Next Generation Network Evaluation

Description

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â??Purpose: This paper reviews the current field of network monitoring and evaluation with the goal of identifying where progress has been made and where further work is still needed. It proposes a framework for network impacts planning, assessment, reporting and learning that can help to close some of the current gaps in network evaluation while building on the advances that have been made. This document is written for practitioners undertaking network evaluation and foundation program staff working to support networks.

Introduction and Context: Networking and networks have become increasingly and consciously utilized as organizing strategies and structures for creating social change in this world. The growing realization that no single actor, no matter how effective they are, is capable of tackling todayâ??s social problems has spurred a flurry of international interest and investment in networks from a wide range of actors and sources. The World Bank began funding networks through its Global and Regional Partnership Program
in the mid-1990â??s and is now currently supporting approximately 175 partnership programs, having spent $3.5 billion in 2006 alone. The Climate Works Foundation has organized more than ten funders and organizations from across sectors and geographies as part of a billion dollar coordinated campaign to fight climate change. The Global AIDS Alliance has launched an
advocacy network across six African countries in a Campaign to End Pediatric HIV/AIDS. Grant makers like the Ford Foundation, Anne E. Casey Foundation, MacArthur Foundation and many others have made the funding of networks a key part of their portfolio and grant making strategy. At the same time, the growing demand for more success from social change public and private initiatives has created an explosion of interest in and demand for increased and improved monitoring and evaluation and impact evaluation. Governments, donors and practitioners are all feeling pressure to demonstrate and report on the impact of their work. Together, these two trends have created a growing appetite for the monitoring and evaluation and impact evaluation of networks. An increasing number of methods, tools and metrics have been proposed, developed and piloted in response to this demand. While important steps have been taken, the field of network monitoring and evaluation is still, in theory and even more so in practice, in its infancy.

This paper is divided into four sections. Section one provides a literature review of the current field of network monitoring and evaluation describing various current metrics and tools for network monitoring and evaluation. The section concludes with a discussion of the key gaps in the current field. Section two examines the key characteristics of networks and the implications these have for evaluation. Section three further elaborates the specific challenges of network evaluation and desirable characteristics for a network monitoring and evaluation system. Section four introduces a framework for network monitoring and evaluation currently being developed by iScale and its partners and explains how it can be

implemented.â?•

For questions and/or comments on this paper please contact Catrina Lucero at clucero@scalingimpact.net

Category

1. Uncategorized

Tags

1. Networks

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