Leveraging the Networks of CBOs:
A Network Analysis of Firelight Foundation's Grantee-Partners

Kyrstin Thorson
Firelight Foundation
IPSS 2014
# Table of Contents

Introduction - 3

Review of the Literature - 4
  - Benefits of Interorganizational Ties
  - Benefits of Networking
    - *Knowledge and Resources*
    - *Impact*
    - *Sustainability*

Methodology - 10

Findings - 10
  - Network of Funding
  - Network of In-Kind or Material Donations
  - Network of Shared Information or Resources
  - Networks of Collaboration on Programs or Projects

Recommendations - 15

Conclusions - 16

Bibliography - 17

Appendix - 19
Introduction

Small, community-based organizations (CBOs) in developing countries often face the task of addressing the major issues of our decade with very limited resources. These organizations work hard to tackle issues of prevailing poverty, HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, economic empowerment, access to education, and many more on very modest budgets. Often CBOs struggle to create the type of far-reaching impact that they aim for due to limited resources. These CBOs typically function with a very small, paid staff and rely on community support and volunteers to fully implement their programs and projects. With the help of domestic and international funding, CBOs are typically able to develop and sustain their programs. Nevertheless, a majority of CBOs must face the day when their funding sources can no longer be relied upon due to an institutional change in funding priorities or a multitude of other reasons. Instability in funding and support creates additional challenges for CBOs working to create effective change in their community. There are countless stories of CBOs reliant upon donor support that must close their doors once the funding for the organization and its programs dries up. Lasting change is hard to accomplish in this of environment. An emerging trend seeks to understand how CBOs can maximize their impact with limited resources and how CBOs can become sustainable. Interorganizational ties allow organizations to access new knowledge and resources in order to scale-up impact and they can possibly be employed to build organizational sustainability.

Firelight Foundation is an international, grant-making organization which supports African CBOs working to create lasting change for children and families that have been affected by HIV/AIDS. By offering supplementary capacity building grants, in-country program consultants who provide organizational development support, learning circles which facilitate GP to GP learning and sharing, and various training on programmatic areas and organizational capacity issues over the course of a seven-year funding partnership Firelight seeks to help CBOs develop their own organization capacity and programs in hopes that its GPs will be more sustainable at the end of their relationship with Firelight. With the recognition that most funding partnerships come to an end (including its own), Firelight is working hard to find ways to help CBOs develop their organizational sustainability.

Firelight has been in the process of following-up with former GPs that have already received their last grant from Firelight to see how the end of the funding partnership has impacted them. Unfortunately, many former GPs have had to cut back on staff or programs due to limited funding and resources at the end of their partnership with Firelight. Some organizations have even had to completely close their doors. These findings were sobering for Firelight and forced it to re-examine its approach to sustainability with its partners. Since networks hold a great potential for CBOs seeking to become less dependent upon institutional funding and more sustainable, Firelight commissioned this study to better understand its GPs' networks and what role they may have on organizational sustainability. Through network analysis and case studies, Firelight seeks to better understand how to support CBOs in developing rich networks that can be utilized for organizational sustainability.
Review of the Literature

A literature review was conducted through the systematic searching of terms such as ‘interorganizational ties,’ ‘networks and organizational sustainability,’ ‘community-based organizations and networks’ in order to gather information on the impact of networks on organizational sustainability and how CBOs have traditionally used interorganizational ties for their benefit.

Benefits of Interorganizational Ties

Much has been written on the benefits of interorganizational ties. Most thinking on interorganizational ties concludes that organizations form relationships with other organizations or actors in order to “increase access to information, expertise and financial resources, to increase efficiency, to increase the visibility of issues, develop shared practices, mitigate risks, reduce isolation, and increase credibility.”

There are many different types of ties that organizations can develop for various purposes. Collaboration is most often written about in the literature. Frey et al. developed a seven stage model of collaboration by combining other stage models in existence (see Figure 1).

These seven stages (coexistence, communication, cooperation, coordination, coalition, collaboration, and coadunation) represent the different types and levels of collaboration that exist between two organizations. CBOs may choose to hold various ties at different levels for unique purposes. One can assume that the intensity of the tie increases at each level within the model. According to Chen, intense ties (as opposed to ties of a lower level of intensity) lead to better access of information and resources for the organizations sharing the tie.

The reasons organizations and CBOs choose to establish ties with other organizations is well documented. CBOs maintain ties with other organizations to access new information, innovate, gain access to resources, improve quality and range of services, and to access community support. Cordero-Guzman found, more specifically, that organizations work together when 1) the projects involved are too risky for one organization, 2) no single organization has the internal capacity to provide an adequate service, 3) key information leading to success is located in other organizations and cannot be easily acquired or purchased, 4) they seek to expand their services and move into other areas for which they need access to local resources and knowledge of local conditions, 5) no single group is sufficiently large to attract a

---

diverse pool of vendors and suppliers and to bring the project to scale, and 6) gaining legitimacy in the eyes of other actors in the system requires a structure wherein various stakeholders participate in the decision-making process.5

Overall, it is believed that when organizations work together their combined effort will create a larger impact more effectively than what one organization could do on its own.6

Benefits of Networking

Knowledge and Resources

Knowledge is one of the primary reasons that CBOs engage in networking. Knowledge creation and dissemination occurs when organizations interact with other organizations. The resulting

---

5 Hector Cordero-Guzman, “Interorganizational Networks Among Community-Based Organizations,” in Communities and Workforce Development, by Edwin Melendez (Kalamazoo, Michigan: W.E. Upjohn Institute, 2004), 431.

conversations can introduce new practices to an organization or can even serve to create new ideas all together. Weak ties with a multitude of actors tend to encourage the generation and flow of knowledge across the network. An organization's position in the network also contributes to innovation. Chen argued that a central position in a network “provides more opportunity to learn, obtain utilize, and disseminate knowledge across organizational boundaries because the paths to gain critical information from others are short.”

Perhaps one of the main benefits of networking for CBOs is the increased access to a variety of resources that may normally be out of reach for small organizations. When organizations are able to establish ties with each other, programs and projects that may have been too large for one CBO can now potentially be taken on with the combined resources of the two (or more) organizations. According to Provan et al., “The logic is that, working together, community organizations can draw on the broad range of resources and expertise by the other organizations in the network, and, as a result, the health and well-being of community members will be improved.” The types of resources with the potential to be tapped are broad. CBOs often have limited staff who are trained in a specific area of expertise while the larger issues they work to address are multifaceted and require interventions from various levels and sectors. In addition, CBOs are often pressured by international donors to limit the focus of their programmatic areas to neatly fit into narrowly defined funding priorities. Resource-benefitting networks can potentially provide CBOs with an opportunity to increase the reach and impact of their programs without having to broaden the expertise of staff or significantly increase budget size.

While the literature shows that networks provide organizations with increased access to resources, it is not entirely clear on how organizations access these benefits. A combination of factors such as trust, shared norms, and solidified personal relationships over time may contribute to how beneficial network ties are for an organization. In addition to these factors, the level of involvement between organizations can also impact the ability of organizations to access new resources. Hardy et al. found through their research that “collaborations that have high levels of involvement will be positively associated with the acquisition of distinctive resources.” CBOs that wish to utilize their networks to access resources need to ensure a high level of trust and involvement exists between actors.

The increased access to knowledge and resources has the potential to combine and create

---

8 Chen, “Partnership and Performance of Community-Based Organizations: A Social Network Study of Taiwan,” 694.
10 Provan et al., “The Use of Network Analysis to Strengthen Community Partnerships,” 603.
13 Hardy, Phillips, and Lawrence, “Resources, Knowledge, and Influence: The Organizational Effects of Interorganizational Collaboration.”
expanded organizational capacity for CBOs. This goes back to the “basic assumption . . . that a network can mobilise or generate capacity and have a greater impact on change processes than could be achieved by individuals or organisations acting alone.”

Impact

The literature is rich with studies asserting that networks are an essential component for organizational success. Keyes et al. claimed that nonprofits must be aware of and utilize the network they are embedded in since these organizations “survive and prosper when they are a part of a network of organizations that support and undergird their activities.” A case study analysis by Chen found that CBOs which act as brokers (organization having ties with disconnected actors in the network), are selective in their ties, and hold ties with influential actors are “more effective in carrying out the service goals.” Chen also found that CBOs are more effective at delivering their services when they are closer in the network to other CBOs. Maintaining a large number of ties can be time-consuming and costly without the resulting benefits of new knowledge or resources. CBOS should be strategic in their relationships so that ties that do not create an added benefit are avoided. In addition, Chen found that CBOs who were more central in their networks were more effective at reaching their organizational goals. Organizations that are central in the network have shorter paths of communication with other actors which allows for efficient action. Chen also found that the width of a network does not significantly impact network effectiveness.

Chen also addressed the role of trust within networks: “Those who had high centrality were confident in their partnerships because they controlled the flow of unique information between others in the networks. As a result of better trust toward partners, an organization was more likely to participate in collective actions that were helpful for an organization to reach its goals.”

Sustainability

Many studies have been conducted on organizational sustainability and the role network ties play in sustainability. Stinchcombe discussed four factors that make organizations more prone to failure. The first reason given is the expense and large amount of time young organizations need to create new roles and positions and learn the essential skills needed to make the organization successful. In addition, Stinchcombe found that young organizations tend to fail due to issues with new employees not working productively with other new employees and also due to the difficulty in

---

17 Chen, “Partnership and Performance of Community-Based Organizations: A Social Network Study of Taiwan.”
18 Galaskiewicz, Bielefeld, and Dowell, “Networks and Organizational Growth: A Study of Community Based Nonprofits.”
19 Chen, “Partnership and Performance of Community-Based Organizations: A Social Network Study of Taiwan.”
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid., 694.
creating relationships with the consumers of the product or service the organization produces.  

Many theories address how organizations can increase longevity. Institutional theory suggests that organizations are more likely to survive over time if they are perceived as conforming to the institutional environment and its norms.  In order to achieve this perception, organizations should work consciously to establish ties with already established institutions. These ties indicate “adherence to institutional prescriptions of appropriate conduct and obtains a variety of rewards that are predicted to contribute to its likelihood of survival, including greater invulnerability to questioning, enhanced legitimacy and status, greater stability and predictability and greater ease of access to resources.” 

Baum and Oliver also found that organizations that are reliable and accountable are more likely to have institutional ties with well-established organizations than organizations that do not possess those characteristics. Institutional ties with other established organizations provide younger organizations with a buffer from factors which typically endanger their survival. These ties provide “legitimacy, stability, and resources that . . . will tend to compensate for the disadvantages of organizational inexperience.” 

A study conducted by Galaskiewicz, Bielefeld, and Dowell came to similar conclusions regarding the benefits of ties to other organizations for organizational longevity; however, they found that the ties benefit donative nonprofit organizations more than organizations that rely on fees or sales for income. Galaskiewicz, Bielefeld, and Dowell concluded:

Being affiliated with organizations prominent in the network and local elites enhanced reputations for quality and fitness, but the also enabled donative nonprofits, which operate in a more institutional context, to access funding, personnel, and other resources through other informal means, such as moral appeals, asking favors, or social exchange. In fact, the study showed that donative nonprofits that were mainly dependent upon donations of time and money and had a rich network of connections grew at a faster rate. This is most likely a result of status generated through being connected with other well-respected organizations. This status is essential in garnering donations from individuals and institutional donors. While a robust network is beneficial to donative nonprofits, the study found the opposite to be true for nonprofits that primarily generated income through fees or sales. Nonprofits that predominately depended upon fees or sales grew at a faster rate if they held less ties to other nonprofit organizations and local elites. 

23 Ibid.
26 Baum and Oliver, “Institutional Linkages and Organizational Mortality.”
27 Ibid., 191.
28 Galaskiewicz, Bielefeld, and Dowell, “Networks and Organizational Growth: A Study of Community Based Nonprofits.”
29 Ibid., 368.
30 Galaskiewicz, Bielefeld, and Dowell, “Networks and Organizational Growth: A Study of Community Based Nonprofits.”
The mix of intensity of ties also matters to an organization's sustainability. A study of apparel manufacturers by Uzzi showed that organizations which had a mix of embedded and arm's-length ties were less likely to fail than organizations with a majority of embedded ties.\textsuperscript{31} Nonprofits should give thought to the amount, types, and intensities of their ties based on their financial situation.

Hager, Galaskiewicz, and Larson similarly found that organizations that are better connected with stakeholders in their community are less likely to close, but that not all types of ties are beneficial. Their study found that organizations with government funding were 2.5 times more likely to close.\textsuperscript{32} Hager, Galaskiewicz, and Larson also found that “for organizations more dependent on volunteers...the initially higher hazard rate [of closure] declines over time so that older organizations dependent on volunteer staff are at lower risk of failure than equally mature organizations less dependent on volunteer staff.”\textsuperscript{33} This is most likely due to the benefits of having ties with volunteers which expands an organization's network and produces a positive effect on reputation and status.

Johnson, Honnold, and Stevens supported these findings: “Nonprofit organizations with more extensive networks have significantly higher survival rates, whether their networks result either from large size and a higher dependence on private donations or from listings in community directories, charitable registration numbers, or having larger boards of directors.”\textsuperscript{34}

Cordero-Guzman explained the process that organizations go through as they develop their network for organizational sustainability:

The first is that by putting organizations in contact with one another networks help to stimulate organizational perspectives on and approaches to community problems. Second, networks strengthen organizational capacity by giving individual organizations that are a part of a collective access to resources and technical assistance they might otherwise not be able to secure. Third, organizations enter into networks to enhance and expand their contracts and opportunities . . . Finally, networks help organizations leverage resources, which enables them to be more efficient by combining their limited resources and assets with those of other organizations and using those ties to secure additional resources and funding.\textsuperscript{35}

The last stage is important for organizations seeking to be sustainable over time. Organizations that are able to effectively leverage their institutional ties to access other resources or even combine efforts with other organizations are better positioned to be sustainable over time and resilient to fickle international donor support.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[33] Ibid., 182–183.
\item[35] Cordero-Guzman, “Interorganizational Networks Among Community-Based Organizations,” 432.
\end{footnotes}
Methodology

Primary data was gathered through a roster survey asking GPs to identify the types of ties they had with other organizations or actors on a regular basis (see Appendix 1). The survey was developed in consultation with Firelight Foundation. Firelight also identified a set of 30 GPs located in Rwanda, Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Lesotho which would be appropriate to participate in the study. GPs, which were selected to participate in the study, were encouraged to have multiple people from their organization collaborate on filling out the survey in order to get a more robust information. Secondary data was gathered from existing information originally collected by Firelight Foundation in the form of reports and narratives.

Data was then aggregated and cleaned. Analysis of the data was conducted with various statistical tests and visualization through using the software packages of UCINET and Pajek.

Findings

Surveys were sent out to 30 of Firelight's grantee-partners. Twenty-seven of the organizations completed the survey, leading to a 90% completion rate. Through visualizing and analyzing the data around different types of ties, some general conclusions can be drawn.

Network of Funding

As can be seen in Figure 2, Firelight grantee-partners tend to have numerous sources of monetary funding. The number of funding sources supporting GPs ranges from 1-17, with an an average of 6.72 funding sources. While most of the funding comes from international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also provided a large amount of the funding. A common assumption is that INGOs only donate to larger, African-based organizations, since they are perceived to have stronger governance and internal capacity to manage the funds. The data does not inherently reflect this assumption. While there is a slight correlation between budget and number of funding sources, a larger budget does not appear to be a strong predictor of the number of funding organizations a GP has. One grantee-partner with a budget upwards of $100,000 only receives funding from three organizations, while another GP with a budget less than $20,000 receives money from 10 organizations. While an organization with a diverse set of funding organizations is not guaranteed success, that organization has multiple sources to supplement funding gaps if one organization cuts funding for some reason. This diversity is important for the sustainability of organizations reliant upon donor funding for the majority of their budgets.

It is apparent from Figure 2, that very few organizations share the same funding sources. As can be seen, the majority of shared funding sources are INGOs. Those GPs which received INGO funding all had relatively larger budgets (over $85,000 USD), with the majority having budgets over $240,000 USD. While the network visualization does not show why this is so, a few hypothesis may explain this occurrence. One possibility is that GPs have developed unique funding networks which would be hard for other organizations to access. One organization has done just that. Kwa Wazee (an
organization in Tanzania) has built a funding network which is composed of local NGOs, INGOs, international government organizations (IGOs). They have even established a branch of Kwa Wazee in Switzerland which is focused on fundraising. Kwa Wazee's ability to be innovative in their funding network has allowed them to create a diverse and unique funding base. The limited shared funding sources may indicate that GPs have each developed unique funding networks and are not competing with other GPs for funding. It could also indicate the opposite, which would be that there is in fact greater competition for funds perhaps due to funders narrowing their focus and funding cohorts.

Network of In-Kind and Material Donations

Very similarly to the funding network, GPs seem to have developed their own unique networks for material or in-kind donations (Figure 3). The number of organizations from which GPs received in-kind donations ranged from 0-24 organizations and averaged 4.33 organizations per GP. INGOs are less
prevalent in this network, while government agencies are more numerous. There appears to be an increased presence of government agencies, as compared to other networks, which may be due to how government agencies are structured. These types of agencies may be limited by their own sparse budgets in how much money they are able to donate financially, but may be more able to give material goods more freely.

Firelight was curious to explore if there is a relationship between the number of in-kind/material donors an organization may have and organizational attributes. Based off of the literature, we expected to find that the number of volunteers an organization has, along with how long the organization has been in business affects the number of donors giving in-kind/material donations to Firelight GPs. Through running a regression, the hypothesis was confirmed. The regression found a statistically significant, strong, positive relationship (adjusted r-squared=0.675, p<0.001) between number of volunteers, the years an organization has existed, and the number of organizations providing in-kind donations.

Figure 3. Network of In-Kind and Material Donations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Organization Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray</td>
<td>Government Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>International Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>International Non-Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Private Sector Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Firelight Grantee-Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Firelight Grantee-Partner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Number of volunteers and years of existence accounted for 67.5% of all variation in the number of organizations that give to Firelight’s partners. This indicates that a greater number of volunteers and the older an organization is related to more organizations donating. This is most likely due to the fact that a greater number of volunteers and a longer amount of time an organization has existed indicates inherent community support which most likely translates over into community donations as well. Large numbers of volunteers most likely expand the network an organization can access to reach potential donors and supporters, which is important not only for future growth but also for sustainability.

Figure 4. Network of Shared Information and Resources

Network of Shared Information and Resources

Unlike the previous networks, the network for information and shared knowledge (Figure 4) is relatively large. According to the literature, the large nature of this
network is beneficial - it is ripe for knowledge dissemination and generation. Firelight's GPs are sharing information with a large number and variety of organizations. On average, GPs share information with 17 other organizations. This high number allows new information to flow into the network and lowers the chance of redundant information. While GPs share between themselves, the sharing tends to be limited by location. Due to the nature of their work, it is not surprising that Firelight's GPs tend to share locally since their work is as community-based organization is conducted primarily at a community and local level. Nevertheless, there are many opportunities for the GPs to establish more connections with other GPs in different countries. These connections could lead to more innovation regarding similar issues on which GPs work. Firelight should work to encourage sharing between partners across countries by acting as a bridge between GPs in different countries. Firelight could facilitate this by identifying GPs with a similar focus of work and then convening information-sharing conferences or phone calls.

![Network of Collaboration on Programs and Projects](image)

Figure 5. Network of Collaboration on Programs and Projects

Network of Collaboration on Programs or Projects

This network shows (Figure 5) the level of collaboration between GPs on programs and projects. Out of the other types of ties surveyed, this is one of the densest networks. With an average of 15 ties per GP, the network is surprisingly large. Unlike many U.S. NGOs, these African CBOs tend to collaborate often with many different government agencies. In fact, over two-thirds of GPs in this
network collaborate with the Ministry of Education on programs or projects. Firelight GPs also collaborate with a high number of government agencies on advocacy, indicating the existence of a close relationship between GPs and government. National level networks (e.g., Tanzania Education Network) and Area Development Committees are also very present in the network. These types of organizations provide forums for similar CBOs and NGOs to discuss local issues and take action.

The literature indicates that NGOs should be strategic and selective in the types of collaboration they participate. According to Frey’s chart (Figure 1), effective collaboration requires an intensive amount of time and resources. Since collaboration requires a high level of involvement between partners, it is important that organizations are not over-extending their limited time and resources in many collaborations that do not bring added benefit. GPs in this network collaborate with a fairly large number of organizations (when compared to the other types of networks surveyed). This high number of collaborations per GP may be cause for concern. Firelight should engage with its GPs to ensure that the collaborations in which they are participating are indeed purposeful and selective.

Recommendations

The networks discussed provide general information regarding the types of organizations Firelight GPs have ties with and what types of ties they maintain. Firelight GPs tend to vary in the number of ties they maintain throughout the different networks. Some GPs have very large networks regardless of the type of tie, while other consistently have only ties with a few other organizations. Local NGOs and INGOs maintain a large presence across the networks, while government agencies are more prevalent in providing in-kind/material donations and in collaborating on programs and projects and on advocacy-related issues. This general knowledge can be useful for Firelight when working with GPs on designing programs.

While GPs tend to engage with a variety of actors both within their communities, nationally, and internationally, only a minority reported having ties with private-sector organizations. While ties with the private-sector may not come as naturally as ties with the civil-sector, private-sector organizations have much to offer to Firelight GPs. Not only would their knowledge regarding successful business operations be beneficial to GPs with an income-generating activity, but their collaboration on programs and projects could prove to be innovative. Rwanda has recognized the importance of bringing all stakeholders together for community development projects. Through creating Joint Action Development Forums (JADF), Rwanda sought to establish a space for both the civil-sector and private-sector to discuss local issues, establish priorities and make recommendations for the government, and collaborate on specific projects. While the JADF has been successful in a few Rwandan communities and less-than-successful in others, the thought behind the JADF is sound. One reason for the lack of interaction between civil-sector and private-sector may be due to a deficiency of areas for the two sectors to intersect. Firelight should strive to encourage the interaction between GPs and private-sector organizations. Through holding workshops or even by simply providing a forum for information-sharing, Firelight could encourage relationships between GPs and private-sector organizations. These ties could be especially beneficial to GPs working with livelihood programs or who have their own organizational income-generating activities.
Firelight should also work to ensure that GPs are engaged strategic and selective collaborations. As compared to the other networks examined, the number of organizations GPs have ties with in the collaboration network is fairly high. While collaborating with other organizations can increase impact within a community while also creating the foundation for other types of ties (such as funding), it is imperative that GPs are not wasting precious time or resources on ties which are not beneficial. An organization's time and resources are very limited and the intensive nature of collaboration makes it impractical for GPs to hold these types of ties with a large number of organizations. Furthermore, in order to be sustainable over time, GPs need to ensure they are using their resources strategically. Firelight should work with GPs to examine their active collaborations to determine if they are truly bringing added benefit or if they are wasting resources.

While in-kind donations are not the sole way to ensure the sustainability of organizations, these donations do play a role. The network shows the importance of community volunteers in increasing the number of donating organizations. The importance of volunteers expands beyond having the donated time of a person, it signifies support within the community which translates into enhanced legitimacy. In addition, the types of programs which require a large number of volunteers are most likely very visible within a community. This visibility and perceived legitimacy assuages fears donors may have in contributing resources or money through proving the organization is supported by the community and that their work is actually benefiting the community. Number of volunteers is just one foundation to ensuring community buy-in and support. Firelight should provide capacity-building resources related to managing volunteers in order to stress the importance of volunteers to GPs. In addition, Firelight should work with GPs to find ways to encourage community support.

**Conclusion and Limitations**

While this study has highlighted areas Firelight should engage with its GPs in order to set the foundations for sustainability, there are limitations to this research. The limited study size does not necessarily construct a complete view of all GPs’ networks. These findings are not generalizable to all GPs or CBOs within Africa. The limited nature of the survey also was not conducive to in-depth qualitative analysis which could further expand Firelight's understanding of how GPs engage in creating ties with other organizations.

There is a great deal of further research which could be conducted by Firelight to further enhance the understanding of networks in relation to sustainability. Research should be conducted on the relationship between networks and incoming-generating activities to better understand the benefits or disadvantage it creates. Furthermore, the role of cultural context should be examined to understand if the findings in the literature hold true for African NGOs. This research could be taken to the next level by conducting a larger study mapping community organizations and their ties while also mapping which organizations or services community members consistently access. While the findings in this study can be used by Firelight to improve GP sustainability, network analysis as a tool holds great potential for Firelight to further expand its knowledge of its grantee-partners.
Bibliography


Appendix 1: Survey Sent to Grantee-Partners

Networks of Community-Based Organizations Survey

This survey is part of the “Leveraging Networks of Community-Based Organizations” project. The research project is examines how Firelight Foundation can work more effectively with its grantee partners to further the mission and impact of their organization. It is being conducted by Kyrstin Thorson for Firelight Foundation as a part of her Graduate Research Project at the Monterey Institute of International Studies (MIIS).

Your responses are entirely voluntary, and you may refuse to complete any part or all of this survey. One or more people from your organization [e.g., you are welcome to collaborate on your responses] may participate in this survey. To ensure confidentiality, please do not provide any personal information beyond the name of the organization you represent. Raw data collected from this survey will not be seen by Firelight. Firelight will only see de-identified data that is in line with the goals of the research project (to inform Firelight on how CBOs network and on how Firelight can better support organizations in developing effective networks). Participating organizations will not be referred to by name in any publications, unless they have given consent to be featured in a case study. By completing and submitting the survey, you affirm that you are at least 18 years old and that you give your consent for Kyrstin Thorson to use your answers in her research. Whether or not your organization chooses to participate in this survey, your relationship with Firelight Foundation will not be affected and any future funding decisions will not be impacted by your participation or lack of participation. The data collected from this survey will be used in Kyrstin Thorson's final deliverable to MIIS and Firelight Foundation. The data may also be included in a summary document to be posted on Firelight's website. If you have any questions about this research before or after you complete the survey, please contact Kyrstin Thorson at 415.298.4207 or kthorson@miis.edu. If you have any concerns or questions about your rights as a participant in this research, please contact the Chair of the Middlebury College Institutional Review Board at irb@middlebury.edu.

1. Relationships with Other Organizations

Listed below are organizations we believe may be in your organization’s network. In columns, please add any organizations or other actors within your community you have a significant relationship with that are not listed but you believe are valuable in helping your organization achieve its mission in the community.

We have listed multiple types of relationship your organization might have with these other organizations. These include links through funding, client referrals, shared information, shared resources (shared equipment or personnel, shared facilities, etc.), training or capacity building activities, or collaboration on advocacy between your organization and the organization listed. Please go through the list below and indicate which agencies your organization has been involved with. Simply place an “X” in the cell that applies, beneath the other organization’s name, but only for those types of relationships that occur with some regularity (not just an occasional referral, for instance). If you had no regular relationship with an organization regarding shared information, shared resources, referrals, etc. simply leave the box or column blank for that organization.
Please think in terms of your organization’s ties with other organizations or entities in your community, rather than just your personal experiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of your Organization:</th>
<th>Org Name 1</th>
<th>Org Name 2</th>
<th>Org Name 3, etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This organization provided monetary funding to us.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This organization received monetary funding from us.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This organization provided material support or in-kind donations to us. (Such as mosquito nets, clothing, fertilizer, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We provided material support or in-kind donations to this organization. (Such as mosquito nets, clothing, fertilizer, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This organization provided technical support to us. (Such as expertise, skills, knowledge, or capacity building)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We provided technical support to this organization. (Such as expertise, skills, knowledge, or capacity building)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our organizations shared information or resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2. Information About Networking:

**Who initiates relationships with organizations or actors for your organization?**

**How does your organization sustain relationships with the organizations or actors that you work with?**