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From a Funder's Perspective: CCAT Quantifies Strengths

The CCAT isn't just for nonprofits. Private foundations and corporate funders of various sizes have also used the CCAT to contribute to non-profit capacity-building efforts.

For the Pfizer Foundation, the CCAT was crucial to their Southern HIV/AIDS Prevention Initiative, a program to support culturally appropriate prevention programs targeting multi-cultural communities in nine Southern states.

Pfizer first administered the tool at the beginning of their multi-year capacity building initiative in order to identify the organizations' strengths and opportunities for growth. At the end of the first year, the tool was re-administered in order to see the level of progress and to better tailor capacity-building activities as needed.

"The tool quantified the nonprofits' strengths in the four capacities and then we determined what capacity-building assistance to offer," said Erica Weinberg, Assistant Director of Global Philanthropy at Pfizer Inc. Nonprofits were then offered management assistance, executive coaching or board development, based on the organization's scores.

Although the program is still in process, results so far have been impressive.

"Some organizations were able to put up websites that they didn't have before and now they're better able to reach people in the community. Other organizations have better board and governance relationships. In one instance, we provided executive coaching to an organization with a new Executive Director who was really struggling," Weinberg said. Other capacity-building efforts also led to board expansion and cross training nonprofit staff.

Both the CCAT and the intensive capacity building were new approaches for Pfizer.

"This paid off tenfold," Weinberg said. "I would absolutely recommend this to any other funder. When you're thinking about impact in communities over time, investing in capacity building is the key to making organizations sustainable. It's about strengthening the organizations to better deliver services and serve their constituents."

Additional information about the CCAT, including a sample final report and answers to frequently asked questions, is also available online at www.tccgrp.com/CCAT.html or by contacting the CCAT Sales & Support Desk toll-free at 1-866-470-2258 or via email at CCAT@tccgrp.com.

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