The catalytic role of philanthropy in early childhood development: financial input meets policy advocacy

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Outline of the session

• Introducing the panellists
• Introducing the International Education Funders Group (IEFG)
• Collaboration among philanthropic actors and in early childhood development
• So what: why do these networks matter?
• Moderated Q&A
• Audience Q&A
International Education Funders Group (IEFG)

• A member-led network of 100 foundations and donor-advised funds

• Members are diverse in approach; but share focus on supporting basic education and contributing to achieving SDG 4

• IEFG’s purpose is to collectively strengthen its members' work and knowledge of the field; and to help its members have a stronger voice and impact in education by:
  • improving their strategic analyses and thinking,
  • informing and assisting their grant-making,
  • providing opportunities for collective learning and action
The Spectrum of Engagement

- Joint Venture
- Co-funding
- Formal strategic alignment
- Informal Strategic Alignment
- Co-learning
- Information exchange

Collaboration in early childhood development

Recent gains and opportunities for the early childhood sector:

• Advances in knowledge - neuroscience and nutrition
• Equity implications
• Cross-sectoral importance
• Political opportunities
• Vocal champions
Philanthropy beyond financial input
Why do these kinds of networks matter?

• Networks of non-state actors who can capitalise on political opportunities are powerful drivers of social change; *nurture new norms that can reach a tipping point and cascade*

• Post 1990: growth in networked forms of governance + nonstate actors

• The role of the actor within the structure
  • “the efforts of collective actors to vie for strategic advantage in and through interaction with other groups in what can be seen as meso-level social orders. We call these orders “*strategic action fields*” (Fligstein & McAdam, 2011)
Philanthropies, networks and early childhood development: hearing from the grant-makers