

Date of Session: February 18, 2019

Title of Session: Using Benchmarking for SGB Impact Measurement and Management

Session Description: Benchmarks are a critical tool for contextualizing performance monitoring data and turning data into action, yet only about one in four development organizations uses benchmarking as a monitoring and evaluation tool. This session will explore the opportunities and challenges of using benchmarking for SGB support programs. It will be led by the Global Accelerator Learning Initiative (GALI), an ANDE program that has collected performance data on over 13,000 ventures from over 200 accelerator programs that is now in the process of developing a benchmarking tool for the sector.

Speakers:

- Matt Guttentag, Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs
- Victoria Hume, Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs

Session Objectives:

The objective of this session is to discuss common challenges in benchmarking, specifically performance benchmarking. Additionally, the GALI team will share the tool currently in development that uses GALI data to help accelerators benchmark their program.

Lead Discussants' Remarks:

Why benchmark? World Bank lays out three uses of performance benchmarking:

- Planning: Helping set reasonable targets
- Performance management: Placing outcomes in context (are they good/bad)
- Performance management: Identifying outliers

What do we mean by benchmark?

- External (using data from across organizations, usually requires this data to be compiled by some sort of third party) vs. internal (using data from across your own programs)

Who in the room has developed benchmarks?

- Elyssa (Skoll) – described using a benchmark to identify minimum costs
- Jennifer (ACDI/VOCA) – described using a benchmark to determine whether to scale an investment
- Liza (Echoing Green) – has experience with internal benchmarking
- Value for Money assessments and frameworks used for funder reporting
- Nicole (FinDev) – has done benchmarking from a global dataset to compare relevant sectors/geographies

About GALI:

- Data from 13,000+ accelerated and non-accelerated ventures
- Phase II moving toward more focused research at a regional/country level rather than a global level, and focusing on building accelerator capacity particularly around the practical use of data.

The GALI tool, which is still in development, allows users to benchmark their accelerated cohort against:

1. The ventures their program rejected
2. Ventures accelerated by other programs
3. Non-accelerated ventures

The tool also offers various criteria to be used to set your benchmark, such as by region or gender makeup of the founding team, if the ventures have any prior acceleration, what kind of financing situation ventures may have at application, years in operation etc.

Crowd-sourcing challenges:

- Confidentiality issues related to data sharing
- Revenue, how formal the business is
- Convincing management to benchmark at all
- Too much variability of programs
- Bandwidth and resources
- Lack of incentive to provide data

Issues discussed with the room:

Data collection, comparability

- Potential solutions: IRIS, Acumen, rating organizations, World Vision data collection

Confidentiality

- Early stage entrepreneurs particularly challenging, did GDPR compliance project

Time and resources

- When does it become a benchmark?

Q&A Overview:

What is the timeline for the GALI tool?

- It is still fairly new; we hope to have partners test the tool, and adapt this year (2019).

Does it make sense to benchmark against programs with different goals (i.e. debt financing)

- We are trying to build in some of that capability in the tool with the filtering options, so that it does make sense to benchmark with this dataset. We have created some filtering based on what ventures hope to get out of program.

What are the different filters?

- Region, Legal status, Team gender, sector, social/environmental motives

Will the tool be updated as you collect new data?

- Yes

Is the data in the GALI database gender disaggregated?

- Yes, to a limited extent. We can identify "team gender," which tells us whether the founding team is comprised of all men, all women, or a mix of both. Given the nature of the question in the survey, it is difficult to understand what "mix" means, since we have no way of identify the actual role the women on the team play.

Key Takeaways:

1. This session is an example of how GALI data is being used to help accelerators benchmark and what can be done with the
2. Common challenges of benchmarking: confidentiality, data quality/confidence in the data, sample size, bandwidth and resources
3. Solutions: contextualized data, certifications/standards, getting the data, feedback loops

Links/Resources mentioned or discussed during session:

- [GALI Website](#)
- If you're an accelerator interested in testing the GALI tool, please reach out to Victoria.Hume@aspeninstitute.org