

## **SESSION IV : Prospects for International Philanthropic Cooperation**

### ***Discussion Summary***

The discussion started with some suggestions on the advantages of more effective international cooperation among philanthropies. One participant praised international cooperation for its ability to institute quality control on grant standards globally and widen the perspectives of grantmaking organizations. Another speaker described how improved information sharing could lead to more effective grantmaking, particularly in international programs where funding agencies are operating in comparatively unfamiliar areas. Japanese and American foundations working in Southeast Asia could use American resident staff and Japanese regional knowledge to benefit their programs. Additionally, improved cooperation among philanthropies could lead to joint support of international programs that are too large to be managed by one foundation alone. By defining a common goal and then assisting individual institutions according to the specific interests of a corporate grantmaker, much broader collective goals could be achieved. It was reported that the Ford Foundation has undertaken a cooperative effort in the People's Republic of China in which it identified specific needs, developed a common framework, and then enlisted the cooperation of many other philanthropies in their own areas of particular interest. Thus broad collaboration and integration is facilitating progress at many Chinese institutions related to economic management, legal education and reform, and international relations studies, to a degree that no single foundation could hope to achieve.

The possibility for expanded government-foundation cooperation on an international level was raised, and several

symposium participants offered advice. It was suggested that foundations had more flexibility to initiate small-scale programs which, as they grew, could absorb the greater funding that only governments can provide. Agricultural centers such as the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines and the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT) in Mexico were cited as illustrations of the potential for foundations to create a program that later attracts government support.

Greater collaboration between foundations and private corporations not involved in grantmaking was mentioned as another method of promoting philanthropic programs. The American experience in supporting the arts was advanced as one example. In international programs in developing nations, such cooperation could serve a much broader social purpose and introduce corporations to private philanthropy.

The conversation shifted to international philanthropic cooperation from a specifically Japanese perspective, and efforts by the Toyota Foundation and others to establish an information clearinghouse were lauded as having the capacity to produce more efficient grantmaking. Foundations were encouraged to make their records and resources public so that others could learn from their experience. Japanese corporations contemplating beginning aid programs were urged to determine their objectives and then utilize but not rely on the accumulated knowledge of their predecessors to develop innovative, long-term methodologies.

Other participants offered further comments on ways that existing foundations could cooperate to improve their own programs. Establishing ad hoc committees or regular briefings or workshops, as has occurred in the United States, was advanced as one method for corporate philanthropies to share insights, create better understandings of regional and national needs, and receive counsel on legal issues of international grantmaking. Such meetings would also permit grantmaking agencies to exchange technical knowledge, promote projects by groups of philanthropies, and raise the global consciousness of even those grantmakers working purely on a local level.

The symposium concluded with a return to discussions on the potential for enhanced cooperation among foundations. Expressing interest in the cooperative effort in China, one participant suggested that Japanese and American philanthropies could develop joint research programs in the Asia/Pacific region as well. It

was suggested that a program similar to the Ford Foundation one be developed, in which institutions and individuals working on Pacific Rim issues of politics, economics, and security would receive integrated support from a series of Japanese and American foundations, in which each grantmaker assisted programs specifically related to its own purposes and resources. It was agreed that in addition to the need for quantitative and qualitative improvements in international grantmaking programs, there is a growing demand for more effective communication and cooperation between extant corporate philanthropies if they are to cope with the varied and sophisticated needs of the international community.