

The Donor Toolkit

A pivotal force for ensuring that the lessons of collaboration are applied is the donor community—the global agencies, bilaterals, multilaterals, NGOs, foundations, and private-sector organizations that have made a commitment to global health. In every successful partnership we profiled, donors played a highly supportive role in providing strategic guidance, supporting local area infrastructure, and/or encouraging collaboration between members of a partnership. The following tools are examples of additional ways donors can support collaboration.

DONORS: THE MAIN MENU

<i>Element</i>	<i>Tools</i>
Leveraging grants to encourage collaboration	Statement of plans to incorporate collaborative practices Examples of impact measurement Developing a senior fellows program
Adapting policies to strengthen support for infrastructure	Recipient country feedback to donors
Supporting skill development in leadership and management	Supporting grantees with active learning Planning investment in a leadership center

<i>Element</i>	<i>Tools</i>
Sponsoring forums for leaders to reach consensus on priorities	Planning a priority forum on a specific disease or health threat
Modeling collaborative behaviors	Grantee feedback to donor

STATEMENT OF PLANS TO INCORPORATE COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES

The heart of close collaboration is the partner group itself—the individuals who arrive with different perspectives to try to reach a single goal. Whether they will become a team that can share ideas openly and solve problems together hangs in the balance when they meet for the first time. Donors can help disseminate the lessons for making that happen by adopting grant policies that hold recipients accountable for effective collaboration practices. For example, donors can require an explicit statement from partnerships about how collaboration will occur over the course of the project. This worksheet will help them develop this statement.

Questions

How will the partners work with each other?

How will the partnership provide for feedback from individual partners?

How will resources be used to support meetings and other means of communication between partners?

(as applicable) How will the partners work with the ministries of health and finance in countries being served? How will the partners identify other relevant ministries and stakeholders and work with them? How will the partners encourage the relevant stakeholders to work together?

WORKSHEET: EXAMPLES OF IMPACT MEASUREMENT

As we described in Chapter 7, global health leaders are only beginning to learn how to measure their progress in terms of impact rather than process. Our advisory group suggested that donors work closely with potential grant recipients to help them design an effective way to evaluate their efforts—for example, providing potential partnerships with examples of how teams have measured progress in similar efforts (drawing from outside as well as inside global health). Donors can use this worksheet to develop a list of examples that illustrate good practices they would like to see applied.

<i>Type of partnership</i>	<i>Name of partnership</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Impact measurement</i>
Advocacy			
Research			
Intervention			
Technology exchange			
Policy development			
Other			

WORKSHEET: DEVELOPING A SENIOR FELLOWS PROGRAM

Leaders in global health suggested that donors develop a cadre of senior fellows from all sectors who are experienced in global health and willing to work on-site with partnerships at critical stages in a project. These questions are designed to guide a discussion among the donor’s senior team, to determine how a fellows program might be developed. The questions can be distributed in advance and summarized before the meeting to spark discussion.

Questions

How can we identify potential fellows? What sectors should we include?
Which of our previous grantees have been particularly successful in building collaborative partnerships?

What will we ask them to do?

How will we communicate the availability of fellows to partnerships in each sector?

What administrative support will we provide? Will we cover expenses of fellows, or will that be expensed to the partnerships?

How will we assess the impact of the fellows program?

RECIPIENT COUNTRY FEEDBACK TO DONOR

In our research we heard repeatedly that the “voice of the South” should be heard to a greater extent. We also heard that to get truly constructive feedback, donors need to work hard to overcome the grantees’ fear that criticizing donors will cause the donors to withdraw their support. One means of hearing this voice and encouraging honesty is to develop a method of gathering feedback from program recipients. The following is a list of questions that might be used to gather such feedback.

Questions

Which of the following characteristics are most important for donors (please check)?

- Understanding local culture
- Communicating effectively with political leaders and communities
- Providing training for health workers and volunteers
- Investing in health systems
- Providing substantial resources
- Demonstrating ongoing interest in the country
- Other _____

Of the donors who have sponsored efforts in your country, which five come closest to having these characteristics?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Which are the top three diseases/threats in your country, in order of importance?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Of these, which diseases/threats are not being addressed adequately?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Do you have the capacity within your infrastructure to integrate the goals and coordinate the programs of different donors? How could donors help strengthen this capacity?

Which of these infrastructure capabilities are most needed in your country (circle needs)? How could donors address each of them (fill in response)?

Financial skills:

Management skills:

Monitoring systems:

Laboratories:

Public health workers:

WORKSHEET: PROVIDING ACTIVE LEARNING TO GRANTEES

Effective collaboration can be taught, but it requires active learning and ongoing coaching. Donors are in an excellent position to connect their grantees with the individuals and organizations that can provide skill building in collaboration that goes beyond simply understanding a particular set of principles or guidelines, to active learning—providing instruction and guidance as the grantees actually struggle in real time with building, strengthening, and maintaining their partnership. The questions below are designed to guide a discussion among the donor’s senior team members about how they might develop such an effort.

Questions

How can we identify those grant programs that would benefit from active learning? What are the criteria we will use to select the grantees for whom this is appropriate?

How can we identify partnerships that would benefit from being grouped together and sharing their experience in a common active learning “collaborative?”

Who are the individuals and institutions that could provide this active learning? What process or mechanism do we use to ensure it takes place?

How can we measure the value added by active learning?

Should we structure this into grants?

WORKSHEET: PLANNING INVESTMENT IN A LEADERSHIP CENTER

Donors can encourage the development of leadership and management skills by providing support for NGOs and institutions that express an interest in the area. For example, donors might endow chairs at universities, fund fellowships at NGOs or successful partnerships, invest in centers of leadership, or fund the development of case materials for leadership and management, based on successful collaborations. These questions are designed to guide a discussion among the donor’s senior team, to determine how a leadership center might be developed. The questions can be distributed in advance and summarized before the meeting to spark discussion.

Questions

How could a leadership center help us achieve our mission?

What institutions are now providing leadership training that is appropriate for or could be adapted to global health?

Which individuals and institutions could provide the best leadership and environment for the center?

What steps should we take to explore the possibility of starting a center?

WORKSHEET: PLANNING A PRIORITY FORUM ON A SPECIFIC DISEASE/THREAT

Leaders in global health have suggested that donors bring together those leaders who are working on a particular disease/threat, so they can reach consensus about the best ways to coordinate efforts. For example, a donor or donors might sponsor a retreat, let people present where we are and lessons learned, and analyze what is needed and the best way to get there (including the goal of each priority and potential partnerships that could be formed). For such discussions, it's very important to have a mixture of people—Americans and non-Americans, developing country leaders and developed country leaders. If the forum is sponsored by a single donor, that donor can then use the results of the forum to shape its own grant-making agenda.

These questions below are designed to guide a discussion among a donor's senior team, to determine how a priority forum might be developed. The questions can be distributed in advance and summarized before the meeting to spark discussion.

Questions

What are the problem areas for which this sort of forum would be useful?

What sectors should we include? Who are the key players currently in this field, including donors, multinational organizations, NGOs, the private sector, and national governments? Who are the other stakeholders that should be invited?

What are the lessons we can learn from what has been done to date?

Do we want to solicit input widely by e-mail or phone calls before the forum assembles? How can the agenda be structured to emphasize discussions rather than presentations? Who should facilitate the forum?

How will we assess the impact of the forum in terms of improving collaborative outcomes?

GRANTEE FEEDBACK TO DONOR

Many of those we interviewed suggested that donors serve as models for collaborative behavior, strengthening their capacity to work with their own organizational units and with external partners. For example, donors can

use a tool such as the following to determine how well they encourage collaboration among partners who have received a grant.

Questions

Which of the following collaborative practices does our donor organization follow with other donors (please check)?

- Takes only joint credit when funding joint projects with other donors
- Works in tandem with other donors within a country
- Sponsors training in collaboration, in conjunction with other donor organizations
- Listens closely to what is said
- Provides for long-term sustainability of the project

Which of the following collaborative practices did our donor organization follow with your partnership? (please check)

- Provided a workshop to train partners in collaborative practices as the project began
- Required feedback by individual partners about how well the partners were collaborating
- Included resources dedicated to communication between partners, including meetings, phone conferences, and other means of communication
- Initiated discussion with leaders of your partnership about how to make the program sustainable

What suggestions do you have for improvement? Are there ways that the administrative and procedural requirements of the donor could be changed to facilitate collaboration?