Funder-Civil Society Dialogue on Capacity-Building

CLINTON FOUNDATION

There exist key challenges to effective capacity-building in the current global framework…

- *Tension between capacity-building and immediate impact*: There can exist a real or perceived tension b/w achieving health outcomes and targets immediately, versus investing longer-term in building local capacity.

- *Preferred metrics of donors, key stakeholders may under-represent systems and capacity building in favor of more immediately quantifiable outcomes:*

- *International NGOs may not be equipped with individuals with appropriate capacity building skills:* The skills these organizations typically hire for (e.g. clinical, public health, or management expertise) may not necessarily equip them to serve as leads in capacity-building.

To succeed, capacity building must be underpinned by a high-level of mutual respect and accountability…

- Develop holistic approaches to 'capacity-building'

    – Recognize that capacity-building is bi-directional – and that local organizations and counterparts have a tremendous amount to contribute to international organizations.

    – Establish joint outcomes and ownership over projects *from the outset*, so that any skill-building is geared towards achievement of a shared objective.

    – Consider a 'mentorship' model, in which individuals work side-by-side on tangible projects and outputs.

    – Ensure that you are building the skills that the organization or individual is actually seeking.

Potential Ways Forward

- Develop clear objectives and metrics for all projects with explicit and measurable outcomes related to capacity building

  – This can include 'transition time line,' in which the project moves over to local ownership over a period of time.

  – Clear benchmarks can be established during this period (e.g. local management of discrete aspects of the project by month X; with full ownership by month Y); which are linked to capacity-building activities.

Potential Ways Forward

- If capacity-building is an objective, international organizations must recognize this as and ensure proper skills are brought to bear

    – This can include bringing in experts with relevant skills in this area (e.g. in training, HR, and/or change management).

    – Technical leads working with local community organizations can also undertake trainings on how to effectively capacity build and/or undertake organizational change management.

Questions?