



# FINAL REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## EVALUATION OF THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR MOBILIZING REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH PROGRAM

INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION  
WEST COAST CENTER • 2006-2011

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**Research Center for  
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IIE also implements many leadership development programs, including the David and Lucile Packard Foundation's Leadership Development for Mobilizing Reproductive Health (LDM) program. The LDM program supports leadership development opportunities for reproductive health leaders who live and work in the poorest regions of five countries: Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Philippines. Many of these leaders work on such pressing global health issues as HIV/AIDS, adolescent reproductive health, gender-based violence, and access to quality family planning services and improved maternal health care.

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## **About This Evaluation**

Between May 2010 and June 2011, the Research Center for Leadership in Action at NYU Wagner conducted an evaluation of IIE West Coast Center's Leadership Development for Mobilizing Reproductive Health Program in five focal countries: Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Philippines. This evaluation assessed the program from 2006-2011.

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## ABOUT THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR MOBILIZING REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH (LDM) PROGRAM

### Background and Context

As a world leader in fostering mutual understanding and helping to solve global issues through the international exchange of people and ideas, the Institute of International Education (IIE) created the Leadership Development for Mobilizing Reproductive Health (LDM) program in 2000 to build and sustain a critical core of well trained emerging and established leaders who have the vision, commitment, knowledge and skills to improve the delivery of reproductive health (RH) and family planning (FP) services.

The vision of the LDM program is that “[a] critical mass of diverse leaders, working individually and collectively, has affected systemic changes that improve reproductive health options and overall quality of life, especially for vulnerable populations.”<sup>1</sup> Therefore, LDM has sought to develop and strengthen leadership within individuals, communities, and local and national organizations, as well as among policy makers to improve RH/FP outcomes in the complex context of five focal countries: Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Philippines. LDM has also sought to expand these leaders’ ability to work individually, organizationally and collaboratively to affect systemic change. Implicit in the LDM approach is the understanding that strong and effective RH/FP programs require leaders who are able to advocate for effective policy and sound implementation of that policy. Moreover, leaders should also be able to work across sectors and ensure strong partnerships among key actors in RH/FP.

As part of a program to support and encourage leadership, the LDM program staff and Fellows have continually reflected on what being a leader entails and regularly incorporated lessons learned throughout the program, effectively modeling leadership as a life-long process.

### Program Description

#### *The Evolution of LDM*

The development and implementation of the LDM program grew out of a collaborative and evolving process between IIE and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. The combined focus on leadership development and RH/FP was directly connected to the Packard Foundation’s strategic areas of interest and IIE’s participatory leadership approach and expertise in leadership development.

In 2006, IIE changed the program name from Leadership Development Mechanism to Leadership Development for Mobilizing Reproductive Health to consolidate the efforts of those who had already participated in all Packard leadership programs and to encourage the Fellows to work more collectively on strategic RH/FP issues within each country.<sup>2</sup> A significant adjustment in 2006 was the change to a more country-based approach, shifting a large portion of the program management responsibilities to the country level. The program also stated its commitment to reach populations in greatest need, with a specific focus on women and youth. This adjustment encouraged a focus on expanding in-country institutional capacity and the role of LDM country managers in modeling, mentoring and offering training in leadership skills for Fellows, organizations and community members.<sup>3</sup>

The final phase of the LDM program, from 2006-2011, was envisioned as a catalyst to strengthen and support local leaders, organizations, networks and institutions to enable them to engage in systems-level change. The program also focused on ensuring the sustainability of effective, long-lasting impacts on RH/FP within each region and country. To achieve these new objectives, the LDM program strategically shifted its activities and introduced effective communications tools to facilitate the sharing of ideas and experiences.

<sup>1</sup> LDM Interim Report 2010

<sup>2</sup> LDM 2006 Proposal

<sup>3</sup> LDM 2006 Proposal; Interviews with key IIE staff; Manila workshop



### *The Fellows*

More than 1,200 leaders<sup>4</sup> participated in LDM activities. These Fellows represent the consolidated group of all leadership Fellows affiliated with the Packard Foundation in the five focal countries. Of the total number of Fellows, 33% were in Ethiopia, 20% in the Philippines, 18% in Nigeria, 16% in Pakistan and 13% in India.

Part of the LDM program's strategy was to engage and empower women, so women comprised the majority (57%) of Fellows. The LDM program also has emphasized supporting younger leaders to continue to influence the field of RH/FP, so 60% of Fellows were under 40 years old.

The leadership Fellows were lawyers, public health professionals, journalists, academics, trainers, community health workers, doctors, nurses and government employees. They led NGOs, advocated for policy changes, and worked in the public sector to improve quality of care, provide family planning services at the community level, prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, and educate and empower youth and those working with youth to ensure a future of safe sexual and reproductive health.

### *The Activities*

From 2006-2011, the LDM program worked to achieve three main outcomes: networking, capacity building for individuals and teams of Fellows in organizations, and institutionalization of leadership and RH programs. The LDM program used an inclusive approach to activities based on the understanding that individuals from any background or in any organizational position could develop leadership skills.

**Training:** The LDM program provided a wide range of opportunities for Fellows to participate in trainings to develop leadership and build technical expertise in their field. From 2006-2011, the program sought to expand national capacities

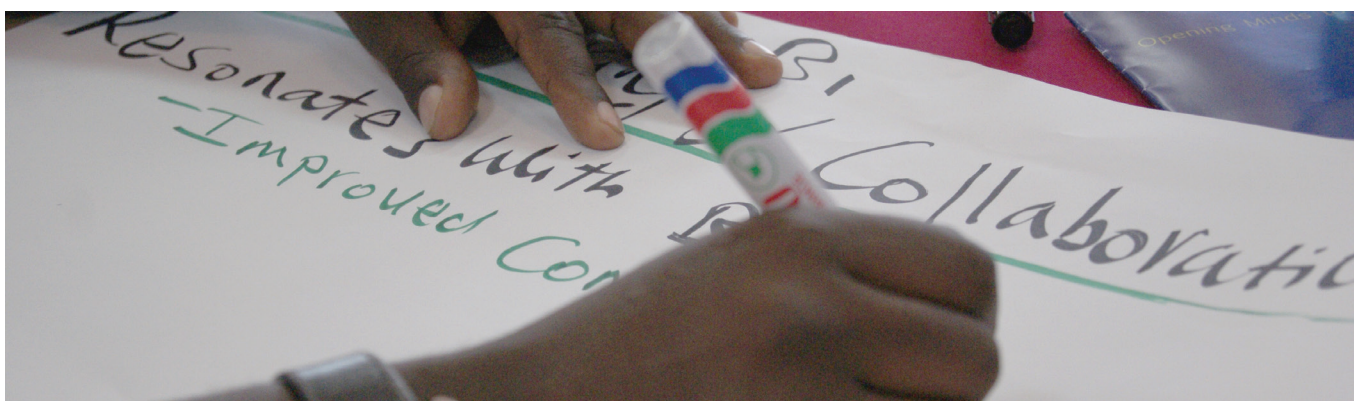
by developing and adapting training courses to give special consideration to country-specific context as an important variable in leadership development. LDM allowed each country to design trainings using local resources, and each country made a point to engage local partners in the design and delivery of the programs. The intention was to have those who participated in the trainings share that knowledge with the larger community or field of practice. The program offered trainings designed to achieve specific impacts (such as themed study tours) and supported the design and development of several trainings to provide particular skills (such as presentation skills, advocacy, writing and documentation).

**Networking:** According to IIE, leaders should be equipped to advance systemic change through collective action. Networking opportunities and the development of structured networks have enabled key actors in the field of RH/FP to share ideas, collaborate on initiatives and consolidate resources to more effectively influence systemic change. LDM Fellowship meetings also provided opportunities for networking and collective reflection, encouraging Fellows to reconnect, share experiences, and keep up-to-date with the changing environment. In addition, the program supported existing and new networks in diverse ways and encouraged the institutionalization of networks of reproductive health leaders as a way to sustain the gains of the program and RH/FP leaders' work for the future.

**Mini-Grants:** The program awarded mini-grants to Fellows as an incentive to foster collaboration, support Fellows in designing and implementing initiatives in response to needs they identified, and enable Fellows to apply skills learned in trainings. Initiatives advanced through mini-grants included hosting seminars and workshops, conducting applied research targeting policy makers, and using locally appropriate communication channels to disseminate information about RH.

<sup>4</sup> Data Tracking Tables for LDM Focus Countries, April 2010





## COUNTRY CONTEXTS

The LDM program has worked in some of the most challenging environments in the world to promote RH/FP, focusing its efforts on areas with significant needs for health services, education and economic opportunities. A main challenge has been working to improve the RH/FP situation in cultural and political contexts that are often restrictive and traditionally unreceptive to contraception or family planning. This overview of the origin and evolution of the LDM program in each country is based on country-level final evaluation reports.

### Ethiopia

When LDM first began working on RH/FP in Ethiopia, the political environment was open and supportive of population and RH initiatives and policies, with the government and organizations increasing spending, services and the emphasis on the education of girls. However, since 2008, the political climate has become less supportive.

The LDM Ethiopia program was established in 2001, the first leadership program of its kind in the country. The program has supported the formation of the Population/Reproductive Health Leadership Network, which now has over 400 members in five regions of the country. In 2007, the program facilitated a Future Search Meeting,<sup>5</sup> the outcomes of which laid the foundation for understanding the need for changes in leadership programs, developing forums and strategizing future action. LDM has worked with other leadership programs and consultants to establish a locally designed leadership module and conduct leadership development locally. At the request of LDM Fellows, the President of the country hosted a forum in 2008 on leadership and reproductive health issues with 70 Fellows. Finally, the program developed the Youth Organizations Leadership Program in 2009-10.

### ETHIOPIA AT A GLANCE

**Population: 82.825 million\***

**Fertility Rate: 5.21\***

**Infant Mortality Rate:  
67.1 per 1,000 live births\***

**Maternal Mortality Adjusted  
Risk Ratio: 1 in 40\*\***

**Contraceptive Prevalence Rate: 15% \*\***

**% Below International Poverty Line (US  
\$1.25/day): 39%\*\***

**\*Source: World Bank, World Development  
Indicators, 2009**

**\*\* Source: UNICEF, 2008**

<sup>5</sup> Future Search is a methodology for planning and facilitating meetings that are intended to transform participants' capabilities into action quickly. <http://www.futuresearch.net/method/whatis/index.cfm>

## India

The government is the main driving force behind RH/FP programs in India. In 2005, the government introduced a seven-year National Rural Health Mission designed to improve access to quality healthcare in rural areas and for the poor, women and children, with specific goals being improved maternal mortality, child mortality and family planning. In Bihar and Jharkhand, the two states where LDM has been working, structural challenges include poverty and malnutrition, early marriage and inadequate educational and health systems. Bihar, in particular, has 33% of its population living below the poverty line and the lowest literacy rate (47%), female literacy rate (31%) and ratio of girls in school in the country.

The LDM India program was established in 2001. Fellows designed collective action plans at the state level and conducted regional meetings to promote collaboration and information sharing. In Bihar and Jharkhand, the program has supported the development of a team of master trainers to offer leadership trainings for CBOs and women leaders, and it has established three information and resource centers as hubs for all network-related activities among Fellows. Finally, LDM India has developed a listserv, biannual newsletter and Web site owned and managed by Fellows for greater communication and outreach.

## Nigeria

High fertility rates and uncontrolled population growth have been cited among the most important factors for the endemic poverty in Nigeria. Too many pregnancies and too little spacing between births also have been pointed to as the cause for high rates of maternal deaths. Significant regional disparities between the predominantly Muslim Northern and predominantly Christian Southern parts of the country tend to distort national averages. For example, fertility rates in two regions in the north are almost twice as high as in two regions in the south, and the Maternal Mortality Rate is about four times as high in the north. However, recent evidence suggests that the RH environment is improving in Northern Nigeria, as reflected in federal and state budget attention to RH and female empowerment.

The LDM program was established in Northern Nigeria in 2002. At that time, only two other organizations supported RH leaders, both of which had a specific technical focus. LDM was implemented through a local organization, linking and leveraging LDM activities with their other activities and programs. The program has implemented overseas trainings and study tours to expose high-ranking traditional rulers, influential Islamic leaders, media, government officials and women's rights activists to new knowledge, skills and best practices. Finally, the program has supported the development of networks of varied groups interested in RH/FP.

### INDIA AT A GLANCE

**Population: 1.155 billion\***

**Fertility Rate: 2.68\***

**Infant Mortality Rate:  
50.3 per 1,000 live births\***

**Maternal Mortality Adjusted Risk  
Ratio: 1 in 140\*\***

**Contraceptive Prevalence Rate: 54% \*\***

**% Below International Poverty Line (US  
\$1.25/day): 42%\*\***

**\* Source: World Bank, World Development  
Indicators, 2009**

**\*\* Source: UNICEF, 2008**

### NIGERIA AT A GLANCE

**Population: 154,729 million\***

**Fertility Rate: 5.6\***

**Infant Mortality Rate:  
85.8 per 1,000 live births\***

**Maternal Mortality Adjusted Risk  
Ratio: 1 in 23\*\***

**Contraceptive Prevalence Rate: 15% \*\***

**% Below International Poverty Line (US  
\$1.25/day): 64%\*\***

**\* Source: World Bank, World Development  
Indicators, 2009**

**\*\* Source: UNICEF, 2008**

## Pakistan

Pakistan's society is patriarchal, especially in the rural areas and lower economic strata, where women have strict limitations regarding their movement and decisions, including choices about their health. Girls and women are often subjected to physical and psychological violence, including honor killings, demand for dowry, bride burning and acid throwing. The maternal and child health situation is poor in Pakistan, though better than most countries in the region. Despite Pakistan's 50-year-old family planning program, fertility has declined more slowly in Pakistan than other countries in the area. The government's attention to RH/FP programming has diminished over time (with the average annual support for the FP program decreasing by half by 2005), but reports suggest women desire FP services and use them when they have access.

The LDM Pakistan program was established in 2001. The program has provided customized courses for rural and small NGOs, media and RH, and advocacy. The program has focused on efforts to support youth and RH through a study tour for youth. Between 2006 and 2008, the program increased efforts to building partnerships and alliances between public, private and civil society actors. In 2008, the program expanded its focus from two regions to the entire country. Finally, Packard Foundation grantees have worked closely to build close collaborations with the Ministry of Population Welfare and alliances for post-abortion care.

## Philippines

In the Philippines, the government's RH/FP program has seen ups and downs. During the 1970s to mid-1980s, there was a strong family planning program. However, the Catholic Church has exerted more influence in the policies and programs of more recent presidents, and in recent years some disturbing RH/FP trends have emerged. The national government has shifted the responsibility for funding family planning to local governments with limited budgets. However, the President elected in May 2010 does seem to have a more favorable view of RH.

The LDM Philippines program was established in 2001, the final of three Packard Foundation leadership programs established in the Philippines. The program has organized and convened participative meetings for national and regional RH and population networks. LDM also has developed and conducted innovative, in-country workshops on reproductive health and religion with local and international NGOs, and initiated the formation of a new network for Catholic reproductive health advocates. In addition, the program has provided opportunities for influential leaders' exposure to practices in other countries. Finally, the program has supported the institutionalization of in-country leadership programs.

### PAKISTAN AT A GLANCE

**Population: 169,708 million\***

**Fertility Rate: 3.87\***

**Infant Mortality Rate:  
70.5 per 1,000 live births\***

**Maternal Mortality Adjusted Risk  
Ratio: 1 in 93\*\***

**Contraceptive Prevalence Rate: 30% \*\*  
% Below International Poverty Line (US  
\$1.25/day): 23% \*\***

**\* Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators, 2009**

**\*\* Source: UNICEF, 2008**

### PHILIPPINES AT A GLANCE

**Population: 91.983 million\***

**Fertility Rate: 3.03\***

**Infant Mortality Rate:  
26.2 per 1,000 live births\***

**Maternal Mortality Adjusted Risk  
Ratio: 1 in 320\*\***

**Contraceptive Prevalence Rate: 51% \*\***

**% Below International Poverty Line (US  
\$1.25/day): 23%\*\***

**\* Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators, 2009**

**\*\* Source: UNICEF, 2008**



## EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

RCLA developed a Systemic Participatory Action Research approach to assess the LDM program, given the program's participatory and networked nature. LDM provided multiple opportunities for Fellows and key stakeholders to connect, collaborate and learn from each other, and the evaluation's participatory approach has supported this effort by integrating and validating the experience and wisdom of the Fellows, stakeholders and LDM program staff.

At the inception of the evaluation, RCLA evaluators designed and facilitated a workshop with national evaluators and country managers to review the evaluation design and prepare the team to successfully implement the evaluation methodologies. The evaluation team collaboratively defined a research matrix including key research questions, outcomes and indicators based on the logic framework of the LDM program. The Packard Foundation also contributed to the team discussion and provided feedback on the overall approach and methodology.

CATEGORIES	KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS
I. Program relevance and effectiveness in terms of main goal (investing in leadership)	How did investing in leadership development affect RH/FP programs, policies and/or outcomes at the individual, organizational, community and systems levels?
A. Individual, organizational, community and systems-levels changes	What changes did the LDM program contribute to at the individual, organizational, community and systems levels and how did they in turn influence RH/FP programs and services in each geographic focus area?
B. Networks and collaborations	What was the contribution of the LDM program in creating and/or strengthening networks and collaborations and how did they in turn influence RH/FP programs and services in each geographical focus area?
C. Policy change	In what ways did LDM Fellows, networks and/or collaborations contribute to changes in RH/FP policy and policy implementation?
II. Program implementation (operation)	Which program implementation strategies and structures were critical in enabling the LDM program to accomplish what it did? Which were not as effective?
III. Lessons learned and best practices	What was learned from the LDM program about best practices in leadership development, especially in the specific cultural contexts in which the program was implemented? How does this contribute to the leadership development field overall or within the local context?





The evaluation was conducted using four basic data collection methodologies that allowed for triangulation and a deeper understanding of the program.

- **Document Review:** Throughout the evaluation, the national and RCLA evaluators reviewed existing relevant program documents (program-wide and country-specific), which provided context and information to help answer the key research questions;
- **Action Reflection (AR) groups:** Developed by the RCLA evaluators specifically for the purposes of this evaluation, this methodology was inspired by the Collaborative Inquiry approach, an action research methodology that takes into consideration the experiences and knowledge of practitioners and encourages collective reflection, sense-making and action. Each country organized three AR groups in representative geographic locations, each location hosted 8-15 participants and each meeting lasted one day. The national evaluators facilitated the meetings.

- **Key Informant Interviews (KII):** KIIs were conducted to obtain new findings or expand on already identified findings from the document review and AR groups. The majority of these interviews (approximately 20-30 per focal country) were conducted by the national evaluators, with some additional program-level interviews conducted by RCLA evaluators.
- **National Meetings:** Toward the end of the evaluation process, RCLA co-evaluators and national evaluators designed a meeting in each focal country to include the voices of additional key stakeholders and provide an opportunity for participants to reflect on initial findings and discuss practical next steps on how to sustain the gains of the LDM program. These meetings provided additional opportunities to integrate and validate the experience and insights of the Fellows, LDM program staff and other stakeholders.

**Final team meeting in Dubai:** A culminating workshop brought together the evaluation team, LDM country managers and assistants, and Packard Foundation representatives. The workshop was conducted to deepen the findings and cross-country analysis, to review the evaluation's methodology, and to define the next steps for completing the reports and disseminating the results. The meeting provided a unique opportunity for collective reflection on the findings at the program level, building on the data gathered within each country. IIE Country Director and LDM Program Director Cheryl Francisconi organized and designed the meeting, with input from the RCLA team and IIE staff, to include a wide variety of participatory methods.

**Communications:** A communications strategy was implemented to ensure coordination of tasks, learning across the team and support to team members. The RCLA team worked to ensure successful communications through emails; phone; Skype; conference calls; a Google group; and a wiki, where the evaluation team kept key documents such as research protocols, notes from the AR groups, interviews, and key IIE documents and other information related to the LDM program. As the national evaluators implemented the evaluation within each country, the RCLA evaluators provided feedback and quality control to ensure that the application of the evaluation framework and methods were adequate within each country context, while consistent and comparable.

**Confidentiality:** Names of key informants, Fellows and other stakeholders who participated in any of the methodologies in this report are not their real names. Their names have been coded to guarantee confidentiality. We have used the real names of the IIE staff and officers from the Packard Foundation with their consent.



## EVALUATION FINDINGS

The following are highlights of the main evaluation findings across the five focal countries, based on the final reports by each national evaluator, RCLA's data collection and analysis, and a collective data analysis with the evaluation team and LDM, IIE and Packard Foundation staff.

### Program Relevance and Effectiveness at the Individual, Organizational and Community Levels

The LDM program has focused on directly supporting emerging leaders and organizations working in RH/FP, with the intention to have an impact at a broader level.

#### *Changes at the Individual Level*

The individual has been the main point of departure for the LDM program in terms of acquiring the skills and behavior and experiencing the personal transformation necessary to be a leader and then leverage these skills and strengths for community, organizational and system-level changes.<sup>6</sup>

#### **Built confidence to strengthen marginalized voices:**

Fellows participating in AR groups in all five countries expressed that the LDM program has helped them to increase their confidence in their own leadership capabilities and expanded their definition of leadership to apply to situations beyond position or stature. Through participating in the LDM program, many Fellows realized that anyone, from any type of background, can demonstrate leadership capabilities. Becoming more knowledgeable regarding RH/FP issues also enhanced Fellows' confidence and increased their willingness to take risks in difficult and sometimes life-threatening situations. As one Fellow noted, "[Before LDM] I was shy and stage-phobic, and I was fearful to speak before the public."<sup>7</sup>

#### **Built leadership skills to increase Fellows' capacities; how they used these tools was determined by the Fellows themselves:**

Overall, Fellows and stakeholders in all five countries not only appreciated the variety of opportunities and

the quality of the trainings and activities, but acknowledged that these diverse opportunities have helped them develop leadership skills and become better leaders. In fact, many recognized that LDM has been one of the first leadership and capacity-building programs offered in their countries. Fellows in the Philippines, especially from the Visayas and Davao, felt strongly that LDM has contributed to their personal and leadership growth, saying that the focus has been on the "growth of leaders" and the approach was "refreshing, collegial and a beneficial dimension to the project in addition to the focus on RH."<sup>8</sup>

#### **Increased self knowledge and changes in values and views regarding RH/FP:**

A majority of Fellows said that the LDM program has helped them to become more reflective individuals. They reported becoming more self aware of their values, strengths and weaknesses in regard to their leadership and FP/RH issues. Many mentioned that they have become better listeners, which has helped them tremendously in improving their leadership. The LDM program has also helped Fellows develop a new sensitivity toward the people they serve. For example, in India, one Fellow noted that LDM has helped her see the people she serves not as mere clients, but as "community."

Participating in the LDM program also has made Fellows aware of the importance of influencing change in others. A Fellow in Nigeria noticed that everyone who attended the AR group where he participated reported that they were either changed by the program and/or were responsible for changing someone. In his words, "LDM has created a rich resource of committed people, young and old, who are propelling the change."<sup>9</sup>

In addition, the program has changed individuals' personal views about RH/FP. For example, in the Philippines many Fellows acknowledged that they had come from conservative backgrounds on RH/FP issues due to their religion. However,

<sup>8</sup> Philippines Final Evaluation Report

<sup>9</sup> Nigerian Final Evaluation Report

<sup>6</sup> Interviews with key IIE staff

<sup>7</sup> Ethiopian Final Evaluation Report

their partnership with Catolicas por el Derecho a Decidir (Catholics for the Right to Choose) in Mexico has allowed them to understand and articulate RH issues “without undermining their identity and beliefs in the church.”<sup>10</sup>

**Built a collaborative style of leadership:** A main aim of the LDM program has been to support an approach to leadership based on teamwork, collaboration and networks. It has offered multiple opportunities for leaders to work together and to learn from each others’ experiences and programs. Participation in activities such as study tours, networks or thematic groups has allowed Fellows to learn about leadership, RH/FP issues and RH/FP programs in other countries and contexts. Fellows mentioned how much they have appreciated the leadership development opportunities regarding collaborating with others and now use a collaborative style to connect with other NGOs, leaders and networks. In India, for instance, a Fellow said that in the past he was “more aggressive” on points with his co-workers, and that LDM has changed his approach to a collaborative one where he asks, “How can we move forward together?”<sup>11</sup>

Many Fellows expressed that visiting other countries has been particularly valuable. During these visits, they have learned about the challenges faced by other countries and the gains they have made in terms of improving RH/FP. Additionally, they also have learned about other leadership styles and strategies. Fellows agreed that LDM has increased their capacity to network and connect with other leaders they would not have had access to otherwise.

**Increased knowledge and skills in reproductive health and family planning:** The Fellows said they deeply appreciated gaining new knowledge and skills regarding reproductive health through the LDM program. The diverse leadership and professional development activities offered by the program, such as trainings, national meetings, national and international conferences, health conferences and study tours, have allowed leaders not only to learn leadership skills, but to become more aware and knowledgeable about issues related to RH/FP. For example, the impact of LDM in supporting many media professionals’ increased knowledge of RH/FP issues was an important aspect highlighted during the data collection in Nigeria and Pakistan. In Nigeria, many women are isolated or in forced seclusion and only receive outside information through the radio or, in limited circumstances, television. Some Media Fellows stated that since joining LDM Pakistan, they have begun to understand the importance of RH issues; therefore, the content and purpose of their articles have changed. Some Fellows have written a number of newspaper articles on RH issues or have started talk shows exploring RH/FP issues.

**Improved career development due to increased capacity:** An unintended outcome of the leadership development and skills building LDM has offered has been the ability for Fellows to improve their careers. Many Fellows indicated

that they have enhanced their professional status and made strategic career moves, developments they attribute to the support and learning from LDM. The Fellows have tended to move from smaller to larger cities, local NGOs to national NGOs, or from national NGOs to donor organizations. As one country manager said, it has been “as if they were moving away from critical areas, away from the vulnerable, away from where the tough work needs to be done because they were more capable and could get better salaries.”<sup>12</sup> She and others recognized that career advancement is a natural part of capacity building. However, the trend remains a concern. On the other hand, what was not recorded was the extent to which Fellows have transferred knowledge to others in their organizations prior to moving to their next position.

**Built capacity to take action:** Fellows in all five countries claimed that participating in the LDM program has allowed them to gain the knowledge, experience and confidence to make decisions and take action, enhancing their ability to affect policy change.

**Improved ability to think strategically:** The Fellows were trained, supported and encouraged to address challenges more systemically. In the case of Pakistan, Fellows felt that the LDM program has helped them to look at their work beyond the everyday and dig deeper in identifying root causes. One Fellow from the media described herself as “a seed of LDM for advocacy of RH/FP. In this capacity, I will keep talking about the issues of RH/FP in the media for the rest of my life. If impacts of LDM are seen in this way, the multiplier effect of the program is huge and perhaps cannot be measured.”<sup>13</sup>

### *Changes at the Organizational Level*

An important goal of the LDM program has been to expand Fellows’ leadership ability and capitalize on their strengths to catalyze change beyond the individual level to the organizational level.

**Provided effective trainings to organizations and institutions beyond LDM’s support:** Through the program, Fellows have learned about the transformative power that leadership development opportunities can have not only for themselves but for other individuals and groups. These experiences have made the LDM Fellows aware of the importance of passing on their knowledge and opening up spaces for others to have similar experiences. The RCLA evaluators found that Fellows in the five countries have started trainings in their own organizations or have influenced other organizations to collaborate and organize these trainings.

**Provided effective training and leadership development for women and youth to strengthen RH/FP programs:** An important part of the LDM strategy in the last phase of the program has been to engage and empower women and youth.

<sup>10</sup> Philippines Final Evaluation Report

<sup>11</sup> Indian Final Evaluation Report

<sup>12</sup> Dubai Meeting Notes, May 2011

<sup>13</sup> Pakistani Final Evaluation Report



For example, providing training for women has been a major focus of the LDM program in Ethiopia. A Fellow described a particularly memorable two-week training in Debrazeit: “It was one of the most exciting trainings we have had. The women attending strengthened their organizational bonds and created strong links with women’s groups across the country.”<sup>14</sup> In another example, LDM supported a national study on youth leadership programs in the Philippines that was later selected for a paper presentation at the International Leadership Association global conference in Prague in 2009.

**Influenced management and organizational practices in their workplaces to improve RH/FP services and policies:** In all five countries, Fellows reported that the LDM trainings and other professional development opportunities have improved their managerial and organizational leadership skills, and as a result they have been able to influence the management and leadership practices in their organizations.

**Influenced organizations to create new RH/FP initiatives, projects and programs:** Fellows have used the knowledge they have gained to influence their organizations to develop or strengthen RH/FP programs or incorporate RH/FP as a thematic area in their organizational policies and strategic plans.

**Obtained new funding to influence program creation:** The LDM mini-grant program has supported collaboration among Fellows and new initiatives that promote RH and address population issues, including workshops, applied research and the use of locally appropriate communication channels to disseminate information about reproductive health. Fellows have also garnered funding from sources other than LDM for the causes of RH and FP. For example, in Pakistan, a Media Fellow mobilized people to fund the purchase of sanitary napkins for women affected by an earthquake. Leveraging funds from other sources has been an important part of the Fellows’ learning process – helping them sustain their work, develop skills, lengthen the tenure of their organizations, and increase RH capacity through networking.<sup>15</sup>

### *Changes at the Community Level*

As previously mentioned, part of the LDM program’s intention has been for individuals and groups to reach beyond their immediate contexts and create opportunities for broader impact in RH/FP, including affecting the communities and populations with which Fellows have been working. Assessing the impact of any one program on community-level change is difficult, given the large number of factors that influence a community. However, some data do point to Fellows’ actions influencing community-level change.



**Built linkages across sectors, overcoming traditional barriers and encouraging stronger influence on communities:** Some of the most significant benefits of the LDM program have been the interactions and collaborations among the broad range of Fellows and stakeholders involved. In the selection process, Fellows were strategically chosen as emerging or potential leaders in RH/FP from a wide variety of backgrounds and sectors; this diversity has allowed for deeper program influence. For example, in Ethiopia, AR group participants reported that LDM support for a combination of community and religious leaders, NGOs in advocacy work, and health workers has facilitated strong outcomes at the community level. In the Philippines, the AR group in Davao felt strongly that the combination of Fellows working in city government, NGOs and academia in one geographic area has allowed for greater community impact. In contrast, stakeholders in Northern Nigeria reported that it has been extremely difficult to overcome these cultural barriers. Although national documents do not record shifts in attitudes or behaviors, Fellows reported that there are now pockets of communities where it is easier to discuss FP, particularly in those communities where LDM Fellows live and work.

**Raised community awareness and increased services:** Fellows reported that they have helped raise awareness about family planning and access to RH/FP services in their communities and that community members have changed their behavior. Raising awareness is not always easy, particularly when the areas in which the LDM program operates are culturally and politically resistant to addressing RH/FP issues. In some cases, the Fellows who work in media have become much more engaged in actively reporting on RH/FP issues. In Pakistan, one of the Media Fellows said, “LDM gave me RH/FP eye, the cause [that] I was blind to most of my life and career.”<sup>16</sup> In Jharkhand, India, raising awareness and increasing services were intertwined. The establishment of Sahiyas (village health workers), a Mobile Medical Unit,

<sup>14</sup> LDM 2007 Interim Report

<sup>15</sup> Philippines’ Final Evaluation Report

<sup>16</sup> Pakistani Midterm Evaluation Report





immunization program and improvement of RH/FP services were collective efforts.

**Built community capacity and empowerment:** Empowering community members and building community capacity were described as essential strategies to help the LDM program be more broadly effective and continue to make gains in the future. Fellows noted that an emphasis on community empowerment has been particularly important in places where the vast majority of people live in rural or hard-to-reach locations. The effectiveness of community involvement can be seen in Ethiopia, where the number of reported incidents of female genital mutilation (FGM) went from 99% to 0% in a particular area due to a Fellow's initiative.

**Modeled effective leadership to communities:** Although the program's intention has been to increase awareness of RH/FP at the community level, improved community leadership has been an unintended outcome. Through their work the Fellows have modeled effective leadership skills and acted as inspirational and motivational capacity builders. In India, Fellows assumed leadership positions in the rehabilitation work when the Kosi River flooded in 2009. In Northern Nigeria, an LDM Fellow named Sufyan has been using the Open Space<sup>17</sup> format to carry out meetings in his village. He said that as a community leader, it has brought him closer to his people. In addition, when they meet to discuss a variety of community issues, he has found ways to inject maternal health into the discussions. Sufyan has also learned that a community leader in the next village, who is not an LDM Fellow, has started to hold meetings with the same approach. Without realizing it, Sufyan has been modeling a new technique that others recognize as effective and are interested in applying to their work.

<sup>17</sup> Open Space is a technique for facilitating participatory meetings. A number of LDM Fellows participated in trainings on how to conduct Open Space meetings.

## Emergence and Sustainability of Networks and Collaborations

The vision of LDM from 2006-2011 has been to provide and support leadership opportunities in such a way that, "Fellows working individually and collectively will have affected systematic changes that have increased family planning and reproductive health policies and services in the five focus countries."<sup>18</sup> LDM has placed an emphasis on supporting networks and collaborations as a strategy to remove the common barriers that prevent quality family planning and reproductive health services. Implicit in this approach is the idea that change requires not only leaders who understand how systems work, but it also "requires the ability to mobilize people to work toward a shared vision and most importantly, it requires leaders working together. It's the collective action of many that can make a difference."<sup>19</sup>

LDM has allowed each country to shape the advancement of networks and collaborations according to the country's particular context and needs, so their development has taken different directions in each place.

In every country, LDM has directly or through the actions of the Fellows supported different types of new and established networks at the local and national levels. LDM has also encouraged and supported numerous collaborations among Fellows themselves, within Fellows' organizations and among NGOs, foundations and international agencies. In most cases, these networks and collaborations have been originated through the Fellows' leadership, their organizations, their relationships with other groups and leaders, and the RH/FP needs in each country. However, as the evaluation data demonstrate, a large number of Fellows acknowledged that the origins of the networks and collaborations are connected to the leadership opportunities offered by LDM itself.

The following are a few of the main networks and collaborations that have been established in each country.

- Ethiopia: The most important network supported by LDM Ethiopia is the National Population Reproductive Health Network, established in 2003 with the support of LDM Ethiopia and Fellows to share resources, enhance collaborative efforts and support capacity building. The network works to complement government efforts in the development and implementation of relevant POP/RH policies, strategies and programs and to support advocacy for the promotion and protection of citizens' RH rights. Fellows and Network members have collaborated with other important networks and organizations in Ethiopia such as CORHA (Consortium of Reproductive Health Associations, an umbrella network funded by the Packard Foundation), other RH/FP stakeholders

<sup>18</sup> LDM 2006 Proposal

<sup>19</sup> LDM Web site, "Networks and Collaborations"

and the National Task Force (a government body working on population issues).

- **India:** Leadership Fellows have established regional Information Resource and Advocacy Centers (IRACs) to facilitate greater empowerment and self-sufficiency. They are the hubs around which all thematic, institutional development and capacity-building activities are planned and managed in collaboration with LDM program management. Other collaborations and networks have emerged in the last two years, such as LDM and the Packard Foundation collaborating to provide support to the Women Leaders Network in Bihar, and LDM supporting the Lawyers Forum. The LDM office also has played an important role in forging collaborations, including, for example, an IRAC-initiated collaboration with local NGOs to create awareness about the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTO) Act and safe abortion.



- **Nigeria:** The most active and vibrant network has been the Islamic Scholars Network established as a result of activities organized by LDM. Another important network is the LDM Network of Media Fellows, created to bring together Fellows from across Northern Nigeria who work in media to raise awareness among their members and use their media positions to educate the community on RH issues. The more recently created Borno/Yobe Network of Fellows promotes RH/FP activities in those regions, which have very conservative policies and practices. The Fellows have also forged important collaborations with other groups and networks, such as an Advocacy Nigeria/LDM Fellows collaboration to advocate for an increase in budgetary allocations for health in all Northern Nigerian states, and the Ku saurrara Network/Fellows collaboration to support advocacy in a radio program organized for youth and married couples on RH. In addition, Fellows have collaborated with government officials through the COBAK (Coalition for Budget Tracking in Kano) focusing on budget tracking in Kano state in the areas of health, education, water and sanitation.
- **Pakistan:** One of the most significant networks has been the Pakistan Reproductive Health Network (PRHN), created in response to a need recognized during LDM activities and in which Fellows play key roles in various chapters. LDM Pakistan has also worked closely with the PRHN secretariat to revise network policy and guidelines and facilitate the creation of a listserv. An additional network the LDM office has strongly supported is the Leadership Learning Group (LLG), which focuses on bringing the stakeholders running Packard Foundation-funded leadership programs to one table to share their learning and experiences. An important collaboration that has emerged in Pakistan is the LDM Training of Trainers Group that works to develop a core group of trainers who can help create leadership in the RH sector through capacity building.
- **Philippines:** LDM Philippines has supported a number of networks that existed before 2006 as well as new collaborations. One important partnership was created with the Reproductive Health Advocacy Network, begun in 2001 to advocate for the passage of reproductive health bills. Four other networks have been launched as a result of the LDM program: Lead NET, created in 2005 to continue the work of LDM in the country when the program's closure was first announced; Catholics for Reproductive Health (C4RH), created in 2008 to advance RH advocacy and provide information and training on RH/FP; and the Mindanao Fellows' Group and Dumaguete Fellows' Group, created in 2008 by Fellows in two separate regions to ensure communication and the exchange of information and resources. There have been a number of other functional networks and collaborations to support advocacy, education, training and other issues related to RH/FP. Some of the most important collaborations have been with the Health Action Information Network (HAIN) and the University of the Philippines Social Science and Philosophy Research Foundation, among others.

**Network and collaboration accomplishments:** The evidence from this evaluation demonstrates that the LDM program has significantly contributed to creating and strengthening networks and collaborations. The data and respective country reports show that the networks and collaborations have been essential sources for sharing experiences, resources, information and knowledge; advancing advocacy and policy change; creating leadership development and training opportunities; advancing cross-sector collaboration (especially between Community Based Organizations—CBOs—and the government); opening spaces to discuss traditional religious and cultural-based values and beliefs regarding RH/FP; and strengthening a sense of belonging and community. These contributions in turn have influenced RH/FP programs and services across the LDM focal countries.



- **Sharing experiences, resources, information and knowledge:** In an environment where people work in difficult and sometimes adverse conditions, networks and collaborations have become powerful tools for leveraging resources and enabling participants to exchange knowledge. In some of the LDM countries, Fellows reported that collaborating with others was a new and unfamiliar practice.
- **Advancing cross-sector collaboration, especially between CBOs and the government:** Networks and collaborations have played an important role in cross-sector work, facilitating meaningful collaborations and partnerships between Fellows, the government and CBOs. The evaluation found that the LDM program, especially in India, Ethiopia, Pakistan and the Philippines, has greatly contributed to bridging the gap between government and non-governmental organizations in the struggle to improve RH/FP rights and meet health needs in these countries.
- **Advancing advocacy and policy change:** Networks where Fellows have participated have supported advocacy efforts and contributed to changes in the public policy arena. (For more details see the following section on Systems and Policy Changes.)
- **Creating leadership development training opportunities:** Fellows and their organizations have been able to organize and roll out trainings and other leadership development opportunities for their communities or constituents, with many of these efforts advanced through the networking and collaboration that LDM has supported. For example, Marie Stopes International Ethiopia—an international NGO that provides FP/RH services to vulnerable women—collaborated with the LDM Fellows' Network to conduct trainings on leadership and sexual RH rights at the regional, provincial and community levels.
- **Opening spaces to discuss traditional, religious, and culturally based values and beliefs regarding RH/FP:** One of the most significant outcomes of LDM-supported collaborations and networks has been the ability to bring together leaders from varying perspectives and roles who are helping to advance changes related to RH/FP, particularly those invested in religion. The work of these groups has had a profound impact on community values and beliefs related to RH/FP issues, with particular success in Nigeria and the Philippines.
- **Contributing to a strengthened sense of belonging and community:** Fellows and key constituents agreed that the feeling of belonging and support from networks has helped them strengthen their communities and advance their work. The sense that they are not working alone and could also be a source of support for others has further enhanced Fellows' willingness to collaborate, and in some instances, leverage each other's work. The evaluator from the Philippines noted that this sense of community and support has been vital both for Fellows in close physical proximity and those who are not. For example, Fellows in the Visayas are spread across a number of islands. The sense of connection and community has provided important support as they address the challenges of their respective work.

**Challenges related to networks and collaborations:** The LDM program's approach to networks and collaborations has been quite successful. However, fellow and key stakeholders also identified challenges during the evaluation process.

- ***The need for a more strategic approach to supporting networks and collaborations:*** Fellows and other stakeholders appreciated LDM's open and flexible approach. However, some LDM managers and staff felt that the program could have been more strategic in supporting the development of networks and collaboration while still embracing a ground-up approach.



- The need to support more action-oriented networks: Some Fellows from India and Ethiopia reported that networks have been mostly sources of relationships, contacts, information and resources. They noted that this is not enough; to be effective, networks must determine clear objectives that go beyond the members' personal interests. While Fellows belong to many networks and are connected to individuals and organizations working at the district, state or national levels, some Fellows argued that they need to demonstrate concrete results.
- The need for stronger tracking mechanisms, especially to demonstrate changes at the systems and policy levels: Fellows, especially in Nigeria, Pakistan and the Philippines, noted that networks have catalyzed individual, organizational and community changes. However, some LDM staff and network members had more difficulty identifying the work and results at the systems and policy levels. Related to this, some Fellows mentioned that their networks and/or the LDM program have lacked clear mechanisms to systematically track, document or make public network achievements.
- A lack of resources limited the abilities of some networks: Some networks have depended heavily on the support and assistance provided by LDM or other agencies. Fellows expressed concern about the sustainability of the networks after the end of the LDM program, and some LDM staff and Fellows thought that LDM could have done more to facilitate networks' sustainability. At the same time, the evaluation team also noticed that many networks are anchored or starting to be anchored in the countries and exhibit signs of independence and sustainability.
- The need for more formal governance structures: In India and Ethiopia, Fellows expressed that often networks rely on volunteers since they lack resources to pay staff. This factor creates a lack of continuity and sometimes a lack of accountability. Some Fellows also mentioned the lack of communication between top leaders and constituencies as a big challenge.
- Challenges related to geographic location: Fellows from regions far from the cities where LDM offices are located reported that the physical distance has created communications challenges. Their perception is that Fellows from large cities have more opportunities than Fellows from remote areas or regions.



## Relevance and Influence at the Systems and Policy Levels

The LDM program recognizes that individuals, organizations and communities function within a larger socio-political environment. In addition, LDM materials note, “Effective leaders must integrate an understanding of themselves as individuals and as part of the systems they seek to change.”<sup>20</sup> As previously mentioned, in 2006 the program shifted its focus to ways it could have a broader, more sustainable impact on people’s reproductive health and lives, in part through changes at the systems level.

**LDM approach to influencing systems:** LDM country offices have fostered Fellows’ ability to utilize a variety of approaches and work individually, collaboratively, organizationally and through networks to sustainably improve RH/FP and leadership. Similar to other aspects of the program, the approaches to systems change and accomplishments have varied in type and depth within each country. Ways the program has encouraged systems change include fostering strategic alignment among Fellows in key positions to promote RH/FP agendas, helping Fellows develop the specific skills they need to affect systems change, and supporting FH/FP collaborations or networks within each country. Fellows in the Philippines and Pakistan have focused more on advocacy

<sup>20</sup> 2006 LDM Proposal



and policy change, while in Ethiopia, Nigeria and India the focus has been on a combination of advocacy and policy implementation.

- **Ethiopia:** The RH/FP policy environment has been fairly favorable, with improved distribution of services and increased government budget allocations. To strengthen leadership and RH/FP in the country, LDM has focused on leadership development for women and youth and has supported existing leadership networks and institutions as well as the replication of leadership development activities through regional networks.
- **India:** In recent years, some national and state government interventions have contributed to a more open RH/FP environment. Although Fellows have collaborated with the government, they have considered it challenging to affect policy change due to their specific skill sets. Rather than advocacy, LDM India has focused on the implementation of policies at the local level and institutionalization of leadership development and RH programs through regional resource centers that provide sustained support for capacity building and collaboration.
- **Nigeria:** The political situation has been fairly restrictive, though there is recent evidence of the RH environment softening with federal and state budgets reflecting more focus on RH. Advocacy activities have also increased in the last six years. LDM Nigeria has focused on mobilizing Fellows toward advocacy and building the capacities of trainers to continue these efforts beyond LDM, as well as strengthening the implementation of RH policies.
- **Pakistan:** The RH political landscape has shifted dramatically with a recent law to devolve the Population Ministry from the federal to the provincial level. LDM Pakistan has worked with Fellows and networks to participate in dialogue with policy makers and has also supported the establishment or expansion of leadership development programs within local institutions.
- **Philippines:** In recent years the Fellows have decided to collectively strategize and take action to influence the ongoing efforts related to a controversial RH bill. In addition, LDM has worked with and encouraged a large number of existing and effective networks to influence change at the systems level.

**LDM influence on country budgets:** Government health budget allocations affect policy implementation and service provision of RH/FP. In some of the focal countries, stakeholders were able to point to LDM's influence in

affecting budgetary changes. In both India and Northern Nigeria, the governments' budgets for RH were reported as having increased in the areas in which LDM has focused, but that there has been a lack of proper allocation of these resources. In India, the government has failed to utilize the money appropriately, and funds have been returned at the end of each financial year. In Nigeria, Fellows have developed a budget tracking committee to track spending and ensure accurate policy implementation. In Ethiopia, the general RH/FP policy environment was reported to be favorable, with increased government funding allocations and a better distribution of RH/FP services across the country. In Pakistan and the Philippines, health budgets increased in the early years of the LDM project but have decreased in recent years.

**Mixed feelings about attributing national systems-level changes to LDM's influence, with clearer impacts at the regional or municipal levels:**

Although LDM's long-term intention was clearly stated to ensure sustainable ways to improve RH/FP and leadership development in each country, many stakeholders expressed concern about claiming that systems-level changes were directly influenced by LDM. When asked about LDM's contribution to systems-level change, some stakeholders were eager to share their accomplishments in this realm and others hesitated, stating that the program was not designed to work at the systems level. However, once stakeholders began to think and talk about it, they realized that there has been a number of ways the LDM program has influenced systems-level change. In some cases, external forces have been seen as overpowering the influence of LDM. For example, in places with a high incidence of corruption, policy decisions are less affected by advocacy, limiting Fellows' ability to influence systems. For example, in Nigeria, a country fraught with corruption, Fellows felt that changes in government policy have not been due to advocacy by any particular group but rather individual interests and influences.



**Attention to strategy and capacity building at the individual level led to greater influence at the systems level:** Fellows' increased confidence, knowledge and leadership skills have made them stronger, more effective current and future leaders who are able to affect systems-level changes.

- Strategic selection process of Fellows in key positions was seen as strengthening the LDM influence on systems and policy: In some cases, Fellows were selected strategically to broaden the dialogue and impact on RH/FP. Depending on country contexts, LDM selection expanded to include Fellows from the government, media, specific communities, and religious institutions. The program also emphasized the selection of emerging Fellows, though some already held key positions. This diversity has bolstered the program's influence at the systems level and has potentially laid the groundwork for continued systems change in the future.
- Strategic individual actions affect RH systems: As described earlier, Fellows saw individual capacity building, training and encouragement by LDM as critical to building their confidence and helping them think and act more strategically, enabling them to affect systems through planning and action.

**Supporting policy implementation influenced RH/FP at the systems level:** In some cases for Fellows, working within a system has been an effective way of influencing that system. This has been particularly true in cases where Fellows have seen policies as fairly supportive of RH/FP but the implementation of those policies lacking.

- Existing RH policies are sufficient; the challenge is insufficient service provision: Some Fellows felt that the existing policies were sufficient, and it would be most effective to work with the government to support the implementation of these policies. Fellows identified a lack of capacity among service providers as a main reason for the government's inability to implement policy. In addition, due in part to LDM's effectiveness, in some places there has been an increased community demand for services.
- Government corruption provided a challenge for policy change and implementation: In India and Nigeria, some Fellows reported government corruption as a strong hindrance to their ability to affect policy change. As one Indian Fellow described it, "There has not been too much impact due to corruption, and things move slowly. Nothing works without money and this makes things very difficult for us."<sup>21</sup> This issue was more widely discussed in Nigeria, where many Fellows agreed that it has been

one of the major challenges they have faced in policy implementation.

**Emphasis on networks and collaborations also contributed to systems-level change:** LDM's support for institutions, networks and collaborations has provided opportunities for Fellows to develop long-lasting relationships and structures that will likely continue to affect RH systems after LDM's closing. Most Fellows agreed that policy change or systems-level influence are only possible when a variety of groups from different backgrounds collaborate. As one AR participant from Ethiopia articulated, "LDM cannot impact [a system] on its own, but it can contribute."<sup>22</sup>

- Through continued collaboration, LDM Fellows have developed strong relationships with key policy makers and others, opening the possibility for influencing policy and systems: Whether working with the government or other organizations, Fellows and LDM staff understood the value of working collaboratively to strengthen their efforts. Through workshops, trainings, cooperating on program or policy implementation, or any number of other interactions, Fellows slowly built relationships with key policy makers and others, opening a space for deeper involvement in influencing policy and systems even within resistant governments.
- AR discussions inspired Fellows in Indian districts to explore possible policy change collaborations: As is common with this type of collaborative enterprise, when people discuss their work and accomplishments, they begin to enthusiastically explore ways to do more work together. During the AR groups in India, Fellows became animated and inspired by discussions on policy change and began to strategize about what more they might do.
- External factors can be game changers; the passing of a momentous amendment in Pakistan has dramatically shifted the work of RH/FP advocates: When the Ministry of Population in Pakistan was devolved from the national level to the provincial level, Fellows who had been working on RH/FP issues with the government were required to extensively rethink their work given the changed landscape of RH/FP in the country.

**LDM supported capacity building and efforts of Fellows to advocate for improved RH/FP:** The mission of LDM did not include its own participation in advocacy work. However, to reach its long-term outcome "to strengthen systematic changes that strengthen FP/RH policies and increase RH options,"<sup>23</sup> LDM has helped build Fellows' advocacy capacity and supported their work to affect policy change.

<sup>21</sup> Indian Final Evaluation Report

<sup>22</sup> Ethiopia AR 2 Notes

<sup>23</sup> 2008-11 LDM Proposal



- In Nigeria, Fellows pointed to specific capacity-building activities that have developed their skills and confidence for more effective advocacy; in India Fellows felt they needed more skills building in this area: The approach to capacity building for advocacy varied in each LDM country. Advocacy was one of LDM Nigeria's main focuses. Fellows were trained in strategies such as Open Space and Spitfire Strategies,<sup>24</sup> which also included a Training of Trainers (ToT) component to share these strategies with others. On the other hand, Fellows in India felt that their work focused more on policy implementation, and if they were to move toward advocacy work they would need further capacity building.
- Supporting networks and collaborations has been an effective route to improving advocacy efforts: As described in the Networks and Collaborations section, one of the ways LDM has supported advocacy has been through strengthening new and existing networks and collaborations. For example, the development Research and Projects Center (dRPC), which implemented the LDM program in Northern Nigeria, leveraged its role with the LDM-initiated network, Advocacy Nigeria, to more effectively encourage RH advocacy throughout the region. They played key roles in securing maternal health budget increases in six Northern Nigeria states as well as tracking expenditures to ensure that those resources are available for implementation. According to the Nigerian evaluator, "Many experts believe that the attention that the Fellows created toward maternal health during the 2006 national conference went a long way toward sensitizing many policy makers about maternal health issues and helped to put

maternal health on the front burner of national discourse."<sup>25</sup> In the Philippines, networks and collaborations have played a key role in promoting advocacy. In Pakistan, Fellows have also leveraged their skills and positions in networks not supported by LDM to advance advocacy efforts.

**An emphasis on institutional capacity building has contributed to systems-level changes:** As part of building long-term local capacity, in recent years the LDM program has focused some effort on strengthening institutions, such as universities and municipalities, selected for the potential to affect such large numbers of people that they are considered sub-systems.

- Institutionalization of leadership development and RH/FP programs: Part of LDM's work has focused on enabling local or national institutions to provide RH/FP and leadership development courses. In Pakistan and the Philippines, new curricula and programs have been developed to support leadership initiatives in the country. In Ethiopia, many Fellows described themselves as serving as links between regional and federal government in the health system, particularly around budget planning. The IRACs established by LDM India have been another way of institutionalizing support for RH/FP and leadership development activities in regionally based centers.

## Program Implementation

The evaluation also looked closely at the strategies and structures the LDM program put in place to help accomplish its goals. LDM's program implementation has met with both great success and significant challenges.

**The way the LDM staff has modeled leadership has enhanced program implementation:** Internal modeling of LDM's participatory, collaborative approach to leadership has been essential to the program's success. Many staff members attributed the embedding of this innovative leadership thinking in their work to the guidance of the LDM program director (who is also an IIE country director). Additionally, the program has enabled staff to attend leadership trainings that have facilitated positive changes in their personal leadership styles and have been critical in guiding their successful implementation of the LDM program.

**Purposeful, planned flexibility in program implementation has allowed the LDM staff to respond to complex and changing situations in meaningful ways:** The LDM program was designed to be responsive and adaptive to needs and changes within each country context. Flexible funding also has allowed staff to identify and attentively respond to needs and gaps as the program developed.

<sup>24</sup> Spitfire Strategies conducted training for the Fellows in communications and management. <http://www.spitfirestrategies.com/>

<sup>25</sup> Nigerian Final Evaluation Report



**Built-in flexibility allowed for major program decentralization in 2006:** LDM was able to make a powerful shift in its focus and implementation in 2006, due in a large part to its flexibility. Staff had observed that participation in trainings abroad was not necessarily being translated to learning at in-country organizations, and were therefore encouraged to build more power at the country level and shift the focus to on-the-ground work.

- Flexibility allowed for relevant and appropriate training for Fellows: The sensitivity of the LDM program to the training needs of the Fellows has allowed the program to provide meaningful, relevant trainings that have responded to Fellows' expressed desires to learn and apply new strategies and approaches to their work. Additionally, trainings themselves have been conducted in a flexible manner that has allowed Fellows to develop skills at their own speed.

**Innovative program implementation:** Throughout the LDM program, staff sought out or developed innovative approaches to respond to the needs of Fellows and more effectively achieve their goals; these activities had varying levels of success.

- Mini-Grants: Fellows found mini-grants to be effective in allowing their visions to become a reality and helping them practice their newly acquired skills in an effective format.
- Thematic groups: Thematic groups did not resonate as well, particularly in India and Pakistan. Fellows expressed that they had anticipated these groups would be an effective way to connect with one another and produce actionable results, but that there had not been real results due to a lack of follow-up and unclear strategies.
- Customized trainings for Media Fellows: While the LDM program established customized trainings for Media Fellows in response to a perceived need, some Media Fellows felt that their needs differed from other Fellows' and had not been met by the LDM program.
- New technologies: Some Fellows found the use of new technologies as part of their inter-country communication to be effective, and they found email listservs and eGroups as helpful and sustainable beyond the program's duration. Fellows also described the LDM Web site as an important resource to share information across countries.

**Strong support from IIE program management staff has facilitated country-level implementation:** The evaluation found that the strong, efficient support the LDM country

managers felt from IIE West Coast Center (WCC) was vital to in-country implementation. Country managers were appreciative of the WCC's production of timely, high-quality work. On IIE's end, they were able to produce this level of support by being in consistent and meaningful contact with one another through regular conference calls, emails, and weekly check-ins where they exchanged ideas and coached each other.

**Successful program implementation created valuable spaces for Fellows to share knowledge and experience:** The LDM program was structured to bring Fellows into meaningful shared spaces with peers working on RH/FP issues, and the program was successful in doing this. Fellows highlighted the national meetings and the customized workshops as aspects of the program that have successfully facilitated these valuable interactions. Fellows described these spaces as helping them feel less alone in their work and as places to translate bonds into lasting networks.

**Contact between Fellows has presented challenges throughout the program:** Fellows found the structures to keep them in contact with one another lacking. Despite effective use of technology in some countries, Fellows found it difficult to stay connected with one another on a deeper level.

- *The location of offices or trainings limited contact* for some Fellows: One key reason Fellows in some countries had difficulty linking with one another was due to the locations of the LDM offices or trainings. Fellows in these countries noted that if the offices and trainings had been located more strategically, there would have been increased communication, interaction and participation.
- Unequal experiences result for those Fellows facing these challenges: Some Fellows have been left with the impression that the LDM program has provided an unequal experience to Fellows. They stated that the program was structured in a way that "favored" certain Fellows and kept them more informed and connected with one another. This sentiment was expressed particularly in Nigeria and Pakistan.

**The documentation, distribution and organization of information during the program implementation provided challenges, as well:** Some Fellows expressed frustration with the lack of mechanisms to track and document Fellows' learning and experiences in the LDM program. They noted that the lack of documentation and distribution of information has had the potential to create an unequal experience of the program among Fellows and has been a lost opportunity to quantify the effects of the program.



**A strategy to include Fellows from different spheres was successfully implemented and has yielded significant collaborations:** The LDM program selected Fellows from different spheres of the RH/FP world, introducing them to a variety of perspectives and allies that has greatly enriched their work.

- Diversity among Fellows enhanced collaborations: Fellows' diverse backgrounds made meaningful collaborations between spheres and integrated interventions easier, particularly critical partnerships between NGOs and the government.
- Successful engagement of religious leaders and youth: The LDM program was successful in its strategic targeting and recruitment of religious leaders and youth for inclusion in the program. LDM recognized that many components of RH/FP issues are controversial in target countries and regions and that religious leaders' positions of influence could create notable impact. Despite inevitable push back from some leaders, the inclusion of religious leaders was considered one of the most successful aspects of the program in several countries. Some Fellows expressed wanting to see more or less youth involved in the program, but overall, the engagement of young people was praised as essential for the sustainability of the program's work.
- Varied cultural contexts affected women's engagement: Changing attitudes and actions toward reproductive health and family planning necessarily require the involvement of both men and women. The LDM program particularly focused on empowering

and including the voices of marginalized women. As with other aspects of the program, country contexts have varied. In some countries, as in the Philippines, India and Pakistan, women are more dominant in the FP/RH sector. In other countries, such as Nigeria and Ethiopia, it has been more of a struggle for women to overcome strong cultural and traditional obstacles to participate. The LDM staff addressed these issues in ways appropriate for each context. All agreed that women are critical for effectively reaching communities, and LDM has been effective in building the capacity of female leaders.

**The lack of LDM mechanisms to ensure Fellows' participation and commitment created a lack of accountability:** The evaluation revealed frustration with the lack of tools to ensure the participation and commitment of Fellows to the program. Some Fellows felt that expected commitments have been unclear, which has divided Fellows into two groups: those that felt that the program has been too time-consuming and others that felt that Fellows should have been more devoted and accountable to the program.

- Diverse reactions to Fellow selection process: Some Fellows said that the key to ensuring Fellows' commitment to the program was the selection process. Fellows expressed that they would have liked to have been included in the process or wished that the rigorousness applied to the application process in the first half of the program (pre-2006) had been maintained. In contrast, IIE staff expressed that they felt the post-2006 process was more strategic.
- Lack of continuity or follow-up after trainings: Follow-up mechanisms that would refresh Fellows' skills or put them into practice after trainings appear to have been lacking.

**Fellows found the level and distribution of funding to be worrisome:** Funding has been a source of worry among many Fellows, who have felt unable to take action without adequate support in a field already experiencing financial scarcity. Fellows have worried that the lack of resources has inhibited their ability to successfully apply their skills and knowledge gained. However, as the Packard Foundation noted, the issue of investment has been difficult due to the complexities, movements and needs of each country. Additionally, LDM was not designed to provide significant funding to initiatives, but to create transformative, self-sustaining networks at the program's completion.

**A sustainability approach should have been introduced earlier:** The evaluation found that Fellows hoped that an emphasis on sustainability would have been included far earlier in the program's implementation. Some Fellows felt caught off-guard and unprepared for the close of the program. Beyond concern at a basic funding level, Fellows



said they hoped structures would be put in place to ensure the sustainability of the networks and the continuation of Fellows' work.

## Sustainability

As part of its forward-thinking, IIE and the Packard Foundation dedicated the final phase of the program to developing a transition process to sustain the gains of LDM. Implicit in this idea has been the need to provide an opportunity for program staff and stakeholders to develop and establish mechanisms prior to the closing of the program. The main focus of the sustainability plan has been to improve the capacities of networks and anchor leadership development efforts.

**Vision of Fellows and key stakeholders about LDM sustainability:** Fellows, LDM staff and other key stakeholders were eager to engage in conversation about sustainability as the LDM program comes to an end. Most participants expressed a clear commitment to sustain program gains in terms of their personal leadership skills and work on RH/FP in their countries, and to share their leadership knowledge with others.

- Need to strengthen and formalize existing networks, create a clear strategy and action plan, and identify membership: Fellows, IIE staff and other key stakeholders agreed that one of the most effective ways to ensure the sustainability of the program is through networks. However, they also recognized that to advance the work in an independent manner, many existing networks have to be strengthened and formalized.

**Institutionalizing LDM in existing organizations and government structures:** A main focus of the LDM program's final phase has been to support and build the capacity of local institutions. Fellows and key stakeholders in several countries expressed the need to continue to institutionalize LDM within pre-existing structures in each country, such as universities, NGOs or other RH/FP networks.

- Creating and/or sustaining solid communication platforms: Fellows and other key stakeholders in the five countries recognized that sustaining program gains will require establishing communication platforms to continue to connect, inform and support Fellows.
- Diversifying, mobilizing and leveraging funding and resources: Fellows and stakeholders affirmed that financial sustainability is essential for keeping LDM gains alive and to continue advancing RH/FP in their respective countries. Moving beyond dependency on a single source was seen as one of the greatest sustainability challenges.

- Transferring leadership skills to key LDM individuals—especially women and youth—for future leadership: Fellows recognized that the closing of the LDM offices should mobilize Fellows to build their own leadership capacities as well as those of others, particularly youth and women, who could play key leadership roles in sustaining the LDM program's gains.
- Creating a resource center for documents, curricula and documented best practices, as well as a dissemination strategy: Fellows in Ethiopia and India spoke of the need to create a space to keep all documents and curricula from trainings, as well as to document and share best practices to sustain the immense learning from the LDM program, either through a new organization or existing ones, such as the IRACs.

## Conclusions of the Findings

Evidence from this evaluation demonstrates that the LDM program's investment in leadership has shaped and supported a critical core of well trained and effective leaders advancing change at the individual, organizational and community levels. Overall, there are some strong and protective RH policies in place with committed governments supporting them, and there is evidence that the LDM program has had some sustainable influence on RH policies and service provision.

The leadership development opportunities offered by LDM have increased leaders' confidence, capacity and collaborations. The program has equipped Fellows with additional tools to help them think and act more strategically, as well as address issues at a more systemic level. Fellows have strengthened their positions as leaders within the RH/FP movement, changing the ways in which RH/FP is discussed and services are provided.

LDM's bottom-up approach and flexibility have allowed country managers and IIE staff to adapt the program to each country's context and needs. This in turn has increased the







Fellows' ownership of and commitment to the program. In addition, IIE and LDM staff's relational approach to leadership has served as a model for Fellows, catalyzing Fellows to pass on their experiences to others and support leadership development in their communities and organizations.

With support from the LDM program, Fellows in each of the five focal countries have participated in creating vibrant and active networks and meaningful collaborations to advance leadership and RH/FP rights, or they have been active members in them. Fellows have also advanced cross-sector collaborations (especially between CBOs and the government); opened spaces to discuss traditional, religious and culturally based values and beliefs regarding RH/FP; and strengthened a sense of belonging and community.

Fellows and stakeholders recognize that there is much more to be done to ensure the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of these collaborative enterprises. There is a clear need to combine a flexible approach with more structure and planning; increase accountability; and establish mechanisms to track, document and make public networks' efforts and achievements. The lack of adequate resources, formal governance structures, paid staff, and clear communication between top leaders and constituencies in some networks are other challenges to long-term sustainability. Despite these concerns, many networks are anchored or starting to be anchored in the focal countries and to exhibit signs of independence and sustainability.

Other ways the LDM program and Fellows have influenced changes at the systems level include working within political systems, particularly on program implementation, and

collaborating with respected academic institutions to create or expand leadership programs or curricula related to RH/FP. Fellows across the five countries have also organized strong advocacy campaigns and activities to inform and educate others about RH/FP issues and to hold governments accountable. In addition, Trainings of Trainers are ensuring that skills and knowledge get transferred to other leaders and organizations.

Along with the program's successes, a main challenge described by Fellows and stakeholders has been the lack of strategies and mechanisms to document Fellows' work. Some Fellows also mentioned the need to develop additional communications mechanisms and tools to ensure a better flow of information and to increase Fellows' participation and accountability to the program.

Overall, the evaluation has found that the LDM program has achieved a variety of milestones and accomplished its main goals. Focusing on individuals, organizations, networks and collaborations has provided a strong base from which broader, systemic progress has been made. Focusing on youth and women has provided a voice to traditionally marginalized groups and a strong connection to the communities and the future. To the credit of LDM, IIE and the Packard Foundation, their open yet strategic approach has allowed and encouraged creativity, innovation and responsiveness by their staff and the Fellows. The LDM program has developed over time, adjusting its approach and activities according to changing circumstances and needs. LDM has built Fellows' confidence, knowledge and leadership skills, empowering them to lead strategic initiatives promoting RH and, in some cases, influence systems-level change. More importantly, LDM has contributed to raising Fellows' unique voices and creating forums and campaigns that had not been a part of the reproductive health and family planning field and context of each country.

## Reflections on the Evaluation Methodology

RCLA examined the most important aspects related to the evaluation methodology, as experienced by the Fellows, key stakeholders, national evaluators and RCLA evaluators.

*The use of methodology as experienced by the national evaluators*

**The methodology, in particular the use of Action Reflection groups, were experienced as participatory and empowering:**

The Fellows and other stakeholders felt engaged and appreciated by the participatory nature of the evaluation, which encouraged them to bring their voices to the process and collectively explore ideas around sustainability of the gains of the program. The evaluator from India noted that it would have been better if the evaluation could have given additional time to the national evaluators to go more in-depth in understanding the Fellows' work and if the evaluation team had more face-to-face time with RCLA.



**The evaluation was a rich learning experience:** The evaluators found that the participatory methodology made the evaluation process a rich learning experience. Some Fellows even expressed their desire to apply participatory principles in their own organizations and practice.

**The participatory methodology, especially the AR groups, provided a space where participants discovered important insights that, at times, led to concrete action:** Several evaluators stated that the methodology allowed participants to generate important “ah-ha” discoveries on key issues related to their work and involvement with LDM. As a result, the participants began to discuss how to overcome challenges and proposed concrete solutions to obstacles that they diagnosed through their reflections.

**The methodology allowed for the collection of a large amount of data in a short time:** The use of several information sources, including the AR groups, interviews, document analysis and national meeting, was appreciated by several evaluators for the rich information they generated within a relatively short amount of time. However, some evaluators noted that the large volume of data was sometimes difficult to manage.

**Some Fellows and evaluators perceived the evaluation to be too process-oriented:** The evaluators from Ethiopia and the Philippines noted that some Fellows perceived the evaluation’s methodology as too focused on process. Additionally, some stakeholders thought that a quantitative component might have provided a significant contribution to the understanding of the program.

**Changes in evaluators:** In the Philippines, in particular, changes in the evaluators made the process challenging for RCLA and the IIE office there.

### *The use of the methodology as experienced by RCLA evaluators*

**The evaluation’s approach was fitting for LDM:** The Systemic Participatory Action Research approach with qualitative and participatory methodologies was the right fit for evaluating the LDM program, given the collective nature of the program and its approach to leadership. The evaluation allowed stakeholders to examine their own experience and assess the program’s gains and challenges in a genuine manner. Through the process, Fellows reaffirmed their commitment to supporting RH/FP issues.

**The data collected were rich and voluminous:** The methodology provided a large quantity of meaningful data and rich stories. The codification and analysis took much more time than initially anticipated. RCLA evaluators agree with the national evaluators that the AR groups could have been fewer and that time between meetings could have been shorter.

**Good communication was critical:** The excellent communication and learning across the team contributed to the evaluation’s success. Regular updates and reminders, the use of the wiki and Google group, and providing detailed protocols were ways to communicate expectations to the evaluation team and receive feedback. The opportunities where the team was able to meet face-to-face (particularly the first and last evaluation team meetings and the national meetings) were useful and appreciated.

**Evaluators’ strong commitment:** Throughout the evaluation process, RCLA and national evaluators, and LDM staff kept highly engaged and committed; in return, many felt they had learned new methodologies and facilitation skills they will continue using in their work.







## LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

The following are some of the key lessons learned and best practices identified from the findings.

RESEARCH CATEGORY	LESSONS LEARNED	
	Concept	Description
<b>Individual, Organizational and Community Levels</b>	LDM's relational or collaborative leadership approach encouraged and supported a wide variety of leaders	Breaking the deeply rooted traditional definition of leadership by instilling the concept that anyone could become a leader— no matter what their circumstances, gender or social status—profoundly influenced the dialogue and sense of empowerment of the Fellows and other leaders in RH/FP.
	The strategic selection of the Fellows directly affected the program's ability to achieve its goals	Varying from country to country, the background of the Fellows strongly affected the types of initiatives they undertook. In addition, choosing more than one Fellow in an organization or network could have added accountability and credibility.
	Supporting and encouraging interactions among strategically diverse Fellows from across sectors helped to break traditional barriers	Working with Fellows from diverse backgrounds broadened LDM's reach and strengthened support for RH/FP. Fellows from various sectors found opportunities to share ideas and overcome traditional barriers, strengthening their impact on communities.
	Improved personal capacity led to improved career opportunities for Fellows, with mixed impacts	As Fellows increased their knowledge and skills, higher-level career opportunities were offered to them, in some cases shifting Fellows away from working directly with the most vulnerable populations. The program's expectations and tracking systems did not clearly capture if and how knowledge was transferred to others within organizations prior to the Fellows' departure.
	Leadership development at the individual level also influenced organizational and community changes	When Fellows gained skills and knowledge regarding leadership, often they often were able to transform their leadership style and interactions with their colleagues, other organizations and the communities where they work.



RESEARCH CATEGORY	LESSONS LEARNED	
	Concept	Description
	Investing in leadership development yielded positive results in the RH/FP field	Building the capacity of emerging leaders provided them with the tools and motivation to more effectively and strategically advance their interests and initiatives, both individually and collaboratively.
	Opportunities to learn about other programs and practices related to leadership and RH/FP across countries influenced deep changes among leaders	Attending study tours, conferences, events and trainings in other countries allowed Fellows to understand other countries' needs and practices, as well as inspired people to apply some of these experiences in their own work.
	Empowering youth and women provided a voice to marginalized groups, established essential links to communities and enhanced long-term sustainability	Focusing on capacity building on youth and women broke traditional barriers and created a space for their voices within RH/FP. LDM also recognized that youth and women were key social change agents within the communities and a focus on these two groups encouraged more effective influence at the organizational and community levels.
	Mini-grants were critical for enabling Fellows to apply new skills, inspiring them to conceptualize and implement new collaborations	The mini-grants were effective tools for encouraging creativity, innovation and collaboration. The design of this component provided clear expectations and linkages to the overall goals of the program. The number of strategic and successful mini-grants demonstrated the high level of capacity and accountability of the Fellows to design and implement projects.
	Strategic Fellowship selection and implementation led to the breaking down of traditional barriers	The LDM program selected Fellows from a variety of backgrounds, some from sectors or groups that traditionally have not interacted or collaborated. Bringing these diverse voices and interests together through strategic and carefully planned activities facilitated trust building and encouraged Fellows to take risks.
	Raising community awareness heightened demand for RH/FP, creating pressure for increased services	As Fellows raised awareness around RH/FP issues, communities began to demand more services. This pressured service providers to expand their work. It also led Fellows to build capacity and to empower community members to further advance RH/FP, particularly in rural areas.
	LDM Fellows modeling effective leadership practices influenced leaders in other communities	LDM Fellows modeling effective leadership skills through their work influenced others in their organizations and communities. This unintended outcome demonstrated the various levels of impact of a program of this nature and the complexity in tracking and measuring that impact.

RESEARCH CATEGORY	LESSONS LEARNED	
	Concept	Description
<b>Networks and Collaborations</b>	Networks and collaborations provided opportunities for broader connections and stronger impact; they developed a strong sense of community among Fellows that helped to overcome cultural, social, professional and geographic barriers	The networks deepened connections, expanded thinking and sustained work that strengthened RH/FP efforts. In some cases, networks were strategically developed to include members from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives to address RH/FP issues and overcome traditional barriers. In other cases, networks helped overcome the geographic divisions within a country. Overall, the members felt supported, empowered and energized.
	Some stakeholders felt the networks could attain much more	Many stakeholders expressed excitement about the potential of these networks and wanted to do even more, which might be facilitated through developing clearer purposes, missions and objectives.
	Some networks needed stronger governance structures and paid staff	The lack of formal governance structures and paid staff for some networks limited continuity in planning and activities, such as holding regular meetings, advancing initiatives and maintaining sufficient communications. Stronger governance structures would also enhance network accountability.
	Limited resources were an issue for some networks and not for others	Most networks reported having limited funding. In some cases, members found creative ways to accomplish their goals with limited resources. In other cases, members found it challenging to run a network without paid staff and funding for activities.
	A strong reliance on the LDM program may have been an obstacle to sustainability	A variety of stakeholders mentioned the reliance of networks on the LDM program for logistical, technical and financial support, which in some cases may have been an obstacle to sustainability.
	LDM could have pursued a more strategic approach to support networks and collaborations	The LDM approach to supporting networks and collaborations emerged according to the country context. While the flexibility of the program was well received, more emphasis on cross-country reflection could have encouraged a more strategic approach.
	Capacity building, particularly in strategic planning and action, provided the Fellows with the necessary tools to effectively identify and address larger system and policy issues	Fellows attributed the expansion their understanding of the larger complexity and scope of RH/FP issues to LDM program inputs. As they built their capacities, they were able to recognize more systemic solutions to specific, localized challenges.

RESEARCH CATEGORY	LESSONS LEARNED	
	Concept	Description
<b>Systems and Government Policies</b>	Focusing on local policy change influenced broader policy change	One small-scale policy change at municipal or provincial levels became examples of effective RH policy, inspiring other municipalities or provinces, building stronger national influence.
	An emphasis on the institutionalization of programs enabled systems changes	Strategic support for the development of institutionalized programs affected larger training systems in each focal country. The innovative curricula and expanded or newly created programs helped form a critical mass of leaders and influenced the availability and dialogue around RH/FP and leadership development.
	Supporting policy implementation was an effective way to immediately enhance services as well as to influence successful long-term policy change	In some cases strong policies were in place, but a lack of resources and capacity were often challenges for RH/FP services to reach communities. Fellows found that LDM's capacity building helped them more effectively support government implementation of policies, gaining trust through regular interactions with government officials.
<b>Program Implementation</b>	The thoughtful, relational and collective leadership style of the LDM staff modeled ways to employ tools and techniques being formally taught through the program's activities	By being active learners and collaborative leaders, the LDM staff modeled for Fellows openness to new ideas and techniques.
	Local program implementation allowed for a deeper understanding of the context and a more efficient use of resources	The shift of responsibilities and implementation from the US-based central office to the local level encouraged a stronger stakeholder connection with the program and improved program responsiveness and relevance to local contexts. In addition, the program was able to offer customized trainings for particular needs and in local languages, reaching more Fellows.
	The program's flexibility allowed for creativity and contextualized program design	The combination of increased program management responsibilities at the local level and flexibility in overall programming encouraged creative and appropriate responses to local needs and contextual factors. This flexible approach also increased commitment and ownership.
	Fast and effective support from IIE WCC and the program director strengthened the work of local program staff	Even with the challenges of distance and the independent nature of each country program, the program management staff effectively and efficiently provided support and guidance while encouraging knowledge sharing among team members.
	Program monitoring needed to reflect the program's outcomes, including any adjustments and changes during implementation	The program's flexibility was a great asset. However, the monitoring and tracking system did not accurately reflect what the program was accomplishing by the closing of the program.



RESEARCH CATEGORY	LESSONS LEARNED	
	Concept	Description
	Clearer expectations would have encouraged Fellows to be more accountable to and invested in the program	Communicating program expectations more clearly may have helped Fellows develop a direction in their work and enhanced their commitment to reporting their related activities back to the program.
	A stronger tracking system would have provided a richer and more accurate accounting of program's accomplishments	A stronger system to track the activities of individuals, organizations and networks, including developing a baseline, would have provided LDM with the richness of data that more accurately represented the program's accomplishments and held the Fellows and staff more accountable.
	The program's focus on youth and women helped to support marginalized people, and will be pivotal for future leadership in RH/FP	Women and youth have been traditionally marginalized, and empowering them to become confident leaders has led to a direct impact on RH/FP in their communities now and for the future.
	Formalizing aspects of the LDM program within other structures, organizations and institutions provided a strong base for sustaining the gains of the program and the continued growth of those gains	LDM's work with local structures, organizations and institutions to build and expand their capacities to assume implementation of relevant aspects of the program were strong ways to facilitate learning and sustainability. Supporting and/or encouraging local expertise was also important for ensuring continued efforts that directly reflect local needs and interests.
<b>Sustainability</b>	Communication among Fellows was seen as critical for sustaining the program's gains	Stakeholders saw staying connected as vital for future sustainability. All agreed that a strong communications plan should be in place, both throughout the program implementation and during this transition period.
	Diversifying access to funding and resources is key for sustainability	As Fellows looked to future initiatives and activities, they noted that financial sustainability and moving beyond reliance on a single resource will be essential.
	Transferring leadership skills to Fellows was a successful practice	Fellows deeply valued the continual training, mentoring, support and opportunities for innovation and open dialogue provided by the LDM program. Stakeholders expressed interest in further development of local leadership in these capacities so that they can be sustained.
	Sustainability should have been planned, communicated and discussed from the program's inception and with stakeholder involvement	IIE and the Packard Foundation were forward-thinking in focusing the last phase of the program on sustainability. The most effective country processes included open communications and dialogue with stakeholders throughout the entire final phase. The LDM staff reflected that an even more effective process would include planning, communications and dialogue around sustainability to be incorporated from the inception of the program and continued throughout its entirety.

RESEARCH CATEGORY	LESSONS LEARNED	
	Concept	Description
	The participatory evaluation process emphasized incorporating stakeholders' varied voices for a better evaluation outcome	Using a participatory approach provided the opportunity for the evaluation to capture the varied perspectives and experiences of stakeholders. As engaged participants in the evaluation process, stakeholders were asked not only to share their insights, but to be part of the investigation. Through continued action, reflection and feedback, the participants were actively involved in and committed to the outcome of the evaluation.
<b>Evaluation Methodology</b>	The combined use of Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Action Reflection (AR) groups provided opportunities for individual and collective reflection, which at times inspired action	Utilizing both KIIs and AR groups was complementary, legitimized the sources of information, and encouraged deeper awareness and understanding of the profound influences of the program. The continued dialogue during the three-day AR groups encouraged deeper, collaborative reflection, and the actions in preparation for each group provided space for individual exploration of specific topics to be discussed in the next meeting. The KIIs provided space for key stakeholders to express their views individually, allowing the evaluators to explore particular points depending on the informant's experiences and background. At times, the AR groups in particular provided space for challenges to be raised and, when inspired, participants began to strategize about how to translate their needs into actions.
	Using mixed methods allowed for the collection of large amounts of rich and diverse data	The AR groups, in particular, enabled evaluators to collect a significant amount of data in a short period of time. Evaluators appreciated the varied methods, which allowed for rich and diverse data collection with a validation process. However, some felt that the quantity of information was difficult to manage.
	Some stakeholders felt that the methodology was too process-oriented and would have preferred a less time-consuming evaluation	Some stakeholders felt that the evaluation needed not take the amount of time that it did. In the Philippines they felt that the AR groups could have been shorter, and in Ethiopia they felt that the actions between each AR group were too demanding.
	Visits by RCLA evaluators to the field were essential; an additional visit earlier in the process would have provided better support to the national evaluators	The visit by the RCLA team to the focal countries for the national meetings was essential for broadening understanding of the program across countries and deepening findings within each country. Visits by the RCLA evaluators early during the data collection phase would have provided additional support to the national evaluators in both the use of the methodology and the organization of data.

RESEARCH CATEGORY	LESSONS LEARNED	
	Concept	Description
	Support and commitment by LDM staff and evaluators was critical to the evaluation's success	With such a rich and complex methodology, significant amounts of time and energy were required by all involved. The commitment of the LDM staff to ensure an honest and thoughtful account of their work demonstrated the strength and openness of the program. The commitment of the evaluators was critical for allowing this evaluation to reach the level of depth and understanding that it did.
	International team meetings and ongoing communications were essential for an effective evaluation	With the evaluators for this process located in six different countries, coordination and communication were essential. The two international meetings with evaluators and LDM staff, initially to design the methodology and finally to deepen the analysis, were necessary components of this participatory and collaborative process. The wiki, group emails, and conference calls facilitated ongoing dialogue and peer-to-peer information sharing. The protocols and continued direct communications by the RCLA evaluators with the team provided a framework and guidance throughout the process.
	The participatory nature of the process provided a rich learning opportunity for participants and evaluators alike	True to the spirit of the LDM program, the evaluation methodology provided an opportunity to collaborate and develop the process throughout the evaluation. Stakeholders involved in the evaluation felt that they were introduced to a new methodology that was relevant for their future work. National evaluators were trained in new participatory research methodologies, and the entire evaluation team learned how to best apply this particular approach throughout the entire process.







## RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation clearly demonstrates that the LDM program has achieved significant RH/FP and leadership development outcomes in the five focal countries despite complicated and challenging contexts. This section is based on the findings, lessons learned and collective insights from the evaluation process and is intended to provide recommendations for IIE, the Packard Foundation, and other organizations and foundations developing, implementing or supporting similar programs. The recommendations are divided into three sections: strategic intention, program design and program management.

### Strategic Intention

**Clearly define and communicate with key stakeholders the overarching program goals and strategy that will frame all program decisions:** An overarching strategy should be clearly articulated to stakeholders throughout the program's implementation. It should be a touch point that is continually considered as the program evolves.

**Ensure a balance between strategic intention and flexibility:** Although an overarching framework is critical, the flexibility for innovation, creativity and adaptation is also essential for ensuring a program's success. Through the implementation process, new ideas will emerge that should have space to be incorporated and flourish.

**Develop a plan for sustainability as part of the program design and facilitate the transition process throughout:** If a program is not intended to be ongoing in the long-term, its design should include a plan for ensuring sustainability that includes specific indicators of success and intended outcomes. Ways to ensure sustainability should be discussed in detail with stakeholders from the beginning and reviewed throughout the entire program implementation process for a smooth transition before the program's termination.

The following are some areas that would encourage sustainability.

- *Invest in next generation leadership development.* As emerging leaders develop their capacities and careers, their approach to issues and leadership will be influenced by the program, and their interconnectedness will provide strength to the movement. Youth and women, in particular, can offer perspectives that have been traditionally marginalized and can more directly change the status quo.
- *Conduct trainings of trainers to build a strong pool of local experts.* Training participants should be expected to train other leaders to build capacity, affect change and expand local expertise over time.
- *Build the capacity and expand the activities of organizations that will continue the gains of the program in the future.* The program should encourage organizations to explore aspects of the program's activities and goals for which they would like to take responsibility, and then identify and fill any organizational capacity gaps so they can undertake these efforts.
- *Support and develop ongoing networks and collaborations.* Creating and supporting ways for Fellows to interact and connect, including establishing spaces to do so outside the program, will help establish collaborations and networks essential for sustaining the work and program gains over the long term.
- *Provide capacity building, mentorship and technical assistance to networks to strengthen their governance structures and define their missions and strategic plans.* Networks can be extremely effective in providing a space for peers to have

continued dialogue, support and collaboration. Networks should be developed and strengthened through trainings, mentorship and technical assistance to provide an ongoing structure for support and collaboration after the program is no longer involved.

- *Build institutional capacity.* One of the most effective ways to ensure sustainability is through changes in programs within larger systems. Governments, universities and other institutions are far reaching and can have a strong impact on broader communities.
- *Explore a wide variety of ways to work with or influence the government.* Programs can collaborate with government entities or influence policy through: building advocacy capacities in the country, supporting participants involved in policy design or implementation, supporting collaborations between nongovernmental organizations and government agencies, designing and facilitating capacity-building and leadership development programs for government officials and staff, and facilitating trust building.

## Program Design

The program should be designed to encourage flexibility and innovation within a strategic framework, as discussed above.

**Invest in individuals as top priority:** An overarching priority for any program of this nature should be to build thoughtful, well prepared leaders. While focusing on individuals, leadership development should also emphasize the need to go beyond personal transformation to ensure the ability to work with others to affect organizations, communities and systems.

**Develop a transparent, rigorous and strategic selection process:** The Fellows and partners largely drive a program of this nature. The selection processes should include, but not be limited to, the following components.

- *Transparent, rigorous and strategic selection of Fellows.* A rigorous selection process, with applications open to all and a selection committee of stakeholders, will provide legitimacy to the program and garner a stronger commitment from the Fellows. The combination of Fellows should be carefully determined in accordance with the program's goals, and Fellows themselves should be representative of a wide variety of fields that intersect with the issues the program seeks to address in a particular context.
- *Transparent, rigorous and strategic selection of organizations and institutions.* When selecting an organization or an institution, it is also important to develop a rigorous process, which may be different than the one for individuals but will also affect the program's legitimacy and effectiveness.
- *Strategic selection of Fellows within participating organizations and institutions.* When an organization or institution is selected as a partner for the program, individual change agents should be identified at a variety of levels, including high-level leaders with the authority to enact change, serve as allies and support participants. Selecting more than one person within an organization may make the program more effective. The selection should be determined through a transparent and collective reflection process as part of the initial stage of working with the organization or institution.





**Set clear expectations for participants entering the program, while encouraging self-direction, innovation and risk-taking:** From the beginning, the program should define clear expectations for the Fellows, organizations, networks or other stakeholders. Participants should be involved in this process, and it should be clear that they are responsible and accountable for meeting these expectations. As the program provides opportunities for growth, development and collaboration, expectations should also be established and communicated to encourage self-initiative and innovation, with space for risk-taking and failure.

**Develop an integrated approach that explicitly links activities and program goals and is clearly communicated to stakeholders:** The program's activities and initiatives should be strategically defined and integrated to support the program's goals. The ways in which the activities relate to each other should be discussed with participants and stakeholders to encourage deeper understanding and impact.

**Provide targeted financial incentives to speed up a change in direction:** Employing economic incentives for a field where resources are extremely limited can jump-start ideas or initiatives. Mini-grants are effective in encouraging Fellows to practice newly acquired skills in a safe environment, to seek out others for collaboration, and to experiment in ways they may not have the chance to otherwise.

## Program Management

**Design effective and efficient communications mechanisms in collaboration with stakeholders:** Programs should establish clear and strong communications systems that inform Fellows and stakeholders of activities, offer opportunities for continued connection, and provide resources such as newsletters, Web sites, a wiki and social media updates.

**Ensure consistent space for dialogue and reflection among staff and stakeholders:** Programs should establish a process for staff, Fellows and stakeholders to collectively assess gains, learn from each other, and articulate their needs and challenges.

**Develop a collaborative monitoring and evaluation process from the beginning:** A monitoring and evaluation component should be implemented simultaneously with the program. Through regular opportunities to collaboratively reflect from the beginning, stakeholders should be encouraged to identify what they are accomplishing, where there are challenges, how their work fits into the larger context and how it relates to the program's goals. They should also have the opportunity to reflect on the larger program's ability to achieve its goals and identify ways of moving forward. This type of feedback loop will provide the program staff with necessary information to plan, allow new ideas to emerge and adjust the program. It will also help them document the work being done.

**Directly align the monitoring and tracking system with the program's goals and intentions:** A monitoring and tracking system should be designed to capture information that reflects the ways in which the program may or may not accomplish its goals. The data gathered should be quantitative and qualitative in nature, with data categories directly related to the intended program outcomes. As a program evolves, the monitoring and tracking system should be reviewed and adjusted accordingly. Participants should be accountable for reporting their accomplishments and challenges as they relate to program goals, and roles should be clearly defined and communicated from the beginning.

**Develop a participatory evaluation methodology that includes key stakeholders in the process:** A participatory approach to evaluation allows for collective sense making of program gains and redefining the approach and direction of the program. Capturing the nuances, depth and breadth of a social change program requires the involvement of the stakeholders, who understand best their experiences and circumstances and the extent to which an activity or program has influenced their work and lives. Stakeholders must be active participants in the evaluation process to ensure accurate and relevant representation of their program experiences.



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