

Olga Alexeeva Memorial Prize 2013

The shortlist

The death of Olga Alexeeva in July 2011 was an enormous loss to the global philanthropy field. Passionate, fearless, energetic, creative, Olga was driven by big, ambitious ideas and by a deep commitment to helping the most marginalized and oppressed elements of our societies. As an individual, she was a one-off, fingers in philanthropic pies across the globe, working to deepen the amount and quality of philanthropy in countries such as Russia, China, Brazil, South Africa and India.

In organizing the Olga Alexeeva Memorial Prize, we decided that the best way of commemorating Olga's life and work would be to see it as a deliberate field-building exercise, following in Olga's footsteps, which would mobilize networks, prompt individual action, and shine a light on a range of innovative and inspiring philanthropic efforts around the world.

The criteria for the prize were left deliberately broad: we were looking for an individual 'who has demonstrated remarkable leadership, creativity and results in developing philanthropy for progressive social change in an emerging market country or countries'. We felt from the start that we should avoid getting too much into the nitty-gritty of detail and allow the field itself to come up with the nominations.

As the deadline approached, we were all rather anxious that people would not see this as 'their prize', broad and global as it was. However, we needn't have worried: receiving as we did an astonishing 41 nominations from 17 countries (including 14 from India). In determining eligibility, we were particularly

interested in individuals who were themselves building or modelling a culture of organized philanthropic giving – with an emphasis on grantmaking – rather than those working in charities or non-profits that were more operational. There were many inspiring examples of nominees implementing fantastic programmes focused on education, poverty alleviation, social enterprise, etc, but these were not included in our list of 18 eligible nominations.

Narrowing down our list of 18 to 7 finalists was a challenge: the list was long and rich and far exceeded our expectations. In drawing up our list of 7 (actually 8) finalists, we have selected a group which we hope captures the richness and creativity of the philanthropic field in emerging market contexts.

The group is diverse, not only in terms of its geography (6 countries across 5 continents) but also in terms of the approaches to building philanthropy for social change that it represents. In India, Neera Nundy and Pushpa Aman Singh are involved with institutions that seek to build local philanthropy, as is Nguyen Tran Hoang Anh in Vietnam. In Belarus, Anna Garchakova's work has involved building up a culture of philanthropy around the very difficult issue of children's hospice and palliative care, while in Peru Luis Gallo's approach can best be described as a form of activist social investment. Finally, we have included two examples of innovative community philanthropy: Boris Tsyruunikov founded the first community foundation in Russia, while Jane Weru and Kingsley Muccheke's work builds on a community assets approach in the context of Kenya's slums.

In selecting our shortlist, we also decided that the prize should serve as an opportunity to highlight individuals who are perhaps less well known in global philanthropic circles. This meant, sadly, that several well-known and respected philanthropic 'pillars' of the establishment were not included.

The world of philanthropy would be far richer if Olga Alexeeva was alive. However, the process of establishing this prize in her memory has revealed a rich and diverse set of individuals who are forging new philanthropic paths around the world with similar levels of energy, dedication and innovation as Olga showed us.

Maria Chertok, Caroline Hartnell and Jenny Hodgson

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The final winner will be selected by a distinguished panel of six judges:

Akwasi Aidoo TrustAfrica, Senegal

Ana Valéria Araújo Brazil Human Rights Fund

Shenyu Belsky Rockefeller Brothers Fund, China

Christopher Harris Independent consultant and former Philanthropy Bridge Foundation trustee, USA

Kavita Ramdas Ford Foundation India

Larisa Zerkova Potanin Foundation, Russia

There will also be a public vote, opening as this issue of *Alliance* is published, to be conducted through our *Latest from Alliance* blog. The outcome of this vote will be one factor in the judges' decision.

The name of the winner will be announced on 15 April, which is Olga's birthday, and the prize will be awarded at the Emerging Societies – Emerging Philanthropies Forum (see p4 of this supplement), followed by a lecture by the winner. All shortlisted candidates are funded to attend the Forum.

Luis Gallo

General Director, Banco de Inversion Social, Colombia



Colombia has no tradition of strategic philanthropy. It is a country exhausted by 40 years of internal conflict. Four million people are internally displaced and 37 per cent live in poverty. The development of a local culture of philanthropy is crucial to the reconstruction of the country.

One of the most successful investment bankers in the country, Luis Gallo has a long history of working to foster a dynamic and sustainable non-profit sector in Colombia, making his investment bank Estrategias Corporativas a leader in bringing together other top-rank

companies and founding Compartamos con Colombia to build the capacity of high-impact non-profits.

Luis could be considered a serial entrepreneur in the field of philanthropy. He helped to create

Conexión Colombia and Give2Colombia, which link members of the Colombian diaspora with their home country. He supported the establishment of Corporacion Inversor, the first impact investment fund in Colombia, with a target size of US\$20 million. And, perhaps most significant of all, he has been deeply involved in Filantropia Transformadora (Transforming Philanthropy), whose aim is to create a community of strategic philanthropists and ultimately to increase the volume of effective social investments in Colombia.

Finally, in 2011 Luis established the Banca de Inversión Social (BIS), or Social Investment Bank, as a non-profit organization whose mission is to grow the impact investing field in Colombia. BIS helps traditional donors who are venturing into impact investing for the first time, supports impact investors in identifying and scaling up opportunities, works with companies that would like to grow their inclusive business strategies, and supports social enterprises to scale up and receive impact investing resources. BIS focuses on large, 'transformative' opportunities, such as providing affordable housing and developing sustainable associative agribusiness to provide a livelihood to rural families.

I began my career as an investment banker with J P Morgan in New York City. I wanted to be successful so that by the age of 35 I could start giving half my time to my profession and half to giving back. I believed there was an opportunity to transfer knowledge from the private sector to the social sector. When I got married in 1997, every Monday morning the priest who married us would call at 6 am and say, 'so, what have you done for the poor?' That was a handy reminder!

I started Compartamos con Colombia, a consortium of professional service firms, to provide non-profit organizations with integrated pro bono services. Its premise was that we would provide the social sector clients with the same, if not better, service as business clients. That would be the benchmark.

I think my biggest achievement has been to influence people, to help serve as a role model for many other successful

Colombians who are now involved in very significant ways in both the social and the public sectors. But no matter how much effort we've put in, the impact is not transformational nationally. We are still very concentrated on the triangle between Bogota, Medellin and Cali.

How do you take that NGO presence from that privileged triangle to the rest of the country? My answer is to apply more aggressive and significant business practices to trying to solve social problems. If you compare business with the social sector, there is a huge gap. Multi-million-dollar companies cover the globe. In the social sector, you have thousands and thousands of small NGOs, with very good people, very passionate, but the impact they generate is limited.

That's why we created the Social Investment Bank. It applies investment banking techniques to carrying out the agency function between the non-profit

sector and those with resources. It's really joining resources with opportunities. Often it's not even a problem of money, it's a problem of getting the right people to connect. The greatest difficulty is proving in a convincing way that this approach of trying to apply business models to help scale social projects works.

I think we have the basics of a well-developed philanthropy sector in Colombia – we have involved families, successful and long-lasting NGOs, companies that are getting more involved in CSR. And tremendous wealth has been created in Colombia in the last ten years. Three things are lacking: we need a culture of giving that is less influenced by traditional structures like the church; we need people to get involved in philanthropy in the same way they do in business; and we need the tax code to be changed to encourage philanthropy.

Anna Garchakova

Director, Belarusian Children's Hospice, Minsk, Belarus



Anna Garchakova's work is a story of how a particular cause can trigger development of philanthropy in a country where NGOs and philanthropy had been treated with suspicion and distrust.

Anna founded the Belarusian Children's Hospice (BCH) in 1994. The first children's hospice in the Former Soviet Union, BCH effectively introduced the concept of palliative care to FSU countries – a region where human life, let alone death, had very little value, and giving even to the most obvious causes was not part of the culture.

Belarus has been very suspicious of NGOs both at state and public level. BCH has proved that NGO projects can be truly charitable, open, professional and without a shadow of corruption. Thanks to Anna's work, public opinion about

philanthropy in Belarus has undergone a radical change and it has become popular to be 'socially useful'. It was BCH, which gains a lot of publicity, that gave rise to the development of volunteering and middle class giving.

Through her work Anna has helped gain public and state acceptance for the NGO sector. Her work has also led to improved conditions for social and medical NGOs in Belarus as a result of changes in legislation to support the activity of BCH. And BCH's work has in turn changed attitudes towards children with disabilities. Previously, parents of children with disabilities received no support and were frequently ostracized. In 2012, the government passed legislation recognizing the right to respite care for families with chronically and terminally ill children.

In addition to her work in Belarus, Anna Garchakova is training people in other FSU countries in palliative care and setting up charitable hospice services. She is also setting up a Children's Palliative Care Association in Eastern Europe to help other countries in the region to do the same.

I was a clinical psychologist working in the oncological unit of a children's hospital here and one day the head of the medical staff decided that we needed a way to care for terminally ill patients, so she sent me to the US to study their methods. That was the first time I came across the idea of hospices. I came back and wrote a report and my chief said, 'OK, do it'.

I think my biggest achievement is to create a very good palliative care team. If I leave the hospice, palliative care will continue. My greatest disappointment is that I was sure that when I showed people the difficulties handicapped and terminally ill children faced, they would say, 'we're ready to help,' but you have to work a very long time before people see this. It took 18 years for the government to pick up on it. For me it's so clear – we need to create a system for this kind of patient.

I have ambitious plans. First, I want to build a new building for the hospice

because the existing building is old and small. As well as providing medical facilities, it will be a research and education centre for Belarus and for all the former Soviet countries. I also want to develop a palliative care association for former Soviet countries which will publish a guide to developing a palliative care system, especially in rural areas, which is a big problem.

I want to mention two challenges. One is personal – it is the children's deaths. I've been doing this work for 20 years and you never get used to it. Second, our service is very good medically, but we need to create stronger organizations. If we improve our management we will provide better palliative care services.

As far as funding is concerned, we are trying to change people's outlook and things are very different from when we started. Our donors and volunteers understand that it's not just the

government that can change things; we as citizens can, too. We now get 78 per cent of our funding from Belarus and there are more small donations. It shows society is involved in this process. Also this year, we have been getting small amounts from people in prison. It's only \$5 a month, but for me it's a sign that the mentality is changing.

As well as changing the mentality, we need better regulations. Charitable organizations in our country are at a low level and there are no incentives to give. Donors pay tax twice, first on their income and then on donations. There's a lot of paperwork. We're used to it but it's complicated for donors.

Nguyen Tran Hoang Anh

Board Chair, LIN Center, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



The LIN Center was established in 2009 with the aim of fostering a culture of philanthropy and supporting the development of a strong and credible non-profit sector in Vietnam. To date Vietnamese philanthropy has mostly consisted of charitable giving to cases of hardship or disaster relief, or funding for capital building projects by foreign and corporate donors.

Nguyen Tran Hoang Anh was one of LIN's founders, all of whom were concerned about the growing levels of inequality associated with Vietnam's transition to a market-based economy. Neither she nor most of her fellow board members had ever served on a board

before. Nevertheless, she volunteered as chair and has also made regular donations to the organization.

Hoang Anh is a pioneer in philanthropy in Vietnam in many ways. She is working to help companies get a better grasp of CSR issues, which are currently not well understood in Vietnam. She has effected positive change in this regard, connecting corporations with local and international non-profit initiatives to form strategic partnerships. As a member of Ho Chi Minh City's creative community, she has access to an influential network; she keeps the network informed and helps in promoting social justice issues in Vietnam.

As communications director for Brand Maker, a leading Vietnamese company, she provides advice on LIN's marketing and communications activities and is one of a pool of expert volunteers, coaching non-profits in project design and presentation. Her work has helped to raise the bar for skilled volunteers; both volunteers and non-profits are now seeing the virtue of such skilled help.

EMERGING SOCIETIES – EMERGING PHILANTHROPIES FORUM

1–2 July 2013, Peterhoff, Russia

The goal of this unique event is to raise the profile of philanthropy in emerging economies by creating a forum for leading philanthropy practitioners who drive social change in their regions. The forum will build a basis for collaboration and partnerships, facilitate peer exchange, and provide space and time for discussing key issues participants face. The first Olga Alexeeva Memorial Prize will be awarded at the forum followed by a lecture by the winner. The forum is organized by an international steering committee made up of representatives of philanthropic institutions from Russia, Brazil, China, India, Turkey and South Africa.

www.emergingforum.org



I knew Dana [Doan] and I knew about her plan to set up LIN and she asked if I was interested in being on the board. I thought it was a good cause so I agreed. I actually didn't think I'd get so involved but it grew on me. Being involved really changed my perception of NGO work and I felt that I understood more about it and I was able to get people around me like my staff, my company, involved. I just became an endorser of the cause.

It was very different from what I expected because generally in Vietnam we are more familiar with giving to needy people directly. It took me a while to understand LIN's work and so it also took me a while to explain it to other people. I'm very close to my boss and she herself is very involved in NGO work but when I explained to her what LIN is doing she kept coming back and asking 'so what is it that LIN does, again?' It's very challenging to fundraise for LIN because helping an organization is something that's very new, especially when people don't see the impact of its work directly or dramatically. There are now more people like me who have been exposed to other cultures, other ideas, so this is going to change, but it's

not changing very fast. This is one of our biggest challenges right now.

Over the past three years, we have been raising awareness of community work and I think the next thing for LIN is to try to foster this culture of giving back to the community and to generate more participation. I'm trying to help raise awareness by doing things that people are more familiar with. For example, in order to raise funds I set up this virtual shop selling clothes that people donate. It's an easier concept for people to relate to, and through that they get to understand what LIN is doing.

The work I do is not just about LIN, it's also about me. I get a sense of satisfaction. Anyone would feel rewarded by doing something that validates them. It's also challenging. I enjoy setting goals and achieving them. I see it as a mission, that's why I'm getting more involved.

Another thing is that my skills in marketing and communications are relevant to what LIN needs at the moment. It's not very different using these skills in the non-profit or the for-profit sector and that's another reason why I'm getting increasingly involved.

Neera Nundy

Partner and co-founder, Dasra, Mumbai, India



Founded in 1999 by Neera and her husband Deval Sanghavi, Dasra has become a leader in strategic philanthropy in India. Its success lies in its ability to bring together the two crucial elements of social change: social entrepreneurs and philanthropists. In a country with over 3 million registered non-profits, its focus on identifying the high-potential solutions to poverty, delivered by the strongest organizations, is essential.

Over the past 13 years, Dasra has strengthened the growth plans of over 200 non-profits and social businesses. Yet

Neera's biggest achievement is the impact she has had on local philanthropy. The Indian Philanthropy Forum, now in its fourth year, has engaged with over 300 philanthropists and foundations on strategic philanthropy, including leaders of the

Indian philanthropy scene like Rohini Nilekani, Anu Aga and Aditi Kothari, and it has enabled over US\$15 million in funding to social entrepreneurs. Dasra has also introduced the idea of giving circles to India. Neera was one of the first in India to focus on social investment, impact investing and social business.

Neera designed and delivered India's first executive education programme for social entrepreneurs, Dasra Social-Impact. Each year 50 organizations graduate from the programme. Those graduates include India's leading social entrepreneurs, including Husk Power Systems, Embrace, Industree and Lend-a-Hand. Neera also led the international launch of Village Capital, which supports successful organizations such as Milaap, SMV Wheels, Sabras and Under the Mango Tree.

At the heart of what Dasra does is a thorough analysis of models and robust sector mapping; this enables it to identify those organizations that are likely to become sector leaders and create wide-scale impact, and to connect them with donors. As the analytical and strategic brain behind this model, Neera's is a huge achievement.

We came up with the idea for Dasra when Deval and I were working at Morgan Stanley, around 1998–9. We were looking for something potentially more fulfilling and thought that the skills we were using in investment banking were equally applicable to helping non-profits professionalize and grow to scale.

I'm proud that we've been able to build an organization that attracts talented people who wouldn't usually come into the sector. And I'm excited that, having been around for 13 years, we've seen organizations we've bet on and backed really start to become sector leaders – Magic Bus and Educate Girls would be among those.

A more holistic thing is that we've seen a lot more philanthropists wanting to engage and be more strategic. There's a generation of young professionals who are the next generation of ultra-wealthy who are starting to think about the role of philanthropy and how it relates to nation

building. It's still an uphill battle, though. Often they don't realize the impact that they can have, not just by funding but by bringing in others and creating movers around some of the issues they back.

Also, strategic giving means funding the boring stuff: people need to be able to pay for salaries, management information systems, things that build institutional strength. Nobody wants to do it because it takes time to see the results, but if you really pay for building an institution, everything else falls into place.

We have just started building indigenous philanthropy. We want to combine that with diaspora philanthropy and then really think through what sectors we drive this towards. Adolescent girls and maternal and newborn health will be two of those.

The biggest issue for India is that, although it's one country, it's extremely fragmented in terms of region, culture and state. Many

philanthropists want to support their own region, so pushing them to think about how you support something that's really pan-Indian is a challenge.

What's changing is that people are finally applying their business and analytical minds to philanthropy and the development sector. Before, it was almost as if they'd switch off and say, 'OK, this is charity', but now they think about funding a non-profit in the same way they think about a potential investment and I think that's helping. Especially among the newly wealthy. It's not only about money; it's whether they engage, at a board level, whether they bring in employees to engage. I think all of that is having a trigger effect on professionalizing the sector, which then leads to people being able to raise more money.

Pushpa Aman Singh

Founder and CEO, GuideStar India



In the US and the UK, GuideStar digitized data provided by government and reached out to NGOs to provide supplementary information. In India, as in most emerging market countries, there is no central database of NGOs nor a regulatory framework for transparent reporting and accountability. At Pushpa Singh's urging, GuideStar International decided for the first time to pursue a strategy of building GuideStar from the ground up. The success of GuideStar India provides a model for other emerging market countries.

Pushpa started GuideStar India in 2009 following nearly eight years at GiveIndia.

In that time, she has established it as the country's first fully searchable online NGO database, with reliable and comparable information on over 3,300 NGOs and email access to 70,000 NGOs. Bit by

bit, GuideStar India is mapping India's vast and fragmented voluntary sector.

This has helped stimulate philanthropy and its ecosystem in several ways. It significantly lowers the cost of, and reduces the time needed for, search and selection of NGOs. This has made giving easier, including CSR and corporate giving programmes. It has also allowed capacity-building programmes for NGOs to reach the right audience.

Partnering with Indian and philanthropic US intermediaries, GuideStar India has recently developed a new portal called India Giving Network, now covering 300 credible Indian NGOs, which organizes information pooled from partners without any additional burden to NGOs.

In short, GuideStar India is transforming how NGOs report and share information, and how donors and others see and engage with NGOs. It has shown that a model devised in the West can be made to work in the vastly different circumstances of emerging markets by maintaining its core values but being flexible enough to take account of local challenges and opportunities.

I think GuideStar India's biggest achievement is to bring down the barriers for donors to engage with NGOs and for NGOs to engage with the giving community. NGOs can come on to the portal with the level of information they are able to share ... and, at no cost to very low cost, donors can engage with NGOs across causes and locations, in a variety of ways. Until now, you found a pool of 300 to 500 NGOs that figured in most donors' portfolios. We have been able to expand that to more than 3,000.

It's also a good way of connecting NGOs to various sources and improving use of resources. As an example, one of those on the portal is a small organization in a remote district of Maharashtra. We invited them to an IT training workshop and they got so motivated that they took an internet connection. Through that, they participated in a number of programmes which otherwise they wouldn't have

heard of. They applied to an international healthcare awards programme, for example, and participated in an online giving challenge.

Donors have a big role to play in increasing the credibility of the voluntary sector by gradually increasing the level of public accountability they demand from their grantees, and we encourage them to do that. The overall perception of credibility needs to go up so that small givers start to give more.

It's important that a lot of people start to give small amounts. As they get to understand the challenges NGOs address, they are likely to give more, and more strategically! While we work primarily on organizing NGO information and making it available, we also help donors create campaigns and connect with NGOs. We help corporations do cool giving activities for their staff and customers, for example organizing an NGO bazaar in their premises,

running a Facebook giving campaign – getting them all to begin to see the other India – and some graduate to giving.

One big challenge is that, on the one hand, the donor community requires scale; on the other hand, the emerging legal framework restricts it. Changes to tax laws have narrowed the definition of charitable activities and fixed limits on self-generated revenues. These and the lack of resources for capacity building are serious challenges to scaling up. We would also like to see donors investing in strengthening institutions that enable philanthropy.

Jane Weru and Kingsley Mucheke

Executive director and Finance and development consultant, Akiba Mashinani Trust, Kenya



It is estimated that 55 per cent of Kenya's urban population (or some 3.9 million people) live in slums. In the capital Nairobi, half the population lives on 1.5 per cent of the total land area.

Founded in 1996 by Jane Weru and Kingsley Mucheke, Akiba Mashinani Trust (AMT) is the financing facility for the Kenya Federation of Slumdwellers. Today it comprises over 700

community savings groups made up of over 300,000 people. Though on the face of it a community savings scheme, AMT's importance runs deeper, blurring as it does the edges between self-help and community philanthropy.

Its members faced many challenges including concerns over land ownership, overcrowding, security of tenure and, crucially, the lack of resources to construct decent, affordable housing once these initial challenges had been resolved. For AMT, this was really the key. It therefore concentrated on creating a resource base, through its savings schemes, to do this.

But AMT does not just benefit members of the Kenya Federation of Slumdwellers. It also tries to ensure that all those who are less able within the community are catered for – old people, disabled people, households headed by single mothers or children as a consequence of HIV/AIDS. In other words, AMT has found ways to go beyond just meeting the social needs of members of the groups it works with. It is guided by a desire for sustainability and a sense of community caring in the 17 towns where it works.

Akiba Mashinani Trust (AMT) began when we took up the cases of slum communities threatened with forced evictions and violent demolitions. Though Muungano wa Wanavijiji (Kenyan Federation of Slumdwellers), we mobilized the slumdwellers into groups to fight evictions. Then we realized that this was not enough. We needed a pre-emptive, sustainable approach to the problem; we needed to develop tools that would enable these communities to get secure tenure and financing to develop the land they occupied. That's where the savings schemes came in.

So far, working with the Government of Kenya and other organizations, we've managed to secure tenure for about 20,000 households and to secure financing for the resettlement of 10,000 of those. We also managed to get slumdwellers a bank loan for the purchase of land valued at \$1 million, which they repaid in less than two years through small amounts saved on a daily basis. We are now working with the government, banks and the community to develop 2,500 houses on this parcel of land

in Mukuru, close to Nairobi's industrial area. This project will demonstrate a practical case of slumdwellers becoming proud homeowners.

One of our challenges is that we work with communities where many vested interests lie, among them organized groups that make huge profits from people renting out structures without adequate water or sanitation.

The Kenyan financial system locks out the poor. Banks are not willing to give poor people loans to buy land or build houses and this has been a major challenge. All the banks we approached regard the poor as an amorphous group of uncontrollable people – you can't do due diligence on slumdwellers because their income is so irregular. They will offer loans only if backed by cash guarantees and at very high interest rates. Effectively, banks are saying, 'we don't want slumdwellers filling our halls'.

In Kenya, everyone helps friends or relatives with school fees or medical

bills. But to develop philanthropy beyond that personal level is a challenge. The Harambee concept – where communities came together to build, say, a school or church – began to be used for political mileage, and there was also an element of coercion involved: before you could get something done by a state official, you had to contribute. Unfortunately, philanthropy became a way of obtaining bribes.

We see initiatives such as ours as a way of developing new forms of institutionalized philanthropic behaviour at the community level, beginning with the immediate needs and interests of members of the savings groups but then extending beyond them to support the most vulnerable members of the community.

Boris Tsyrunikov

Founder, Togliatti Community Foundation, Russia



In 1998, Boris Tsyrunikov set up the first community foundation in Russia. At that time Russia was far from being a giving nation, and the idea of community foundations was received as a fairy tale that would never come true. The power of Togliatti's success was tremendous: since then over 40 community foundations have been set up across Russia, many with direct help from Boris himself, now a recognized leader of the country's community foundation movement.

To further development of the field, Boris created the Community Foundation Partnership, which sets standards and acts as a platform for peer exchange both in Russia and in neighbouring countries including Ukraine,

Kazakhstan and Latvia. Its support is vital to the development of philanthropy, especially in Russia where such platforms are few and far between.

Boris has a number of other 'firsts' to his credit, including setting up the first youth bank and the first reserve fund at a community foundation in Russia. He also works with companies developing their philanthropic activities, which is creating a basis and setting a precedent for business to be involved in social change. Meanwhile, the youth bank involves young people in the grant-giving process, helping them understand philanthropic approaches and the value of philanthropy generally.

Boris is an acknowledged authority on philanthropy, serving on the board of the Russian Donors Forum and as an expert to the Public Chamber and to the Ministry of Economic Development. He is also involved in educating Russian officials in philanthropy. Due to his work, support to community foundations has become one of the government's priorities for sector development.

I became involved in the development of the Togliatti Community Foundation because three things captured my interest. First, I like to start something new and innovative. Second, it was close to my heart because I was involved in community issues. Finally, it was a sector and direction that gave my city the possibility of further development.

The community foundation has prompted the conscious development of institutional philanthropy. That's a huge difference for Russia – it is about social investment rather than duty. We have also made the community foundation model clear for Russians. Everyone can be involved in constructive development instead of complaining. It has become obvious to public officials in different Russian regions that one can't sustainably develop a territory without a community foundation in it. Intelligent mayors and local business finally got it.

My role is as a storyteller. The most important thing is to find the right story for each individual, which allows them to find their own place in the picture. I have

a successful community foundation story that I can share, so people listen to me and go with me along this way.

I'd like to help all foundation staff to understand that their major goal is not funding community initiatives but identifying and achieving social changes. Foundations should be future-focused. We have to make opportunities for everyone to express themselves, to be involved in development. I'm also planning to give more attention to developing the Community Foundation Partnership, building more alliances and joint projects, establishing new community foundations.

There is a tendency for public officials in Russia to change, and it is a huge challenge for foundations to establish and maintain long-term relations with them. We are trying to overcome it, involving them in projects, inviting them to become members of consultative and expert boards, to learn from us.

I think the biggest challenge for Russia generally is attitude. Often, for recipients, charitable support is a due and giving a chore. It's a legacy of the Soviet era. NGOs

have to become clearer about what they do and how they present themselves. It would make it easier to find donors. If we can find a way to reach donors, we can teach them and help them to express themselves, to feel the joy and happiness of philanthropy.

Olga Alexeeva understood the philanthropic potential of new wealth emerging in fast-growing economies. CAF shared this vision with Olga, who was a highly valued member of the CAF team for many years. She first led CAF Russia before moving to London to head up our global philanthropy services. CAF has been supporting the development of philanthropy and civil society in emerging economies for the past 20 years, and we continue to promote more, and more effective, giving around the world. We are delighted to support this supplement, which celebrates Olga's legacy and showcases the significant achievements of the shortlisted candidates.

John Low
Chief executive, Charities Aid Foundation

CAF Charities Aid Foundation