

World Café «Philanthropy & Politics»

Hosted by Nicholas Arnold, Center for Philanthropy Studies (CEPS)

This particular World Café aimed at discussing the extent to which philanthropy is and has to be active in the political arena, in order to address pressing societal issues around the globe. Following hypothesis offered the guiding line for the discussion:

In an effort to global humanitarian and ecological progress, philanthropy must also position itself politically and participate in social and legal processes, whether through legal work, lobbying, campaigning, or other available instruments.



Manon Schick, Director Amnesty International Switzerland

«International Advocacy»

In her input, Manon Schick first discussed the benefits and drawbacks of working with celebrities on topics important to her organization. She stressed how important such work is for drawing public attention to critical issues in the area of human rights, but also pointed out that projects with celebrities are too often very short and confined to topics that are of interest to latter. While she acknowledged the potential of doing similar work with philanthropists, she underlined two critical issues. First, it is important that philanthropists or other partners do not use their power as donors to influence the direction of campaigns. Second, there has to be a commitment to long-term collaboration, especially in polarizing issues such as migration, where work has to be done constantly and not only, when the issue gains attention with the media and the public. She then asked the participants to discuss, how much an organization can adapt to funders and what the limits of such adaptation are.



Lukas Straumann, Executive Director Bruno Manser Fonds

«Ecology & Sustainability»

Lukas Straumann presented three forms of protest, which his organization applies to try to influence companies and state actors: 1) naming and shaming; 2) political lobbying and mobilization; and 3) strategic litigation. He emphasised that the use of such instruments is of critical importance to draw public attention to issues that might otherwise be neglected. However, he also acknowledged that such forms of campaigning – and above all the process of litigation – are time-consuming and costly. At the end of his input, Lukas Straumann posed the question: «How political can an organization be without turning off philanthropists»?



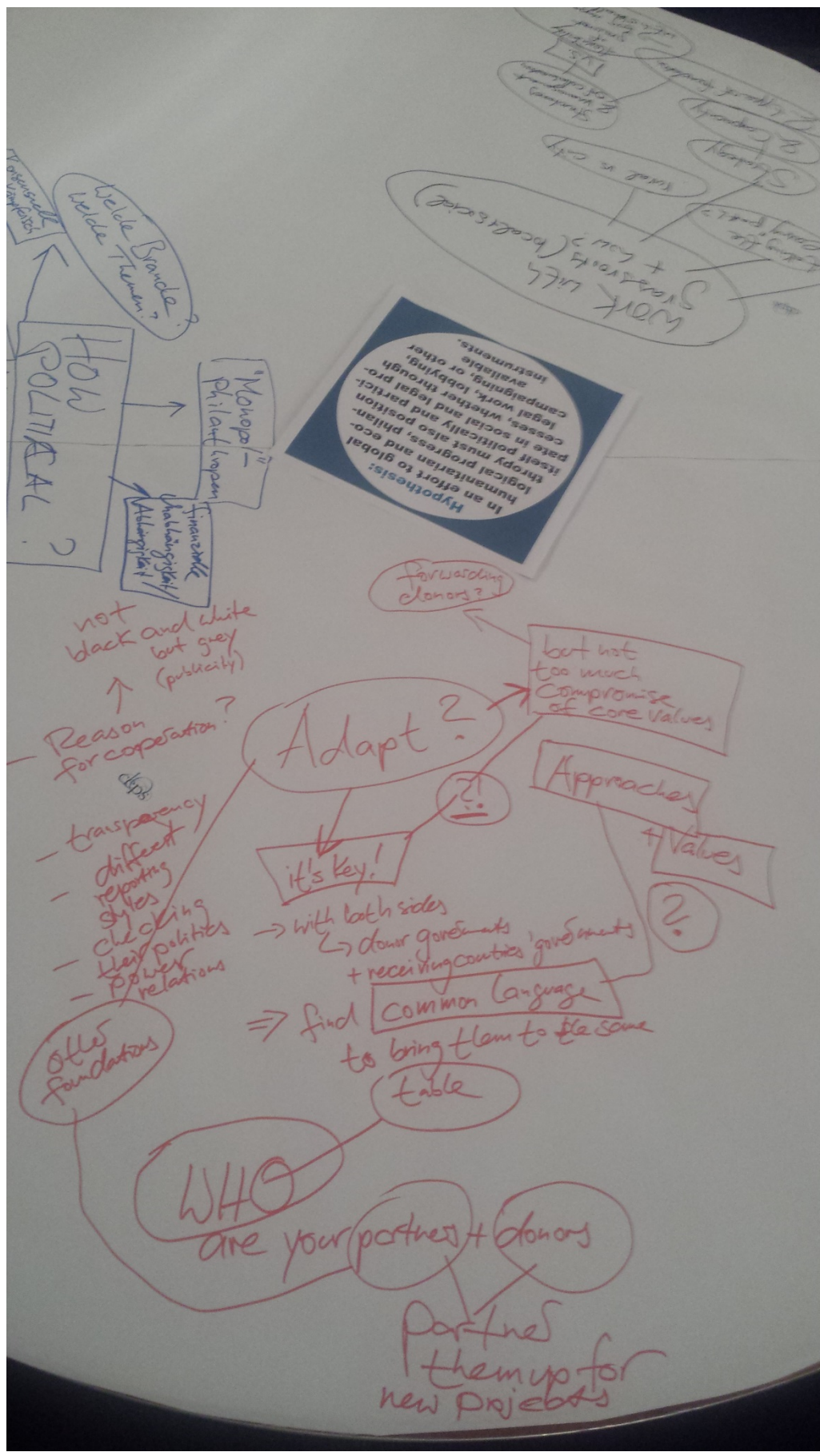
Dr. Domink Mösching, Deputy Director staatslabor

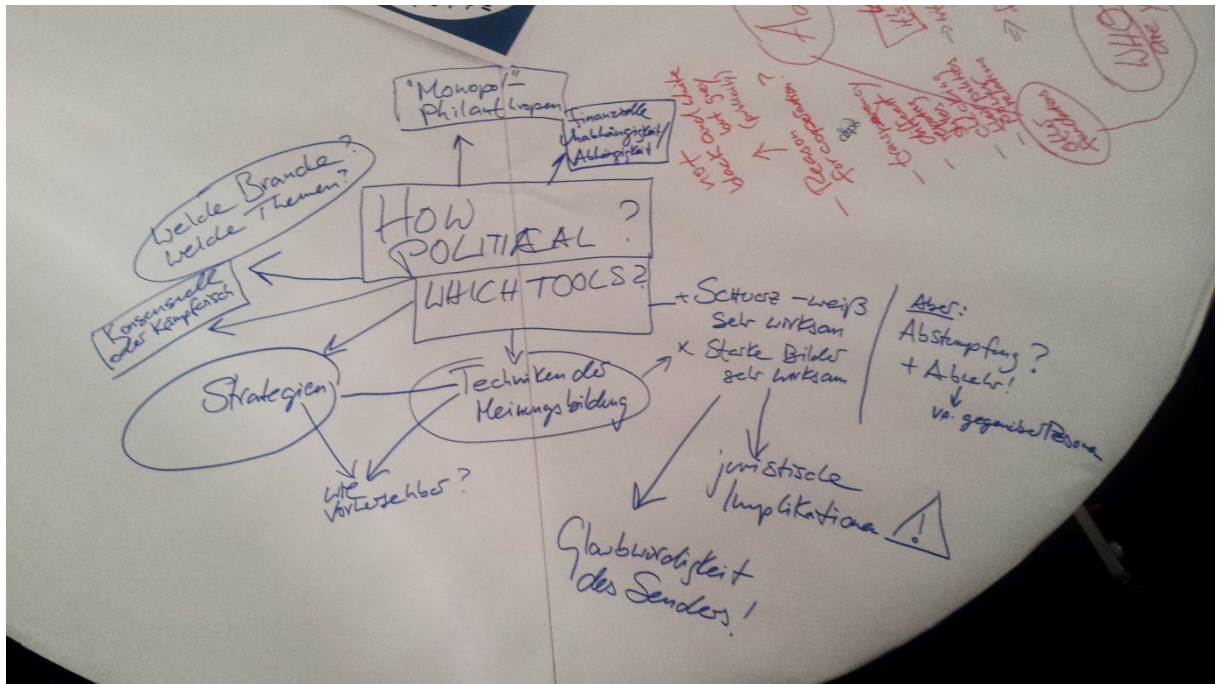
«Grassroot Organizations»

Dominik Mösching underlined the importance of involving less institutionalized actors to achieve social transformation – thereby mainly referring to grassroots movements. Since such movements are thoroughly grounded in local realities, they can not only point the finger to social issues that have to be resolved, but also offer networks within local communities that could offer a hand in the solution of many issues. He then asked the participants at the tables to discuss, whether it is desirable for philanthropic actors to work with local movements, and how such collaboration can work if grassroots are often a temporary and loosely organized occurrence.

Key points of wrap-up discussion:

- Philanthropy should actively take a more prominent role in politics – and can play a strong role as convener.
- Balance was an important theme to emerge. Funders have to make sure that they do not dictate what issues are worked on and beneficiary organizations have to critically reflect on how they can strike a balance between criticizing and being part of the solution process.
- A topic repeatedly taken up was the question of ethics/values. Actors from different sectors often hold different views concerning certain topics. If collaboration is to succeed, then a common value frame has to be developed which all collaborating partners can agree with. This also means that partnerships are not always realistic, and it is better to acknowledge this at an early stage.



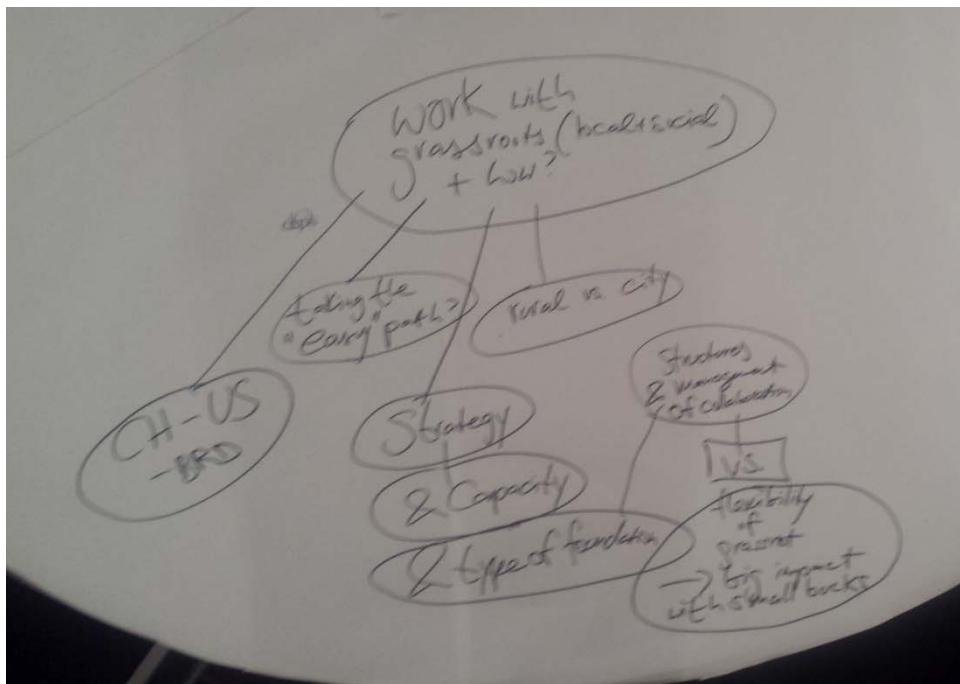


- Grassroot organisations:
How to work with movements with few structures
- Not automatically political
- Risk prevention vs. Innovation
- financial vs. Impact risks
- In Forschung/Entwicklung → risikobewusste Stiftungen
- Evaluations-Anforderungen fressen ganze Fundings
- im
- Lokal: Schwierigkeit Relevanz zu erkennen

locally? c. 1/20
John

Other tools of influence

- Go into the ~~philanthro~~ business sector
- Partnerships / Networks
- Donors: Contract + Don't accept money from tobacco industry
- Paying Studies



But on foundation vs. innovation risks
 vs. impact risks
 → Stiftungsförderung
 → massive funding
 → how to work with movements?

Grassroot organizations with few structures? local?

Influence / agenda setting?

Grundfrage
 Darf man gutes Geld machen?
 Making good money out of bad money?

Hypothesis:
 In an effort to global humanitarian and ecological progress, philanthropy must also position itself politically and participate in social and legal processes, whether through legal work, lobbying, campaigning, or other available instruments.

How political can you become?

Other tools?

VC-check
 what investments
 f.ex. weapons

Chances / „to do“	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidelines of act acceptance of help on a strategic level, Process / due diligence ↳ example EFTL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agenda setting ↳ UBS an NZH ↳ Accounting firmen Lehst ↳ Prof. Araser, Swissnucle ↳ 3 cases money denied for reputation risks

Moral conflicts, examples

- Beiersdorf / Nivea: No partnership with if palm oil used in their
- Money out of wars / oil business (Addex Petroleum for Youth, environm. NGOs? Foundation Gaudin)

