Building Capacity to Measure Impact: A Private Foundation's Vision

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Strategy

Improve development outcomes, build lasting community connections, and advance peace by mobilizing religious leaders and communities to address common challenges.

- **Support research & implementation:** Research and test inter-religious approaches and institutions to improve development outcomes
- **Build the field:** Seed inter-religious platforms for collaborative action and advance knowledge of best practices
- **Develop the evidence and tools:** Strengthen IRA work and demonstrate impact
- **Make the case:** Influence a growing number of funders to support promising models of inter-religious action worldwide
Building Evaluation Capacity

• Our partners may know they are doing good, but can they demonstrate it to others?
• Partners’ needs include:
  – Robust independent evaluations
  – Enhanced evaluative thinking (internally)
  – Longer-term developmental evaluations
GHR’s Approach to Evaluation

• Goals: Accountability & Learning – for us and our partners, with emphasis on learning

• Two challenges:
  1. Partners differ in evaluative capacity
  2. Shaky evidence around inter-religious action

• Building capacity for evaluation – Two core principles:
  – Foster trust and open conversations around expectations/needs on both sides
  – One size does not fit all
Case #1: Mercy Corps
Inter-religious Peacebuilding in Northern Nigeria (IPNN)

• Strong evaluation systems/framework
• GHR’s role: Seek to understand and support creative approaches to evaluation and sharing knowledge
Case #2: Religions for Peace (RfP)

- Global network w/ wide range of evaluation experiences
- GHR’s role: Provide resources to support’s RfP’s desire to strengthen evidence of impact across network; connect RfP to evaluators with appropriate skills/sensitivities
Myths and Fallacies

• Good work speaks for itself.
• Foundations are only interested in quantitative data.
• Foundations are monoliths.
• Funders know what they want.
Suggestions

• Evaluations should stimulate conversations between funders and grantees
  • Help your funders absorb key findings
  • Don’t let your evaluation report speak for itself – show how you learn/adapt
  • Remember that grant/project evaluations inform donor strategies – seek to understand your funding partner

• Be clear about what you don’t know – we don’t expect you to have all the answers
Critical Next Steps
• Seeking evidence showing if/when/how inter-religious action improves development outcomes and builds peace – can you help?
• Continue to engage with our partners and others to learn and adjust our strategies
• Invite others to evaluate our own work – the IRA initiative and our partnerships
• Connect our partners – we learn from them, and they learn from each other

WHERE ARE WE HEADED?
THANK YOU

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