

GEO Member Spotlight

THE GLOBAL FUND FOR Children

How the Global Fund for Children is guiding under-the-radar grantees to new heights

Potential, that's what program officers from Global Fund for Children are looking at when meeting nascent, grassroots groups ready to join its freshly implemented Grantee Pathways to Success system of grantmaking.

Grantee Pathways to Success helps GFC to manage its relationships with grantees — many of whom have never been funded by a large donor before — by ensuring that both GFC and its grantee partners have a mutual understanding of expectations and the kinds of support GFC can provide along the way.

The GPS system — which GFC tested last year and which was first used in a complete grant docket this October — places grantees in one of four stages:

1) Entering and orienting, 2) Intensifying, 3) Resolving and reflecting, 4) Exiting

“GPS helps us to work with grantees in a very systematic way where they can really benefit from the full range of services and the full relationship,” said Victoria Dunning, vice president for programs at GFC. “It’s allowed us not only to be a strategic and targeted grantmaker, but it also allows us to streamline some of the processes by working with grantees in cohorts.”

Step one, “entering and orienting,” focuses on making sure grantees understand requirements for reporting, how GFC works and what sort of services it offers beyond the grant. It’s a trust-building and relationship-building stage, Dunning said.

Step two, “intensifying,” includes providing grantees with additional capacity building support. Examples include supporting knowledge exchange workshops and forging new connections through conferences. This stage may also include organizational development grants that provide outside support for grantee development. This stage is about maximizing relationships, Dunning said.

Step three, “resolving and reflecting,” is a time for assessing the effects of decisions made during stage two and observing what shape the grantee’s trajectory has taken. Stage three includes envisioning what support the grantee needs to successfully reach the final stage.

The fourth and final stage is “exiting.” This stage includes good dialogue to set expectations and ensure the last grant is a smooth and dignified exit. Care is taken to mitigate program disruption as the funding ends. With the entire GPS process applied, the grantee partner will be in a strong position to grow and develop following this last stage.



Victoria Dunning, Vice President for Programs, Global Fund for Children

Global Fund for Children wins 2012 Financial Times seasonal appeal

This December, the Financial Times is promoting the GFC by publishing a series of articles and has also produced a multimedia piece, which can be viewed by clicking the image below:



For more information about the FT 2012 Seasonal Appeal, including its fundraising support with GFC, [click here](#).

The process from stage one to stage four can take between three to seven years. While GPS is a systemized approach to grantmaking, during this variable period there is room for subjective decisions that allow for more organic relationships to form between GFC and its grantees

Grants also have slightly different proposals and reporting at each GPS stage. Earlier stages focus on baseline metrics and organizational diagnostics, while later stages incorporate more aspects of progress and organizational development. This tailored information and frequent dialogue leads to smooth transitions over the course of multi-year funding. The GPS system has helped GFC to provide the right input at the right time for grantees.

Program officers have also found it to be helpful in ensuring that grantees all receive an adequate amount of attention. Rather than reacting to extremes — such as constant requests and information-overload or crises and silence — GPS allows for more even-handed and strategic grants management that can maximize program officer efforts.

In addition, GPS has proven itself useful for GFC’s board, which appreciates being presented the grant dockets divided into the four stages. It is also helpful in introducing the new grantees to the board and, by excluding repetitious information, has reduced the page count of grant dockets by about half. The system gives the board an opportunity to provide better guidance by questioning why a certain grantee may still only be at a certain stage or whether it’s time to move a grantee toward the exit stage. Analytics are provided not just at the grantee level, but by GPS stage, allowing GFC to fully demonstrate the benefits of its capacity-building grant model.

“The GPS system allows for us to have more rigorous discussions on a subjective level,” Dunning said. “[Before GPS], I think it was very easy to renew indefinitely compared to after when we have to really state the rationale or justification for lagging or lingering grantees in our portfolio.”

The GPS system also helps to naturally create a narrative for grantees that accompanies the data being collected in evaluations.

“It’s not just the numbers and the data and the analytics going into the system; it’s also being able to narrate the case for our investment,” Dunning said.

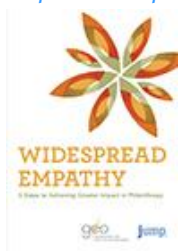
Dunning encourages other GEO members who are interested in learning more about the GPS system to reach out to her at dunning@globalfundforchildren.org.

About the Global Fund for Children

[The Global Fund for Children](#) works to transform the lives of the world’s most vulnerable children. It pursues this mission by making small grants to innovative community-based organizations, and by harnessing the power of children’s books, films, and documentary photography to promote global understanding. Since 1997, GFC has given grants worth \$26 million to 500 partners in 78 countries. Grant sizes range from \$5,000 to \$30,000, and an average annual grant is \$12,000

GEO resources that relate to the topics covered in this member spotlight:

[Widespread Empathy](#)



[Is Grantmaking Getting Smarter?](#)



[Assessing the Impact](#)

