

Evaluating 'system effects' of large scale AIDS funding

Third African Evaluation Association Conference
1-3 December 2004, Cape Town

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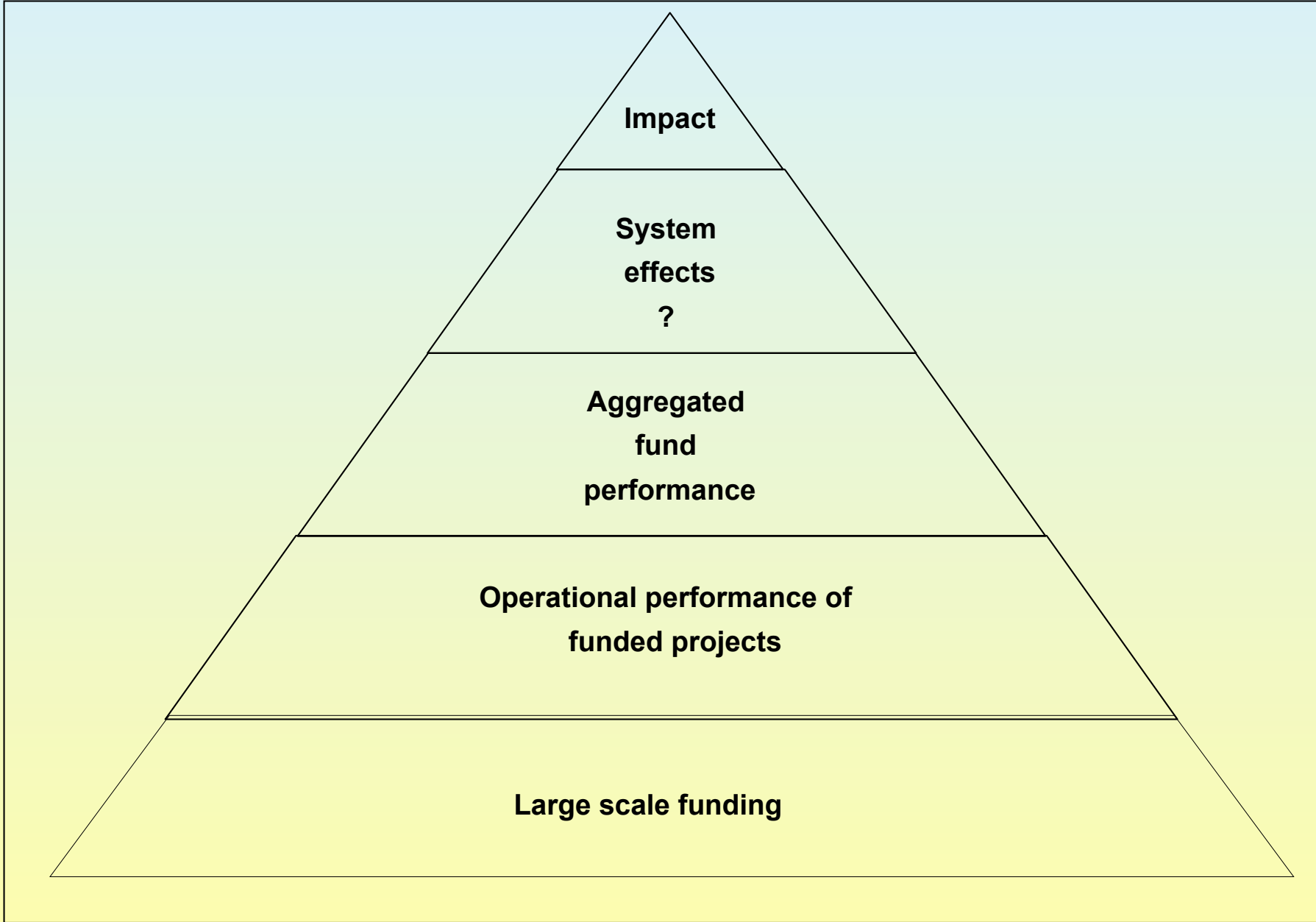
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Where leaders learn



What are system effects?

- Large scale funding programmes (GFATM more than \$3 billion in first two years) may have unintended by-products
- These may create conditions which influence the capacity of the country to respond to AIDS
- Conditions may influence the broader socio-economic and development context as well as the immediate context of AIDS intervention
- Once created these conditions may operate independently of the programme and they may not be easily reversed
- Influence may be indirect and impact may become apparent in years to come rather than immediately apparent
- Effects?
 - benign?
 - positive? (augmenting, complementing intended programme effects)
 - malignant? (negative, undermining of current and future interventions)

Large scale funding impact pyramid



Impact

**System effects
?**

Aggregated fund performance

Operational performance of funded projects

Large scale funding

Types of system effects

- **Macroeconomic effects**
 - macroeconomic instability risks
 - dependence
 - sectors of the country economy
 - pricing of public goods and services
 - absorptive capacity of society
- **Funder commitments**
 - crowding in, crowding out
 - donor co-ordination
- **Country commitments**
 - fungibility: money diverted to other uses
- **Civil society culture**
 - partnerships
 - volunteerism
 - professionalisation
 - inflation
- **Programme development and planning**
 - spending priorities
 - coverage
 - development process and scale
 - M&E culture

What should we measure?

1. Additionality

2. Partnership

3. Sustainability

**4. M&E practice – amongst other
management and system development
practices**

1.Additionality

- The condition that that external assistance fully augment local investment that would have occurred without that assistance.
- Received wisdom is that there should not be displacement of other donor funds to alternative uses.
- Received wisdom is that there should not be displacement of government funding to other areas.
- Received wisdom is that there should not be neglect of attempts to secure better prices for goods and services.

Some additionality indicators

- Proportion of funding for recurrent expenditure
- Trends in funding patterns of government departments
- Trends in funding of other in-country funding sources
- Cost per person reached with treatment services (efficiency)
- Commitment of volunteers to programme activities

Need to rethink additionality

- Counterfactual condition: The condition that would have prevailed without the intervention.
- We cannot understand the impacts of large scale interventions against assumed counterfactual condition.
- E.g. we cannot expect government agencies not to change their priorities, or other funders not to shift their priority areas of funding.
- It is a system effect that this will happen.
- Fungibility may be a good thing which extends government intervention into new areas of intervention (e.g. impact mitigation). It allows creativity and adaptability to emerging needs and possibilities. (Frees up discretionary component of government funding for innovation and rapid response to new interventions)

2. Partnership

- To what extent does the funding create a multi-sectoral co-operation and co-ordination of the efforts of agencies?
- To what extent does AIDS response draw on the civil society, government and business contributions in crafting of programmes?

Some partnership indicators

- Alignment of funded programmes with national priorities, policies
- Alignment (harmonisation) of donors
- Development of horizontal co-ordination structures (e.g. intergovernmental structures)
- Integration of delivery systems
- Growth of civil society contributions to meeting funded programme objectives
- Range of representation on committees

3. Sustainability

- **To what extent will countries be able to take over funding of funded activities?**
- **Can predictability of funding sources be improved?**
- **How efficiently are resources used?**
- **Development of technical and institutional sustainability**
- **Expect low % of support for recurring costs e.g. drugs, running costs**
- **Expect no fall off of in-country investment in programmes; e.g. business investment in AIDS response**

Some sustainability indicators

- Costs of key goods and services
- Human resource investment
- Development of systems and models
- Reliance of programmes on external technical assistance
- Growth of internal technical assistance programmes

4. Effects on M&E culture

Large scale funding aside we need to raise questions about the growing emphasis on evaluation, as conventionally understood, in development.

“Development organisations at all scales [global to local] are fixated on translating their objectives and intentions into tangible indicators that can be tracked and used as a yardstick for assessing the degree of success in pursuing elusive development objectives... I continue to ask myself elementary questions That lurk beneath the surface of scientific rigour and objective control ... questions about the utility of ‘objective indicators’ when we are dealing with the complex and fluid dimensions of associational life of ordinary people in their variable contexts.” Maketha goes on to call for housing approaches that collaborate with citizens in designing sustainable communities, not simply producing housing.

Effects on M&E culture cont.

- **Concern with results-based disbursement has led to reliance on numbers which are not sensitive to the true impacts of programmes, however reassuring they may be to funders.**
- **The development of country level indicator systems and the upflow of information to populate indicator sets may provide understanding of some of the net impact of large scale funding,**
- **BUT the emphasis on country level data and information systems may be diverting us from resourcing M&E systems at programme level.**
- **Too many resources are being spent on setting up monitoring systems, especially at country level. We need massive investment in use of M&E at programme level. WHERE ARE THE PROGRAMMES FOR THIS?**

Some M&E indicators

- Proportion of programmes with indicators for key activities
- Use of data in programme reporting
- Use of resources for M&E development
- Designation of M&E as a programme management activity