Evaluating partnerships is a complex issue to tackle, upon which the OECD recommends examining three dimensions: A partnership’s design and functioning; a partnership project’s results; and a partnership added value.

While a partnership project’s results can be evaluated through the conventional methods used by many foundations, the assessment of the partnership design, functioning and added value are less frequently assessed and demands a specific approach. This helps to explain why there is a lack of information sharing in the philanthropic sector regarding what works and what hasn’t in our collaboratives.

In helping to fill the gaps and shed light on the successes and failures of our partnerships, we are committed to communicating about our collaboratives through a variety of products and platforms. Such examples include several case studies that we have commissioned and released, with the latest concerning the European Fund for the Balkans.

At the end of this year, two long-standing initiatives within NEF will close: the Fikra Tunisia Joint Fund and the FutureLab programme. We will share with the community a short evaluation on these two endeavours, aiming to put into practise this multidimensional prism of collaborative evaluation.

For us here at NEF, we believe to have a good knowledge on what makes a partnership effective in terms of its design and implementation. It is now our responsibility to ensure that these different elements - common agenda, long term planning and focus on results, predictable funding, inclusive governance, clear division of roles, and leadership - are well
understood and integrated from the onset. This will lay the foundation for a project development and delivery that leads us to social and policy answers to the variety of challenges our societies face.

Peggy Sailler, Executive Director

2. HIGHLIGHTS

Case Study: European Fund for the Balkans

What difference can a collaborative fund make in as complex and divided a region as the Western Balkans? It turns out: a great difference. On the EFB’s 10th anniversary, this case study explores how the fund became a uniting force for the region. This includes shoring up pro-EU sentiment, promoting democratic development, and boosting cross-border cooperation on the region’s journey towards EU accession. Clear and concise, this case study presents the EFB’s history, the value it adds for many in the region, what really makes it work, and what lessons it holds for regional collaborative funding.

Read the Case Study

Philanthropy House Brown Bag Lunches

In order to facilitate collaboration, share learnings and get to know colleagues from the different organisations based in the Philanthropy House, NEF has supported the organisation of monthly Brown Bag Lunches. Lunch topics could include anything from a personal interest to a professional task, and should be diverse in organizational representation. On June 7th, we held our first Lunch with about 30 colleagues in attendance, which included a presentation on Systems Change Philanthropy.

3. UPDATES
The first call for coalitions to address the shrinking space for civil society in Europe closed on 15th June. Over 200 proposals from all over Europe were received, which shows on one hand the extent to which the shrinking space is a reality in Europe and on the other, the will of civil society organisations to form for a common front to defend their space.

Children and Violence Evaluation Challenge Fund (CVECF)

As part of a wider scope to develop the Children and Violence Evaluation Challenge Fund’s communications activities, in June 2018, CVECF finalized a new Communications and Advocacy Strategy. In tandem with the goal to reach a wider audience and expand funding for evaluation research on violence prevention programming, this strategy also puts an emphasis on building local capacity and promoting local leadership, which will be integrated into the upcoming Call for Proposals in Tanzania and Uganda as well as in the release of past research findings.

European Practice EXchange (EPEX)

EPEX’s final publication will be released at the end of 2018. The publication provides a summary of shared learnings by practitioners on de-radicalisation.

European Fund for the Balkans (EFB)

In 2018, the European Fund for the Balkans celebrated its 10th Anniversary, organizing a set of activities that were envisaged as a complementary feed to the final two-day conference that was held on April 16 -17, 2018. Over 300 people – members of the EFB community, EFB partners, current and former officials, civil society activists, influencers, business executives, thinkers and innovators — sent a message that the future of the Balkans is inextricably linked to the future of Europe. The event highlights included the launch of the Declaration of European Balkan Partnership — a visionary document designed to reignite the spark of the EU enlargement process and the democratic transformation of the Western Balkan countries, which was outlined by the region’s and Europe’s most prominent thinkers and influencers.

European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM)
EPIM has confirmed a new five-year strategy paving the way for the years 2019-2023 which aims at deepening impact and enhancing sustainability of the own operations as well as in the field of migration. Supported work will aim to see migrants and other members of the societies they live in benefit from a European policy framework and effective practice that provide for inclusive societies and humane and durable responses to migration, based on European commitment to universal human rights and social justice. All foundations currently involved in the programme have expressed their interest in continuing their engagement in EPIM and new foundations have signaled interest in joining.

Meanwhile, a call for interest on ‘Rethinking Inclusion’ was launched as part of the Thematic Fund on Building Inclusive Societies. EPIM will also represented at the Fundamental Rights Forum organised by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) with the session ‘From 'good practices' to system change: how to rethink migrant inclusion from a community perspective?’ on 25 September 2018.

**Fikra**
In its closing, Fikra is capitalising on its success stories to share with its stakeholders in a ‘legacy’ document. This stock-taking exercise aims to explain Fikra’s mission, its unique approach and the changes it triggered in North-West communities in Tunisia during its 5 years of existence.

**FutureLab Europe**
FutureLab Europe’s seventh generation will reconvene in Brussels in September 2018 on the occasion of the Autumn Conference. During this conference, an exposition of the pictures taken for the project “Crossed Paths of Europe” will be organised in partnership with the association Plateforme citoyenne d’aide aux réfugiés. Equally important, the advisory group meeting at the Autumn Conference will be an opportunity to include alumnis of FutureLab Europe in the discussion about new forms that the programme could take in the future.

**Joint Action for Farmers Organisations in West Africa (JAFOWA)**
At its upcoming grantees’ workshop in Senegal on 3-5 July 2018, JAFOWA will hold a meeting with its advisory board to discuss the scope and guidelines for its 2nd call for proposals. The idea is to reflect on how the programme has progressed. Its theory of change should be adapted to a changing environment, where the support of an agro-ecological transition has been increasing in relevance and has become more dominant on the policy agenda across Africa. Nonetheless, the funding for and knowledge of agro-ecological practices remains scarce.
Transnational Forum on Integrated Community Care (TransForm)
The first transnational conference, “Making the case for Integrated Community Care,” will take place in Hamburg on 24-26 September 2018. About 75 delegates are expected to attend the event, which will include panel discussions, keynote speeches, working groups and site visits to local initiatives.

4. UPCOMING EVENTS

25 September 2018
Futurelab Europe 2018 Autumn Conference
Brussels

26 September 2018
TransForm Advisory Board Meeting
Hamburg

23-24 October 2018
EPIM Steering Committee
Stuttgart

25 October 2018
Civitates Steering Committee 2018
Barcelona