

# **Universal Values, Foreign Money: Funding Local Human Rights Organizations in the Global South**

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**Abstract (190 words)**

Local human rights organizations (LHROs) are key domestic and transnational actors, modifying, diffusing, and promoting liberal norms; mobilizing citizens; networking with the media and activists; and pressuring governments to implement international commitments. These groups, however, are reliant on international funds. This makes sense in politically repressive environments, where potential donors fear government retaliation, but is puzzling elsewhere. We interviewed 263 LHRO leaders and key informants from 60 countries, and conducted statistically representative surveys of 6,180 respondents in India, Mexico, Morocco, and Nigeria. Based on these data, we believe LHRO funding in non-repressive environments is shaped by philanthropic logics of appropriateness. In the late 1990s, transnational activists successfully mainstreamed human rights throughout the international donor assistance community, freeing up development money for LHROs. Domestic activists in the global South have not promoted similar philanthropic transformations at home, where charitable giving still focuses on traditional institutions. Instead, domestic rights activists have followed the path of least resistance towards international aid, a logic of outcomes produced by variations in global logics of [philanthropic] appropriateness.

## **I. Introduction** (word count, including text, notes, and bibliography: 11,500)

Our data suggest that many in the global South support human rights ideas and groups, but that few contribute financially to local human rights organizations (LHROs), and that most LHROs depend on international funds.<sup>1</sup> This “rights/resources puzzle” is not particularly puzzling in repressive countries, where local contributions would be risky, but is harder to fathom in less repressive contexts, like those studied here.

LHRO reliance on international funding in less repressive countries stems from a global divergence in logics of philanthropic appropriateness on the part of potential local donors, international donors, and LHROs. In much of the world, taken-for-granted philanthropic routines remain focused on religious institutions and traditional, service-based charities; citizens in the global South do not consider LHROs as “natural” charitable recipients. The giving routines of internationally oriented donors, however, *have* changed, due to transnational activist entrepreneurship in the 1990s. Boosted by the horrors of the Rwandan genocide, transnational rights activists persuaded donor agencies and private foundations in wealthy countries to invest in global rights-promotion, including by LHROs (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004; Kindornay, Ron, & Carpenter, 2012; Uvin, 1998, 2004, 2013). Today, experts believe that roughly 6% of all official development assistance is human rights oriented, of which a portion goes to LHROs (Atwood 2013). This represents a major change from the 1970s and 1980s, when only a handful of private Western donors invested in international rights promotion, and when official aid flows rarely went to explicit rights promotion (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). This 6% of official aid, coupled with now significant donations by private donors and foundations,

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<sup>1</sup> LHROs first appeared in the Americas and Europe during the 1970s, and then spread to other world regions, often with help from international donors. For a causal account of this process, see (Ball, 1998)

represents roughly nine billion dollars a year for human rights promotion by governments and civil society.

As a result, international resource mobilization has become the path of least resistance for Southern rights activists. Domestic fundraising is possible, but requires substantial investment with uncertain short-term prospects. Southern activists prefer to focus on international funds, a rational-instrumental logic of outcomes flowing naturally from the global divergence in philanthropic logics of appropriateness. Would-be givers don't donate because they never have, and LHROs bypass potential local givers for international donors because, until now, this strategy has worked.

Is the rights-resource puzzle really puzzling? On the rights side, some contend that the assertion of universal rights acceptance is just a Western conceit, and that publics skeptical of rights as a Trojan horse for foreign values, or mistrustful of local rights advocates, will not contribute to LHROs. On the resources side, citizens in the global South—particularly the disenfranchised and poor, the natural constituency for human rights groups—may simply not have enough money to give. Our research, however, shows that the puzzle is indeed real. Support for rights principles and groups are sufficiently high among people with sufficient money so that LHROs could, in theory, raise local money.

Dependence on international money, and the corresponding failure to cultivate local donors, is becoming increasingly problematic. International funds have helped the global LHRO sector expand, but governments worldwide are now cracking down on foreign aid to local NGOs. From 1993 to 2012, 45 governments passed new laws restricting foreign transfers to domestically registered non-profits, and more limitations are in the offing (Carothers & Brechenmacher, 2014; Christensen & Weinstein, 2013; Mendelson, 2015)—including,

ominously, in the world's largest democracy and one of the countries we study here, India.<sup>2</sup> These new regulations have profound consequences. In 2012, most of the Ethiopian LHRO community was wiped out by one such law (Dupuy, Ron, & Prakash, 2015).

As research on *other* NGO sectors has shown, moreover, excessive reliance on foreign aid is rarely healthy over the long term; it can easily weaken, distort, and divide domestic civil societies (Henderson, 2003; Sundstrom, 2005; Uvin, 1998). When non-profit groups raise resources locally, by contrast, they are better able to strengthen ties with local constituents, deepen local accountability, and reflect domestic priorities. The more rights groups mobilize resources from ordinary citizens within their own country, the better equipped they will be to counter claims of elitism and arrogance (Englund, 2006; Hopgood, 2013; Mutua, 2001; Okafor, 2006). Local money is no panacea, but it can help LHROs avoid common NGO pitfalls.

International relations (IR) scholars should care about LHROs' sustainability because rights-based civil society is vital for the diffusion and impact of international rights norms (Hafner-Burton, 2013; Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Landman, 2005; Murdie & Davis, 2012; Simmons, 2009). Without vigorous civil society support from below, international norms, treaties, and pressures from above have limited impact; a robust LHRO sector is essential to the global human rights regime's health. To date, however, LHRO resource mobilization has attracted little IR attention.<sup>3</sup> Although development scholars regularly study domestic civil societies, they focus on other types of NGOs, relegating the human rights sector to legal scholars and anthropologists (Allen, 2013; Englund, 2006; Merry, 2006; Mutua, 2001; Okafor, 2006).

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<sup>2</sup> "India's Chilling Crackdown," *New York Times*, May 7, 2015 ([http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/08/opinion/indias-chilling-crackdown.html?smid=fb-share&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/08/opinion/indias-chilling-crackdown.html?smid=fb-share&_r=0)) [accessed June 4, 2015].

<sup>3</sup> One important exception is (Berkovitch & Gordon, 2008), which we discuss below.

Our study fills this gap in four ways: First, we intervene uniquely in long-standing IR debates over the universality of human rights (Donnelly, 2007; Franck, 2001; Howard & Donnelly, 1986) by inserting a rare discussion of comparative philanthropic routines. Second, we contribute to ongoing debates on the organizational dynamics of normatively-driven activists (Berkovitch & Gordon, 2008; Bob, 2005; Carpenter, 2014; Cooley & Ron, 2002; Murdie, 2014; Prakash & Gugerty, 2011; Reimann, 2006; Sells & Prakash, 2004; Simeant, 2005; Stroup, 2012; Sundstrom, 2005; Wong, 2012). International norms are embedded in organizations with resource requirements, and while principled NGO activism is not *reducible* to resource dynamics, they do matter. Third, we contribute to the IR literature on the unanticipated effects of international aid (Lischer, 2003; Kuperman 2008). Foreign assistance offers a vital lifeline to embattled LHROs in repressive environments, but in less abusive contexts, undermines local fundraising incentives. Finally, we add a new area of inquiry – philanthropy – to constructivist studies of international political behavior. To date, most studies have focused on the “logics of appropriateness” for states, international organizations (IOs), and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs). Here, we extend this concept to LHROs and to philanthropy.

## **II. Logics of Appropriateness: Philanthropy and Development Assistance**

We ground our explanation of the rights/resources puzzle in “logics of appropriateness” that lead, on the supply side, would-be local donors to abstain from giving (and international donors to give), and, on the demand side, LHROs to overlook local donors when raising funds. The logics of appropriateness perspective argues that social action is guided by socially constructed notions of legitimacy and propriety, rather than the rational, cost-benefit analyses of “logics of

outcomes.”<sup>4</sup> Heavily socialized actors regard only some goals and behaviors as appropriate, excluding others regardless of efficacy. This reduces cognitive burdens and simplifies decision-making, but precludes options from consideration. Sometimes, the socially constructed rules become “fully acquired habits” of individuals and groups who act “virtually nonconsciously” (Graybiel, 2008, 361). In other instances, actors realize they are simply rule following, but continue to do so to signal significant others they are committed to acting “appropriately” (Swidler, 1995, 18). This latter is crucial, because it allows for the decoupling of individual attitudes from collectively sanctioned behaviors. Ordinary people may support human rights ideas and organizations while simultaneously regarding *donating* to LHROs as inappropriate. Attitudes and behavior can proceed along different tracks. Constructivist scholars have successfully applied this logic to all manner of international behavior, typically by states, international norm entrepreneurs, transnational activist campaigns, INGOs, and IOs (Barnett & Finnemore 1999; Barnett, 2011; Carpenter, 2005; Finnemore, 1993; Sikkink, 2011). Until now, however, IR scholars have not applied these arguments to philanthropic logics or studied their resource implications for LHROs.

### **Logics of philanthropic appropriateness in the global South**

Philanthropy – an inherently social activity – is subject to powerful and socially constructed logics of appropriateness (Ilchman et al., 1998). As one anthropologist notes, the human impulse to share is “cultivated and articulated in ritual practice” (Bornstein, 2009, 634), while extra-household giving is subject to “culturally specific” routines, norms, and styles

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<sup>4</sup> (March & Olsen, 2009; Meyer et al., 1997; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991).

(Dulany & Winder, 2001).<sup>5</sup> Individuals, groups, and organizations give to all manner of extra-family actors, but do so in accordance with accepted norms. In devoutly Muslim societies, for example, most people direct donations to religious institutions administering *zakat*, the alms-giving obligation required of every believer (Pew Center, 2012). In Jewish-American communities, charitable giving focuses on legitimized organizations (such as the United Jewish Appeal), socially legitimated activities (such as education), and appropriate beneficiaries (typically, needy Jews) (Cannon, 2014; Telushkin, 2008). Philanthropy exists outside these parameters, but is less common, and more open to contestation.

In the global South, giving from private individuals and businesses tends to focus more on the “charitable” than the “strategic,” supporting immediate relief rather than long term structural change, policy advocacy, or human rights reforms (Dulany & Winder, 2001). In Asia, people give generously to individuals and religious charities but not to NGOs seeking broader social change (Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium, 2002). In Palestine, people regularly donate to local *zakat* committee, but not to “strategic” Palestinian NGOs, which rely on foreign aid (Challand, 2008, 50). In much of the global South, the philanthropic sector is bifurcated between a “traditional” sector, focused on charitable relief through religious organizations, and the “modern” NGO sector, supported by foreign sources (Chahim & Prakash, 2014). LHROs are confined to the latter, preventing them from accessing local money.

Over time, philanthropic institutions in the global North have grown interested in strategic giving for long-term change, especially for international human rights. According to one recent study, the overwhelming majority of private human rights funding comes from donors

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<sup>5</sup> As used here, “philanthropy” refers to all forms of monetized and non-monetized giving and sharing. Others differentiate between “charity,” in the sense of immediate relief of suffering, and “philanthropy,” a long-term commitment to promoting the public good (Daly, 2011)



in the US, with Western Europe a distant second (Lawrence & Dobson, 2013). This does not mean that Northern citizens are more supportive of human rights, only that Northern philanthropic practices are such that donating to human rights organizations, replete with their organizational charts, boards, and internationally oriented mission statements, is socially accepted. Cognizant of this divergence between their own logics and those of most donors in the global South, human rights-oriented foundations in the global North are increasingly keen to encourage parallel philanthropic developments elsewhere.<sup>6</sup>

Change in logics of appropriateness is possible. With effort and propitious conditions, dedicated change agents can spark shifts, typically through the re-interpretation and re-framing of existing rules and routines. In social movement parlance, change agents “graft” revised interpretations onto existing “frames,” extending old meanings in new but related ways (Benford & Snow, 2000; McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001; Sundstrom, 2005). This reinterpretation and grafting is essential to all manner of activism, including efforts to change philanthropic practices.

Philanthropic change occurs regularly in the global South, albeit not by LHROs. In 19<sup>th</sup> century India, famed social innovator Swami Vivekananda reworked traditional doctrines of social service to create the radically egalitarian Ramakrishna Mission, disavowing caste and religious differences (Beckerlegge, 1990). Gandhi did the same a few decades later, reworking traditional Hindu concepts of *dan* (gift-giving) and *seva* (service) to create a new philanthropic synthesis focused on land reform, Hindu-Muslim unity, Untouchability, and more (Bornstein, 2009; Juergensmeyer & McMahon, 1998). In countries with large Islamic populations, philanthropic innovators have repeatedly reworked interpretations of *zakat*, taking traditional alms-giving in all manner of new directions (Candland, 2001; Kozlowsky, 1998; Petersen, 2012).

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<sup>6</sup> Author workshop with the International Human Rights Funders Group, New York, May 18, 2015, and telephone conversation with a program officer at the Open Society Foundation, June 12, 2015.

Such reinterpretations require much work, as well as deep cultural fluency and strong alliances in the traditional charitable sector. To change local giving patterns, LHROs would have to invest heavily in redefining themselves and their work as socially legitimate recipients. For example, LHROs would have to convince at least some religious leaders that good Muslims could satisfy their *zakat* obligation by donating to a rights group. Below, we provide evidence that key informants and LHRO leaders realize how challenging this transformation would be, and have instead chosen, for now, to focus their energies elsewhere.

It is here that the logics of appropriateness and outcomes intersect. Most philanthropic giving in the global South is oriented towards traditional charitable activities, typically through religious channels; it would be hard to convince local donors differently. This is the logic of appropriateness. Given this, LHRO leaders rationally weigh options; should they invest in trying to change local philanthropic styles over the long term, or should they should focus on the here and now, raising funds internationally? Clearly, the latter is quicker and more cost-effective, but it is also path dependent (Pierson, 2000): once locked in to international funding, switching to local funding becomes increasingly costly. LHROs have ample practice appealing to international donors, but cultivating locals would entail substantial effort, including require retooling fundraising departments, hiring new types of staff, targeting new types of donors, building new alliances. This “logic of outcomes” dovetails with the logic of appropriateness, resulting in continued reliance on foreign donors.

To date, according to key informants and LHRO leaders, the most cost-effective strategy is the pursuit of external funds. Southern populations support human rights ideas and organizations, but their philanthropic routines have not adjusted so that donating to LHROs is a socially legitimated option. Neither have LHROs, for their part, adjusted their routines so that

they perceive soliciting local funds as desirable or feasible. The international development community, by contrast, went through this transformation in the late 1990s, freeing up resources hitherto unavailable to human rights practitioners.

### **Logics of appropriateness in the international development sector**

International development assistance, a form of publicly organized philanthropy, is also subject to logics of appropriateness (Easterly, 2006; Rist, 2014; Tandler, 1975).<sup>7</sup> Aid agencies spend much effort identifying socially acceptable processes, recipients, activities, evaluation methods, and outcomes. Indeed, the critical literature often castigates the sector for its preoccupation with fads and legitimacy. Aid agencies follow logics of appropriateness for good reason, however. The actual impacts of development aid (its logic of outcomes) are difficult to measure (Glennie & Sumner, 2014), so like all good bureaucrats, development professionals compensate by signaling their commitment to social expectations. These logics of appropriateness are not static, however, since transnational norm entrepreneurs (Carpenter, 2014) are constantly seeking to modify international assistance routines, pushing re-interpretations of existing norms.

Precisely one such change occurred in the mid-to-late 1990s, in the wake of the Rwandan genocide and the growing power of the transnational human rights movement. Until then, international development and human rights donors and practitioners inhabited distinct worlds (Sano, 2000). Development agencies benefited from comparatively substantial investments of public and private resources, while rights activists struggled to survive on meager support from a

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<sup>7</sup> Aid agencies, their political overseers, and some scholars stress aid's logic of outcomes, rather than its logic of appropriateness. Foreign aid, in this view, seeks to achieve rationally derived, *manifest* goals, such as poverty-alleviation, or rationally derived but *latent* goals, such as rewarding political allies, or boosting trade partnerships (Dietrich, 2013).

handful of individuals and foundations (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). This changed after the 1994 Rwandan genocide, however, when critics noted that the country's vast array of internationally supported development agencies had failed to anticipate the killings (Uvin, 1998). Development and humanitarian agencies began experimenting with human rights, and by the early 2000s, dozens of individual agencies had followed suit.<sup>8</sup> In 2003, the United Nations (UN) established an all-agency "common understanding" mainstreaming human rights into their operations, disseminating the "rights-based approach to development." By 2014, development and human rights had become "partners at last," with roughly 6% of official development assistance devoted to all manner of human rights work (Atwood, 2013). In 2012, this would have translated into roughly into some \$8 billion USD.

Below, we show that key informants and LHRO leaders understand this shift in international logics and its contrast to philanthropic routines in their own countries. Rational cost-benefit analyses, reinforced by path dependency – the logic of outcomes – suggest that the pursuit of external funds is most efficient. Many in the global South may be sympathetic to human rights, but deeply entrenched routines of giving are sending most donations to traditional causes. As a result, LHROs focus on external aid.

Having elaborated our theoretical story, we next describe our data; engage with alternative explanations; and then support our claims.

### **III. Data & Case Selection**

As noted above, the IR scholarly community devotes most of its human rights analysis to the behavior of states, INGOs, and IOs, focusing far less on LHROs and their resources. In part, this is due to the dearth of reliable and consistent data. The World Bank and the OECD's

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<sup>8</sup> (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004; Kindornay, Ron, & Carpenter, 2012)

Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) publish remittance and official assistance data, but offer little on human rights-specific flows, and other donor agencies rarely use human rights as a reporting category. Governments often resent international funding of their local critics, prompting donors to bury their human rights giving in other categories. “These things are best discussed in private,” one human rights donor explained.<sup>9</sup>

There is also little information on LHRO numbers. Although the Union of International Associations (UIA) publishes data on formally constituted rights groups with transnational ties, it offers little information on domestically focused groups.<sup>10</sup> Individual governments maintain lists of registered NGOs, but rarely distinguish the rights-based sector. As a result, we have sampling frames for transnational rights groups (Meernik, Aloisi, Sowell, & Nichols, 2012; Smith & Wiest, 2005; Tsutsui & Wotipka, 2004) and for domestic NGOs (Barr, Fafchamps, & Owens, 2005; Gauri & Galef, 2005), but very few lists of LHROs operating within national borders. Indeed, the only two studies we know of are Berkovitch & Gordon (2008), who purposively sampled 16 of the 26 LHROs they identified within Israel’s 1967 borders, and Okafor (2006), who purposively sampled 20 of the 100 LHROs he identified in Nigeria. Both discovered overwhelming LHRO dependence on foreign aid.

Finally, we have little systematic information on public attitudes towards human rights and LHROs, and even less combining those attitudes with charitable patterns. Major survey projects ask whether respondents think their governments respect human rights, but rarely inquire about attitudes towards human rights concepts and organizations. In 2011, a Korean team conducted a nationally representative poll of public attitudes towards human rights (n=1500), but did not explore resource mobilization (Koo, Cheong, & Ramirez, 2015). In 2007-08, an

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<sup>9</sup> Phone discussion with London-based program officer for the Open Society Foundation, May 31, 2013.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.uia.org>.

international consortium polled individuals in 28 countries and territories for their views on international human rights principles (n=47,241), but again, did not ask for attitudes towards LHROs, or for patterns of charitable giving (WorldPublicOpinion.org, 2008). The same is true for unpublished polls conducted by an NGO consortium in Israel.<sup>11</sup> The reasons for this data dearth are complex; one study of Russian activists discovered a principled reluctance to engage with survey research (Mendelson & Gerber, 2007). In addition, the cost of surveys is comparatively high, and both their execution and their interpretation require familiarity with social science techniques.

To address this gap, we collected data from three unique sources.

**Data Source #1) Face-to-face interviews with 128 key informants from 60 countries:** From 2006 through 2010, we purposively selected and interviewed 128 key informants from 60 countries in the global South and East while participating in an annual, three-week International Human Rights Training Program in Montreal, run by a Canadian NGO, Equitas.<sup>12</sup> Of these 128 respondents, 64% worked for local NGOs, while the remainder worked in the domestic branches of international organizations, human rights-related government agencies (such as national human rights commissions), or universities. All 128 had substantial knowledge of, or experience with, their country's LHRO sector; this was a criterion for acceptance. Over three-quarters were paid professionals, and most self-identified as "senior" (48%) or "middle" (44%) management. We interviewed them in English or French for 58 minutes, on average; digitally recorded the conversations; transcribed; and coded with STATA and NVivo.

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<sup>11</sup> Private conversations with Israeli human rights groups, 2014 and 2015.

<sup>12</sup> <https://equitas.org/en/what-we-do/human-rights-defenders-and-educators/ihrtp/>.

**Data Source #2) Interviews with 135 randomly selected LHRO leaders in four countries:**

Data source #1 relied on individuals with the knowledge, motivation, and resources to successfully apply to and attend international training.<sup>13</sup> We corrected for this transnational skew by replicating our semi-structured key informant interview with 135 randomly selected LHRO leaders living in four global South countries, from 2010 to 2014. Of these, 115 were face-to-face interviews that lasted 60 minutes, on average, in English, Spanish, and French. We conducted a further 20 written or web-based interviews. These samples are representative of the LHRO community in major cities within each of our case studies.

**Case selection criteria:** We focused on major cities in India, Mexico, Morocco, and Nigeria, because all four (a) had sufficient political freedom to allow LHROs to operate and fundraise freely, and allow citizens to comment and donate to LHROs freely; (b) had substantial LHRO communities. Otherwise, these countries varied on key independent variables, creating a “most different” research design (Gerring, 2007) that allows us to cautiously extrapolate from cross-case similarities to global trends.

As Table 1 indicates, our countries vary dramatically by *world region* (South Asia, North Africa, Latin America, and sub-Saharan Africa); *major religion* (Hinduism; Sunni Islam; Catholicism, and various other Christian traditions); *colonial history* (Britain, France, Spain); “*civilization*” (Islamic, African, Latin American, and Indian) (Huntington, 2011); *dominant language* (Hindi plus regional Indian languages, Spanish, French, Arabic, English, Pidgin, and

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<sup>13</sup> Equitas covered participant travel and lodging with a Canadian government grant. Participants required substantial resources to learn of the conference, however, as well as to apply, in English or French; obtain passports and visas; and function for three weeks in French or English. As a result, we regard this purposive sample as skewed towards the transnational.

regional Nigerian languages); *population, per capita GDP*, and their propensity for *charity*.<sup>14</sup> Mexico is the wealthiest, India is the most populous, and Nigerians are the most charitable.

Table 1 Here

All four cases satisfy our scope conditions, in that they were sufficiently free to allow LHRO activity and citizen expression, and have substantial LHRO communities. To develop LHRO sampling frames, we focused on major cities: Mumbai, India’s cultural and financial capital; Mexico City, Mexico’s political, economic and cultural capital, and San Cristóbal, a regional hub of rights-based organizing; Rabat and Casablanca, Morocco’s adjacent political, cultural, and economic capitals; and Lagos, Nigeria’s economic and cultural capital. From 2010 to 2014, our team assembled lists of all the legally registered, locally-headquartered NGOs they could identify with the word “rights,” in the vernacular, in their mission statement or description of major activities.<sup>15</sup> As Table 1 indicates, each city contained a significant LHRO population; 56 in Rabat and Casablanca; 57 in Mumbai; 50 in Mexico City; 25 in San Cristóbal; and 64 in Lagos. Cumulatively, this totaled 252 LHROs whose human rights focus we confirmed via email, phone, reputational consultation, or personal office visit. We selected 135 (54%) for interview, using two different sampling techniques. In Nigeria, Mexico, and Morocco, we divided the LHRO lists into three strata: rights-based NGOs with hyperlinked websites (identified with Issue Crawler)<sup>16</sup>; groups with websites, but no mutual hyperlinks; and groups with no Internet presence. We then sampled proportionally from, and randomly within, each city

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<sup>14</sup> World Bank Development Indicators and Charities Aid Foundation (2013, 2014a), based on Gallup polling.

<sup>15</sup> These groups are a subset of non-profits, defined as formally organized entities that are self-governing, separate from government, and that do not distribute profits. Almost all NGOs in our sample relied at least in part on volunteers, another important non-profit criterion.

<sup>16</sup> Issue-Crawler analyzes virtual connections between websites. For details, see <https://www.issuecrawler.net>.



and strata. In Mumbai, we performed simple random sampling on the entire list, as its LHROs had limited web presence.

**Data Source #3) Human Rights Perception Polls:** Finally, we surveyed 6,180 members of the general public in all four countries, using stratified, multi-stage random cluster sampling. We began in 2012 with a nationally representative survey of all adults aged 18 and over in Mexico (n=2,400), and continued with regionally representative surveys in Rabat, Casablanca and their rural environs (n=1,100) in 2012; Mumbai and the surrounding rural areas of Maharashtra state (n=1,680) in that same year; and Lagos and the two surrounding rural states (n=1,000) in 2014.<sup>17</sup> We oversampled Christians and Buddhists in India, and rural residents in India, Morocco, and Nigeria, and adjust with weights where appropriate.

#### **IV. Where do LHROs get their Money?**

Researching non-profit finances in the developing world is challenging, since reports are rarely publicly available (Bornstein, 2009; Fafchamps & Owens, 2009). Given political sensitivities, moreover, LHROs are wary of discussing finances. To ethically obtain sensitive information, researchers typically establish trust through prolonged contact, as did Okafor (2006) and Berkovitch & Gordon (2008) in Nigeria and Israel, where they were citizens and insiders. As foreign cross-national researchers, however, we had to devise other techniques.

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<sup>17</sup> One or more authors was present in each field location, and worked with the survey partners to translate the survey; pilot the questionnaire; train interviewers; assess data quality procedures; and review the sampling and weighting procedures. We conducted the Mexican survey in partnership with the *Americas and the World Project* at the Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE, Mexico City). In the other three countries, we contracted directly with local survey companies.

First, we asked all 263 informants from data sources #1 and #2, *In your opinion, what percentage of human rights organizations in [your country] receive substantial funding from foreign donors?* This was less threatening than a direct query about individual organization finances, and treated respondents as experts, rather than as primary sources.<sup>18</sup> Figure A summarizes the responses of those who answered this question.

### **Figure A Here**

Given data source #1's transnational skew, we expected its foreign aid estimates to be higher. The LHRO leaders we interviewed in Morocco, however, offered *higher* estimates, on average, than those in the purposive 60-country sample and the other country samples. And while the LHRO leaders we interviewed in Mexico and Mumbai offered slightly lower estimates, the margin of error overlaps with that of the Moroccan sample. In short, Figure A demonstrates that across widely different contexts, informed experts and LHRO leaders believe most local rights groups receive "substantial" foreign aid.

Next, we asked respondents from data sources #1 and #2, *How many human rights organizations in [your country] raise substantial local funds?* Figure B summarizes their responses, the most common of which was "very few." Statistically, there was no difference across cases in the proportion of respondents with that answer.

### **Figure B Here**

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<sup>18</sup> Established projects such as Transparency International and Freedom House regularly rely on such techniques.

Qualitative elaborations reinforced this message. One Senegalese respondent, for example, told us he did “not know one human rights organization [in Senegal]... that lives off its own resources,”<sup>19</sup> while her Filipino counterpart said “it’s mostly European money that has been sustaining us.”<sup>20</sup> In Lebanon, another informant said, “all of the people who work in human rights depend on funding from the European Union, the United States, and the European foundations;”<sup>21</sup> in Peru, “like 100%” of LHROs do the same,<sup>22</sup> and in Armenia, “all active NGOs [in human rights] are getting funding from abroad.”<sup>23</sup> Across world region, key informants asserted that dependency on foreign aid was the LHRO norm.

We then asked respondents whether their *own* organization received foreign funds. Again, due to political sensitivities, we did not inquire about the percentage of foreign aid in their budgets. As Figure C shows, 89% of the 60-country sample (data source #1) said their organizations received foreign funds. This figure ranged from 67% to 79% in our four country studies (data source #2). In two of these countries (Morocco and Nigeria), the percentages reporting receiving foreign funds were statistically indistinguishable from the 60-country sample; in the other two (Mexico and India), the percentage was statistically lower. Overall, the picture painted by these two data sources is consistent.<sup>24</sup>

Figure C Here

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<sup>19</sup> 10-Burkina Faso

<sup>20</sup> 98-Philippine

<sup>21</sup> 88-Lebanon

<sup>22</sup> 33-Peru

<sup>23</sup> 5-Armenia

<sup>24</sup> In the purposive 60-country sample estimate, we used responses *only* from informants working in local NGOs.

Finally, we asked informants to speculate what would happen if *foreign funding for human rights work in [your country] was cut off*. If this happened, we asked, *would local human rights activities: (1) collapse entirely; (2); collapse somewhat; (3) stay about the same; (4) grow a little, or; (5) grow a lot?* As Figure D notes, most responses cited the two worst-case scenarios; only the Moroccan LHRO leaders expressed optimism.<sup>25</sup>

Figure D Here

From 2010 to 2012, the Ethiopian government tested this claim by drastically restricting all external aid to LHROs. As expected, the country's national human rights sector all but collapsed (Dupuy, Ron & Prakash, 2015).

Our surveys of ordinary people in four countries, discussed in greater detail below, reinforce what the key informants and LHRO leaders told us: few members of the public donate funds to human rights groups or issues. Table 3, for example, lists the percentage of respondents in each sample who responded "yes" to the question, "*Have you ever donated money to one of the following organizations...A human rights organization in your country.*" Affirmative responses ranged from 1% in Mexico, to 5.2% in Lagos and its environs.<sup>26</sup>

Informants were concerned by the paucity of domestic donors, and their organizations' reliance on international funds. One Armenian key informant, for example, said she feared LHROs in her country would "not be able to continue their active work"<sup>27</sup> without foreign aid, while a Macedonian counterpart warned that without international aid, "there would be

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<sup>25</sup> In ongoing work, we analyze the sources of human rights NGO resilience in the face of possible aid cutoffs.

<sup>26</sup> The Mexico numbers are not strictly comparable to the others, because of the way the question was asked in that country. See below for details.

<sup>27</sup> 5-Armenia

nothing.”<sup>28</sup> A Filipino feared his group would “be crippled,”<sup>29</sup> a Bangladeshi said human rights work “would be over,”<sup>30</sup> a Palestinian warned a cutoff would be “catastrophic,”<sup>31</sup> and an Ecuadoran asked, “Where else would [human rights] NGOs get their funding?”<sup>32</sup> Even in Brazil, a comparatively dynamic emerging market, a respondent said there would be “a huge problem” for LHROs if external aid ended.<sup>33</sup> Across world regions, informants feared their country’s LHROs would either fail, or badly falter, without international money.

Our theory, outlined above, is that logics of philanthropic appropriateness and outcomes explain this rights/resources puzzle. Before providing our evidence, we engage critically with five major alternative explanations.

## **V. Alternative Explanations**

Some critiques focus on the rights side of the rights/resources puzzle, noting that when publics are skeptical of rights principles and advocates, they will not donate. Others focus on the resources side, claiming that citizens in the global South are too poor. We consider, and ultimately reject, five major alternatives: 1) political repression; 2) skepticism toward human rights; 3) mistrust of human rights organizations; 4) general poverty; and 5) poverty concentrated among rights-oriented constituents. The first explanation, that potential donors don’t give because they fear reprisals, is plausible only in highly repressive political contexts. It cannot account for low levels of donations in countries with relative political freedom, including our four cases. Wariness of rights advocates, or rights themselves (the second and third

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<sup>28</sup> 29-Macedonia  
<sup>29</sup> 58-Philippines  
<sup>30</sup> 100-Bangladesh  
<sup>31</sup> 73-Palestine  
<sup>32</sup> 97-Ecuador  
<sup>33</sup> 15-Brazil

explanations), aren't prevalent enough, according to our data, to account for low levels of donations. Nor are people generally, or rights supporters specifically (the fourth and fifth explanations), too poor to donate.

**Political repression:** Many policymakers and rights practitioners in the global North say fear inhibits local donations. In much of the global South, they argue, citizens fear government retaliation if they donate to groups critical of the authorities. One former US official went so far as to tell us that political repression is *the only* reason for LHRO reliance on external aid,<sup>34</sup> a view echoed by the current UN special rapporteur for freedom of association (Kiai, 2013), as well as many Northern-based scholars.

This claim finds support in the scholarly literature, as IR researchers have long argued that state repression propels domestic activists into transnational arenas in search of political, financial, and symbolic support (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). As a result, however, these scholars rarely ask about domestic resource mobilization, tacitly assuming there simply is no domestic money for LHROs; the authorities have cowed citizens into submission. This makes sense in repressive environments, but does not explain why LHROs in *less* repressive contexts *also* rely on external aid. After all, none of our cases were so fearsomely governed so as to deter citizens from donating to LHROs.

Consider Morocco. The country's monarchy began liberalizing two decades ago, and conditions improved further when Mohammed VI succeeded his father in 1999. Serious human rights concerns remain, but political repression has eased since the 1970s and 1980s, the country's dreaded "Years of Lead" (Human Rights Watch, 1995, 2013a). Most importantly, Morocco now has a vibrant civil society and an outspoken, self-confident domestic rights sector. None of the LHRO leaders we interviewed in Rabat and Casablanca said citizens feared

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<sup>34</sup> Remarks by former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State in Minneapolis, March 7, 2014.

contributing financially to their groups. And yet, as Figures A and B demonstrate, Moroccan LHRO leaders also estimated that some 83% of their sector received “substantial” overseas money, while 62% said “very few” raised substantial domestic funds. Morocco’s political conditions do not explain this pattern.

The same is true for Mexico. In 2010-11, the years we conducted our LHRO interviews, the country was entering its second decade of political democracy. Criminal violence was high, and human rights abuses by criminals and security forces were common (Anaya Muñoz, 2013; Human Rights Watch, 2011, 2013b). Still, none of the LHRO leaders we interviewed said citizens were too scared to donate, and while one informant said fear *might* prevent citizens in high-violence drug war zones from donating, he thought this was unlikely elsewhere.<sup>35</sup> Yet as Figures A and B note, the Mexican LHRO leaders we interviewed estimated, on average, that 64% of the country’s rights groups received “substantial” foreign aid, and 53% said “very few” received substantial local funding.

India is also politically democratic and poorly governed, with multiple armed insurgencies and widespread human rights violations. In some parts of the country, moreover, government-allied militias target civil society groups (Human Rights Watch, 2012). As one activist told us, Indian donors are often scared to contribute to LHROs working on national security issues.<sup>36</sup> Yet LHROs working on “softer” issues such as children, gender, and sanitation are subject to far less scrutiny (Jalali, 2008); why do these not benefit from more local funding? Political repression is a reasonable explanation for LHRO dependence on foreign funds in authoritarian settings, but is less persuasive elsewhere.

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<sup>35</sup> Email interview with locally based Mexican human rights expert, May 11, 2014.

<sup>36</sup> Face-to-face interview with key informant in Delhi, January 2006.

**Public skepticism toward human rights:** If behavior and beliefs are tightly coupled, the lack of donations by citizens to LHRO may stem from negative attitudes towards human rights. Scholars have long debated the universality of human rights principles, and some believe that the public in non-Western societies considers individual rights irrelevant, foreign, or even harmful. So-called universal human rights, some say, are really only Western values. If true, this explains why LHROs do not attract local money.

The available polling data, however, suggest otherwise. Consider the 2007-08 poll by WorldOpinion.org (2008), which asked 47,241 people in 28 countries and territories – 13 of which appear in our 60-country sample (data source #1), and only six of which were in the global North – for their views on the principles outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The results indicated that “the norms of the UDHR receive robust support throughout the world...[and] are endorsed by majorities in every country.” There was no evidence that global populations lived in “highly different moral universes.”

Next, consider our own polls with 6,180 respondents in four countries (data source #3). Figure E reports average responses to our query, *How strongly do you associate [specific phrase] with ‘human rights?’* We offered respondents three positive-sounding phrases: *protecting people from torture and murder*, *promoting socio-economic justice*, and *promoting free and fair elections*; three negative-sounding phrases: *protecting criminals*, *protecting terrorists*,<sup>37</sup> and *not protecting or promoting anyone’s interests*; and two associating human rights with foreign interference: *promoting U.S. interests* and *promoting foreign values and ideas*. We then asked respondents to rank the extent to which they agreed with each association on a scale from 1 to 7, in ascending order of strength. A midpoint score of 4 indicates neutrality.

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<sup>37</sup> We did not ask this question in Mexico.



Figure E presents average scores for each sample, plus a four-sample average weighting each sample equally.

### **Figure E Here**

The results offer little evidence of widespread public distaste for human rights. Across all four surveys, average associations for phrases linking human rights to negative items or foreign intrusion were well *below* the midpoint, while associations for positive sounding phrases scored well *above*. Respondents felt more warmth than chill towards human rights ideas, and did not regard them as foreign concepts.

To be sure, these results could be overly optimistic; respondents may have offered socially desirable answers, rather than their true feelings (Belli, Traugott, Young, & Mcgonagle, 2010; Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). The odds of some 6,000 randomly selected respondents doing this *in remarkably consistent ways across four different countries*, however, seem low. Publics may be reluctant to donate money to LHROs, but this is not, it seems, due to their distaste for human rights ideas. It is precisely this kind of decoupling of personal attitudes from socially constructed behavior that the logics of appropriateness allow for.

**Public mistrust of human rights organizations:** Publics may support human rights ideas but mistrust rights organizations; organizational “brand trust” matters enormously for giving (Bennett, 2003). Many scholars are concerned with public trust in NGOs overall, but none have asked about LHROs (Davis, Murdie, & Steinmetz, 2012; Ebrahim, 2003; Murdie & Peksen, 2014). To estimate, our public polls asked, *How much trust [do] you ... place in the following institutions*, followed by a battery of roughly 15 national and international actors, including *[country toponym] human rights organizations*. Enumerators rotated this list of actors, and we

rescaled responses from 0 to 1 (1 = most trust).<sup>38</sup> Figure F summarizes average sample responses for LHROs and other institutions for comparative purposes.

**Figure F here**

Religious institutions are highly trusted, with a four-sample average of 0.65, while politicians attracted little trust, with a four-sample average of 0.32. Within this spectrum, the average LHRO score of 0.52 is comparatively strong. Thus not only do publics feel warmly towards human rights *ideas*, they also substantial trust in rights *organizations*, suggesting the decoupling of personal attitudes from socially constructed philanthropic behavior.

**People are too poor (“generalized poverty”):** Attitudes aside, some societies may be simply too poor to support LHROs. This seems plausible for Nigeria, where PPP-adjusted per capita income in 2013 was \$5,360 (in current USD) (Table 1). It seems less persuasive for other cases, however. As Figure A notes, LHRO leaders in Rabat and Casablanca were more likely than in Mumbai to believe their country’s rights groups received “substantial” foreign aid, even though the former’s per capita income was higher. LHRO leaders in Mumbai, Mexico City and San Cristóbal, moreover, offered statistically similar estimates of LHRO reliance on foreign aid, even though Mexico’s per capita income was over three times larger than India’s.<sup>39</sup> And as Figure B notes, respondents across *all* samples in data sources #1 and #2 believed that “very few” LHROs in their countries raised local funds, regardless of per capita income. Consider also Israel, where Berkovitch & Gordon (2008) discovered that over 90% of LHRO budgets were foreign-funded, despite Israel’s comparatively high income. Indeed, research suggests that

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<sup>38</sup> In the Indian, Moroccan and Nigerian surveys, we asked respondents to rate their trust on a 1-4 scale. In Mexico, we asked half the sample to rank on a 1-4 scale, and the other half to rank on a 1-7 scale.

<sup>39</sup> Mexico’s PPP-adjusted GDP per capita for 2012 was \$16,030, compared to India’s \$5,000.

aggregate development levels are generally poor predictors of non-profit resource mobilization (Themudo, 2013, 7-8).<sup>40</sup> As Tables 3 and 4 indicate below, people in all four of our countries of interest do contribute to charitable causes, including in the poorest country of them all, Nigeria. It's just that those donations do not flow to human rights groups.

**People who support rights are too poor (“concentrated poverty”):** Average incomes may be a poor explanation, but the real problem may be that poverty is concentrated among those *most supportive* of human rights. To investigate, we used our polls (data source #3) to create a new category of respondents, *Strong Rights Supporters*, combining respondents who (1) reported high trust in LHROs (e.g., scored 0.6 and over on the adjusted 0-1 trust scale); (2) strongly associated human rights with *protecting people from torture and murder* (i.e., scored 6 or 7 on the 1-7 scale); and (3) strongly associated human rights with *promoting socio-economic justice* with human rights. As Table 2 demonstrates, 11-42% of each sample fits into this category, with a four-sample average of 23%.

Table 2 here

We then created a second category, *Have Disposable Income*, from those who expressed either the first or second of the following statements: (1) *My income can cover expenses and save*; (2) *My income can just cover expenses, without major difficulties*; (3) *My income cannot cover expenses, and I have difficulties*, and; (4) *My income cannot cover expenses, and I have major difficulties*. As seen in Table 2, 37-54% of each sample chose the first two options; the four-sample average was 40%. A significant portion of the public in our case studies, in other words, has the ability to spare at least small charitable sums.

Table 2 shows that when we overlap *Strong Rights Supporters* and *Have Disposable*

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<sup>40</sup> Themudo (2013) argues for U-shaped relationships between per capita income, philanthropy, and volunteering.

*Income*, 6-17% of each sample, or 11% on average, strongly support human rights ideas and organizations, *and also* have charitable money to spare. Of these *High Probability Rights Givers*, however, only a tiny fraction report having donated to LHROs (right-hand column in Table 2). This group, moreover, is only one potential source of funding; other citizens may support human rights ideas and organizations, but do not satisfy our strict inclusion criteria for *Strong Rights Supporters* and *Have Disposable Income*. And yet, lower-income people are often more willing than the wealthy to donate (Egan, 2001; Piff, Kraus, Côté, Cheng, & Keltner, 2010).

This section has reviewed five major challenges to our explanation, which we elaborate upon below, and is based on the logics of philanthropic appropriateness. We believe the first alternative explanation has merit in highly repressive countries, but does not persuade elsewhere, including in the four countries we focus on here. We find little support for the other explanations, including disregard for human rights ideas, mistrust in LHROs, generalized poverty, or concentrated poverty among strong rights supporters. All told, enough people are sufficiently bullish on rights and LHROs, and enough of those rights supporters have sufficient incomes. Why, then, has local funding for LHROs not materialized?

## **VII. Philanthropic Logics of Appropriateness**

Ordinary people in the global South *do* donate, albeit not those related to human rights. Consider Table 1, which relies on Gallup surveys to tally the percentage of people in each of our countries reporting having donated money to “a charity” in the previous month. Gallup’s estimates range from 6% in Morocco to 26% in Nigeria, but these likely exclude Islamic tithing,

or *zakat*.<sup>41</sup> According to a Pew survey, 92% of Moroccans and 80% of Nigerian Muslims voluntarily fulfill their *zakat* obligation by donating as much as 2.5% of their income to mosques and/or religious foundations (Pew Center, 2012).

Our own polls (data source #3) also asked respondents about donations, but we focused on specific entities, including religious organizations, political parties, parents associations, environmental organizations, unions, and human rights organizations. In Nigeria, Morocco and India, we also asked about neighborhood associations, professional associations, non-governmental organizations, social clubs, and thrift societies and market organizations. Unlike Gallup, we asked respondents whether they had *ever* donated, rather than whether they had given *in the last month*. Unfortunately, variation crept in to how our enumerators asked this question across countries, complicating cross-sample comparisons. Table 3 nonetheless summarizes the responses we have. Like Gallup, we find that ordinary people *do* donate to charity, and that the most frequent recipients were often religious entities. Some 38% of our Mumbai sample, for example, said they donated to religious organizations, as did 88% of Lagos respondents. Contributions to parents associations were also popular, topping 47% in Lagos and its environs.

### **Table 3 Here**

In Nigeria, we also distinguished between compulsory and voluntary donations. Table 4 showed that residents of Lagos and its environs donate frequently, while Table 4 demonstrates that between 30% and 85% of those do so voluntarily. In sum, even accounting for the fact that some “donations” may not be entirely voluntary, the willingness to give seems great.

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<sup>41</sup> The 2010 Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) report cited Moroccan giving at 72%, however, respondents were asked more generally whether they had donated to “an organization” including religious institutions among others. From 2011 onwards, CAF reports state that respondents were asked if they had donated to “a charity” specifically.

Nonetheless, few people either in Lagos, or in our other three case studies, reported giving to LHROs. As Table 4 notes, the per-sample percentage of LHRO donors ranges from 1% (Rabat and Casablanca) to 5% (Lagos). As indicated in Table 2, moreover, the proportion of *High Probability Rights Givers* in India, Morocco, and Nigeria who report having given money to LHROs at least once in their life ranges from nearly none in Rabat & Casablanca to 11% in Lagos, with a three-sample average of 5%. Charitable giving is not uncommon, but donations to human rights activities are quite rare, even from those most supportive and trusting of human rights ideas and organizations.

Key informants and LHRO leaders confirmed this pattern. In Pakistan, one said, religiously inclined actors “gladly donate money for the construction of mosques” and give generously to the poor, but never give money to LHROs.<sup>42</sup> In Bangladesh, citizens generously support “infrastructure ... like building schools, roads, hospitals, or community clubs,” but “the money doesn’t come” for human rights.<sup>43</sup> In Peru, “Private [local] funding [is typically] for cancer or other issues, not human rights,”<sup>44</sup> while in Bolivia, local donors support the poor, but never “give money for human rights.”<sup>45</sup> In India, a LHRO worker explained, her family donates generously to “the school, infrastructure and... temple” in their native village, but would never consider donating to an LHRO, including her own; it would seem entirely unnatural.<sup>46</sup> In Mexico, another LHRO worker explained how, average people typically “will give to religious foundation, or... to [a] telethon.”<sup>47</sup> Similarly, in Morocco, another respondent said, “if we had a charity approach, as opposed to [a human rights] approach, we would have a lot more financing,”

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<sup>42</sup> 40-Pakistan

<sup>43</sup> 92-Bangladesh

<sup>44</sup> 33-Peru

<sup>45</sup> 85-Bolivia

<sup>46</sup> 121-India

<sup>47</sup> 139-Mexico

from local sources.<sup>48</sup> In Nigeria, “people are just learning to be philanthropic” hence “unless there is something in it for them” it’s unlikely they will support human rights work.<sup>49</sup>

Figure G reports the number of informants and LHROs from data sources #1 and #2 who answered yes to the question, *Is substantial local funding for LHROs a possibility in your country*. Between 43% and 93% in each sample believed that local money was, in theory, available, but few thought LHROs successfully accessed these funds. Local philanthropic routines are deeply entrenched in a logic of appropriateness, taken-for-granted and followed because actors see them as “natural, rightful, expected, and legitimate” (March & Olsen, 2009:1; March & Olsen, 1989). To change these routines, LHRO fundraisers would have to substantially reinterpret traditional philanthropic frames.

In fact, key informants and LHRO leaders report all manner of outreach efforts; this is one of their central missions, as well as a major preoccupation of international donors (England, 2006). When it comes to engaging local citizens as potential *donors*, however, informants from data sources #1 and #2 drew a blank. Reaching out to local citizens for the purposes of fundraising is not part of their missions, and is not something donors mention or require.

The reasons for this donor disinterest are unclear. In the 1990s, the Ford Foundation explored possibilities, without much success,<sup>50</sup> as did Amnesty International.<sup>51</sup> Those efforts were aborted. Northern donors may tacitly prefer to keep LHROs dependent (Barnett, 2011), or may mistrust LHROs’ spending priorities (Muguongo, 2015). A handful of private groups have

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<sup>48</sup> 215-Morocco

<sup>49</sup> 236-Nigeria

<sup>50</sup> Skype interview on December 3, 2013 with a former Ford Foundation program officer; phone interview on April 9, 2015, an officer of the International Human Rights Funders Group.

<sup>51</sup> Interview on November 14, 2014 with former Amnesty International-USA executive Susan Waltz, Ann Arbor, MI.

recently reopened the question, including the Open Society Foundation;<sup>52</sup> more research on donors' priorities is required.

Existing incentives push groups towards international, not local, fundraising. "It's the easy option," one Senegalese respondent explained. "A foreign donor sends you one million dirham," while an LHRO "would have huge difficulties raising half of that locally." Naturally, LHROs "prefer what is easier."<sup>53</sup> In Nigeria, another said, local funding "doesn't come as quickly as when you go to a [foreign] donor that deals with ... human rights,"<sup>54</sup> while in Thailand, foreign money is "easier" and permits local rights groups to "do more work."<sup>55</sup> The same is true in Indonesia, where "it's easier to get big money" from international sources,<sup>56</sup> or in the Ukraine, where "it is enough to use international foundations and international financial resources."<sup>57</sup> In Bangladesh, another said, LHROs "are ... getting the funds from the [international] donors [and]... not giving much...time" to explorations of local funding.<sup>58</sup> One donor specializing in Israel said this was true there as well: "Everyone who cares about human rights in Israel knows that local donors need to step up and fund their own human rights work, but it is happening very slowly...the influx of foreign monies for the last two decades has made it seem like funding the human rights scene in Israel is a foreign, not a domestic, responsibility."<sup>59</sup>

Many said LHROs didn't have the capacity, skills, or contacts to engage effectively with local donors. In Gambia, one said, raising local money would require expertise that his group,

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<sup>52</sup> See footnote 6 above.

<sup>53</sup> 44-Senegal

<sup>54</sup> 2-Nigeria

<sup>55</sup> 106-Thailand

<sup>56</sup> 105-Indonesia

<sup>57</sup> 70-Ukraine

<sup>58</sup> 92-Bangladesh

<sup>59</sup> Email with former Ford Foundation program officer Aaron Back, currently a consultant to the New Israel Fund, December 1, 2013.



and others like his, simply don't have.<sup>60</sup> In Cameroon, another said LHROs would have to "train people on [local] fundraising strategies" to succeed, necessitating new investments.<sup>61</sup> In Pakistan, LHRO workers would have to "make [local donors] understand what we think," which would require new ways of connecting.<sup>62</sup> In the Ukraine, another said, LHROs would "need some [new] skills for it [domestic fund raising]."<sup>63</sup> In India, one LHRO worker explained how establishing relationships and stewarding potential local donors requires "a lot of effort", "human resources" and "skills".<sup>64</sup> In Mexico, another LHRO worker said groups lacked the "know-how" to raise funds locally,<sup>65</sup> while in Morocco, "we do not know how to get to it [local funding]" or "who to go to."<sup>66</sup>

No such investments are required when approaching international funders, however, as transnational rights activists have already paved the road, inserting human rights considerations into standard grant-making templates, and transforming LHROs into legitimate recipients. Given this divergence between local and global logics of philanthropic appropriateness, rational considerations (logics of outcomes) push LHROs towards international fundraising.

## **IX. Conclusions**

LHROs in the global South depend on foreign money, even though many co-citizens support their principles and organizations. This dependence makes sense in repressive contexts, but is more puzzling in other countries. To date, few studies have identified or resolved this "rights-resource" puzzle. Our explanation focuses on the intersection of logics of philanthropic

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<sup>60</sup> 64-Gambia

<sup>61</sup> 63-Cameroon

<sup>62</sup> 40-Pakistan

<sup>63</sup> 84-Ukraine

<sup>64</sup> 191-India

<sup>65</sup> 130-Mexico

<sup>66</sup> 192-Morocco

appropriateness and outcomes: In much of the global South, donating to LHROs engaged in long-term social change efforts is not a taken-for-granted charitable behavior, unlike donating to traditional charities through religious mechanisms; entrenched philanthropic logics of appropriateness militate against giving to LHROs. These ingrained habits, combined with LHROs' previous success at international fundraising, and the high costs of launching new local fundraising campaigns, have pushed LHROs towards international financial sources. This minimizes costs and is path dependent (Pierson, 2000), because transnational norm entrepreneurs successfully changed development assistance routines in the major donor agencies in the global North during the late 1990s and early 2000s, paving the way for human rights-oriented investments (Uvin, 1998, 2004; Nelson & Dorsey, 2007). It is more efficient for LHROs to look outwards, rather than inwards, for financial support. The logics of appropriateness and outcomes thus intersect, discouraging human rights actors from investigating local alternatives.

We explored alternative explanations for this puzzle, including public skepticism towards human rights ideas and organizations, and widespread poverty among those most likely to support the human rights cause. Drawing on 263 semi-structured interviews with key informants and LHRO leaders from 60 countries, as well as 6,180 representative surveys with ordinary people in four different countries, we discovered substantial support for rights principles and groups, including among those with some money to spare. Our surveys also showed that ordinary people do give to charitable causes, but that the overwhelming majority of those funds go to non-human rights related activities and groups.

Philanthropic logics can change, but this requires significant investment. LHROs would have to learn to appeal locally, and would have to hire new types of staff. International donors would have to invest in LHRO local fundraising, with uncertain short-term results. To date, the

incentives and logics have not pushed the global rights sector in this direction. States may be increasingly cracking down on foreign aid to local NGOs, but international funds for human rights are still easier to access than local money.

This article contributes to IR scholarship in several ways. First, it focuses attention on the *local* non-governmental carriers of international norms, a category often overlooked by IR scholars. Second, it focuses attention on *resources* for these local carriers, an understudied topic. Third, it uses opinion surveys to investigate the individual-level reception of international norms, another issue overlooked by IR scholars. Fourth, it introduces philanthropy and local NGOs into the study of logics of outcomes and appropriateness, concepts IR scholars have, until now, tended to apply to states and international organizations (Barnett 2011, Carpenter 2005, Finnemore 1993). Similarly, this article contributes to studies of international political economy by focusing local alternatives to development assistance, and exploring, through original surveys, the charitable patterns of people living in low and middle-income countries. Fifth, we intervene in new ways in ongoing discussions of the organizational dynamics of principled actors in world politics, a topic attracting substantial scholarly interest (Cooley and Ron 2003; Prakash and Gugerty 2011; Simeant 2005; Stroup 2012; Wong 2014). And finally, we contribute to the scholarship on human rights, a central IR concern, by distinguishing between popular *attitudes* towards rights ideas and organizations and philanthropic *behavior*.

Our surveys show that human rights ideas and organizations receive substantial support across world regions, religions, and linguistic traditions, and that citizens in the global South do donate money to charitable causes. We find little evidence that human rights are chiefly a Western concern, but do find variation in the way this support is behaviorally enacted. The real human rights divide, in other words, is in philanthropic *routine*, not ideas.

To take advantage of public support for human rights, LHROs should explore the potential for domestic fundraising. A new research agenda should include issues not explored here, including comparative studies of domestic tax laws and philanthropic cultures, as well as organizational-level studies of fundraising innovation.<sup>67</sup> In addition, scholars must continue to study the global backlash against civil society and foreign aid to local NGOs. Civil society worldwide is under pressure as states roll back gains made by NGOs and their international supporters following the Cold War's end.

The time has come for a new research agenda into possibilities for domestic resource mobilization for international norms. IR scholarship has dramatically advanced our understanding of transnational activists and civil society in world politics (Bob 2005; Carpenter 2014; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Stroup 2012; Wong 2014). Now, we must study the possibilities of global South resource mobilization for these transnational actors.

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<sup>67</sup> For a comparative discussion of philanthropy laws, see Charities Aid Foundation (2014b).

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**Table 1**  
**Comparative Case Attributes**

	India	Morocco	Mexico	Nigeria
<b>World Region</b>	South Asia	North Africa	Latin America	Sub-Saharan Africa
<b>Major Religions</b>	Hinduism, Sunni Islam	Sunni Islam	Christian, Catholicism	Islam, Christianity
<b>Colonial History</b>	Britain	France	Spain	Britain
<b>Civilization<sup>68</sup></b>	Hindi	Islamic	Latin American	African, Islamic
<b>Major languages</b>	Hindi, Marathi, English	Arabic, French	Spanish	English, Pidgin, African languages
<b>National Population (millions)<sup>69</sup></b>	1,236	32	120	173
<b>GDP per capita<sup>70</sup></b>	\$5,000	\$6,670	\$16,030	\$5,360
<b>National Charitable Giving (% donated to “a charity” in last month)<sup>71</sup></b>	28%	6%	22%	29%
<b>Total number of LHROs<sup>72</sup></b>	57 in Mumbai	56 in Rabat & Casablanca	74 in Mexico City & San Cristobal	64 in Lagos
<b>Number of LHROs interviewed</b>	30	30	45	30

<sup>68</sup> (Huntington, 2011)

<sup>69</sup> World Bank World Development Indicators dataset, available online at <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/variableSelection/selectvariables.aspx?source=world-development-indicators>. Figures for India, Morocco and Mexico are from 2012, the year in which the opinion polls were conducted. Figures for Nigeria are from 2013 as data for 2014 were unavailable as of June 9, 2015 when all figures were retrieved.

<sup>70</sup> 2012 estimates for India, Mexico and Morocco; 2013 for Nigeria. Figures retrieved on June 9, 2015. All figures PPP-adjusted from *World Development Indicators*, available online at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.PP.CD>.

<sup>71</sup> Charities Aid Foundation (2013, 2014a). Does not appear to include religious tithing. All countries 2012 data, except for Nigeria, which is 2013.

<sup>72</sup> Based on our team’s original research.

**Table 2**  
**High Probability Local Givers to Human Rights**

<b>Case</b>	<b>% Strong Rights Supporters</b>	<b>% Have Disposable Income</b>	<b>% High Probability Rights Givers</b>	<b>% of High Probability Givers Who Report Having Ever Given to an HRO</b>
Mumbai	11	37	6	0
Rabat & Casablanca	26	38	12	3
Mexico	42	41	17	NA
Lagos	13	54	7	11
4-sample average	23	40	11	4

**Table 3**

Percent responding “yes” to the question, “*Have you ever donated money to any of these organizations?*”

	Mexico <sup>73</sup> (n=2,398) <sup>74</sup>	Rabat & Casablanca (n=1,100)	Mumbai (n=1,680)	Nigeria (n=1,000)
<b>Religious organizations</b>	<u>12.6%</u>	0.3%	<u>38.0%</u>	<u>88.0%</u>
<b>Parents associations</b>	<u>12.5%</u>	0.8%	6.1%	<u>46.5%</u>
<b>Environmental organizations</b>	3.5%	0.5%	7.9%	3.5%
<b>Political parties</b>	4%	0.3%	7.0%	7%
<b>Human rights organizations</b>	1.3%	1.1%	4.2%	5.2%
<b>Unions</b>	2.9%	0.3%	1.7%	7.6%
<b>Professional Associations</b>	N/A	.5%	.8%	17.5%
<b>Neighborhood Associations</b>	N/A	1.1%	7.3%	30.9%
<b>Non-governmental organization</b>	N/A	.5%	2.6%	5.1%
<b>Social Club</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	22%
<b>Thrift societies/Market associations</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	19%

<sup>73</sup> Data from Mexico differs from the other countries in that only respondents who said “yes” to participating in the institutions listed were asked whether or not they donated to that respective type of organization. The percentages listed here for Mexico have been calculated including the full sample population as the base. Hence, they likely under estimate the amount of donations given to each type of organization.

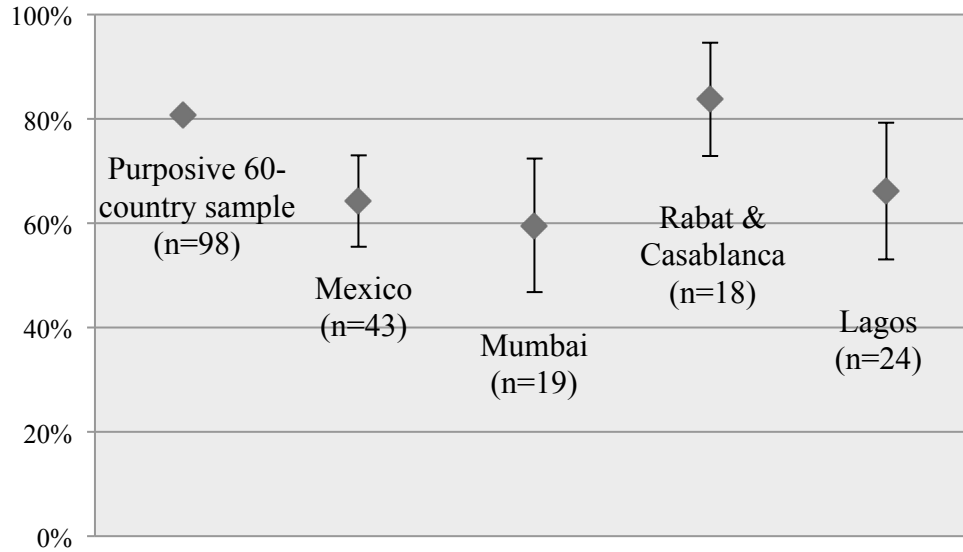
<sup>74</sup> Table 4 indicates the total number of respondents (n) for each survey. Response rates for these questions in Mexico, Rabat and Casablanca, and Mumbai were all above 98%.

**Table 4**  
 In Lagos, responses to the question,  
*“Did you give money to these organizations as a compulsory levy  
 or as a voluntary donation?”*

	<b>Compulsory Levy</b>	<b>Voluntary Donation</b>	<b>Both</b>
<b>Religious organizations</b>	10%	66%	24%
<b>Parents associations</b>	34%	42%	24%
<b>Environmental organizations</b>	48%	43%	9%
<b>Political parties</b>	16%	75%	9%
<b>Human rights organizations</b>	8%	85%	8%
<b>Unions</b>	54%	32%	15%
<b>Professional Associations</b>	45%	37%	18%
<b>Neighborhood Associations</b>	49%	37%	14%
<b>Non-governmental organization</b>	20%	73%	8%
<b>Social Club</b>	52%	27%	21%
<b>Thrift societies/ Market associations</b>	51%	31%	18%

**Figure A**

Mean key informant estimate in response to the question,  
*"In your opinion, what percentage of human rights NGOs in [your country] receive substantial funding from foreign donors?"*

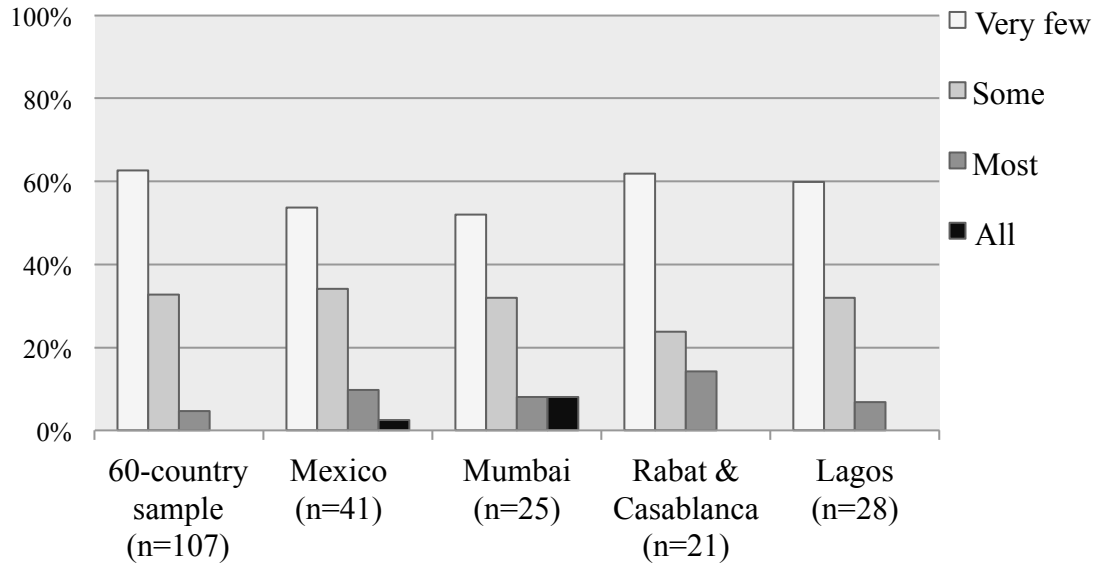


Confidence intervals for representative samples.

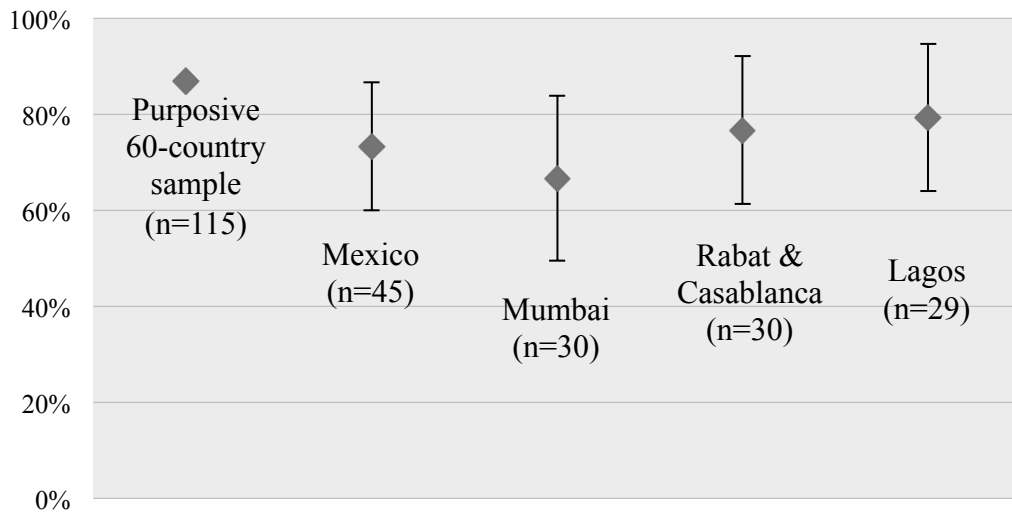


**Figure B**

Key informant responses to the question, "How many of [your country's] human rights groups raise substantial funds from local sources?"



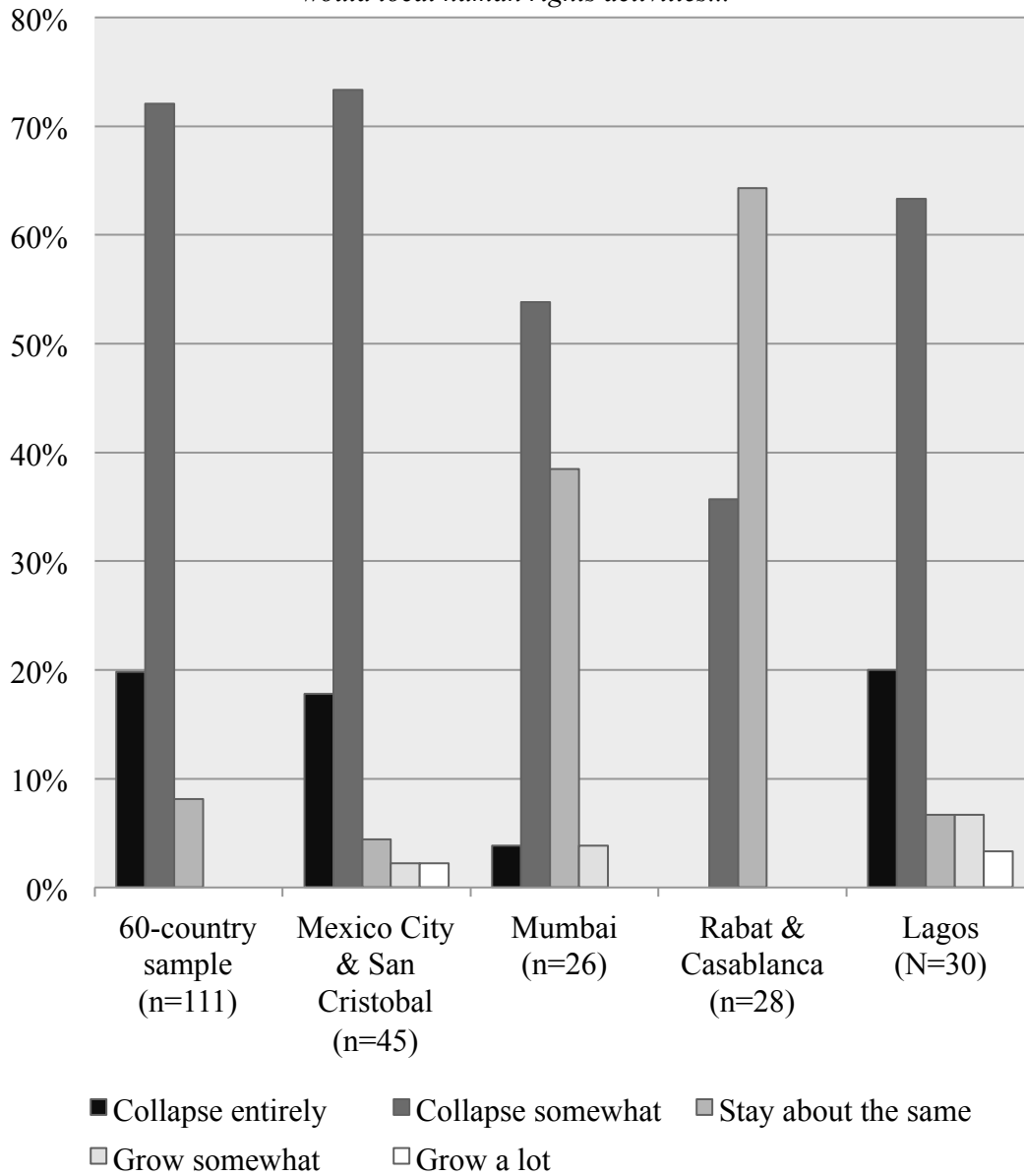
**Figure C**  
Percentage of respondents answering "yes" to:  
*"Does your organization receive foreign funds?"*



Confidence intervals shown for representative samples.

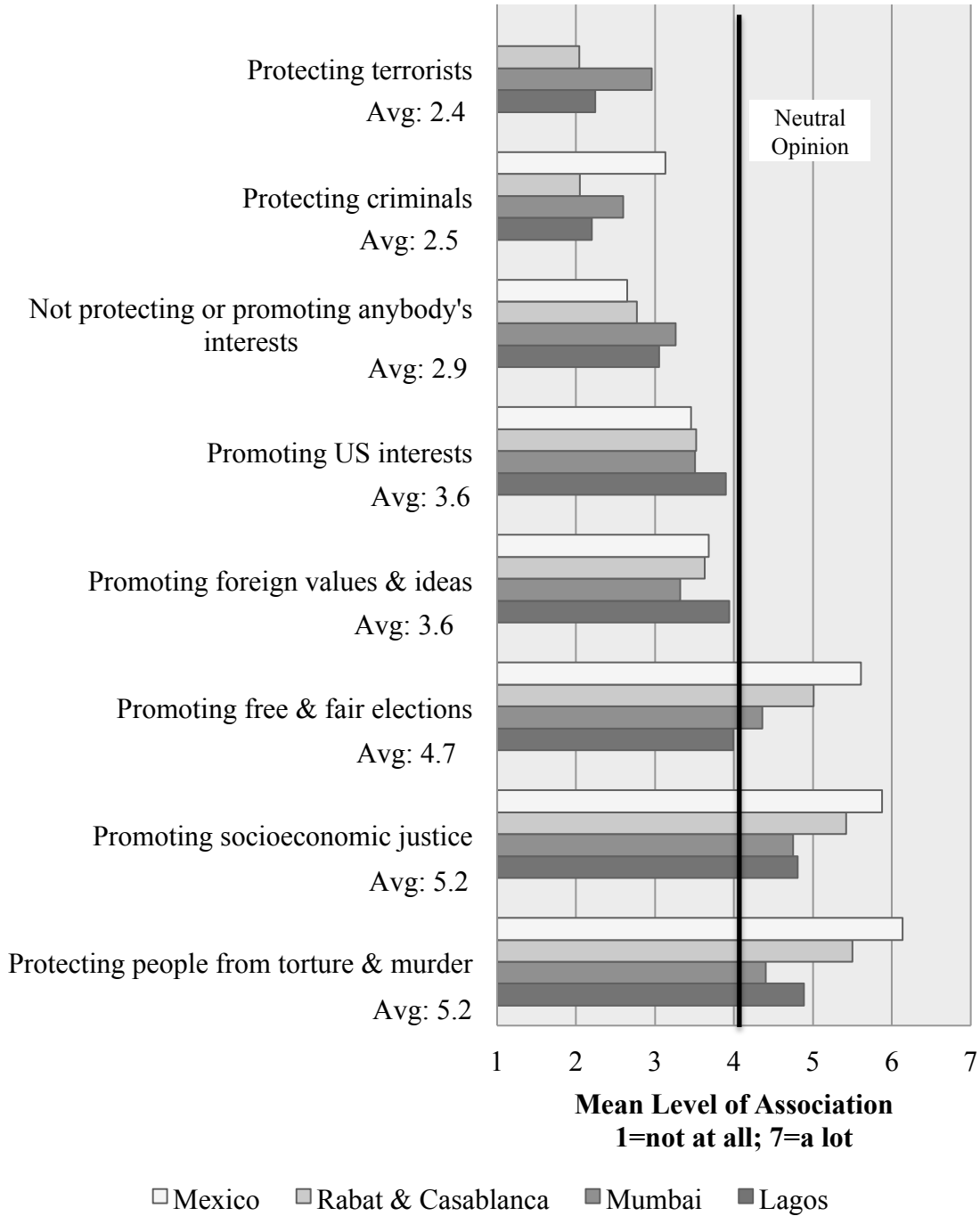
**Figure D**

Responses to question, "If foreign funding for human rights work in your country was cut off, would local human rights activities..."



**Figure E**

Mean responses to the question, "In your opinion, how strongly do you associate \_\_\_\_\_ with the term 'human rights'?"



**Figure F**

Mean responses to the question, "Please tell me how much trust you place on the following institutions, groups, or persons: a lot, some, a little, or none at all?"

