The Philantropic Approach of the Trump Foundation

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Introduction: A Philanthropic Gamble?

An article published in the winter of 2016 in the Stanford Social Innovation Review (SSIR) under the title *Making Big Bets for Social Change* identified a broad gulf between the willingness and desire of donors to promote real social change and their actual commitment to this in practice. According to the article, written by staff members from The Bridgespan Group, while 60 percent of major philanthropic foundations claim that social change is one of their priorities, only 20 percent of them invest significant sums in projects that advance this objective.

It is important to appreciate that simply focusing on an objective does not guarantee success. Indeed, there are numerous examples of substantial investments that have come to nothing, such as the 200 million dollars invested over a decade by the Northwest Foundation. The investment did nothing to change the reality facing hungry people, and actually worsened their dependence on food banks. Conversely, scattering small investments over a large number of goals and projects obviously reduces the probability of a meaningful impact and leads to frustration among donors interested in such change.

How is it possible to secure significant progress in tackling a social problem? According to the Bridgespan professionals, this can be achieved when an investor does not confine themselves to local or random outcomes but examines the causes of the problem in depth and works to develop an organizational infrastructure and decisive capability enabling a real response. The risk this entails is high, since it is rare to find social organizations that have the appropriate capabilities to make real progress. In many cases, the investor will need to roll up their sleeves and provide micro assistance in the development of such organizations. Secondly, it is important to maintain a balance of forces with the supported organization, since the organization has practical experience and enjoys an advantage in the provision of the service. If they who pay the piper call the tune, this advantage may be lost. Thirdly, it would seem that a philanthropic gamble must be built on relations of trust between the investor and the leaders of the supported organizations. Intimacy and proximity help calm both sides and enhance their willingness to take risks.

Investors want to know with a reasonable level of certainty that their investment will yield social "profits." They are willing to make compromises regarding testimonies, measurements, and comparisons in the absence of scientific proof. Conversely, when a very substantial sum of money is invested in a focused objective, it is easier to allocate an appropriate portion for ongoing, high-quality, and in-depth research. Research is also important to document what works and what does not, in order to help similar players in the future who in turn work to reduce the social problem.

An investor considering a philanthropic gamble must also take into account image-related risks. Past incidents — including some in Israel, such as the donation to the Tel Aviv Museum by the Ofer family, which did not come to fruition — show that the media are quick to depict large donations as a failure and lack the patience to wait and see the outcomes. Such stigmatization can accompany the investor for a long time to come.

Precisely because of the unusual gamble they entail, such investments face unusually high expectations. Several conditions are needed in order to overcome this heightened risk, including the added value of the investment — that is, recognition that without the investment no change would have taken place at all. Equally, of course, the investor's objective, values, and beliefs must be compatible with those of the supported organization.

The philanthropic market in Israel is small in comparison to the United States. Is there room here, too, for massive focused donations and for philanthropic gambles that are calculated and considered, but not without an element of risk? Is the Israeli public tolerant of such risks, even when they are made with private money? Is it right to prefer large and focused investment as opposed to dispersing donations across diverse fields and objectives? The example of the Trump Foundation may offer some answers to these questions.

Framework and Context

The Trump Foundation is an Israeli foundation that has been active in the field of education since its establishment in 2011. Unlike most foundations, it is spend-down, and from the outset it set itself the goal of attempting to secure its objectives within one decade. The "strategic roadmap" prepared by the Foundation when it embarked on its activities, notes that after five years it would look back in order to analyze and learn from the decisions made and the initiatives launched, both for the purpose of internal learning and improvement and in order to disseminate its knowledge to the philanthropic and professional community. This report, which seeks to document the Foundation's philanthropic methodology and theory of change, is one of a number of efforts the Foundation is making to engage in this process of reflection.

The literature centers on the concept of success: Has the foundation managed to generate the change it defined when it began its work? It is important to emphasize from the outset that a social investor usually encounters complex difficulties, since it is very difficult to identify a successful investment in the social field.

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It is far from easy to attribute any particular outcome to a specific donation from a single source; in many cases, a very long time elapses between the date of investment and the change it creates; there are almost no testimonies or real evidence that can indicate that change has begun, gauge its degree or strength, or evaluate its impact on the beneficiaries. In the absence of the financial bottom line, various methods are used to evaluate impact, but almost all of these face problems of validation and reliability, as well as difficulties hampering comparisons to other social investments. This complexity leads many social investors to select one of two macro strategies:

Some investors choose to abandon the attempt and to confine themselves to anecdotal successes, or to collating success stories (story telling), thank you letters, certificates of appreciation, estimates of the number of participants in the funded activities, and — above all — gestures and acts that create emotions, provide justification for the donation, and reinforce the affinity between the donor and the recipient. The advantages of this approach include the limited resources it requires, the emotional dividends it provides, and the fact that it is impossible to argue with its conclusions.

Conversely, other investors choose to define measurable objectives, collect data, document patterns and trends, learn lessons, evaluate changes, and attempt to measure at least some of these changes. This enables them to attempt to establish whether and to what extent the desired change has taken place, and whether change has improved the beneficiaries' lives or reduced the social problem the resources were intended to address. This approach is difficult and expensive to implement and demands patience. The resources invested in this process may come at the expense of direct investment in solving the social problem the investor planned to address. Nevertheless, this is the best available way to draw real conclusions regarding the quality of the investment.

Along the axis between these two approaches, the Trump Foundation is a strategic philanthropic foundation that belongs to the second group.

What is Strategic Philanthropy?

A distinction is usually made between traditional philanthropy and contemporary philanthropy, also known by many other names — modern, professional, systemic, formative, involved, entrepreneurial, tactical, and strategic philanthropy. Traditional philanthropy was shaped in the Western world in recent centuries in forms of giving whose common denominator is the relatively low involvement of the donor in the ramifications of their donation, accompanied by an approach that mainly reflects compassion and empathy and does not claim to change social orders or repair social problems. Traditional philanthropy embodies unconditional giving, but makes no pretense of addressing the root of the problem. Instead, it seeks to secure a temporary improvement in the spirit of the needy.

It is difficult to pinpoint the precise stage at which a change began to occur in the character of philanthropy. Moreover, even today many philanthropic bodies, and certainly private donors, act in a way that meets the traditional definition of philanthropy. However, the trend to emphasize professionalism, systemic and rational action, and strategic thought is gathering pace and is being adopted by philanthropic foundations around the world. Today this is the *lingua franca* of the field, even if in some cases it is no more than lip service.

Some foundations, both traditional and strategic, deliberately choose to disperse their resources across diverse fields. They do so due to a genuine desire to solve numerous social problems, without any binding order of priority, or out of concern about putting all their eggs in one basket. In other cases, the motivation is to benefit all the public sectors without discrimination. In some instances, this policy is consistent with their commercial approach and interests. Others choose to focus on a specific field, a single social problem, or a population with distinct characteristics. There are few foundations that can concentrate resources and efforts in a manner similar to governments in an attempt to confront the "big issues," as Harvey and Brest note in their book (*Money Well Spent*, 2008). A single foundation cannot assume responsibility for eliminating poverty and must focus its efforts. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of recognizing the limited power, resources, and capabilities of a philanthropic foundation. Relative to government budgets, the total amount of donations made by philanthropic foundations to society as a whole is negligible.

It has not been easy for concepts from the world of business — such as strategy — to enter the world of philanthropy. Players in the field have done their best, and continue to do so, in order to defend the boundaries of their field, arguing that business tools not only do not bring any benefit, but actually damage the pure qualities of philanthropy, such as the volunteering spirit. The early pioneers who promoted strategic discourse did so on the basis of a need to justify their giving in the same manner in which they make business decisions. In the absence of a bottom line, they sought alternative tools that could be used in order to compare potential investments and identify successful opportunities. Dozens, if not hundreds, of tools of diverse kinds have since been developed for measuring social outcomes (GIIN, SROI, OCAT, and many others, most of which can be found on the TRASI website). Nevertheless, there is still no universally-accepted model for measuring social impact, though several tools provide a relatively successful approximation.

Peter Frumkin, one of the most prominent theoreticians who support the strategic approach, argues in his book *Strategic Giving* (2006), that precisely because of the difficulties involved in objective measurement, it is important and worthwhile for philanthropists to focus on a logical decision-making process. He points out that every philanthropic investment constitutes a response to a public and not a private problem — a subject or issue that requires the catalyst of resources and commitment. Giving realizes its potential when the giver brings their preferences, values, and basic assumptions to the process. It can apply solutions that governments cannot implement, if the donor also brings their own life experience, commitment, and caring. The way to solving problems rests with those who respond to the challenge, and donors, too, cannot shirk this responsibility. They must decide what should be done, what is worth doing, and how — and these are purely strategic questions.

What is strategy? Frumkin proposes a model that helps the investor to ask themselves five questions:

.1 Values. What do I believe in, what motivates me, what has value for me, what is important to me, and what am I not willing to give up? How will my giving reflect these values and priorities?

2. Theory of change. What is the logical and causal model and what is the sequence of actions that will lead from the current reality to the desired reality? What is government's function in providing the solution to the problem and what relationship must I develop with government?

3. Agents of change. What social organizations should I invest in in order to realize change? What coordination is needed between all the players in order for change to occur effectively?

4. Philanthropic style. Do I want to micromanage, take risks, cooperate with other funding bodies, support new projects or proven ideas?

5. Timeframe. When is the right time to invest in the organization and the initiative, for how long should I invest, what is my exit strategy, and how will sustainability be ensured in the long term after the foundation ends its grant?

In their book *Give Smart* (2011), Tom Tierney and Joel Fleishman suggest a slightly different model. The six questions that a donor must ask themselves are: What are my values and beliefs? What is "success" and how can it be achieved? What am I responsible for? What do I need to do so that the work will take place? How should I work with the supported organizations? Am I getting better? The authors claim that ignoring any one of these questions will reduce the chances that the donor will secure the desired outcomes.

The theory of change and the logic model are basic tools in strategic philanthropy. The logic model details all the resources and relevant actions for inputs, actions, outputs, outcomes, and impact. The theory of change specifies how the social problem will be solved or alleviated, how the foundation's actions will catalyze and impact the social system, and how the activities will expand to a broad scope over time.

These are important tools for planning and evaluation, but they also serve as the "psychological contract" between the foundation and its partners. However, the use of these tools demands modesty due to an underlying problem: However effective intervention may be, it is not responsible alone for any given outcome. Numerous complementary and competing variables also come into play and contribute to strengthening or weakening a given trend. No outcome can be attributed exclusively to a single investment. It must also be recalled that a logic model is not a closed system, rather it is dynamic and influenced by external factors. The logic model is particularly suited to organizations that focus on a particular field of activity, but may prove misleading or problematic when applied to organizations that run multiple initiatives in different fields. These reservations may deter potential investors, but there is no replacement for a commitment to the desired change on the part of the donor and an attempt to identify the causal relationship between the donation and the change. In the final analysis, every donation entails risk. The principal motivation for a logic model is not planning or evaluation, but the clarity it offers from the donor themselves, enabling the identification of the approach that will secure the desired outcomes to the best of the donor's judgment.

The Case of the Trump Foundation

Let us return to the question of the philanthropic gamble. To the best of my understanding, the specific initiative launched by the Trump Foundation — which is similar to that of the Avi Chai Foundation, with certain differences — meets the definition of the experts from Bridgespan and constitutes a philanthropic gamble, certainly with reference to the overall scope of philanthropic investments in Israel. An investment of 600 million shekels over a defined timeframe of 10 years in a clearly-delineated sphere of activity, part of which requires the establishment, from scratch, of mechanisms, partnerships, and projects, certainly constitutes a philanthropic gamble. If successful, it may change fundamental patterns, reverse tends, and create social change with ramifications in the fields of education and higher education, employment, entrepreneurship, innovation, and so forth that will be felt over the coming generations. Conversely, failure — or failure to identify failure — will throw into the literal wastebin and the wastebin of history vital funds, and is liable to impair future philanthropic initiatives.

In the case of the Trump Foundation, the key word is opportunity. The book *Startup Nation* appeared in 2009, highlighting Israel's unique capabilities. The family and the founders of the foundation realized that education was the field in which they should be investing. In contrast to the traditional philanthropic approach, the founders did not want to establish a charitable organization. Rather, they identified a social problem and felt obliged to remedy, or at least to improve, the situation. From the outset the foundation was motivated by a clear sense of urgency. It decided to focus on mathematics and science education as an engine capable of pulling forward the other carriages on the train.

The founders recognized that while a window of opportunity for improvement had opened, it would not remain open for long. Accordingly, they decided to focus their efforts rapidly and over a set timeframe. A second opportunity was largely responsible for shaping the foundation's theory of change and its decision to concentrate on a specific and unique niche. Although the Israeli government renewed investments in education, and indeed did so at a level above the average for the OECD countries, the results of international measurement tests published in 2009 (particularly the PISA tests, which examine not only literacy and reading skills but also the atmosphere in the school) positioned Israel below the average obtained by these countries. This suggested a gulf between the investments made by the Ministry of Education and the results, and raised concern that Israel was beginning to lag behind in a field in which it had been thought to enjoy a relative advantage. Moreover, the figures showed that other countries, such as Poland and Canada, had managed to progress and to improve their relative position in the ranking significantly, presumably thanks to pinpointed investments. These findings were an eye-opener for many people, including the founders of the Trump Foundation.

Two years earlier, the McKinsey report examined the factors behind the success of the best education systems in the world. The report noted the lack of success of structural and budgetary reforms in securing change in education systems, and identified the principal factor on which almost everything depends: the teachers. The report convinced many people that improving students' achievements requires investment in the human dimension, i.e., teachers and the quality of their teaching, and that it was now possible to learn from the experience of countries that have been successful in this respect. More importantly, the Israeli education system was also aware of a window of opportunity that might close, and was willing to listen to new ideas that could change the situation. The desire to exploit these opportunities led the Trump Foundation to a promising starting point. Now it needed to choose a course of action to realize the founders' vision. The question was — how exactly should this be achieved?

Calibrating the Focus

The "why" had been clear to the founders of the Trump Foundation from the outset, but they now had to translate this into the "how" and "what." It is apparent that the process of preliminary clarification has become embedded as the foundation's preferred modus operandi and is returned to repeatedly.

That is open and transparent consultation that welcomes criticism, comments, and revisions, resulting in a strategic document that is coherent yet open to all and more complex than usual in the field. These have become the Foundation's hallmark and a source of pride for those who work in it. Alongside the considerable investment in this process, it offers additional advantages, particularly in terms of the organizational culture and the development of awareness and legitimacy inside the organization and beyond, regarding the spirit of the foundation's actions. The involvement of people from within the organization in the process of drafting these founding documents may secure at least two positive outcomes: It creates a common language and common denominator that facilitate coordination, synchronization, cooperation, and the reduction of room for error and opposition; and it reinforces the sense of ownership of all those involved in the final document. From an external perspective, the process itself conveys a sense of seriousness, professionalism, and credibility, while the content of the document conveys messages to all the stakeholders, helping to coordinate expectations and even delineating methods and objectives for potential partners. To an external observer, the large number of drafts produced before the final version, and the element of transparency that exposes interim comments to anyone interested, may be misperceived as ambiguity. Others, however, will find in this practice a calming message of self-confidence.

The Foundation's professional staff drew two alarming insights from their initial encounter with the various reports. The first was that the dramatic gulfs were evidence of a real problem. The second was a combination of modesty and concern: they gained the impression that the problem was so profound and extensive that any solution would require cooperation with numerous bodies. Rather than abandoning the issue and surrendering to the scale of the challenge, however, they decided to confront it head on and to turn to the world of knowledge in order to locate appropriate solutions. The sense of urgency and the recognition of a transient window of opportunity filtered through to the professional staff, who embarked on a series of consultations with experts from the educational field and the world of philanthropy in order to brainstorm and receive feedback on their preliminary ideas. After much discussion, the Foundation decided to concentrate on teachers, and in particular on tools that would enable teachers to devote their time, capabilities, skills, and energy to the 15 percent of students who belong to the second circle around the circle of outstanding students. The Foundation deliberately refrained from declaring that it was "dealing with education." Although such broad definitions are common and facilitate flexibility, they tend to have the opposite impact to that sought by the leading organization. The Trump Foundation prefers a precise and defined process, with clear components that can be realized during its lifespan, rather than a vague definition whose successful implementation cannot easily be gauged.

Many educators and educational experts face a dilemma: should they focus their efforts mainly on the outstanding students in each class, hoping that the engine will pull forward the other carriages in the train; or should they invest in the weaker students who need the most help, to prevent them falling behind and slowing down the class? The Trump Foundation decided to set aside the layer of outstanding students, comprising approximately six percent of the total student population, based on the assumption that they need less help than their peers. It decided to focus its investments on the 15 percent of students who form the second circle, and who can move forward to expand the circle of outstanding students. After studying the issue and understanding the data, the Foundation reached the conclusion that these 15 percent do not belong to any particular population sector and do not share a common profile. Neither was any difference found between the center of the country and peripheral areas. On the contrary — these students come from diverse population groups and are regular youngsters in every respect. This fact helped shape a program that is "blind" to the different sectors and facilitates investment across groups and regions, without the need to prioritize any specific group.

The Foundation's Strategy

As a self-aware foundation that applies strategic thinking, the Trump Foundation engages in frequent discussions of its strategy, revising and adjusting its perceptions on the basis of insights drawn from discussions with experts, the encounter with the field, and analysis of its own activities. In a departure from the usual practice in Israel, the foundation also involves the public, inviting stakeholders to comment and make proposals concerning its strategy, as published on its website in a series of documents.

The first document, published in 2011, emphasized the window of opportunity that had opened, through which the Foundation planned to launch an initiative to improve the quality of education in Israel. The Foundation identified an awakening of interest in the issue in official circles, based on the analysis of the deterioration in the achievements of Israeli school students on international tests. The government announced a change in its policy on teachers' salaries and set itself the ambitious goal of closing the gap in knowledge between Israeli students and their peers overseas. From the very beginning, the Foundation developed a clear and precise theory of change. It decided to focus on mathematics and science studies, and to attempt to motivate students to choose to study at the five-unit level in the matriculation examination. This was to be achieved through investment in improving the quality of teachers. This outline remained unchanged in the subsequent documents. Three programs of activity were also apparent from the first document:

On the basis of the model presented by Joel Fleishman in his book *The Foundation* (2007), the Trump Foundation adopted three strategies for promoting high-quality teaching in mathematics and the sciences in post-elementary schools in Israel: recruiting excellence in the service of education; nurturing clinical expertise among teachers; and modeling support networks for high-quality teaching. The Foundation decided to play a distinct role in each of these strategies. Fleishman suggests that foundations can choose to play one of three roles: driver, partner or catalyst.

The Trump Foundation chose to act as a catalyst in its plan to recruit excellence to teaching. The Foundation's goal was to ensure that the teaching profession is led by capable teachers who can have a positive impact on their students. The attractiveness of the teaching profession depends on numerous variables, most of which lie beyond the Foundation's sphere of influence. The Foundation decided to create examples of success that would attract the most outstanding teachers. Given the unpromising starting conditions, the foundation was obliged to initiate preliminary training and jumpstart its routine activities.

The Trump Foundation chose to act as a driver in its program to nurture teachers' clinical expertise. The innovative concept of "clinical teaching" refers to the strengthening of teachers' practical capabilities in the classroom, alongside specific professional knowledge.

These skills enable teachers to provide a fitting response for every student in a heterogeneous class; to diagnose each student's capabilities; set them a high target; adjust teaching methods to their needs; monitor their progress; and provide constructive feedback. There was no need to invent this aspect of teacher training from scratch since training institutions and professional development frameworks are already engaged in the nurturing of teachers' content-based knowledge. However, in order to complement this knowledge with the required clinical skills, the Foundation chose to work with these institutions, helping them to build components for more practical professional development focusing on the student's learning. The Foundation would later act as a driver with its partners, connecting these basic components to form a center of expertise to advance the field in Israel.

The Trump Foundation chose to act as a partner in its program to model networks for supporting high-quality teaching. An excellent teacher needs a support network so that all of his or her students can secure high achievements. This support network includes various components, such as work methods, the use of technology, a professional community, infrastructures, and management. In the initial stage, the Trump Foundation would assist in the development and introduction of a professional infrastructure for these components, in order to ensure that they are available to the education system. In the second stage, the Foundation would partner with a small number of local authorities and school networks, helping them to model the successful implementation of all the components.

The aforementioned initial document clearly defined the undesirable phenomenon that the Foundation sought to correct these, while presenting objectives for realizing change. Even while the document did not fully clarify the causal connection between the intervention and the desired outcome, the Foundation's theory of change, the theory of leverage and the macro theory are clear to the reader. Naturally, the explanation was accompanied by statistics and other findings supporting the logic model and reinforcing the Foundation's choices. It would be unreasonable to expect that a preliminary document, published before the activities began, could validate the selected course of action — particularly in the absence of similar experience by other foundations. According to the document, the Foundation expected that within seven to ten years it would initiate the establishment of an Israeli institute for advanced teaching, introduce a prize recognizing outstanding teaching, and establish coaching and training tracks for excellent teachers — as a kind of "elite force" helping to attract many others to the field.

The Foundation also hoped to establish a municipal model in cooperation with local bodies, one of the outcomes of which would be a significant increase in the number of students taking five-unit mathematics and physics matriculation exams. The document also presents the principal structures that would operate within the framework of the Foundation and contribute to realizing the theory of change. Even at this early stage, the document mentions the Foundation's undertaking to examine its progress on a quarterly basis, and in a thorough and in-depth manner five years after its establishment.

A year later, in 2012, a similar document was produced ahead of the discussions by the Foundation's Advisory Council. The document reflects the questions and insights that accumulated over the course of the initial activities. The 2012 paper explains the method of selection of the methodology, which is dedicated to increasing the number of students taking mathematics and physics at the level of five study units, as opposed to other possible courses of action, such as helping weaker students or outstanding students, direct pedagogic activities, establishing a network of schools, developing and inculcating teaching and learning technologies, and public advocacy and campaigning. The main reason given was that these alternative niches lacked a relative advantage or added value and would not advance the overall vision. Another factor was the Foundation's recognition of its limited power, and the clarification that it intended to concentrate its efforts in a single sphere rather than disperse them over several areas. Once again, the selected sphere was the improvement of teaching in general, and the inculcation of clinical teaching in particular. The three-way model (catalyst, driver, partner) was replaced by a model reflecting the Foundation's sense of urgency. The Foundation was to function as a type of pyromaniac lighting localized fires, and as an engineer locating the cogs and defining vital actions, key stages, milestones, criteria for implementation, and the desired pace of progress.

The significant change evident in 2012 also reflects an internal contradiction. On the one hand, the Foundation abandoned its intention to operate in a linear fashion and to make gradual progress, stage by stage, from recruiting support to training. The leaders of the Foundation now recognized the importance of establishing tools and means in a simultaneous and parallel manner — particularly the components of the support network. However, as part of the process of drawing interim conclusions and developing guiding principles, it was decided to work in a gradual manner. The system was not yet mature enough, and there was a fear that excessive speed could impair the credibility of the initiative as a whole. The document included another important addition in terms of sharpening and refining the criteria for implementation. The Foundation realized that the preliminary criteria had been overly cautious, and now sought to enhance the precision of certain criteria. This change reflects growing confidence in the steps that had already been taken and in the chosen direction. As befits a document submitted for discussion by the Advisory Council, the document includes numerous questions for discussion and consideration.

At the end of 2014 the Foundation published a new strategic document. As its title makes clear, the document constituted a summary of insights raised by the members of the Advisory Council. One of the main insights relates to the innovative concept of "clinical teaching," acknowledging that this term is not easily accepted and adopted by professionals. There is also recognition of the importance of high-quality teaching. In light of this insight, the foundation realized that it must find a compromise between the perceptions of the professionals and its desire to secure change. From the Foundation's standpoint, it has completed its infancy stage — or "start-up stage" as the document puts it — and this stage has already yielded its first tentative successes. Now it must "put its foot to the gas pedal." The recommendation to the Foundation was to deepen the program to promote high-quality teaching; to network all the stakeholders systematically; to move from the development of tools to their implementation and modeling; and to invest in data collection, documentation, and measurement — an aspect that received little attention in the previous papers. Without relying on Fleishman's model, the paper details the means by which the Foundation should strengthen its partnerships, build networks, and develop capabilities. The paper includes a recommendation to resume public media work, an aspect that had been examined in the past but rejected.

The last paper, to date, was published in 2015 and presents a portrait of the Trump Foundation's initiative after five years.

The introduction includes the important statistic that the Foundation has approved 125 projects at a total cost of 100 million shekels, out of the 600 million shekels allocated for the initiative as a whole. This proportion reflects the Foundation's choice to spread its expenditure over the period, and to expend larger sums in its latter phase rather than in the beginning. A clear chart shows the change that has occurred over the Foundation's period of work in the key criterion: the number of students taking mathematics at the five-unit level — even if this does not include evidence showing that the Foundation's activities have necessarily influenced this finding. The paper presents a new model of "functions" based on the original model with some elaborations. The document explains that the Foundation worked in stages: in the initial stage, it served as a catalyst, and in the subsequent stages, it plans to work as a connector, builder, and ultimately as a mentor. In contrast to the earlier documents, this paper does not confine itself to strategy, but also includes detailed discussion of tactics — i.e., the programs and projects that go together to form the big picture. The document also discusses the leveraging of change (Frumkin's theory of leverage) but does not, however, address the causal relationship that could prove a correlation between the Foundation's intervention and the evidence of change to date.

The Theory of Change

Every philanthropic foundation has developed its own strategy, whether worded clearly or less so, and whether transparent and accessible, or more obscure. We have already discussed the importance of a public strategy developed in partnership with the members of the organization, as well as the central role of strategy in the Trump Foundation's experience. Additional characteristics in this context distinguish one organization from another. These include the level of flexibility or rigidity in conserving the strategic framework or in its replacement as conditions change. In the case of the Trump Foundation, a welcome measure of duality can be seen. On the one hand, there is an emphasis on strategic discipline and a tendency to avoid engaging in actions inconsistent with the strategy. On the other, we see openness to change as something that is particularly vital in conditions of uncertainty. Adjusting strategy if and when new data emerges and renders earlier decisions irrelevant is a necessary process.

A key component in the Trump Foundation's strategy is the recurring image of "scaffolding." To an extent, this metaphor was chosen in contrast to the usual modus operandi of other foundations. Scaffolding is "a temporary structure that provides support… in order to build or renovate larger structures." This is exactly how the Foundation perceives itself: not as the thing itself, but as a supporting arm; not as a permanent structure, but as a temporary one; not as a simple structure from simple materials, but as a framework that facilitates the construction of edifices that are larger, more stable, and last longer than itself. The Foundation considered various alternatives when it selected its theory of change, including a number that have been applied successfully in Israel. Among other options, it could have offered additional support for the existing system, for example through scholarships or incentives for teachers, establishing training and empowerment centers for outstanding students, or developing a network of schools as a model for replication. The Trump Foundation chose to go with the system rather than bypassing it. It seeks to help the system take responsibility for the solution it has presented. Colleagues I interviewed also formed a positive impression of the Foundation's ability to work together with the government, present a horizontal perspective beyond the level of the project itself, and to maintain philanthropic partnerships on critical issues for the future of Israel. This capability was described as a vital condition for success.

The Trump Foundation enjoyed an inherent advantage over many other organizations. Its leaders wisely selected measurable objectives for which it is relatively easy to collect, document, measure, and compare achievements with the starting point. This is a lesson that is worth holding onto. Colleagues I interviewed also praised the care taken by the Foundation to define a clear problem, set measureable objectives, define a solution within a fixed timeframe, and plan actions to secure the solution. All these constitute strengths in the Foundation's activities.

The Exit Strategy

In the philanthropic context, the term "exit strategy" usually refers to the manner in which the foundation notifies its grantees of its intention to discontinue funding, so that they can prepare ahead and find alternative funding sources. In the case of the Trump Foundation, the definition is slightly different. Everyone recognizes that the Foundation does not intend to remain in the picture in the long term. This entails disadvantages, particularly in terms of uncertainty among the stakeholders regarding "the day after." They wonder who will serve as a facilitating and catalyzing body, and above all — who will provide support and funding. Some of the programs may be cut, reduced, or even closed. Employees in the partner organizations are liable to lose their jobs, suppliers will lose an important client, and volunteers will lose the place where they have volunteered. An idea that has gained a foothold is liable to lose the trust and legitimacy it has won, lose prestige, and be replaced by more attractive ideas in the marketplace, thereby impairing continuity. Programs that survive the change are liable to suffer from inadequate maintenance. The professional community is also liable to put the past behind it and to turn to competing programs with a longer horizon and lifespan. At the very least, training may be interrupted and sporadic. The government and the authorities are liable to renege on their promise to assume ownership of the various programs, and in the absence of the scaffolding the building may collapse.

Is it possible to achieve real change in a decade? If not, should the task be abandoned at its midpoint? Who will preserve what has already been achieved and who will ensure ongoing development? Even if reality proves to be less dramatic than this description implies, it is important to prepare remedies and solutions in advance for every scenario. The Trump Foundation recognizes that the real test will come on the day it closes. Accordingly, it has emphasized that while momentum is important, implementation is even more so. Once the professional community and the government make the program their own, the Foundation will know that it has accomplished its mission.

Alongside the advantages, we must highlight the sense of urgency and the awareness of all those involved that the window of opportunity that has opened will eventually close. For some people, and perhaps also for some organizations, a clear deadline is beneficial and brings their positive qualities to the forefront. The organization strives to find the best possible partners and to learn quickly from its mistakes. The Foundation does not enjoy the prerogative of eternity, and this influences the pace of events.

The partner organizations that receive the support are also influenced by this reality and act with a sense of urgency. The Trump Foundation has been careful to select strong partner organizations, and even after doing so it supports them and enhances their capabilities. The setup is more like a social movement with commitment than a random collection of franchisees.

What will happen in the field after exit? This is a dramatic question, because it is not easy to change culture. The situation is reminiscent of the Talmudic story of Honi HaMe'aggel, who was walking along the road when he saw a man planting a carob tree. Honi asked him how long it would be until the tree would bear fruit, and the man answered, "70 years." Honi asked, "Surely you will not still be around in 70 years to see this tree bear fruit?" And the man answered that he came into a world full of fruit trees planted by his ancestors for his benefit, and so he was doing for his descendants.

The Trump Foundation also invests in projects that, it hopes, will continue to operate after it departs, so that others can enjoy the fruits. As it declares, to this end it is willing to act without honor and praise, and it emphasizes the importance of the initiative and the shared achievement rather than the name of the Foundation. The Foundation's heads are fond of saying that the initiative is what matters, not the brand. The broad landscape of initiatives launched by many different bodies are the Foundation's pride and joy. ■