

Ferrante Gift Boosts “Outside-the-Box” Thinking

Among the outside-the-box efforts that may benefit from a new \$500,000 gift from Domenic and Molly Ferrante to the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (HHI):

- *Collecting, analyzing, and distributing large data sets to provide time-sensitive information on humanitarian issues—painting a picture, for example, of how displaced populations are faring in the wake of a natural disaster.*
- *Facilitating the scale-up of a hand-held data collection system that allows humanitarian workers to share information as crises unfold—such as during a disease outbreak.*
- *Using satellite technology to help understand fast-moving events with public health implications—such as troop movements in a war-torn country.*

Thanks to the Ferrantes' gift—their second to HHI—these and other potentially high-impact efforts will get a crucial boost. The Dom and Molly Ferrante Humanitarian Innovation Fund will make possible novel technologies in humanitarian response efforts, creative collaborations in the humanitarian realm, and models of how best to quantify the impact of humanitarian work.

HHI Director Michael VanRooyen calls the Ferrantes' funding “extremely valuable.” Because the gift isn't tied to a particular program or initiative, it can be used for untested ideas that require support but are unlikely to win traditional grant funding. “By our very nature, our organization is on the leading edge of humanitarian relief,” VanRooyen says. “There are many things we see that need to be done that are not fundable—at least not yet. This support is valuable because it will allow us to develop and test new and creative ideas.”

“Mike [VanRooyen] is an innovator,” says Dom Ferrante, MBA '93, managing partner of The Ferrante Group. “His work has been groundbreaking, bringing to the humanitarian field a high level of metrics, measurement, process orientation, and an emphasis on leveraging technology. We wanted to give unrestricted money to help him and his team push one or two innovative ideas over the goal line in the next 5 or 10 years.” The HHI gift, Ferrante says, has the potential “to impact a large number of people in a positive way.” \



Harvard Humanitarian Initiative staff at a field hospital after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti