

## **U.S. PROGRAMS OPERATING PRINCIPLES (DRAFT 05.04.09)**

### **PRINCIPLE I:**

U.S. Programs recognizes that issues of power and equity are closely linked in the United States. Power is not broadly shared and inequalities cut across multiple lines, including race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and citizenship. To build a just and open society, we support efforts to expand accountability for those currently in power and to build power for historically excluded groups. We work to ensure that the, benefits, burdens and opportunities of society are distributed equally among all groups within our society.

### **PRINCIPLE II:**

U.S. Programs continually seeks to identify the most critical and urgent threats to open society and to respond nimbly and flexibly to emerging challenges. We are willing to take on controversial issues that other funders shy away from.

### **PRINCIPLE III.**

U.S. Programs is committed to examining our grantmaking activities and assessing our impact in the areas we fund. We regularly evaluate the impact of our programs and ask our grantees to do the same. We believe that evaluation should not be burdensome to our grantees, but should provide relevant information that can be analyzed jointly to determine more effective strategies for achieving change.

### **PRINCIPLE IV.**

U.S. Programs encourages and rewards effective collaboration between organizations across constituencies, sectors and issues. We are intentional about dedicating time and resources to creating opportunities for grantees to share ideas among each other and develop new strategies that will promote their work. We believe that innovation is developed and driven by those working in the fields we support.

### **PRINCIPLE V.**

U.S. Programs works from a theory of change that, among other things, believes that in order to achieve sustainable social change we must partner with a wide range of organizations and employ a multitude of strategies (including advocacy, field building, public education, research and litigation, ). We support the creation of robust, strategic and interconnected fields capable of achieving systemic change at the national, regional, state and local level.

### **PRINCIPLE VI.**

U.S. Programs develops grantmaking guidelines that are transparent and accessible, and engages in affirmative outreach efforts to ensure a broad and diverse pool of grantees. U.S. Programs respects our grantees as partners, recognizing their leadership and working with them in a timely and open manner.