

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION AIC 2016: #19

1. Title:

Integrating “lean startup” principles and implementations science to support interventions in international aid

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3. Key words:

International aid; “lean startup”; social enterprise; case study

4. Abstract text:

a. Background and aims

Core concepts and processes in the “lean” approach to the startup of for-profit businesses have recently been applied to the start-up of social enterprises. These adapted concepts are consistent with several core principles of implementation science. This paper explores (1) the similarities between these two fields of knowledge; (2) ways in which these two fields might be integrated; and (3) how this integrated knowledge might be applied in the context of international aid.

b. Methods

A framework based on the factors and sequence of activities summarized in the “Business model canvas” from the lean approach to startups and those in the Hexagon tool from implementation science is used to identify similarities and differences in the core concepts and processes used in the two fields. An integration of these core concepts and processes in the two fields is then proposed. It draws on the similarities in concepts and processes in the two fields but also adds the advantages that are unique to each approach. The potential application of this integrated knowledge is explored through case studies using two international aid organizations: Kiva and Fulcrum Aid.

c. Conclusion

Knowledge transfer between implementation science and fields of knowledge that may initially appear to have little overlap holds the potential to enrich both fields in ways, and allow applications that hold the promise of increasing the effectiveness of international aid.