

Report: Philanthropy can help protect against climate change

June 8 2022, by Glenn Gamboa



People march holding a banner with a message that reads in Spanish; "Environmental justice is social justice" during a global climate strike demonstration in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Sept. 24, 2021. Philanthropy can fight climate change more effectively if more donors focus on funding climate justice issues and battling inequality, according to a report from the philanthropy research organization Candid released Wednesday, June 8, 2022. According to the report, only about 2% of global giving goes to climate change mitigation and less than 4% of that – about \$60 million in 2019 – is designated for climate

justice and equity-oriented work. Credit: AP Photo/Victor R. Caivano, file

Philanthropists could help ease the damage from climate change by donating more money to address global warming and the communities most at risk from it, according to a report that the research organization Candid released Wednesday.

"There can be huge [climate](#) value-for-money in supporting communities to address the inequalities that are causing their climate vulnerability," Heather McGray, of the Climate Justice Resilience Fund, says in the [report](#), "[Centering Equity and Justice in Climate Philanthropy](#)." "But it only works if success is defined as reducing the overall harm of climate change, not just reducing [greenhouse gas emissions](#)."

According to the report, only about 2% of global giving goes to climate change mitigation and less than 4% of that—about \$60 million in 2019—is designated for climate justice and equity-oriented work.

"It's a tiny slice of an already-tiny slice," said the report's co-editor Janet Camarena, senior director of Candid Learning. "Traditional top-down philanthropic practices often perpetuate inequities in how the climate crisis is addressed."

Despite "all the buzz we hear about trust-based philanthropy and participatory processes," Camarena said most donors don't base their contributions on the expertise of the people who receive their money.

A push to reverse that trend is what inspired the report, which was funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Oak Foundation.



Destroyed homes, illuminated by fire engine lights, are seen after a tornado struck the area in Arabi, La., March 22, 2022. Philanthropy can fight climate change more effectively if more donors focus on funding climate justice issues and battling inequality, according to a report from the philanthropy research organization Candid released Wednesday, June 8, 2022. According to the report, only about 2% of global giving goes to climate change mitigation and less than 4% of that – about \$60 million in 2019 – is designated for climate justice and equity-oriented work. Credit: AP Photo/Gerald Herbert, file

In 2019, Ariadne, a European network of foundations that support [social change](#) and human rights issues, recognized a need to increase funding for climate justice. In doing so, the network sought to address the problems of racism, classism, patriarchy, economic injustice and

environmental harm that communities affected by climate change disproportionately encounter. Yet it also recognized that many donors didn't know how to get started.

"Ultimately, the climate crisis is deeply interconnected with questions of equity, which must be part of the analysis and embedded in the solutions," Julie Broome, Ariadne's director, wrote in the report. "The countries bearing the greatest burden of [climate change](#) are often far from the greatest contributors to the crisis."

Candid's Camarena said the [climate crisis](#) requires the same wide range of small, creative solutions that philanthropic donors used to help combat COVID-19. And she said she believes there's reason for optimism that those changes can be achieved.

"In the wake of both the reckoning of COVID inequities and the wake of the racial reckoning with the murder of George Floyd, many foundations changed their value statements and posted notices about how they support racial equity, and in some cases even racial justice," she said. "Climate [justice](#) aligns very well with that, as funders think about not just putting the words on a website but how to operationalize those words."

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