

Philanthropy Letter



Philanthropy in action

‘There is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women.’

Kofi Annan

Women are increasingly becoming a target of international efforts to support development and human rights. They are central to the newly adopted United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Last month, a report from the International Monetary Fund pointed out that the gender gap leads to income inequalities and fuels discrimination, marginalization and exclusion. Investing in women fundamentally strengthens families and societies and improves women's social, economic and political opportunities, which is necessary in order to reduce poverty and spur development. At the same time, an increasing number of women are engaging in philanthropy, often with a desire to tackle gender issues, and bring innovative solutions to local and global challenges.

Dame Stephanie Shirley is one of them. At 82, this fascinating woman travels the world to share her unique life story at the crossroads of history, entrepreneurship and philanthropy. She reminds us about the need to provide strategic support for women to help balance inequalities and stimulate development.

Women empowerment is also a major preoccupation of Runa Khan, another inspiring woman and social entrepreneur. Runa Khan is the founder and Executive Director of Friendship, which provides healthcare in the poorest regions of Bangladesh, by training women in basic health care, and thereby turning them into health service delivery agents in remote areas.

Many of our founders are foreigners and non-residents, but have chosen Luxembourg for the establishment of their foundations. How does Luxembourg score in terms of philanthropy? We decided to ask Sasha Baillie, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Vice Prime Minister and Head of Nation Branding to tell us about the true Luxembourg values and identity and whether philanthropy is part of these.

We wish you an interesting reading.

Tonika Hirdman
Director General



- 2 From escaping war to giving millions, the fascinating story of Dame Shirley
- 4 Empowering women by nurturing dignity
- 6 Philanthropy – part of Luxembourg's identity?
- 7 Trois questions à Henri Grethen
- 8 How do women approach philanthropy?

From escaping war to giving millions, the fascinating story of Dame Shirley



Dame Shirley

Dame Stephanie Shirley is a British businesswoman and philanthropist. She arrived in Britain as an unaccompanied child refugee from Germany in 1939. In 1962, she started her own company with £6, which became 25 years later a leading business technology group, while changing the position of professional women. In 1986, she creates The Shirley Foundation for the support of pioneering projects with strategic impact in the field of autism spectrum disorders with particular emphasis on medical research. She is one of Britain's top five most generous givers.

You have an extraordinary life story. Could you tell us about your background and what have been the greatest learnings of your childhood that influenced you the most?

My father was a young judge in Dortmund who – because of his Jewish ethnicity – was fired by edict of the so-called Third Reich in 1933. The family moved around trying to get a safe place, finishing up in Vienna where my Gentile mother came from. After the annexation of Austria, my father walked over the mountains to neutral Switzerland. My mother did a brave thing – she organised for my sister and me to come to England on a Kindertransport, thinking she would never see us again. That experience has influenced my life beyond measure. I learnt to deal with trauma, to cope with change – indeed eventually to welcome change – and determined to make mine a life that was worth saving.

What was the turning point that made you engage in philanthropy?

Probably my son's autism. Prior to that, yes I'd been charitably inclined – having been given so much as a child, I wanted to give back. But the step to give strategically – to give time, skills, contacts, not just my self-earned wealth – that came when care for my son developed into care for others.

How would you define philanthropy?

Compassion. The sharing of suffering. Strategic giving.

You addressed the gender issues of the 60's by creating your own company of women, for women, which was an early form of social enterprise. What are the biggest issues women face today, and how do you think philanthropy can contribute to solving them?

In the Western World, women no longer have legal barriers to their progress. But there are cultural barriers (far more difficult to address) and unconscious bias against women and girls.

In the Islamic world, women still have a long way to go and perhaps this is where philanthropy can help (with female genital mutilation, for instance which is illegal in Britain but still takes place). Philanthropy is also a major contributor to mid- and low-income countries. When one gives to women, one can be pretty sure that the money will be used for: clean water, better food, and the education of children.

Today there is still a need to provide support for women to help balance the inequalities between the sexes. For example, Venture Capitalists are reluctant to funding women (Groupthink and biases are hard to overcome). Especially as the key challenges of our time; renewable energy, food security, medical advances, requires diversity of technical and societal engagement. The Althea-Imperial Programme supports female entrepreneurship.

Women have become creators as well as consumers.



What is your experience as a woman philanthropist? Do women approach philanthropy differently than men?

“Do-gooder” is a term I really dislike; it has a nasty jealous tinge. Studies show that women (somewhat counter-intuitively) support international projects more than men do. They consider “what difference can I make?” rather than “is this what is expected of me?”

Kofi Annan once said, “There is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women”. What does this mean to you and how do you see the efforts made with regard to women empowerment?

The situation is different in the developing nations and although my experience is largely European; I have worked in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia where women are still very much second-class citizens.

In the UK, nearly all the legal obstacles to women’s progress have been removed. The cultural obstacles which remain are much more difficult to address: getting girls to study science (vital in today’s world); venture capitalists to invest in women’s companies... everywhere you look, the male view predominates. I used to abhor the idea of quotas – I wanted to be judged by the same criteria as my male colleagues. Then, over the years, I began to have doubts. Perhaps we do need quotas to move the position of women forward.

Former Prime Minister Gordon Brown has appointed you Founding Ambassador for Philanthropy, an initiative you are strongly involved in; can you tell us more about it?

As the state withdraws from social funding, it was thought that philanthropists would step in and make up the funding gaps. My aim was to move philanthropy into the mainstream. And by philanthropy, I mean strategic giving: of time, skills and contacts as well as money. It’s not just a matter of giving large-scale.

As you were chosen Founding Ambassador for Philanthropy you said it was because you represented “a modern model of philanthropy”. How do you embody this modernity?

I’m classed as modern, not because I invest in 21st century projects – although I do – but rather because I focus on themes. I’m business-like about my giving and because I speak openly about the pleasure I get from giving.

Autism and scientific research appears to be a strong focus of your philanthropic engagement, can you tell us why?

I’ve always been a scientist and involved in pioneering projects. My late son Giles was autistic so when choosing to give to things I know and care about – autism was high on my list of priorities.

You have given away more than 100 Million USD to the projects you support. What have been your main achievements?

My largest gift – \$45m – was to set up a new school for challenging pupils with autism aged 5 - 18. This later extended to a Young Adult Centre for those aged 19-25. But that was not only the biggest, it was also the most pioneering – and a project that gives me enormous satisfaction each time I visit. You can see the pupils grow in capability as well as size.

Do you have a favorite quote related to your philanthropic engagement?

Not original but coming from my taxi driver: “If there’s no need, it’s just greed.”

Is there a question you’d like to ask yourself?

How has your experience of being an unaccompanied child refugee on the Kindertransport affected your giving?

I try hard not to patronize beneficiaries. I’ve been given so much by strangers that there’s nothing else I could have done but give. It’s a reciprocal relationship – I get just as much as I give.

Empowering women by nurturing dignity



Runa Khan

Runa Khan is the founder and Executive Director of Friendship, a Bangladesh-based NGO active in healthcare and education. She is also the country chair of Global Dignity, an organization founded by the Crown Prince of Norway, engaging and enabling conversations on dignity. She has published several books and has received numerous awards from well-renowned organizations such as Ashoka, the Islamic Development Bank and the Schwab Foundation.

“I am a Woman. I am Sabina from the remote island of Fechka on the Brahmaputra. My husband beat me, left me and my child, then migrated to Dhaka... I broke boundaries and fought for justice, received my dues from him, got trained in sewing and today I am working, earning three times what my husband earns. I take care of my parents and my child eats well and goes to school.”

“I am a Woman. I am Ratna from Sonatola in Bogra. Due to a fistula which I could not afford to operate, my husband left me, I was ostracised by everyone. I fought to have the operation

done and today I am healthy, everyone accepts me once again as part of the community and I work and earn my own living. I do not need to remarry.”

These are stories I hear from the field, regularly.

If we look beyond the clichés of the role women are supposed to play in households towards the wellbeing of the family, we uncover ‘The Real Woman’ – someone with incredible dignity, courage and resilience in the face of adversity.

Where does this strength come from?

80 million women live in Bangladesh, 30% below the poverty line – lack of proper healthcare and situational disempowerment are amongst the major causes which hinder the advancement of women. It is a formidable challenge to bring healthcare and empowerment to the 4 million women in the most remote communities that we work in.

When I started Friendship 14 years ago, each challenge I faced as a woman made me realise the issues I would encounter whilst trying to meet my goal of *nurturing dignity and creating equal opportunity for all*, especially the Women.

I found social stigmas in Bangladesh went beyond religious stigmas; harassment, income differences and doubt of our abilities were common issues; and humility, kindness and generosity of spirit were misconstrued for weakness.

What I remember most is the incredulity that as a woman, I could actually take on the challenge of making the first mobile hospital, build health care systems and an integrated development model in such remote and hazardous areas. All that as a local Bangladeshi woman through a local Bangladeshi organisation!

I faced condescension and scepticism amongst the development sector,



Friendship Floating Hospital Jamapur District, Bangladesh
© Friendship International



Life boat Hospital, Bangladesh © Friendship International

the government and my own social circle, where my work was seen as an indulgence, a mere whim that I ‘would get over’. I was classified as a woman whose actual work must be done by ‘her husband’ or an elusive ‘man’ somewhere in the background.

I thought that if my challenge for acceptance was this difficult despite the privileges available to me, then what monumental challenges those that I wish to serve, must confront, possibly daily. But women are driven by commitment, deep self-dignity, empathy and compassion – herein lies our strengths to achieve our goals.

Working in philanthropy meant funds were always limited. They needed to be utilized in an innovative and efficient manner. With innovative methods and synergy effects we achieved results that exceeded the realm of the presumed monetary output. For a woman, efficacy and innovation are daily tools.

I believe that women are the strongest instrument for ensuring sustainability and bringing long-term impact into a community. Thus, we focus our work so that women are accepted as Equals in their society. We have implemented inclusive, deep-rooted and systematic programs for empowerment. Thus, we achieve that the opposite sex realise a

women’s potential and more importantly, ensure respect towards them. All our programs involve both sexes. We do not cater to ‘women only’ programs. That invariably creates deep confrontation, jealousies and disharmony within the families and communities. Yet 80% of those we help are women because to reach equality, which is the purpose, women need more support, right now!

To feel empowered is to be empowered. To be healthy is the first step. Thus curative and preventive healthcare had to be provided.

I introduced Friendship’s 3-tier health system which includes hospitals, satellite clinics and trained Friendship Community Medic-Aides (FCMs), which serves over 180,000 women and children every month. The FCMs are our female community health service delivery agents who work in areas where there are NO health services.

In this area of training and enabling committed village women to become micro social medical entrepreneurs, we work with *The Mangrove Foundation*, a sheltered foundation within Fondation de Luxembourg. The FCMs receive basic medical and field training and advanced training for treatable conditions and diseases. They also sell medicines and basic hygiene products

to the communities within a strict WHO / Bangladesh Government protocol. They give an essential service to the communities but are also generating an income for themselves. 630 FCMs are presently working, of which for now 200 are being selected for the Friendship telemedicine program.

These women are respected and empowered and they help empower others.

In Friendship, empowerment means not only healthy women but women who can earn a living and gain the knowledge of where to seek out basic services when Friendship is not around. To achieve this, we train women in vocational skills and functional literacy courses. Train them as teachers, paralegals, in livestock rearing, agriculture, weaving, sewing and gain essentials skills in business through marketing, selling and distribution and to liaise with the various government sectors so that they can demand their rights as citizens.

Women change their own role in their society. We only need to provide a little help and fill gaps. Sustainability for any development work means people are able to nurture their value and dignity which leads to the creation of a stable platform from which they can “take off” themselves.

Dignity, empathy, compassion, vision of what is right and wrong, sense of justice equalled with deep anger at injustice and capacity to overcome the sense of fear of the unknown, are some strengths of women who become leaders of their society.

What is it about Women that they can perform their best under the most challenging, excruciating circumstances where others give up? Seeing the thousands of Sabinas and Ratnas, how can we not have faith in their ability and strength for creating our new world? Seeing this level of commitment and single minded purpose for betterment, do we not see Humankind at its genuine best?

Philanthropy – part of Luxembourg's identity?



Photo © Laurent Antonelli

Ambassador Sasha Baillie

Ambassador Sasha Baillie is a Luxembourg diplomat currently seconded to the Ministry of Economy, where she works closely with the Deputy Prime Minister, Etienne Schneider. In addition to her role as Deputy Chief of Staff and Diplomatic Adviser to the Minister, Sasha Baillie also chairs the Luxembourg Nation Branding Committee. She joined the Foreign Ministry in 1997, has been seconded to the Luxembourg mission in Moscow and served as non-resident Ambassador to Serbia.

As President of the Luxembourg Nation Branding Committee you conducted numerous workshops with various stakeholders. Can you tell us more about this?

Through workshops and polls, we have tried to dig deeper to find a common set of values that captures the essence of our country. The idea was to develop a brand identity for Luxembourg that sets it apart from other countries – our intention was to involve people from as many different backgrounds as possible.

We then sought to boil down all this feedback and, working with our advisers, we found these values were represented by one of the 12 archetypes

originally developed by Carl Jung: *the ally*. This profile's core values are reliability, an innovative spirit, dynamism, pragmatism, cooperation and the will to engage for the common good. An important number of these values are also very relevant to philanthropy.

According to you, is philanthropy part of Luxembourg's identity?

I think Luxembourg is a promising place for the evolution of philanthropic activities. I am convinced that the creation of the Fondation de Luxembourg really has contributed to a dynamic towards supporting philanthropy. As a diplomat who lived abroad and came home, I have the feeling that for the last ten years, there has been a growing awareness about philanthropy and socially responsible investments (SRI) by companies, investors and the public sector. Philanthropy has also evolved, thanks to the increasing interest from the financial sector. You could say that the Fondation de Luxembourg already implemented the identity and values that came out of the Nation Branding study.

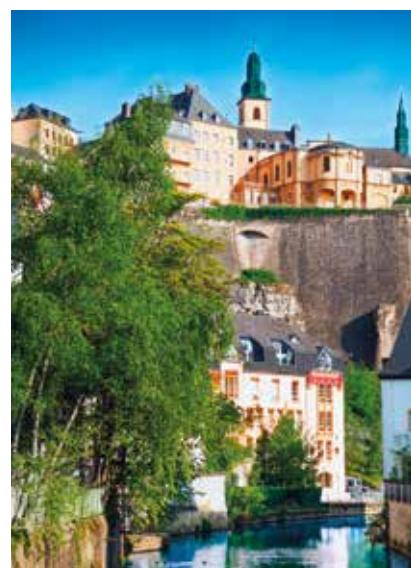
What do you think makes Luxembourg a destination of choice for setting up a foundation?

Many different factors explain the philanthropic sector in Luxembourg, starting with the open-mindedness of the people in Luxembourg to the world. There are a great number of foreigners living in Luxembourg and they form an important part of the country. They come here because they find the tools and infrastructure, a stable political environment and of course a strong financial centre. Through the Nation Branding project, we want these people to know about our values, diversity and identity *before* they come here.

Our goal is that these values become a good reason for them to select Luxembourg as their destination of choice.

How can the philanthropic sector benefit from Luxembourg's position as a major international finance centre?

Mainly, through the diversity and quality of the professionals present in Luxembourg. These professionals represent a wide variety of industries, but the financial centre certainly offers a very dynamic and resourceful ground for philanthropy. We can see numerous initiatives recently that aim to develop social and environmental tools for better decision-making. One exciting initiative is IMS (Inspiring More Sustainability) that works actively to promote Corporate Social Responsibility. Jeremy Rifkin, the author of '*The Third Industrial Revolution*' participated in a special forum organised very recently in Luxembourg by IMS. At this occasion the Minister of Economy, Etienne Schneider, launched a very ambitious study with Jeremy Rifkin on how to prepare our country for a new sustainable economic model.



Luxembourg will be the very first country to try and implement Rifkin's ideas for a sustainable future. Needless to say, the philanthropic sector shares these objectives of sustainable development.

There has been a lot of attention on philanthropy in the media lately, how do you explain this growing interest?

People are starting to realise the importance of image and reputation for a country's competitiveness. Recently, we suffered from attacks against the Luxembourg financial centre that affected the whole country's image. Reducing the country to its financial centre is simplistic and makes us vulnerable. Foundations, NGOs and associations doing so much good work – are not visible enough. But this is changing.

What is your vision for Luxembourg in the next 15 years and what role can philanthropy play in it?

I think that the ideas and values that came out of the Nation Branding project should be disseminated widely and built upon in the years ahead, to contribute positively to society as a whole. Philanthropy, as an integral part of Luxembourg's values, can play an important role in this.

As Diplomatic Adviser to the Vice Prime Minister Etienne Schneider and considering the increasing number of conflicts and crises in the world (e.g. Syria, Yemen, Mali, Ukraine), do you think foundations can or should play a role with regards to improving international relations?

Absolutely. Foundations have an important role to play in this respect. Firstly, in terms of the core values

they promote and that we can share. Secondly, wealthy and influential people have the capacity to promote and support values and causes through their philanthropic agenda. It is even more relevant in the area of conflict prevention, where philanthropists can concentrate their actions, in order to prevent situations that could otherwise turn into open conflicts.

Finally, do you have a secret about Luxembourg you would like to share with us?

I think Luxembourg is one of the world's best kept secrets! It's time to let the world know what a great country we live in and why. Both nation branding and philanthropy are brilliant ways to get the message out there – we're an "ally" so let's celebrate what this is: reliable, innovative, dynamic, pragmatic, cooperative and with a willingness to engage for the common good.

Trois questions à Henri Grethen, nouveau Président de la Fondation de Luxembourg



Vous avez pris vos fonctions de Président de la Fondation de Luxembourg le 23 juillet dernier. Quelles sont les raisons qui vous ont amenées à accepter cette nomination ?

Philanthropie et bénévolat sont les deux faces d'une même pièce. Je n'ai pas hésité une seule seconde pour

m'engager quand ma collaboration au sein de la Fondation de Luxembourg a été sollicitée. Dans la continuité de mes engagements passés, solidarité et respect de la liberté ainsi que de la diversité sont les principes qui guideront mon action.

Selon vous quelles sont les perspectives pour la philanthropie au Luxembourg dans les années à venir ?

Depuis quelques années la philanthropie connaît une évolution sans précédent au Luxembourg. Sous l'impulsion de l'initiative privée, la Fondation de Luxembourg a été créée par l'État. Je suis persuadé que de plus en plus de nos concitoyens vont s'engager dans les années à venir. Et la Fondation de Luxembourg est l'instrument à leur disposition pour les aider à réaliser leurs projets et pour leur en garantir la pérennité.

Votre solide expérience politique en tant qu'ancien ministre de l'Économie et votre excellente connaissance du tissu économique et social du Luxembourg font de vous un candidat de choix. Comment comptez-vous accompagner le développement de la Fondation ?

Je crains que vous ne me surestimeriez. Mais je suis déterminé à faire de mon mieux pour ne pas décevoir la confiance qui m'a été témoignée. Avec l'aide des autres membres du conseil d'administration et des collaborateurs de la Fondation, j'entends intensifier encore les efforts pour gagner l'attention des donateurs. Parallèlement, il me semble important de faire évoluer le cadre juridique et fiscal des fondations. Finalement je voudrais m'impliquer également dans l'accompagnement des projets d'investissements philanthropiques confiés à la Fondation.

According to your experience, how do women approach philanthropy?

Valérie Aubier

Senior Private Banker, Head of Philanthropy
Crédit Suisse (Luxembourg) S.A., Succursale en France



Our client experience shows that women are deeply involved in philanthropy. They invest in the philanthropic field as they manage their jobs and careers. Pragmatic and professional, they

want to make a difference by gaining deep knowledge of the charitable issues they support, engaging in field experience, impact measurement, networking and collaboration with experts and peers. Besides, more women are creating their own wealth than ever before. Often, they become philanthropic mentors and activists. Because they feel more connected to women, many of them chose to promote women-related issues. The landscape for women's philanthropic involvement is in progress. However women's implication is still sometimes underestimated.

**Sandrine Brel – Offer & Innovation Manager,
Wealth Planning Solutions Head Office,
Société Générale Private Banking**



Our client base is composed mainly of wealthy entrepreneurial families in which it is often the women who lead the philanthropic initiatives. We have adapted our services such that wealth planning teams are increasingly working with female clients on the structuring of their philanthropic projects and introducing them to experts in the field and to other clients with similar concerns. Their involvement and the effectiveness of their projects are considered in the long term. Some volunteer with charities or foundations they finance, in particular when they have set up a dedicated foundation or their own charitable trust with our help. Their philanthropic commitment alongside ours helps to enrich our relationship and is a strong marker of the trust they put in us.

Henriette Kühl-Olufsen

Associate Director, Head of Wealth Planning,
Danske Bank International



In general we see women having a structured, long-term approach to philanthropy, both in terms of the type of charity and the way it is managed. Many philanthropic investments made by women focus

on issues targeting long-term development of societies, e.g. through education and health improvement initiatives. The investments are also made strategically over a long period of time, often using structures that later on can be taken over and managed by the next generation. We consider philanthropy a part of our holistic Private Banking service and support our clients with the financial solutions they need in order to achieve their charitable goals in the long-term.

Catherine Roux-Sevelle
Head of Wealth Solutions,
Banque privée Edmond de Rothschild (Europe)



Who better than a woman knows how challenging the life of an accomplished professional, a wife, a mother supporting her beloved ones can be? The hard day-to-day work pursued by many women around the world removes any doubt regarding female pragmatism. These multiple aspects of women's life make them generous and engaged contributors to philanthropic initiatives, as well as perfect targets to receive a window of opportunities. For instance, investing in the education of young girls gives them the weapon of knowledge to avoid becoming a victim of violence, prostitution, abuse of authority ... Like in a virtuous circle, an educated woman is a woman able to protect and pass on knowledge to her children for the next generations.



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