

Transforming Evaluation

Learning From and For the Field
June 2007 (Volume II, Number 2)

Greetings!

Welcome to the June 2007 issue of *Transforming Evaluation*, Innovation Network's more-or-less quarterly newsletter. *Transforming Evaluation* offers **meaningful, practical, and tangible** information about the field of evaluation and about Innovation Network's in-person and online services. We hope that you find this newsletter useful, and share it with your friends and colleagues.

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Latest Projects



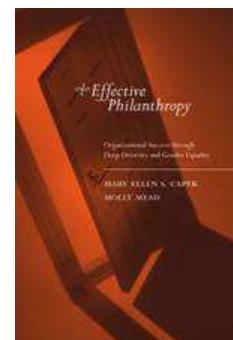
Report: Responses to the Data Integration Challenge

Data and workflow integration are increasingly urgent to civil society organizations. This new report by Jennifer Bagnell Stuart and Dahna Goldstein offers insights about and innovative responses to the integration challenge. We're very pleased that it has been featured in the new *Journal of Information Technology in Social Change*. [Reprinted with permission from [The Gilbert Center](#)]

[» Read more: Responses to the Data Integration Challenge](#)

Effective Philanthropy: Author Interview

Innovation Network has been working to evaluate Women & Philanthropy's programming efforts based on the book, ***Effective Philanthropy: Organizational Success through Deep Diversity and Gender Equity***, co-written by Mary Ellen Capek and Molly Mead. This book offers an inspirational message for organizational effectiveness. [» Read more: Effective Philanthropy](#)



It's Academic! InnoNet Helps Public School Advocacy Organization Improve Evaluation Capacity

The 21st Century School Fund, an advocacy organization working to improve urban public school facilities, has commissioned Innovation Network to help them better understand the effectiveness and impact of their policy initiatives. [» Read more: 21st Century School Fund.](#)



In Focus: Advocacy Evaluation Update Newsletter



Interested in nonprofit advocacy efforts and how to evaluate them? We're developing a new resource for you. The inaugural issue of *Advocacy Evaluation Update* will be available from Innovation Network at the end of June 2007.

[Read In Focus: full text...](#)

New & Noteworthy

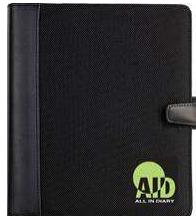
Innovation Network Welcomes New Members to Board of Directors

Innovation Network recently expanded its Board of Directors to include Dan Baum, former InnoNet Executive Director, and Julia Coffman, a senior consultant with Harvard Family Research Project. » [Read more about Dan and Julia here.](#)

Evaluation in Action: Lessons from the Field

Measuring Social Change: Lessons from the Field

Measuring social change has often been described as balancing act between the needs of the funder and the needs of the grantee organization. Each partner may have unique strategies and different reasons for assessing a program's impact. But the ultimate end remains constant: to make a positive difference in the world. » [Find out more of the lessons we've learned.](#)



Humanitarian Aid Coalition Taps InnoNet Tools for its New Resource

Simone Parrish

Two international organizations, Inter-Face Development and InTuition, have partnered to create the **All In Diary**, a tool for field-based humanitarian workers that aims to improve the quality of emergency relief operations. Slated for a July 2007 launch, this new resource includes Innovation Network's toolset on survey development in its Monitoring and Evaluation section. » [Learn more about the All In Diary.](#)

Breaking News! Gates/UW Grant Supports Evaluation

The Gates Foundation has made a \$105 million grant to the University of Washington to support a new center for evaluation of global health initiatives. This is great news for the evaluation community. » [Read more: Gates Grant](#)

Send us feedback!

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Latest Projects

Report: *Responses to the Data Integration Challenge*

Jennifer Bagnell Stuart and Dahna Goldstein



Today's typical nonprofit organization uses a variety of information management systems for collecting and storing data, ranging from client and constituent contacts to program tracking and evaluation. While standards for data exchange and inter-software

communication are developing in the nonprofit sector, the vast majority of nonprofit organizations face steep barriers to realizing the benefits and leveraging the power of technology. Despite the challenges, as inaccurate, duplicate, outdated and unconnected data create pain within organizations and push them to do something about the situation, and as opportunities pull organizations to adopt new tools such as online fundraising and online advocacy tools, we are seeing an increased need and demand for data integration among nonprofits.

Organizations that succeed in data integration efforts achieve a new, unified view of information that they did not have before. This new insight can result in real results for nonprofits – from increasing staff productivity to informing their fundraising strategies. In short, they are able to become more effective in achieving their missions. The process by which these organizations learn to

be more effective, which includes the application of information technologies to share information more effectively, has the potential to be transformational.

This practitioner-focused research conducted by InnoNet's Jennifer Bagnell Stuart and Dahna Goldstein of PhilanTech examines why data integration is a growing trend in the nonprofit sector. Building on past research into data integration in foundations, the authors explore the presence and nature of conditions that facilitate the uptake and determine the success of integration solutions, as well as themes and emerging trends in data integration approaches. The research includes responses from the innonet.org online community and in-depth interviews with nonprofit practitioners. This paper first appeared in the Spring 2007 issue of *the Journal of Information Technology in Social Change*, and is reproduced here at www.innonet.org with permission from The Gilbert Center.

Read more:

[About the research project](#)

[About PhilanTech](#)

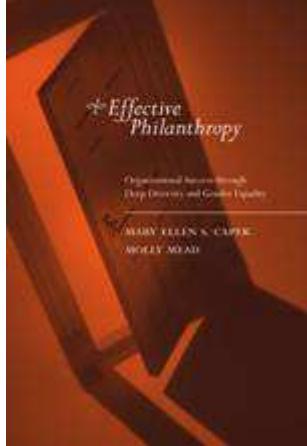
[About the Journal of Information Technology in Social Change](#)

[The full report \(pdf\)](#)

[Appendices \(pdf\)](#)

[Topic presentation at the Nonprofit Technology Conference, April 2007 \(pdf\)](#)

Latest Projects



Effective Philanthropy: InnoNet Interviews the Authors of Women & Philanthropy Publication Johanna Gladfelter

Innovation Network is currently partnering with [Women & Philanthropy](#) to evaluate core components of their programs funded by the Kellogg Foundation. Women & Philanthropy, a 501c3 organization, is an association of grantmakers

who are dedicated to achieving equity for women and girls. The organization's mission is to lead philanthropy to leverage the power of women and girls in creating a just and peaceful world. Some of Women & Philanthropy's more prominent work includes:

- **The LEAD Award** (Leadership for Equity and Diversity Award). An award that honors individuals representing foundations or corporate giving programs in recognition of significant accomplishments in developing and supporting creative programs or practices that promote equity and diversity for women and girls; and
- Reports such as ***The Leading 500 New Foundations Funding Women and Girls***, a report with comprehensive profiles of the top 500 new foundations working at the leading edge of funding for women and girls across the nation; and
- Programming related to the book ***Effective Philanthropy: Organizational Success through Deep Diversity and Gender Equity***.

Most recently, Innovation Network has been working to evaluate Women & Philanthropy's work related to *Effective Philanthropy*. The book offers research-based strategies and new language for strengthening organizations. It also provides advice on cutting through unnamed assumptions and tapping into the "differences that divide us."

Once organizations understand their own diversity, they can gain access to a wider range of available resources, both inside and outside of the organization's doors. As part of the evaluation related to *Effective Philanthropy*, we interviewed the book's authors, [Mary Ellen Capek and Molly Mead](#).

Molly and Mary Ellen hope that the primary take-away of the book is for philanthropic professionals to realize that "organizations cannot be effective if they are not diverse." Molly and Mary Ellen went on to explain that, "Diversity is about more than the classic civil rights reason of fairness for people who have been excluded. Diversity is really about generating the most creative, the most complex and effective solutions and approaches." Furthermore, they noted that "Diversity has to be promoted from within a foundation itself...You have got to look at organizational culture, otherwise [effective grantmaking] is not going to work."

Intertwined in their hope to see grantmaking become more effective is the authors' desire to "reframe and rename gender and diversity issues." The authors want to "give people the room to talk about [gender and diversity] issues; and give people of color a stage to talk about these issues that affect them in the philanthropy world." Finally, Mary Ellen and Molly reiterated that foundations "need to institutionalize diversity. [Foundations] cannot be effective if they are not diverse."

If you would like more information, please visit the [Women & Philanthropy website](#). For more information on *Effective Philanthropy*, we encourage you to visit the [book's own website](#).

We would like to thank Women & Philanthropy, Mary Ellen Capek, and Molly Mead for allowing us to share their story.

Latest Projects

It's Academic! InnoNet Helps Public School Advocacy Organization Improve Evaluation Capacity

Shital Shah



Innovation Network has been chosen to lead an evaluation effort with the 21st Century School Fund (21 CSF), a local advocacy organization created to improve public school facilities. The 21st Century School Fund works with communities in Washington D.C. and across the U.S. to create healthy, safe, and educationally appropriate learning environments.

Our work will involve evaluation trainings, evaluation planning, and the development of data collection instruments for one of their community-based advocacy programs. The evaluation we have designed will give 21 CSF a thorough understanding of the effectiveness and impact of their policy initiatives. In addition, we will work with them to develop a framework for ongoing evaluation of their advocacy efforts and a way to articulate to their outcomes to funders and other stakeholders.

Anticipated results of Innovation Network's engagement with 21 CSF include:

- Increased awareness of the terminology and techniques used in evaluation,
- Clarification of their Theory of Change and Logic Model, and
- A framework for assessing the short-, intermediate, and long-term outcomes of one of their programs.



Ultimately, 21 CSF will have a model for how to successfully implement evaluation techniques that they can apply to all areas of work moving forward.

Innovation Network Welcomes New Members to Board of Directors

Sharon Grevious

Innovation Network recently expanded its Board of Directors to include Dan Baum, former InnoNet Executive Director, and Julia Coffman, a senior consultant with Harvard Family Research Project. We look forward to the insights and ideas they will bring to Innovation Network. Here is a quick look at their bios.

Dan Baum

Crosby Marketing Communications (Annapolis, MD)

Innovation Network's Executive Director from November 2005-March 2007, Dan is now a member of our Board of Directors. We are delighted to be able to draw on his over twenty years of leadership, service, and communications experience.

Dan is a Vice President with [Crosby Marketing Communications](#), where he helps clients explore new strategic directions and make communications plans that deliver results.

Prior to joining Innovation Network, Dan spent seven years with the Building Owners and Managers Institute (BOMI), where he started as the Director of Marketing and progressed to President. BOMI provides training and education to commercial real estate professionals, enrolling over three thousand new students every year. Under Dan's leadership, BOMI expanded its educational products by launching online courses, a series of new reference guides, and its first Webinar.

Before his work with BOMI, Dan was an Account Supervisor at Crosby Marketing Communications in Annapolis, a top-five Washington/Baltimore area communications firm. At Crosby, Dan provided marketing communications to a variety of clients, including trade associations, educational institutions, and service organizations.

Dan is a graduate of the Institute of Advanced Advertising Studies, an intensive strategic marketing program sponsored by the American Association of Advertising Agencies. He is a Master of Science candidate in marketing at Johns Hopkins University, and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Writing from Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts. He is also a playwright and founder of the Four Seasons' Playwrights' Circle, an

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incubator of new play development. Dan lives in Annapolis, Maryland with his wife and two young children.

Julia Coffman

Harvard Family Research Project (Cambridge, MA / Alexandria, VA)

Julia Coffman is a senior consultant with [Harvard Family Research Project](#) ("HFRP"), a research and evaluation organization based at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Since 1983, HFRP has helped foundations, nonprofits, and policymakers develop and evaluate strategies to promote the well being of children, youth, families, and their communities.

Julia has been with HFRP for 11 years and leads the organization's evaluation work, which includes helping foundations and nonprofits integrate evaluation and learning with ongoing strategy development. HFRP also publishes [The Evaluation Exchange](#), a nationally renowned periodical on emerging evaluation strategies and issues.

Ms. Coffman's expertise is with theory of change approaches to evaluation, particularly for complex initiatives involving multiple organizations. In recent years she has developed expertise in the evaluation of advocacy, policy change, and public communications efforts, and now researches, writes about, and practices evaluation in these areas.

Ms. Coffman is co-chair of the American Evaluation Association's Advocacy and Policy Change Topical Interest Group and is a member of The Advertising Council's Research Advisory Committee. She received a master's degree in Justice Studies with an emphasis on program evaluation from Arizona State University, and a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She works out of her office in Alexandria, Virginia.

Measuring Social Change: Lessons from the Field



Veena Pankaj

For-profit organizations measure success by looking at their year-end revenues. Nonprofit organizations, on the other hand, aren't in business to make a profit; instead, most nonprofits are in the business of creating social change. The idea of measuring social change can be daunting, especially if that change is

expected to take several years. Organizations need a clear understanding of what it is they are trying to change, what that change will look like when it occurs, the timeframe for this change, and what other factors may also contribute to this change.

At Innovation Network, we have worked with funders and community-based organizations interested in measuring social change. Funders are interested in learning about the social value of their investment dollars. Nonprofits want to know how they are progressing towards achieving their program goals (partly to report back to their funders and partly to better understand and improve their own work).

Understanding and measuring social change requires a long-term, reciprocal, and balanced partnership between the grantmaker and the grantee. Both parties need to work together to set realistic expectations and outline strategies for collecting useful information.

Tensions can arise, as when the pressure to collect evaluation data puts a strain on the resources of the funded organization. This is where capacity building can be crucial. It's of utmost importance that funders invest not only in programs, but also in the success of their grantee organizations. Social change may take years or even decades to occur; it's important to ensure that the grantee organization can be sustained long enough to have a real impact.

These are some of the lessons we've learned from our work over the past 10 years:

- In order for social change to be accurately measured, grantmakers need to provide enough resources to cover not only specific interventions (i.e., programs and initiatives) but also the grantees' operational needs.
- Community organizations need to be sustainable over a long period of time to have an impact on social change.
- It's important, especially for funders, to have a realistic perspective on what types of change can occur within a given grant period, and to assess social change in terms of short, intermediate and long-term outcomes.
- Funders need to share lessons learned from their funding experiences to promote general field building.
- In designing a multi-year funding partnership, it's important to incorporate flexibility. There needs to be an understanding and willingness on both sides to make process adjustments over the course of program implementation.
- If a funder is interested in developing common outcomes among multiple grantees, there needs to be an understanding that consensus building takes time, but is vital to the overall buy-in of the initiative and its evaluation results.
- Buy-in is further enhanced by including grantees, funders, and other relevant stakeholders in the evaluation design process.
- It's important to be willing to make process adjustments along the way. When funding multi-year efforts, it's wise to step back and take a look at the overall process, asking questions such as: ***What are we doing? How well are we doing it?*** This helps to make course corrections during the program, rather than waiting to the end to find out what strategies didn't work.

Measuring social change requires the long-term commitment of both grantmaker and grantee. Through a mutually beneficial partnership, social change can be successfully achieved to ensure lasting impact in the communities served.

Humanitarian Aid Coalition Taps InnoNet for New Resource

Simone Parrish

An Innovation Network publication has been selected for inclusion in the [All In Diary](#), a new resource for humanitarian aid field workers in international and local NGOs. The All In Diary, to be released in July, provides in-the-field workers with helpful practical information and tips, even if they have limited or no Internet access. Innovation Network's [Data Collection Tips: Developing a Survey](#) has been chosen as part of the diary's Monitoring and Evaluation section.

The Diary has been devised, developed and produced by [InTuition](#) and [Inter-Face Development](#) in a collaborative process involving a broader international team. Supported by a variety of organizations including [RedR-IHE](#), [Filofax](#), and [People in Aid](#), the project provides a personal organizer that includes:

- A diary to plan and record activities;
- Information on good humanitarian practice;

- Essential briefing materials on local community context and international standards;
- A handover mechanism to enable smooth transition between workers; and
- An evaluation component for monitoring progress and facilitating real-time learning.
- An accompanying CD-Rom and website offer supplementary tools and resources for each topic area.

The All In Diary project aims to improve awareness of international standards, support local participation in aid efforts, assist post-disaster briefing and handover, and enable easy access to and sharing of information in the field in disaster situations.

For more information about the All In Diary, visit www.allindiary.org.

In Focus: Advocacy Evaluation Newsletter

New Resource for Advocacy Evaluation Community

Sharon C. Grevious

Later this month, Innovation Network will publish the inaugural issue of the Advocacy Evaluation Update, an occasional publication that will help funders, evaluators and practitioners obtain the latest information and resources about the rapidly-evolving field of advocacy evaluation.

Produced with the support of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and The Atlantic Philanthropies, the Update offers content with diverse insights and perspectives. Specifically, the newsletter will spotlight how organizations are adopting advocacy evaluation methodologies to achieve their objectives. The Update will also feature upcoming events in the field and poll readers on various topics relevant to the field.

Our hope is that this publication will serve as a vehicle for sparking discourse and also as a forum for peer collaboration. We want to hear your stories about your advocacy evaluation efforts. To speak with the editors about submitting ideas (an experience, suggestion or recommendation) for subsequent issues of the newsletter, please write to us!

Visit <http://www.innonet.org/advocacy> to subscribe.

Breaking News! Gates/UW Grant Supports Evaluation

Gates Grants \$105 Million for Evaluation to University of Washington

The growing awareness of the importance of evaluation was dramatically illustrated by this week's announcement from the Gates Foundation. The Foundation has made a 10-year, \$105 million grant to the University of Washington to fund the new Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation.

This is excellent news for the entire evaluation field. Not so long ago, grants for evaluation were scarce. Grantees were expected to report on their work, but most grantmakers rarely allotted funds for evaluation efforts. Over Innovation Network's 15-year history, we have championed the evaluation cause and watched it win supporters throughout the nonprofit and philanthropic community. We applaud the Gates Foundation for showing such an extraordinary level of commitment to the evaluation process.

[Read more about the grant at the Gates Foundation website.](#)

Innovation Network: Transforming Evaluation for Social Change

Innovation Network's mission is to **improve nonprofit results by building evaluation capacity**. Working with nonprofit organizations and funders through evaluation **consulting, training, Web-based tools, and outreach**, we seek to increase evaluation and planning knowledge and skills for the entire nonprofit and philanthropic field, and to build the ability of individual nonprofits to meet their missions.

Measure results.

Make informed decisions.

Create lasting change.

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