

Faith-based Giving from a Distant Land: Hindu Diaspora and Religious Giving

Priya Anand, Fellow, International Fellows Program ~ 2003

Abstract

Priya Anand documents the philanthropic role of the Hindu diaspora and the fundraising strategies used by Hindu religious institutions in the United States. Her study identifies where the philanthropic activities of temples and religious movements are directed (i.e. whether to India alone or also toward local causes); whether the beneficiaries are exclusively Indian; and whether these institutions serve as operating foundations or grantmakers. Her research includes a small-sample survey on philanthropic behavior to better understand donors' motivations for religious giving.

While many donors give because of their religious beliefs, Ms. Anand observes that the political climate made many donors wary of unwittingly supporting programs or causes that might covertly support "Hinduization." In addition, many Indian donors prefer to make direct, personalized contributions. Based on her findings, she suggests that feedback on how donors' dollars are spent should be encouraged. Donor-designated funds may also be used to enhance giving by Indian Americans, enabling donors to contribute to programs or organizations of their choosing.

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