

Top 25 high-impact givers inspire the rest of us

by LuAnne Speeter

[Barron's](#) recently released its list of the world's top high-impact givers. These philanthropists focus their donated dollars on addressing root causes of social and environmental problems, thereby having a greater, more long-term effect than simply treating the symptoms.

But it doesn't require millions – or billions – to be a more effective giver. You and your small business or giving circle can also have an impact that goes far beyond the dollar amount you invest. For example, \$65 to [Save the Children](#) can [educate a girl in an undeveloped country for a year](#). According to Save the Children, "Statistics show that girls with a good education delay premature marriage and childbirth and provide better nutrition and education for themselves and their children later on."

The following philanthropists have developed high-impact strategies that lead to impressive results and inspire all of us to think strategically about our giving plans.

*"The first thing is in your own community,
and then take the next step in poor countries."
- Bill Gates*

Philanthropist	Claim to Fame	Mission and Strategy	Mega-Impact Results
1. Pierre and Pam Omidyar Omidyar Network	Founder of Ebay	Invests in businesses and nonprofits that aim for social change.	A \$100 million fund established at Tufts University is set to produce \$1 billion in microloans in developing countries while also turning a profit for Tufts.
2. Jeff Skoll Skoll Foundation	Ebay's second employee	Awards unrestricted three-year grants to 59 entrepreneurial groups trying to build a more peaceful and prosperous world.	One of this year's grant recipients has trained armies of large rats to sniff for landmines in Africa.

3. Chris and Jamie Cooper-Hohn The Children's Investment Fund Foundation	Chris is manager of one of Britain's largest activist hedge funds	Much of the fund's profits and fees are directed into a foundation run by Chris' wife Jamie, now totaling \$2.5 billion in assets.	The foundation uses various leveraging techniques, such as aiming to save kids by saving their mothers.
4. Eli & Edythe Broad The Broad Foundations	Created two Fortune 500 companies: KB Home and SunAmerica, Inc.	Develops programs for causes that no one else is pursuing.	Projects include: a lending library to galleries and museums; training superintendents to run more efficient schools; funding young doctors' medical research.
5. Thomas Siebel The Meth Project	Tech billionaire	Funded a massive anti-methamphetamine ad campaign in Montana (2,000 billboards across the state, 61,000 TV spots) to warn teens about the drug's devastating effects.	Montana dropped from its No. 5 ranking in the U.S. for meth abuse to No. 39. Arizona, Idaho, Illinois, Wyoming, Colorado and Hawaii have replicated the program, with more states to come.
6. Donna & Philip Berber A Glimmer of Hope Foundation	Founded online trading firm CyBerCorp, which he sold to Charles Schwab	Seeks to help Ethiopians lift themselves out of poverty through Integrated Rural Development.	To date, they have financed 3,600 water wells, 400 schools and 6,500 microloans, reaching an estimated two million Ethiopians.
7. Bill & Melinda Gates Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Co-founder and chairman of Microsoft Corporation; now dedicated to his foundation full-time.	World's largest foundation with \$34 billion in assets, with ambitious aims such as an AIDS vaccine.	Impressive results in the areas of global health, poverty and development, and education. Malaria cases have declined by 50% in many parts of the world.
8. Paul Tudor Jones II Robin Hood Foundation	Chairman and CEO, Tudor Investment Corporation	Raises money to help address the overlapping issues facing New York's poorest.	Developed precise metrics for determining most effective programs.
9. Helen and Swanee Hunt Women Moving Millions	Daughters of Texas oil mogul H.L. Hunt	Harnesses the power of other wealthy women to help women's causes ranging from basic health to job training.	Launched in Nov. 2007, the organization had raised more than \$176 million by April 2009.

10. Richard Branson Virgin Unite	British industrialist	Takes an entrepreneurial approach; e.g., in 2006 pledged all his profits from transportation businesses over the next 10 years, estimated at \$3 billion, to developing green energy.	His Carbon War Room rewards individuals and scientists for coming up with new ways to control global warming.
11. John Wood Room to Read	Former Microsoft executive	Strives to break the cycle of poverty through childhood education.	Its programs have reached more than three million children and distributes a new book every three minutes.
12. Arpad Busson ARK: Absolute Return for Kids	London-based financier	Focused on meeting strategic goals in the areas of HIV/AIDS (South Africa, Mozambique), Education (UK, India) and Children in Care (Eastern Europe).	The group has freed 1,700 kids in Eastern Europe from institutionalized care, and ensured that 50,000 children of AIDS patients in South Africa can attend school.
13. Bill & Hillary Clinton William J. Clinton Foundation	Former U.S. president/ current U.S. secretary of state	Develops partnerships through the Clinton Global Initiative, challenging governments, business, academics and other leaders to develop innovative solutions to lingering problems.	Provided schooling for 10 million children, safe drinking water for 12 million, and a reduction of 40 million metric tons of carbon-dioxide emissions.
14. Jane Rosenthal, Craig Hatkoff & Robert De Niro Tribeca Film Festival	Three filmmakers	Founded in 2001 following the attacks on the World Trade Center to spur the economic and cultural revitalization of lower Manhattan through an annual celebration of film, music and culture.	The first festival, in 2003, generated an estimated \$50 million for local merchants. The event has now drawn 2.3 million moviegoers to the downtown neighborhood.
15. Jimmy Carter The Carter Center	Former U.S. president	Champions global peace and human rights; seeks to eradicate treatable diseases.	Monitors elections in more than 70 different nations; helped farmers double or triple grain production in 15 African countries; helped nearly eradicate Guinea worm disease.
16. Sunil Mittal Bharti Foundation	Founder of Bharti Group, India's largest telecom company	Leverages partnerships with IBM, Vodafone, Oracle and others to spread the country's economic gains to more of the population.	Opened more than 200 so far, training teachers and setting up libraries nearby.

17. Brad Pitt Make It Right Foundation	Actor	Donated toward 150 new low-income homes in the New Orleans area hit hardest by Hurricane Katrina.	The homes feature innovative design and green technology; the template is now being used by other foundations and governments
18. John Fisher The KIPP Foundation	Founder of Gap stores	Seeks to reenergize America's public school systems	Launched 82 free schools in 19 states, mostly in inner cities. Gave critical seed money to Teach for America, which sends college grads into the poorest school districts.
19. George Soros Open Society Institute	Hungarian-born hedge fund manager	Has championed nonviolent democratization since the 1970s and operates via a strong network of governments, organizations and individuals around the world.	Helped spark the nation of Georgia's democracy, financed college scholarships for black students in South Africa and donated \$100 million to cushion the impact of the economic crisis on Central and Eastern Europe
20. Howard G. Buffett Howard G. Buffett Foundation	Warren Buffet's eldest son	A farmer himself, Howard Buffett has been a leader in helping displaced African farmers return to their homes and resume work in areas like Kenya, Somalia and Darfur.	Funded Global Water Initiative for crucial, rural water-projects in 13 countries.
21. Earvin "Magic" Johnson The Magic Johnson Foundation	Former basketball star; currently a corporate endorser	Having tested positive for the HIV virus in 1991, Johnson leveraged his celebrity to help lessen the stigma attached to an HIV/AIDS diagnosis.	Foundation has provided free testing to more than 38,000 Americans in 16 major cities.
22. Marcos de Moraes Zip Educação/Instituto Rukha	Brazilian business mogul	Helps eradicate child labor and addresses issues of violence through humane developmental programs for youth and their families.	Of those children targeted, 97% of have effectively stopped working and 93% are enrolled in school.
23. Jennifer and Peter Buffett NoVo Foundation	Peter is Warren Buffet's second son	Focuses on helping women and girls in developing nation.	One of the foundation's microfinance initiatives funneled \$3 million in grants to 14,000 Bangladeshi girls, helping them start businesses.

<p>24. William Barron Hilton Conrad N. Hilton Foundation</p>	<p>Hotelier</p>	<p>Has directed that 97% of his wealth, or approximately \$2 billion, will be left to the foundation, to be routed to a number of small, high-impact causes.</p>	<p>Foundation's programs include supplying sewing machines to nuns to run vocational training in Vietnam, educating disabled toddlers across the U.S., and providing housing for homeless, mentally ill individuals in Los Angeles.</p>
<p>25. David and Cheryl Duffield Maddie's Fund</p>	<p>Founded PeopleSoft Inc., a human resource and CRM software company, now owned by Oracle Corp.</p>	<p>Named after Duffield's miniature schnauzer, finds homes for some 70,000 dogs and cats each year and fights euthanasia at shelters.</p>	<p>Launched a program at Cornell University that trains veterinary students in medical practices for animal shelters.</p>

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