Study of grantee dissemination activity
September 2013

Summary

Aim   To document the key messages, dissemination activities and outcomes of grantees within the Gates foundation MNH strategy portfolio, and consider how these might contribute toward the foundation's MNH strategy learning agenda.

Research question

How might grantee dissemination efforts be better used to contribute toward the Gates foundation's MNH strategy learning agenda?

Objectives

- To capture the key messages that form the basis for dissemination
- To document each grantee's dissemination activities and outcomes
- To synthesise the dissemination activities of grants within the foundation's MNH portfolio
- To consider how grantee dissemination efforts might contribute toward the foundation's MNH strategy learning agenda.

Audience   Gates foundation MNH Program Officers and Advocacy team; Gates MNH grantees.

Methods   Semi-structured interviews with 2-3 key informants per grantee; document review.

Outputs

- Section within the Characterisations tables for each grantee for dissemination activities and key messages
- Short report for each grantee summarising their dissemination activities and outcomes, and the key messages on which these are based.
- Summary reports synthesising dissemination activities and outcomes, and key messages, across grantees.
- Discussion paper to share with grantees and the foundation about the potential for project-level dissemination to contribute to the foundation's MNH strategy learning agenda.

Timeline

Phase I August 2013 – January 2014 with grants nearing/at completion in 2013
Phase II February 2014 – November 2014 with grants still active in 2013/14.

Background

This work addresses activity and milestone 5.4 of the IDEAS project proposal:

Activity 5.4: *Use the Research Impact Framework tool to capture grantee dissemination activities and map their impact*

Milestone: *Research Impact Framework tool used with grantees near end of their grant.*

The Research Impact Framework[1] will be used as a way of categorising reported outcomes/impacts of dissemination, but the emphasis has shifted toward documenting dissemination activities and key messages. The qualitative study of scale-up will explore project impacts in much greater detail through a case-based approach to understanding the scale-up of innovations.

Links with other parts of the IDEAS project

Key messages and dissemination activities will be incorporated as a section in the Characterisations work under objective 1. Key messages, audiences, dissemination activities and outputs will be captured. This will be updated on an annual basis when the project characterisations are updated.

In 2014 the qualitative study of scale-up will involve developing case-studies focused on selected grantees or selected grantee innovations. This study of dissemination will involve many of the same individuals – key project staff from grants – and there is potential for overlap. As such, we propose limiting the extent of data collection to interviews with 2 key stakeholders per grantee to be completed before end 2013 (for L10K, ManHEP, Manthan, SNL and Surestart); focusing on key messages, dissemination activities and outputs, and self-reported outcomes, and making the data collected available as background information to the study of scale-up. Interviewees would be informed about this at the time of interview, and the connection between the two studies explained.

Methods

We will conduct semi-structured interviews with the Project Director and one other key staff member, e.g. communications officer, Assistant Project Director from each grantee. We suggest using the learning workshop in November 2013 to target grantees for interviews that are approaching/have reached the end of their grant.   The timing is based upon the assumption that grantees are more likely to have research findings and be in a position to disseminate these findings toward the end of the grant period, even if they have also engaged in dissemination activities earlier in the project lifecycle, and trying to minimise the burden on grantees who may also be involved in interviews for the qualitative study of scale-up in 2014.

Interviews will comprise three parts:

- Part I will document grantee dissemination activities used to communicate key messages, including communications channels and intended audiences. This section will include questions about grantees' efforts to engage with audiences and stimulate an environment in which research might be taken up, and questions to about what types of dissemination approaches are seen to be more effective in a grantee's context and why.
- Part II will focus on identifying the key messages based on research evidence from the grant.
- Part III will investigate what grantees report to have achieved through their dissemination activities, whether these outcomes were more, less or different than they had anticipated, and why. The Research Impact Framework tool will be used to probe for different types of outcome, and/or to categorise the outcomes described.

Grantees will also be asked for copies of /references to any dissemination materials produced based on the research findings from a project.

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[1] Kuruvilla, S. et al (2006) *Describing the impact of health research: a Research Impact Framework*, BMC Health Services Research, 6: 134.

Analysis

Analysis will be descriptive – describing what, how and why grantees disseminate, and capturing the key messages for dissemination. Interviewees' accounts will be compared and synthesised into a report for each grantee, in combination with evidence from documents. Where there are discrepancies between accounts, these will be checked with the interviewees.

A short report will be written for each grantee summarising the key messages, dissemination activities and outcomes reported. A summary report combining the information from all grantees will be compiled. The information about key messages, dissemination activities, audiences and outcomes will be included in the characterisations tables for each grantee.

Ethics

All interviewees will be informed about the scope and purpose of the study when interviews are arranged. This information will be reiterated at the start of the interview, and interviewees will be requested to confirm their informed consent to participate in the study, on the understanding that they may withdraw at any time. All interviewees will have an opportunity to comment on the write-up about their grant and will be requested to approve it before it is circulated more widely, or decline its wider use. Grants will be named, and the contributors to a grantee report will be named, with their permission.

Work plan

August 2013 — **Develop topic guide** covering the three segments of interest: Part I key messages, Part II dissemination activities, and Part III outcomes and impacts.

September — **Conduct pilot interviews** with two-three members of the IDEAS team, in relation to other current/recent projects they are working on, and modify topic guide.

October — **Approach grantees** reaching/at the end of their lifecycle about participating in the study. These are ManHEP, L10K and SNL in Ethiopia; Surestart and Manthan in Uttar Pradesh, India.

October - December — **Collect data -** interview 2 Key informants (PI and other project staff) from each of the grantees that has agreed to participate. The IDEAS learning workshop 5-7 November in London presents a good opportunity for interviews with some/all of ManHEP, SNL, Surestart and Manthan (L10K not attending).

January 2014 — **Write up** phase I and present back to grantees and to the foundation, following grantee approval.

February – November — **Phase II** Capture dissemination activities and outcomes of remaining MNH grantees, Better Birth, UP Behaviour Change Management grant, SFH if phase I is felt to have been of value to the foundation and to grantees.

Limitations

It is difficult to attribute outcomes, such as policy decisions, to research dissemination activities, or to be precise about the contribution of dissemination activity to a particular outcome. The impact of research findings on policy-makers and other audiences may take place over a longer timescale than a project is in existence to report on/observe, and be part of a complex set of evidence used to

inform decisions and actions. Whilst efforts will be made to capture the reported outcomes of grantee dissemination activities, the emphasis of this study is on documenting purposeful grantee dissemination activities, and the key messages from research evidence that these are based on.

Annex 1: Key terms

Dissemination - we use a broad definition of dissemination:

"A planned process that involves consideration of target audiences and the settings in which research findings are to be received, and, where appropriate, communicating and interacting with wider policy and health service audiences in ways that will facilitate research uptake in decision-making processes and practice" (Wilson et al, 2010).

Research Impact Framework categories:

- **Research-related impacts:**
    - Type of knowledge produced
    - Papers, products, patents
    - Citation analyses
    - Research networks
    - Research leadership
    - Research management
    - Dissemination

- **Policy impacts**
    - Level of policy-making
    - Type of policy
    - Type of impact: Instrumental, Supportive / tactical, Conceptual, Redefining/ wider.

- **Service impacts - health**
    - Adherence/ adoption
    - Quality of care
    - Evidence-based practice
    - Monitoring/ Health information systems
    - Health systems management
    - Cost-savings/effectiveness.

- **Service impacts – intersectoral**
  (longer list, some items deleted as not seen to be relevant to Gates grantees)
    - Domestic and work environments
    - Food and water services

- **Societal impacts**
    - Health
    - Equity
    - Macroeconomic
    - Social capital
    - Sustainable development.

- **Other impacts**