CONCEPT NOTE

Practical Adaptation Network (PAN)

Building off of various workshops and communities that have recently focused on the need for more adaptive management within and across international development programming, the Practical Adaptation Network (PAN), will bring together donors and practitioners/implementers in a series of convenings to improve the practice of adaptive management. PAN will also explore how to practically incorporate knowledge, information and data (KID) feedback systems for improved learning, decision-making and action.

BACKGROUND

Learning from other communities such as Doing Development Differently (DDD), Problem Driven Iteration and Adaptation (PDIA), Thinking and Working Politically (TWP), USAID's Learning Lab, Mercy Corps/IRC ADAPT and more, PAN has identified a need for taking much of the conceptual conversations around adaptive management and moving it more into the practical domain of how to implement these approaches. The convenings will bring together donors and practitioners to discuss challenges, opportunities, emerging priorities, etc. in the practice of adaptive management and KID feedback systems. This network will not only concentrate on the relationship between donors and practitioners, but also internally between donors, and practitioners themselves.

Much of the community around these existing discussions is made up of M&E, learning/effectiveness and associated staff, as well as leadership in organizations. Key audiences for PAN to bring together are the roles in donor and implementing organizations that support the practice of adaptive management but have not been active in these dialogues including: procurement/contracting, human resources, technical program managers and related staff. Another audience is the senior leadership of donors and implementing organizations; there have been several bilateral conversations in specific meetings and conferences, but there has been a lack of substantive dialogue at the senior leadership level on how to move these efforts forward within individual organizations and across the international development field.

OBJECTIVES

PAN has three objectives:

1. Develop a network amongst key staff in organizations whose roles are critical for the adoption and practical implementation of Adaptive Management;
2. Convene senior leaders in organizations that can become champions and move the practice of adaptive management in their organizations forward; and
3. Have separate conversations amongst these two different audiences, but also bring them together to better understand each other's circumstances, issues and opportunities related to adaptive management and KID feedback systems.

LEADERSHIP

PAN will be co-led and co-convened by Feedback Labs and the USAID Global Development Lab, with support from Reboot, the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). PAN will also closely align with the World Bank's Global Delivery Initiative and its focus of fostering greater adoption of adaptive implementation amongst the donor community. This network will also collaborate closely with the Rockefeller Foundation, The International Development Innovation Alliance (IDIA), the White House OSTP, DDD and ADAPT.

LOGISTICS

PAN will hold a regular series of monthly meetings that will be 2.5 hours each. Meetings will also be oriented around a theme in a salon like style (e.g., Adaptive Procurement, MEL, Digital Development, etc). These gatherings will predominantly be located in Washington, DC and New York, but there will also be potential meetings in the San Francisco Bay Area and London, UK. PAN will also try to hold convenings around other events so as to maximize the diversity of participants, especially those traveling into the area.