, in a highly connected environment, where people are in touch with several issues at once, there is also a challenge of learning how to communicate in an original, creative way, raising awareness while at the same time explaining and conveying a clear message. That means communicating while explaining basic concepts, in a new way, to a society that often prioritizes other agendas over the socio-environmental agenda," explains the Institute for Society, Population and Nature - ISPN.

Institute for Climate and Society noted the challenge of conveying the depth of their primary work area. According to the organization's communicators, it is necessary to "challenge institutional cultures" to overcome the difficulties: "Talking about climate and philanthropy means talking about race, gender, and class inequalities. And, more than merely talk, communicators need to be deliberate in the development of their strategic plans, and to challenge their institutional cultures towards inclusion and equity."

Gender is undoubtedly a key issue. The ELAS – Social Investment Fund, aimed at fighting gender inequalities and violence against women, is the only Brazilian social investment fund dedicated exclusively to promoting women's issues and leadership. According to the fund's communicators, the focus on social change is what drives the organization, making it a priority. "ELAS's work unveils the meaning of philanthropy for social justice and for society as it successfully donates (financial or other) resources based on trust and with the goal of changing society. We are deeply aware that the culture of giving in Brazil must be expanded on and directed towards social change, and this shows in the actions by ELAS," says the Fund.

The mobilization of resources is a core, crucial part of the work of philanthropy for social justice and should be seen as a political act, going beyond the double effort of mobilizing resources for donation. So, the challenge of establishing a form of communication that enables and reinforces this mobilization of resources takes on a political dimension.

3. The power and reach of narratives in communicating community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice

"In our experience, statistics and theses become real in true, human stories". This statement by the Baoba - Fund for Racial Equity about the lessons learned with the communication to reinforce community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice effectively conveys the main challenge facing communication in the XXI century: overcoming the increasingly hard fight for society's attention with stories able to touch and engage people.

The "true, human stories" referenced by the Baoba - Fund for Racial Equity are also the major goal of Casa Fluminense. "We face a challenge to communicate our projects: to establish a form of communication that helps make our stories real, but which must also be nurtured by a harvest of practical effects," claim the organization's communicators.

The challenge posed by communicating the actions by the member organizations comprising the Network is to combine evidence-based, result-oriented communication with the core feature that drives the very existence of these organizations: solidarity.

"We pay close attention to recognition, appreciation, and dissemination of collective actions toward territorial development, with a view to creating more powerful narratives that can attract society's attention and, additionally, engage major funders, the foundations and institutes, which also play a crucial role for the arrival of resources," explain the communicators of Casa Fluminense.

The power of narratives was not only referred to in the interviews by Casa Fluminense and the Baoba - Fund for Racial Equity, which mentioned it directly, but it was unanimous among Fundo Positivo, ELAS – Social Investment Fund, Institute for Society, Population and Nature - ISPN, Brazil Human Rights Fund, Baixada, and ICOM.

But what exactly are narratives? Merriam-Webster defines the term as follows: "something that is narrated: STORY, ACCOUNT; a way of presenting or understanding a situation or series of events that reflects and promotes a particular point of view or set of values; the art or practice of narration; the repre-

sentation in art of an event or story." If the dictionary entry manages to define the meaning of narratives, how do they materialize in the organizations comprising the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice?

For Fundo Positivo, which supports people living with HIV, the power of the narratives "lies in ensuring that, especially in our field, which has produced significant results in controlling an epidemic in the country that was installed in the 1980's and was decimating lives and stigmatizing people who were living with the disease, the social movement will respond quickly to counter an infection."

According to the testimonies by the ELAS – Social Investment Fund, on the other hand, the relevance of building people-oriented narratives, which translate impact into personal stories, lies in recognizing "women for their strengths – and not for what they lack, which is what philanthropic institutions with paternalistic approach do –, because we are committed to transforming the power relations in society." The communicators of the ELAS – Social Investment Fund further reflect that: "The funds that practice grant making engage in a complex activity. The people who donate resources to social projects, for instance, have an expectation of giving directly to those executing the project."

The Institute for Society, Population and Nature - ISPN, in turn, notes that the narratives to reinforce philanthropy for social justice, in addition to the need of humanizing the work carried out by the organization, must explain "concepts that are recurrent in the ISPN's form of operating, but poorly disseminated throughout society, and whose meaning is known by few people. In addition to guiding the way our narratives are built, these concepts must be understood and assimilated in the way people and communities work to influence a better, fairer, more sustainable world." The communicators of the ISPN add that: "in a highly connected environment, where people are in touch with several issues at once, there is also a challenge of learning how to communicate in an original way, raising awareness while at the same time explaining and conveying a clear message."

Since the narratives emerge from the transformation of subjects into characters, of facts into plots, the matter of leadership was conspicuously present in the communicators' reflections.

"Brazil Human Rights Fund views grantmaking – and community philanthropy – as tools that bring to the center of the political debate a plurality of propositions about which are the fundamental rights of citizenship and how to promote and expand them. They highlight local agendas and strategies, built

from diversified knowledge bases and different understandings of the country and the world. They democratize the construction of a more egalitarian country, empowering subjects, boosting community and collective development, strengthening voices to lead their own causes," the fund's professionals explain.

More than seeing the stories reflected in its communication contents, Instituto Baixada mentions the importance of networking to the construction of narratives. "In addition to the difficulties associated with technology, we also find it difficult to mobilize and appeal to the community itself, an issue we address constantly with campaigns that help broaden our notions about the importance of remaining connected in networks, which in turn helps to expand on the discussions about philanthropy and giving," they say.

The testimony by the ICOM team brought a reflection on networked partnerships. They defined the role of the organization as a "bridge". "It is always important to communicate that the role of the ICOM is to act as a bridge between donors and organizations that work on the grassroots, promoting these causes, which has also proved to be quite challenging," say the interviewees. "Communicating how community philanthropy and philanthropy for social justice happen in practice, and how the different work fronts that make this happen work – by encouraging the culture of giving and private social investment – is quite challenging," they point out.

For the communicators at Institute for Climate and Society, narratives ultimately provide a true dimension of the impact of the organization's core issue: "The challenge is to ensure that our messages reach vulnerable populations and are not restricted to a privileged field of climate activists. To talk about climate (and philanthropy) is to talk about inequalities, race, gender, and class. And, more than just talking, communicators need to be deliberate in the preparation of their strategic plans and to challenge their institutional cultures toward inclusion and equality," they say.

The professionals at the Baoba - Fund for Racial Equity raised the reflection that has triggered the development of this report, and highlighted the importance of viewing each actor involved with philanthropy for social justice as the "subjects of their own stories". "Although it may seem that there is a hierarchical relationship separating those who give from those who receive, both are the subjects of their own stories, and the philanthropy that considers the well-established dynamics of the territories and communities as the key to transformation reveals this complementary dimension of the roles assigned to each political actor involved," they argue.

4. Networked communication and its power to impact public policy and the philanthropy field

The most widely known idea of "networked communication" coincides with the emergence of the internet, which has fundamentally changed the conditions and strategies for information dissemination. Networked communication, however, has a long history and a deep meaning for philanthropy for social justice.

Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells, who was largely responsible for the popularization of the concept, with the publication of his book trilogy "The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture," breaks down the current common-sense notion of the expression. According to the author, the phenomenon emerged long before the World Wide Web. For him, the internet merely boosted certain phenomena that already existed in society. The author argues, then, that the internet is not synonymous with networked communication, but just one of its possibilities.

Castells's vision of the internet as a tool and of networked communication as its essence has materialized in the interviews held with the members of the communication teams of the organizations making up the Network. The interviewees clearly established the essence of the communication they practice: a communication that is mindful of the challenges and possibilities provided by new information technologies, but prioritizes human communication, based on partnerships and dialogue – therefore, carried out in networks.

The members of Casa Fluminense's communication team, for instance, spoke about the challenges to establishing an active, collaborative communication with social leaders and organizations that work in the public management field, their area of expertise. "Our goal is to work closely with social leaders in order to keep on creating education and mobilization processes within the territories, promoting territorial and thematic agendas. This makes a difference within this scenario: this sense of monitoring, of social control by civil society. It is based on this active, collaborative action that we manage to reflect about better public policies, urging decision makers and identifying where policy formulation processes need to advance," they said.

Fundo Positivo, in turn, referred to the importance of bringing together movements and organizations to influence public policy. According to its team's members, it is networked communication that enables the debate on the ex-

pansion of social rights to the population they work with: "the work done by the Positivo Fund seeks to help this social movement to continue its work of building these policies to afford greater access to rights and health services, expanding its scope to the women's movement and the LGBTI movement, so that these institutions can continue to exist in such a diverse country, and continue to offer services to the most vulnerable." And they conclude: "in this sense, there is a close relationship with philanthropy for social justice, since this fund allows these voices to echo through the movements to which they are associated, and to deliver a wide variety of services to those populations, especially access to justice and rights as a whole."

At the ELAS – Social Investment Fund, the complexity of producing communication that is not based on institutional information, but rather on programs, grows subtle when the work is integrated with the actors' work in the field. "In the communication by ELAS, an additional challenge is the fact that we have delivered fragmented communications over the years, focused on different programs instead of communicating the institution as a whole. So, we have a crucial responsibility to support the sustainability and development of women's movements in Brazil, having supported their main achievements for 20 years, and to engage more partners and funders," they said.

The Institute for Society, Population and Nature - ISPN, in turn, stressed the importance of being directly in touch with the population that benefits from its work, to reinforce the notion of rights that are not so widespread, such as access to territory. "The ISPN also works toward the appreciation of these populations, made up of people who have been historically marginalized or denied rights: small farmers and traditional peoples and communities. The goal is to raise them to become leader of their actions, which also consist of political actions in defense of their rights, especially the right to territory," said the team of communicators.

The team at Brazil Human Rights Fund translated into the concept of "building bridges" the proposition of acting in a network rather than merely communicating, by establishing and reinforcing connections as a means to amplify messages. "We build bridges between grassroots groups with common agendas or interests, and between these and the sectors of society interested in investing in the sustainable development of communities throughout the country," explained the members of the team that handles the fund's communication.

At Baixada, the communicators highlighted the importance of "treading the same path" in order to reach a common goal, namely, the quality of life of the

Baixada Maranhense's residents. "We must all tread the same path, taking into account our collective goals, which ultimately results in the improvement of the quality of life of the Baixada resident," they noted.

In the interview held with the ICOM - Instituto Comunitário Grande Florianópolis, the organization's goal of not working for self-promotion, but rather to strengthen an ecosystem of organizations and collectives, remained clear: "ICOM's work is important because it strengthens organized civil society, supports social justice causes that promote equity, provides broader access to resources, and enables spaces for the creation and sharing of knowledge."

At the Institute for Climate and Society, according to its communicators' testimonies, talking to multiple actors is the most effective path and the best way to change public climate policies. "We intend to build evidence that opens space for dialogue between multiple actors, helping to further advance the climate agenda in Brazil. This entails political and economic commitment, as well as more effective governance and control mechanisms for policies affecting the climate," they said.

For the Baoba - Fund for Racial Equity, the recognition of the actors involved in the organization's communication process is crucial. The fund's communication team emphasized that it is imperative to know that "those giving and those receiving are the subjects of their own stories. Although it may seem that there is a hierarchical relationship separating those who give from those who receive, both are the subjects of their own stories, and the philanthropy that considers the well-established dynamics of the territories and communities as the key to transformation reveals this complementary dimension to the roles assigned to each political actor involved."

Challenges and paths for communication strategies and practices identified and listed by the member organizations of the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice, according to the interviews	
Relevance of narratives for the advancement of rights	Advancing a human rights-friendly narrative
	Expanding the reach of the voices of activists, organizations, and grassroots groups across the country
	Reinforcing the narratives of these groups and activists and disseminating the relevance of philanthropy for social justice
Different audiences to communicate with	Raising awareness about giving among people and organizations
	Reporting results to keep donors engaged
	Reaching out to informal social groups and movements
	Understanding who the audiences are and adapting the narratives
The challenging environment of the defense of rights	Dedicating part of the communication to produce effective, engaging counter-narratives
	Crisis management and how to respond to potential reputation attacks
	Unequal access to technology (internet and means for producing media content) and its impact on communication and on the defense of rights

Producing narratives on the broad themes of philanthropy for social justice and community philanthropy	Gathering data to support the narratives
	Finding the narrative thread without getting lost among so many stories, considering that these often involve characters and guidelines that are still very unfamiliar to society
	Developing a narrative path that contributes to the consolidation of the organizations as the subjects of their own stories and engages different audiences
	Understanding how each organization delivers its own communication and, consequently, produces its own narratives, and pursuing common narrative paths that result in mutual reinforcement
	Disseminating causes and agendas using real stories from the people who work on the grassroots, in the communities, which are capable of mobilizing and advancing social change processes, in practical propositions suggesting paths and solutions
	Investing in research and data production to support the narratives
	Co-production of transformative narratives, produced together
Reach of philanthropy for social justice narratives	Creating and reinforcing spaces for and sharing of plural, inclusive dialogues, collectivizing demands and problems, and reaching broader audiences
	Generating social mobilization, strengthening community development processes and the establishment of partnerships, and delivering value
	Contributing to the reinforcement of coordinated action and scale
	Strengthening communication skills and abilities of the various supported organizations
	Reclaiming symbolic space from other narratives that eventually present as more legitimate

Ways found by the organiza-tions comprising the Network to communicate	Collaboratively building content solutions for causes and agendas to raise awareness within society
	Safe, more welcoming communication, using a language and approach that allows expanding its reach
	Producing infographics and reports in formats that ad-dress issues and promote causes
	Contents based on the narratives' formative processes, grounded on the combination of data and propositions
	Using their own, autonomous tools to narrate stories and experiences of groups and people supported
	Developing common agendas in partnership and forms of collaboration based on communication, and build ne-tworks with our supported organizations
	Supporting the communication efforts of the beneficiaries

Communication as a bridge

Mariana Belmont[*]

Communication is crucial to coexistence. It is also the foundation for perpetuating the stories that need to be recorded and told in any territories. In peripheral areas, this is no different. Listening to the poet Sérgio Vaz, at one of the weekly meetings of Sarau da Cooperifa (a spoken word event in the south side of the city of São Paulo), is to translate everyday life into words and broaden one's understanding of the future. There we understand that communicating is more than about having a voice – it is a right.

"We must provide widespread access to the word,
desacralize literature.
It is not the one who writes who is sacred,
but the one who reads" (Sérgio Vaz)

There are still many challenges to overcome and paths to walk in order to effectively democratize communication. This concerns not only those who produce information, but also those who consume it. This means enabling universal access to diverse, quality information to all people, in all territories, streets, and city dwellings. To get there, we cannot set aside the dream and the struggle for a communication that connects with what is most real, which is people's lives. Stories based exclusively on data are empty stories. People are changing the world, and it is their stories – of mobilization and the fight for rights – that help activists, advocates, and grassroots organizations to organize and use communication tools more effectively in their daily lives.

If the organizations that build bridges want to allow these new perspectives to take shape, it is crucial to understand the role of communication as key to both the transparency of local processes and the mobilization, coordination, and connection between actors. It is important to perceive communication in all its forms.

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Yes, communication does have a zip code, a race, a color, and a gender. That is why it is so important to discuss, reflect, and identify means to address everyday issues that take into account the identities of those who live in the diverse peripheral territories of this country.

And, no, the internet has still not arrived everywhere. Generational challenges aside, the crux of the matter is lack of access. Data from the Regional Center of Studies for the Development of the Information Society (Cetic.br) show that, today, 46 million Brazilians do not have internet access, 45% because the service is too expensive and 37% for lack of a cell phone, computer or tablet. Bringing together access data and data on territories, it is not surprising that the majority of this population lives in the urban and rural outskirts of large and small cities.

Territory as a form of communication

We spend part of our lives believing that our speech is hard to understand, full of big words that most of the population will not get. Today I wonder if this is still true. It is crucial that communication for sustainability is distributed throughout the territories, and it is really urgent that people and grassroots organizations treat communication as a core issue, but based on everyday experiences, on what makes sense for the reality of each place. What is the use of talking about a polar ice cap with a riverside community in the Amazon? You see, the problem is not talking about or reporting the melting of the polar ice caps, which is, in fact, important, but communicating information without a sense of territoriality. Information must exist as a meeting between concurrent parties, and not like a parachute that simply falls out of nowhere with a given project or action.

In recent years, we have been following a large number of popular communicators who live in favelas and working-class suburbs, people who were raised in the communities that redefine the narratives promoted by the mainstream media and who create content from the perspective of people – with people. Believing in the power and importance of these voices as the leading actors of communication is just as crucial. This is the democratization of communication, the expansion of the organizations' work in and with the communities.

Along the same lines of this form of thinking (and manner of acting in the world), the work of the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice is vital for reinforcing a network that allows sharing experiences, narratives and ways of

making communication touch the ground in all places. In addition to mobilizing more resources and engaging people, this enables the emergence of a historic process of telling stories, as well as powerful processes for other projects and actions to come.

The challenges and perspectives described by the communicators of the organizations comprising the Brazilian Philanthropy Network for Social Justice are many, precisely at a time when the battle for attention and an avalanche of information and misinformation spreads throughout the world. Full democracy has not arrived for the majority of the population. That is why the work of investigating, checking, and producing quality information and media content is so necessary. So civil society organizations can continue to act as a bridge and to support the reinforcement of fight for rights. So democracy can finally reach the places where it needs to be.