



## 2022 REPORT OF ACTIVITIES



**SYNERGOS**  
Building trust works

# WELCOME

Synergos is a global organization that has pioneered the use of bridging leadership, which builds trust and collaboration to solve complex problems.

We have used this inclusive approach with partners around the world for 35 years to achieve extraordinary results meeting local and national needs. Today, we help partners and leaders dismantle systems that create the most urgent problems of our time: poverty, social injustice, and climate change.

In 2022, as the world emerged from the worst of the Covid-19 crisis, we focused on our core strengths: our bridging leadership approach, which builds trust for collective action, our global networks, and our country programs in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Africa, and the Arab World.

Within our networks, we relaunched significant in-person activities and continued to develop our Collaborative Communities, which bring together members of our Global Philanthropists Circle with experts, activists, and grassroots leaders working on specific thematic issues to share ideas and, where possible, launch collaborative action.

A milestone in our programming at the country level in 2022 was in Bangladesh, where we saw the launch of a multi-million-dollar, multi-year integrated program that will both reduce child drowning and improve early childhood development across the country.

We are only able to achieve so much thanks to your committed and ongoing financial support of Synergos. We are grateful to all our annual fund donors and hope you feel inspired by the change that you are enabling us to achieve. We hope you enjoy reading the report.





## COUNTRY PARTNERSHIPS

## Bangladesh

Synergos worked closely with partners to develop the multi-million-dollar, multi-year *Integrated Community Based Centers for Child Care, Protection, and Swim-Safe Facilities* project, which was officially launched in 2022. Synergos is providing strategic advisory support and bridging leadership training to the new government project management team. Synergos has undertaken activities to support activation of the project over the last year, including securing final government approvals, pushing for project management team staffing, helping produce a highly publicized official project launch that was attended by 200 people including key officials and international donor partners, and expediting the establishment of childcare centers. The program's achievements are the result of trusting relationships and shared understanding of the importance of collaboration that have been nurtured among key partners in the early childhood development and public health sectors, between government and NGO actors, and at local and national levels.

In 2022, Synergos also developed and secured funding for a new program to build bridging leadership capacity for cross-sector coordination across the integrated childcare centers project. This new program presents an opportunity to deepen our bridging leadership work with government.

## Brazil

In 2022, the Brazil team worked to systematize the learning from the *Bridging Leadership for Social Investment* program over the last four years. These learnings will inform the launch of a new Bridging Leadership program in Brazil for “now generation” philanthropists.

Synergos hosted philanthropic events in Latin America and explored partnership with other philanthropic networks and advisory groups in the region. The team also continued offering advisory services to two clients. This included helping to design and manage the operation of the *Potencia* program in coordination with Luminate, a peer social investment organization that serves Luminate grantees in Latin America.

## Ethiopia

Synergos is partnering with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture of Ethiopia to transform its human resource system into a high-impact system for the effective implementation of its mission and achievement of its strategic objectives. Synergos is also working on another project to improve the lives of 30,000 smallholder farmers and their families in Ethiopia, through increased productivity and income and by building strategic collaboration and market linkages between producers and buyers.

The Ethiopia team has been able to overcome immense challenges related to internal conflict, security concerns in the north, inflation, and transition to a digital platform due to COVID. The team has continuously engaged with partners and stakeholders to ensure the success and impact of the projects.

## Nigeria

In Nigeria, Synergos is providing bridging leadership support to international and local partners, building a network of leaders within institutions including the Government of Nigeria, NGOs, and civil society organizations. This included building a multi-stakeholder platform for state agriculture leaders in 2022.

## South Africa

Synergos is partnering with the Kagiso Trust in South Africa to build a municipal leadership and inclusive governance initiative. Through bridging leadership processes, the initiative will aim to strengthen to voice of civil society, local government accountability and service delivery, and collaboration between local government and communities for inclusive socio-economic development. A pilot is underway in Makana municipality, and the program has the potential to replicate across additional municipalities.

Synergos also continued supporting the Southern Africa Network of Social Connectedness partners towards more intentional learning and sharing across their work, improved sectoral collaboration, and advocacy for better psychosocial well-being outcomes and improved mental health and resilience children, youth and family.





## LEADERSHIP NETWORKS

## Global Philanthropists Circle

Synergos' Global Philanthropists Circle (GPC) held well-attended events and gatherings in Mexico City, New York, San Francisco, London, Barcelona, and Istanbul. These convenings brought our network of members together for in-person connection, dialogue, and relationship-building touching on issues such as the future of philanthropy, next generation giving, death and dying, and climate change.

In addition, members participated in meetings of our Collaborative Communities, described in the following section.

We are pleased to share that ten new families joined the GPC in 2022, bringing our total active membership to 82 families. Members continue to value the GPC as a brave space to share about challenges and aspirations, and are also coalescing for action through the Collaborative Communities.

## Collaborative Communities

Catalyzing collective action is at the core of our networks, and we have curated dedicated spaces – Collaborative Communities – for the GPC members and other actors to come together around certain topics to facilitate ongoing learning, connections, and action.

Current Collaborative Communities include the global dialogue initiative, climate and environment philanthropy, shifting the food system, spiritual civilization, next generation philanthropy, and collective action for the Amazon. Over 200 members from our networks are members of these communities which met over 20 times online, as well as in-person events on food systems and dialogue.

## Arab World

The *Pioneers* program was launched in Egypt in 2011 with the goal of advancing social entrepreneurship and promoting youth volunteerism and employment. Since then, Synergos has built the largest network of social entrepreneurs in the Middle East and Northern Africa region. In 2022, the *Pioneers* program continued to expand in the region, with an expansion into Tunisia.

In Tunisia, Synergos is establishing youth-led civic engagement clubs, implementing youth-driven community development initiatives, and developing a replicable model for youth engagement and empowerment. Synergos is also undertaking an in-depth assessment of our regional *Pioneers* program to understand its impact in Egypt, Palestine, and Jordan over the last 10 years.

## Thought Leadership

Our bridging leadership approach is integral to the programming described in this report. In addition, we shared this approach in a variety of media and spaces, including:

- A video on government-community collaboration in Makana South Africa produced for the *Stanford Social Innovation Review's* Nonprofit Management Institute
- Continuation of our Cultivate the Soul podcast series, which in 2022 highlighted 12 stories of purpose-driven philanthropy in which philanthropic leaders share how they are bringing inner work to outer action and the impact this creates. We are proud to report the podcast reached 2,900 total downloads in 2022 (including downloads of earlier content)
- An in-person event "On Belonging: A conversation on inclusion in a time of social, economic, and ecological disconnection" which included sharing about our work to overcome social isolation of children and communities affected by poverty in South Africa
- Staff appearing in Do One Better leadership podcast and GIFE (Brazil) philanthropy podcast
- Staff appearing on sessions at Dasra Philanthropy Week and the Impact Networks and the Future of International Philanthropy Event online event
- A blog post for *Alliance* magazine on how "Collaboration is the only pathway" in philanthropy
- Our founder, Peggy Dulany, hosting a session centered on the evolving meaning of philanthropy at the Wellbeing Summit in Spain
- A video featuring Peggy Dulany exploring ways in which social innovators in the Arab World are using bridging leadership to expand their impact
- Staff sharing about inner work in a Nigerian Psychological Association webinar
- Organizing an online event on Philanthropy in Times of Political Divides with a focus on Latin America



## 2022 David Rockefeller Bridging Leadership Award & Synergos Global Gathering

The David Rockefeller Bridging Leadership award celebrates leadership that gets to root causes, strengthens local capacity, and builds trust for collective action. Together, 210 philanthropists, social investors, and business, government, and nonprofit leaders from around the world gathered in community to explore inclusive, systems focused leadership at our event in May 2022.

The 2022 Bridging Leadership Award honorees were:

- André Hoffman – Vice Chairman, Roche Holding
- Alyse Nelson – President, CEO & Co-Founder, Vital Voices Global Partnership
- Darren Walker – President, Ford Foundation



Synergos' Global Gathering also took place during the same week in May, bringing together members of Synergos' global networks to gather in and around New York City to explore building the kind of leadership needed today. Keynote sessions were held on the future of philanthropy and the opportunities to connect more deeply with ourselves, each other, and our world. Community discussions took place around key areas such as racial equity, spiritual civilization, new generation philanthropy, dialogue, climate and environment, action for the Amazon and more.

