



Analysis of the Effectiveness of Grants Awarded by ESTHER Ireland

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Follows Assessment of Effectiveness of ESTHER Ireland in 2021

FINDINGS

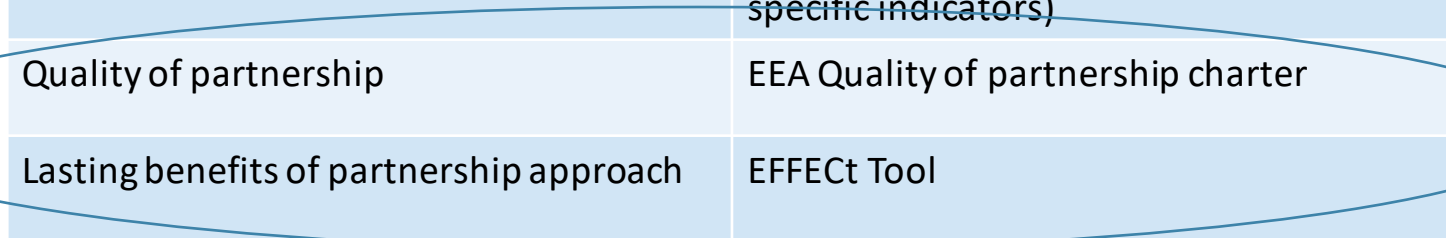
- ESTHER Ireland fundamental to success of partnerships
- Attributed to grants, events, publications, networking opportunities, assessment tools, accreditation + investment of time, energy and passion
- Clear value for money
- Need greater resources

BUT..... insufficient data to show evidence of impact and effectiveness is a significant disadvantage

Evaluation framework for Institutional Health Partnerships

Three tiers of evaluation

Evaluation Domain	Approach
Effectiveness of partnership intervention	Use project M&E tools (intervention specific indicators)
Quality of partnership	EEA Quality of partnership charter
Lasting benefits of partnership approach	EFFECt Tool





Follows Assessment of Effectiveness of ESTHER Ireland in 2021

- Not role of ESTHER Ireland to monitor partnerships; partnerships responsible for their M&E
- Grants process “excessively cumbersome”
- Intentional focus on quality of partnership as evidence shows this is key to effectiveness and impact
 - Criteria for small grants
 - EFFECt tool
 - Accreditation of partnerships
- However, we do have a large amount of documentation on partnerships from the grant programme



Analysis of the Effectiveness of Grants awarded by ESTHER Ireland

- The purpose of this review was to assess the achievements resulting from the ESTHER grants, particularly the results and outcomes achieved by the partnerships, and also how the partnerships were strengthened.
- Examined the period from 2014-2021, during which 50 grants awarded to a value of €411,537



Analysis of the Effectiveness of Grants awarded by ESTHER Ireland

- IGHN contracted consultant Andrew Jones, Global Health Associates, UK
- The study was conducted in different phases: Evaluation Framework, thematic review of documents, 'Data collection', Focus Groups (at the Partnerships Forum 2022).
- Qualitative data analysis methodologies were used to scrutinise documentary evidence in partnerships grant reports.



Challenges in undertaking analysis of grants

- Narrative reporting of results were the main source of information.
- Limited quantitative data collected on grants to date, made analysing impact of grants challenging.
- Documents reviewed tended to list activities carried out rather than probing the effect of those activities.



Context – Partnership Approach

- From the literature, the Health Partnership model applied elsewhere was shown to achieve results which were equal to or better than those achieved through more “traditional” development interventions.



Findings – Results and Outcomes

- Given the very small amounts of funding “...many of the achievements under the ESTHER Ireland programme are outstanding.”
- “A rich diversity of activities within partnership projects funded through ESTHER that have had impact at a local, district or national level.”



Findings – Impact

- Report acknowledges that some individual grants achieved a disproportionately large impact considering the grant size and others report numerous achievements.
- Others have expanded their activities well beyond initial ambitions.



Findings – Funding

- Report recognises that it would be “*almost impossible*” for an emerging partnership to access similar funding elsewhere and that *ESTHER* funding was also helpful in leveraging additional funding from other donors.



Findings – Partnership Strengthening

- *“...the grants received through ESTHER Ireland have been the most important contribution to the establishment and continuation of partnerships and their activities.”*
- *Support given by ESTHER Ireland staff and the EFFECt Tool also highlighted as a very positive contribution.*



Findings – Partnership Strengthening cont.

- *Findings point to positive results associated with characteristics of quality partnerships.*
- *Most commonly mentioned success factor was establishment of good relationships.*
- *Other factors include regular clear communication, shared values, understanding of cultural setting of each partner, institutional commitment.*



Findings – Strengthening of Irish health services

- *Report highlights that the majority of partnerships have not focused on this to-date.*
- *Of those that have, benefits include involvement of local community, learning around better utilization of limited resources, inter-disciplinary approach, breaking-down of hierarchical barriers in clinical settings, and gaining valuable clinical experience.*



Actions Taken – Improved Impact Monitoring

- Recommendation of report to request goal, outcomes and outputs with SMART indicators in all applications.
- *ESTHER completed a review and update of application and reporting templates in April 2023.*



Next steps

- *New grant round (June 2023) trialing more specific questions on benefits to Irish Health System and stronger emphasis on M&E at application and reporting stages including clear expressions of goal, outcomes and outputs with SMART indicators.*

Objectives - what specific changes do you expect to see within a year?	Indicators and targets - what indicators will you use to show this has been achieved?	Data collection – who will do this and when?	Data analysis – who will do this and when?



Next steps – Funding

- *Seek additional funding for partnerships and partnership projects – Multi-annual funding? Larger grants?*
- *Continue to catalyse new partnerships*
- *More targeted support for partnerships*
 - *Partnerships in HSE priority countries*
 - *Partnerships which strengthen health systems*
 - *Partnerships with key national institutions or programmes*



Next steps – strengthening Irish health services

- *Developed assessment tool to facilitate application of learning in Irish health service*
- *Plan measures for learning exchanges*



Next steps - continued

- *Use report to inform planning of ESTHER Programme from 2024 – visit to Dublin by Andrew Jones planned for October to meet with HSE and IGHN*

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