
Lessons Learned

Global Fund for Children
December 4, 2008

Global Fund for Children: Who We Are

- Public foundation based in Washington, DC
- Funds grassroots organizations that work directly with children and youth globally
- Small staff, global reach through grassroots grantmaking

Global Fund for Children: What we do

- Small grants to locally based organizations working directly with children and youth
- Value added services and knowledge management
- Long-term partnership
- 5 portfolio areas: Learning, Enterprise, Safety, Healthy Minds and Bodies, Creative Opportunities

Grantmaking Presence

- Africa, SA, ESE, LAC, EE
- Currently funding over 200 partners in 60+ countries
- Close to \$10 million given out in grants to date

Lessons Learned: Defining success and failure

- Absolute success
 - Bigger, stronger, deeper
 - High visibility/recognition
 - High budget growth
 - Diversity and type of funding
- Neither success nor failure
 - Status quo
 - No growth
 - No harm done
- Absolute Failure
 - Collapse
 - Dysfunction
 - “Lost to follow-up”

Lessons Learned: Defining “risk”

- Size of organization
- Age of organization
- Funders to date
- Institutional and management capacity
- Organization or program model innovation
- Political context

Lessons Learned: Absolute success

- Wilderness Foundation (South Africa)
- Ubuntu (South Africa)
- Horn Relief (Somalia)

Lessons Learned: Failed grants

- Ithuteng Trust (South Africa)
- Kamulu Academy (Kenya)

Lessons Learned: Insights from Successes and Failures

- Marry intuition and science when scouting
- Recognize that small CBOs & NGOs are big actors in development
- Provide funding that is appropriate for size and capacity of organization
- Consider general support as the backbone of success

Lessons Learned: Insights from Successes and Failures

- Consider strong organization vs. strong programs
- Communicate expectations clearly early in the funding relationship
- Read reports scrupulously
- Invest not just financially but also in building knowledge and capacity