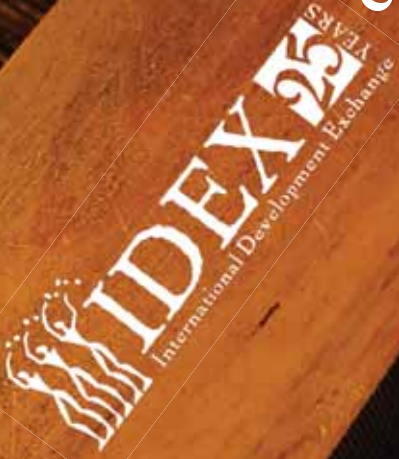


annual  
review  
2010/II

celebrating 25 years of IDEX



# mission

IDEX promotes sustainable solutions to poverty by providing long-term grants and access to resources to locally run organizations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

# vision

we envision a global community that embraces economic, social and cultural rights in which all people may access resources, preserve their environment, and are empowered to live free from poverty and discrimination.

# values

- a participatory model of international philanthropy that addresses the power imbalance between the donor and grantee and prioritizes the voices of the communities
- grassroots solutions free from agendas imposed by governments, corporations, or funding agencies
- local knowledge and leadership that encourages sustained community development
- equity, accountability, and integrity with our grantees and in all our relationships
- open communication and transparency

**empowering women,  
building local economies and  
caring for the environment  
for 25 years**



“ IDEX has shown a great desire in supporting local knowledge and leadership that encourages sustainable community development. For that we are most grateful to IDEX and her supporters.”- *Mary Tal, founder and Director of IDEX Partner Whole World Women’s Association in South Africa.*



# in conversation



Paul Strasburg  
*IDEX Founder*



Rajasvini Bhansali  
*Executive Director*

Dear Friends,

In lieu of a traditional Executive Summary, I thought I'd take this opportunity to share with you an inspiring conversation I had recently with IDEX's founder, Paul Strasburg. This past year, as we reflect on a quarter century of partnering with locally-led organizations, we are reminded once again that we have always been a learning organization; we adapt to our partners' needs and learn with them about innovative strategies and practices that work. Each day when I step into the IDEX office, I feel the force of a universe of committed, passionate advocates for real change. Incredible people approach IDEX daily as donors, volunteers and allies to become a part of this movement for lasting and sustainable change, one that respects, dignifies and learns from the Global South while mobilizing good will and resources in the Global North. What a true honor and a privilege to be a part of this positive, growing community.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rajasvini Bhansali". The ink is a dark color, possibly black or dark blue.

*Executive Director*

**Vini:** *So when the idea of IDEX was born 25 years ago, what was your ultimate vision?*

**Paul:** What drove me in those early days was the very personal and rewarding experience I had had as a Peace Corps volunteer working with a few small villages in Thailand in the mid-1960s. When I came back to the US, I found so much cynicism about foreign assistance: corruption, misuse of funds, and the belief that we could use this money better here in the U.S. My vision was to let Americans be inspired by what people in the Global South were able to do for themselves with a little bit of assistance.

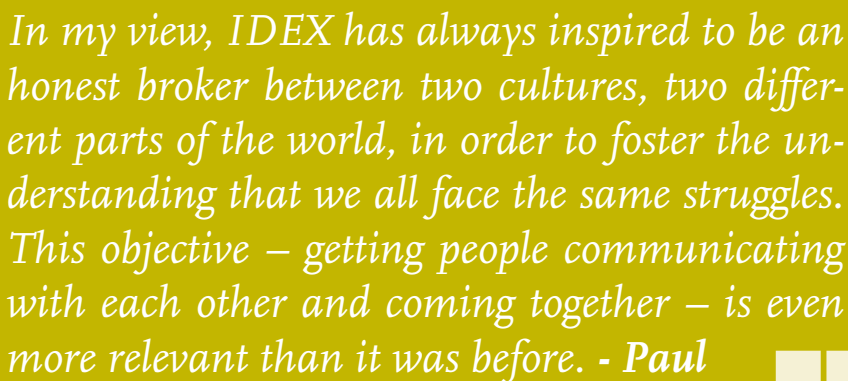
I felt the only way to do this was to let people see the process as closely as they could, whether the information coming back was that we succeeded or that we failed; and if we failed, what could we learn from it? We involved the donors in this process. We laid out the project on paper, told them why we thought it was the best thing to do, and let them pick the projects they wanted to support and kept them informed.

An underlying value that infused the way we worked was equal exchange between the recipients of the funds and the donor community. I think IDEX has pushed that to a wonderful place right now. Twenty-five years ago it was basically letters and telegrams that brought us into contact with each other. Now, IDEX is much more connected. IDEX brings partners up here to share their challenges and successes. IDEX uses its website to give a voice to people to tell their stories. And you have more linkages to US groups that are working on similar issues as your international partners.

**Vini:** *From your perspective, what in the “IDEX story” has inspired you?*

**Paul:** After I came back from the Peace Corps, I worked for big organizations and city government. I had fine experiences, but they were on the whole unsatisfying. So I came back to the role I was able to play in the Peace Corps, and the privileged perspective it gave me to see how a community could get motivated with a little bit of assistance to bring about positive change itself. I asked myself, “Why not invest time into seeing if you can make this work on a larger scale?”

I took a year off to reflect and came up with the idea that eventually became IDEX. Of course, it wasn't my idea alone: many people I talked with along the way added terrific ideas and recommendations. By the time we created an actual organization, a group of people had been formed who were deeply invested and played vital roles in getting it off the ground.



*In my view, IDEX has always inspired to be an honest broker between two cultures, two different parts of the world, in order to foster the understanding that we all face the same struggles. This objective – getting people communicating with each other and coming together – is even more relevant than it was before. - Paul*

**Vini:** *From the beginning it seems like IDEX has been about relationships and connecting people with each other. 25 years later, how do you see IDEX still being relevant?*

**Paul:** It seems to me there is more poverty and more marginalization in more parts of the world now than there was then, so certainly the underlying issue of concern has not gone away.

In another way, IDEX is even more relevant today than it was before. The American public is much more used to news about international affairs. They are bombarded by it! But IDEX has the capacity to make big issues seem personal and give people a taste of how seemingly complex issues actually play out at the grassroots level.

**Vini:** *In this moment I think it's really important to hear that because there's an argument that says 25 years later there are so many more grantmaking organizations, so what really is IDEX's particular role?*


**Paul:** There are big organizations doing good work, especially in the field of relief and response to major calamities. This kind of work requires major resources. Many organizations also aspire to get routine aid to the community level, but the bigger they get, the more difficult it becomes to operate at the community level in a sustained and authentic way.

They often lose that sense of deeply understanding how communities change and evolve over time, and what is going to be effective in the long


run. IDEX, by working with small groups of people over long periods, has an opportunity to dissect the changes that occur at the community level and assess what kind of external and internal resources are effective at making positive change.

*Vini: There is also a transformational aspect to this. IDEX allows itself to be changed by the realities on the ground.*

**Paul:** Yes, exactly, and I think this is also key. I see IDEX being open and honest and receptive to what it learns. I don't see any ideology – it is experimental and empirically based. But it's great to see that certain values are still central: the values of mutual respect, equality, openness and communication. It's about the ability to adapt, and that ability is greatly enhanced by being small and lean and working through relationships that deepen over time.



*I frequently get asked: 'How many staff members do you have?' Six full time plus many volunteers. 'How is it that you are doing so much?' We are built on the strength of passionate, committed and dedicated people and supporters who give generously of their time and resources and are driven by IDEX's vision of democratic partnerships with the Global South to address root causes of poverty. - Vini*



**Paul:** It's true – many people are so intimately connected to IDEX. If you want to work well, people – from staff, to volunteers, donors, and the community – have to feel like they have a voice. People with shared values then feel empowered to make a contribution. I also see how IDEX has been true in its values for the past 25 years. IDEX has changed in many ways, but people still connect to these values.

*Vini: I often meet people who were IDEX volunteers 20 some years ago, who felt that they were fundamentally shaped by this experience. What was that process like in those early days?*

**Paul:** Well, it came about partly out of this ideology of openness and sharing, and partly out of necessity. We had big ambitions. We were going to support projects at the end of the small dirt roads all over the world. How do you find them? How do you evaluate them? How do you even pronounce the name of the villages you are talking to? It was a big challenge when we were in a two-room office above a bicycle store in Palo Alto! We turned to returned Peace Corps volunteers, since there were many in the Bay Area and they were thirsty for change.

We raised the money for our projects one project at a time. Our first annual budget was something like \$17,000. Volunteers sat around someone's living room and discussed what projects we should fund. As IDEX grew – at one point we were getting proposals from over twenty countries and we were trying to honor them all equally – it became really difficult. Even the volunteer corps decided there had to be more order to this! It was well-intentioned, but not very systematic, so changes were introduced gradually. Over the years, IDEX has grown so much.

*Vini: We see many people looking to get engaged again in IDEX-type giving that has deep impact. We are continuing with our effort to bring together folks who see beyond the dominant form of international development that is not based from the communities' perspective. 25 years later we are still advocating for people-centered development. But more and more we are feeling that our message is resonating again. People are cutting through the cynicism.*

**Paul:** It's a hopeful place to be. Let me ask you: What does being the head of IDEX mean to you?

*Vini: It is very exciting to be a part of a new kind of IDEX family. I have been saying over and over that we are getting back to our roots. And I don't mean to the times of no staff and no office! We are going back to the roots in the sense of bringing together long-time supporters and new people. We are going back to what is real and the stories we need to be telling.*

*It has been such a big year for us, engaging in conversations about global philanthropy and actively participating in vibrant social movements. For example, it is very exciting when one of our partners like Biowatch from South Africa can be at the US Social Forum alongside black farmers in Detroit and share how*

*they are both fighting for environmental justice – to make sure that genetically modified seeds are not introduced in their communities by big agribusiness. Groups from opposite sides of the world are saying that they have learned so much through these exchanges. Those are real thrilling moments for me.*

*We are in a moment where we are appreciating how much we have to learn from the Global South. I love it when I hear – what does the South teach us about how to do development? And IDEX is continuing to lead in the sector as a learning, reflective organization, that takes impact as seriously as it takes amplifying the voices of the communities that we serve.*

**Paul:** This is terrific. I like your vision. You can see the world changing and IDEX is adapting to these changes. The US is increasingly relevant to the Global South as a market but perhaps irrelevant as a source of inspiration for how to organize to truly meet the needs of one's community. All of us in the US have so much more to learn from the Global South about building communities.

**Vini:** *Yes, and from my perspective Paul, there is a lot to learn and so little I know and the world is changing fast.*

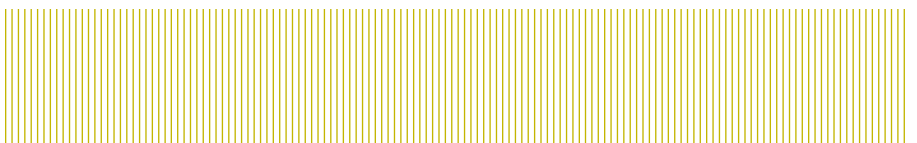
**Paul:** It is a good posture to operate from. I wake up everyday feeling that I know less than I knew the day before.

**Vini:** *So where do you think that we will be 25 years from now?*

**Paul:** Oh my goodness! I could not even imagine 25 years ago what IDEX would be today.

I just hope that it is still connecting communities around the globe to each other to make real change happen. Maybe 25 years from now you will be able to transport the whole IDEX staff to Durban by pushing a button, vaporize and reappear over there!

Seriously, I'd like to see IDEX staying open and being a clear-headed and honest filter between important grassroots work and the philanthropic community. I hope I am around 25 years from now to see it.





## program highlights

IDEX funds grassroots organizations directly to ensure that every dollar is fully leveraged to benefit those who understand the challenges and can implement solutions. IDEX has the networks and relationships in place to identify effective organizations and we work closely with these groups to help them create sustainable solutions to the challenges their communities face.

Since IDEX began, we have seen that small grants are an important vehicle for grassroots change. IDEX primarily provides flexible general support grants (typical grant amounts range from \$5,000 - \$20,000 per year) for organizations to allocate funds where they are most needed.

Right from the beginning, IDEX has emphasized supporting people who have traditionally been excluded from the benefits of development assistance – particularly women and indigenous people.

During Fiscal Year 2011 (July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011), we were honored to work with 27 partners and grantees across Africa, Asia and Latin America.

dignity ●

equity ●

sustainability ●

solidarity ●



**IDEX has funded \$5 million in grants in the past 25 years to grassroots groups at the frontlines of social change.**

# latin america - FY11 grantees

## Guatemala

Association for the Promotion of Health and Socio-Economic Development (APROSADSE)

**The Institute for Overcoming Urban Poverty (ISMU)**

Women's Association for the Development of Sacatepéquez (AFEDES)

## Mexico

Education for Peace (EduPaz)

Ñepi Behña – Women of Dignity

Social and Economic Development for Indigenous Mexicans (DESMI)



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## partner spotlight



“IDEX’s support is key for us to keep responding to the true needs of the community, such as right to education, housing improvements and survival in itself. Not only through training, but also through small microcredits that have allowed families to have a basis to start and expand their small businesses, which then snowball into other effects for families and the larger community.” - *Elvira Sanchez, director and cofounder of ISMU*

In light of Guatemala’s 36-year civil war that displaced huge numbers of people to already crowded urban areas, ISMU focuses on helping communities mobilize collectively to get their needs met and their rights recognized.

When IDEX started partnering with ISMU, they were an effective organization focusing on housing needs and community services such as schools and childcare centers for low-income people in the slums of Guatemala City. Over the course of our long-term partnership, they have deepened their impact in addressing the root causes of homelessness and poverty. They work with communities who traditionally have had no say about the laws and policies that affect them to fight to change unjust laws themselves. ISMU is a powerful example of how systemic level change can occur when the people most effected by poverty are empowered to create change.

Today, ISMU is a thriving network of organizations working in 22 communities. Over the last 12 years of partnering with IDEX, ISMU has scaled up many of its programs by utilizing IDEX grants to build more effective infrastructure, systems, skills and capacity. ISMU has successfully diversified its funding and expanded its services to include disaster preparedness and response, women’s microenterprise and employment, and youth development.

**ISMU has been an IDEX partner since 1999.**



# asia - FY11 grantees

## India

Center for People's Science for Rural Development (GRAVIS)

Sahyog Sansthan (Work Together to Help Organizations)

Chintan Environmental Research and Action Group

Impulse NGO Network

Action Northeast Trust (ANT)

Manipur Women Gun Survivor Network

Mine Labor Protection Campaign Trust (MLPC)

Navdanya Farm

Rajsamand Mahila Manch

## Nepal

ASHA - Nepal

Women's Awareness Center Nepal (WACN)



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## partner spotlight ●



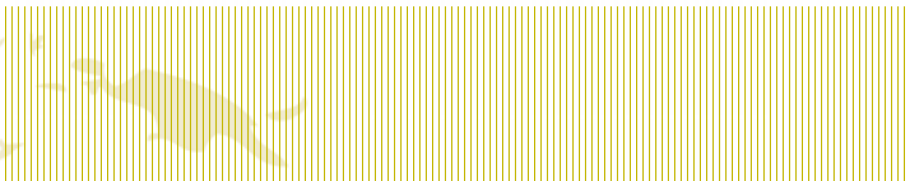
“What inspires me? The people of Thar may be impoverished but they are keen to actively participate in community development. I personally enjoy the sense that the organization is working for and alongside the people and in a sustainable way. We also draw inspiration from developing sustainable partnerships with communities that do not revolve around financial resources only, but the ones that have peace, integrity, and mutual respect embedded in it.

*In our long journey with IDEX, GRAVIS has changed tremendously and has learned a great deal. And always, from the beginning, the needs of the communities have always been given priority.”- Prakash Tiwagi, GRAVIS*

GRAVIS, founded by Gandhian activists, promotes self-reliance to improve the social, economic and political opportunities of Thar Desert peoples in Rajasthan, India. GRAVIS’ approach focuses on social transformation- rather than economic assistance to create self-reliant village communities. GRAVIS’ wide-ranging programs include education, health, women’s empowerment and income generation, microcredit, water resource development, agriculture, forestry, land management, and labor rights of mineworkers.

When IDEX’s partnership with GRAVIS first began, they worked in a few villages. Today, GRAVIS is the second largest non-governmental organization in Rajasthan, with programs growing to serve 500 remote, tribal communities. IDEX’s long-term core support grants to GRAVIS, providing them with the flexibility to allocate funds in ways that best address the needs of their communities, has been a critical factor in this organization’s growth trajectory.

**GRAVIS has been an IDEX partner since 1999.**



# africa - FY11 grantees

## South Africa

Angus Gillis Foundation

Biowatch

Hlomelikusasa – “Skills for the Future” – Rural Women’s Development Network

Positive Women’s Network

Rural Education, Awareness and Community Health (REACH)

South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA)

Surplus People’s Project

**Whole World Women Association (WWWA)**

Women’s Net

## Zimbabwe

Girl Child Network



## partner spotlight ●



“With the IDEX grant, our Economic Empowerment Center opened its doors this year to 30 women to learn sewing and beading, as well as basic computer skills training. Members are now assisting in the ongoing training of other women to effectively market their newly acquired skills. The center also serves as a place for women to network, build awareness of their rights and access counseling services to address issues of HIV/AIDS, cases of rapes and domestic violence.

*I am proud to say our relationship with IDEX goes beyond monetary value. It's a relationship of openness, respect and trust.”- Mary Tal, founder and director of WWSA*

Thousands of women have fled their home countries for South Africa in recent years to escape persecution, war, political conflict, and gender-based violence including genital mutilation and forced early marriage. Once in South Africa, refugee women often face homelessness, violence and discrimination.

Whole World Women’s Association, founded by Mary Tal – herself a refugee from Cameroon – provides a safe haven for women to access health-care, jobs and education. WWSA provides legal assistance, income-generating skills, and HIV/AIDS awareness, counseling and testing. Members themselves are trained to run support groups and share programs – including an innovative art and theater self-expression program – in their home languages, reaching many vulnerable and underserved refugee communities.

When IDEX first partnered with WWSA, recognizing their uniquely effective model for empowering women, the organization had no sources of international funding. In addition to IDEX grants, IDEX has advocated on their behalf and has connected them to other funding sources. As a result of IDEX’s capacity building support, WWSA has been able to develop women’s leadership in the refugee community and yield greater influence in the movement to reduce xenophobia in South Africa.

**WWSA has been an IDEX partner since 2010.**

## LEADING THE MOVEMENT FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE: IDEX PARTNERS IN ACTION



Climate Change. While the Global North talks about it, many of the communities where IDEX partners work, climate change is a reality that they are contending with daily. Unjustly, the greatest impacts are being experienced by those that have contributed the least to the causes behind it. These include rural villages that rely on subsistence farming and frontline communities that live in the shadow of the mining, logging, petroleum and tourism industries.

The good news is that people's mobilizations – indigenous communities, environmental activists, grassroots leaders from the Global South – are paving the way forward with their own action against climate change.

With your support, IDEX is investing in the right of local communities – those on the frontlines of climate change – to participate in shaping solutions. IDEX grants help organizations to continue with their adaptive solutions and prepare for the future. And since we fund our partners on a long-term basis, their work can continue to build from one year to the next.



**Case Study 1:** In South Durban, South Africa minority communities live in the shadows of over a hundred smokestack industries. Oil spills, industrial accidents, and illegal dumping of toxic wastes are commonplace. People contend with toxic emissions in the air, water and land – and high rates of cancer and asthma.

IDEX partner South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA) works to empower community members – especially women and youth – to engage in environmental issues and fight against man-made climate threats. SDCEA trains community members to use a low-tech system called a “bucket brigade” which takes air samples to gather evidence of pollution. These results are used to lobby the government and companies to take responsibility for their environmental degradation.

SDCEA has been instrumental in reducing the toxic releases of refineries in South Durban and building community resistance to apartheid-era laws that treat some communities as sacrifice zone for industrial development.



“In partnering with IDEX, I value the honesty and approach to assist with the struggles we face. IDEX supporters play a crucial role in the work we do at the grassroots which is so critical as we deepen the democratic values we all cherish. Without this solidarity this work of justice and peace would be very difficult to do.” - *Desmond D’Sa, a key leader in the South African climate justice movement and chairperson of IDEX Partner SDCEA.*

Desmond came to the United States in June to share his findings of pollution left by major oil refineries in South Durban and getting large oil companies to change their destructive ways.

**Case Study 2:** In Rajasthan, India, our partner Sahyog Sansthan, was founded 20 years ago to help rural communities who are heavily dependent on the land for their livelihoods. The once fertile land has been eroded as a result of commercial logging and mining. Climate change is further impacting communities as rainfall in this semi-arid part of India is becoming less and less predictable.

In response, Sahyog promotes the self-help model and encourages communities to work together to improve their livelihoods. They help form Self-Help Groups (SHGs) of about a dozen community members working to develop both sustainable agriculture and income-generation activities.

They currently work with over 200 SHGs and reach over 3500 women. Collectively, these groups have more than \$100,000 in their own savings. Sustained economic development means families and entire communities are building resiliency when shocks do occur.

Sahyog has regenerated thousands of acres of degraded land through soil and water management, small-scale irrigation, and sustainable agriculture – improving crop yields and nourishing the soil for future generations. Through our long-standing relationship with partners like Sahyog, an IDEX partner since 2005, we have seen how, over time, communities are improving the health and sustainability of their land.



“I feel renewed in the knowledge that I am part of a global movement for change – one that honors the rights of indigenous peoples to participate in their own development.”- *Heera Lal Sharma, founder and Executive Director of Sahyog Sansthan.*

Heera Lal came to the United States in June where he presented at the International Funders for Indigenous Peoples Conference. Heera Lal demonstrated how, feeling the effects of climate change, communities in Rajasthan have mobilized to influence policy and are successfully building sustainable and resilient communities.

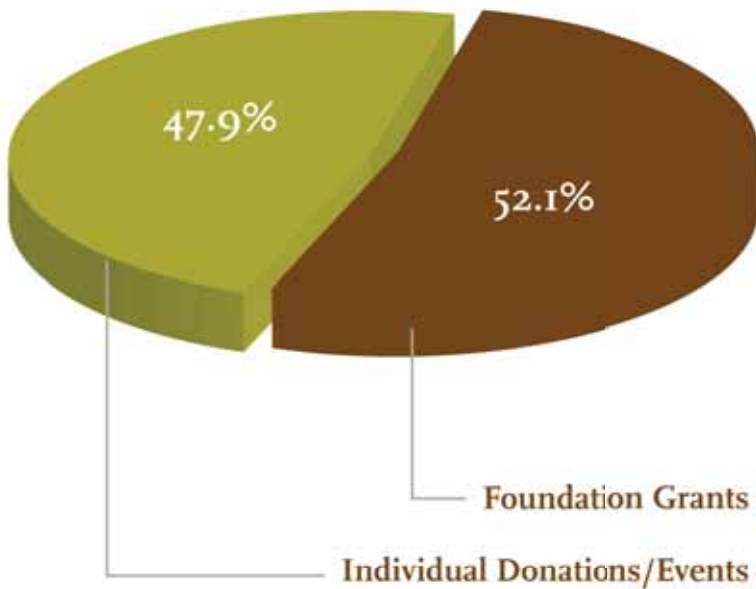
# financial highlights 2010 - 2011

Grants to our international partners entirely come from the funds we raise each year from individuals and foundations.

Thank you to our network of philanthropic supporters.

## REVENUE SOURCES

Foundation Grants	\$334, 534
Individual Donations/Events	\$307,815



## EXPENSES

Programs	\$702,562
Fundraising & Communications	\$138,419
Administration	\$50,149



“I appreciate how IDEX very carefully selects who they work with in finding great organizations that do not yet have the kind of funding they need, but have enough internal structure so that they can do sufficient reporting and contact. I like that IDEX looks at their partners as having the expertise that they need.”- *Susan Kahn, former IDEX volunteer and supporter since 1994.*



## in appreciation

IDEX deeply appreciates the generosity of the funders and individuals listed below as well as those who remain anonymous. Our committed supporters inspire us with their passion for social justice and their solidarity with our international partners.

### LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIPS = LONG-TERM CHANGE

*A special thank you to our long-time supporters. Names with a \* indicate 5 plus years of giving and \*\* indicates 10 plus years. Your steadfast partnership over the years has enabled us to be where we are today and provide long-term support to our partners.*

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Rahima Abdelhamid  
Prof. & Mrs. David Abernethy  
Renjish Abraham  
Christina Advanly  
Ravi Agarwal  
Naveen Agrawal  
Mamta Ahluwalia  
Paul Albert  
Laure Andrieux  
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May and Stanley Smith Charitable Trust  
Morrison Foerster Foundation  
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Scott Raymond Evans Foundation  
Share Our Strength Fund  
Solidago Foundation  
Tides Foundation  
USA for Africa Fund  
Vista Hermosa Foundation  
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## GIFT-IN-KIND

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## MATCHING GIFTS

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## interns & volunteers

*Since 1985, hundreds of volunteers and interns have contributed thousands of hours to our work and have played a central role in all of IDEX's activities. Our work would simply not be possible without their time, talent, and dedication. A special thanks to the following interns and volunteers during the 2011 fiscal year.*

Isabel Alface | Michael Altshuler | Tatiana Aras | Franco Asmaeil  
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“

“IDEX has a deep commitment to nurturing innovation and problem-solving at the village and community level...Want to make a growing difference? IDEX is your answer.”- *Jonathan Lewis, Huffington Post*

”



## partnering with IDEX

As we look back on 25 years, we are also looking forward to our ambitious goals for the future to grow and scale our unique model of grantmaking.

The time is now. While funding for grassroots development continues to dwindle, the need to support grassroots movements and visionary social change leaders has never been more urgent. And you have a critical role to play.

Did you know that out of all charitable giving in the last year from the United States, almost 75% came from individuals?

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And of that tiny fraction, less than 0.5% went towards grassroots organizations like IDEX partners?

That's less than  $\frac{1}{3}$  of 1%!

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We hope we can count on your continued support or if you are new to IDEX that you will join our global justice community. Through IDEX's pipeline your giving directly reaches grassroots organizations and local leaders who are making a real difference.

We are deeply grateful to our community of supporters for investing and believing in the work of IDEX and our international partners.

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“My experience as a donor and volunteer for IDEX has been an education in values driven philanthropy. Their commitment to local empowerment and sustainable solutions has truly made me not just a better donor, but a better activist and global citizen as well. The humility and humanity with which IDEX approaches every partnership never ceases to inspire me in my own life”- *Jonah Silas Sheridan, IDEX donor and volunteer*



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