DevCom
Informal Network of DAC
Development Communicators

OECD
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

GOOD PRACTICES
IN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

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FOREWORD

In a changing world communication about development challenges and advocacy for change have become increasingly complex. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are being revisited in the context of the post-2015 framework and official development assistance (ODA) from OECD countries is less central to development debates than it was before because of the rise in the number of new donors and funding mechanisms. At the same time, the number of issues on the development agenda seems to be increasing (poverty reduction, climate change, inequalities, etc.). This study, which has been supported by input from members of the OECD Development Centre's Informal Network of Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Development Communicators (DevCom), has been developed as a compass for orientating development practitioners involved in communication. It specifically identifies some of the most pressing challenges faced by directors and senior staff in charge of communication in development ministries and official aid agencies in OECD and non-OECD countries alike. It offers insights into practical tools, innovative practices and emerging trends in the field of development communication. For instance, it helps in making sense of the public's uneven – and, at times, even seemingly contradictory – position regarding aid, by highlighting the importance and the limitations of opinion polls in helping inform and develop communication strategies.

Created in 1988, DevCom is a global network of directors of public affairs and senior communication staff of development ministries and agencies. DevCom supports donors in addressing the challenges of communication about development and development activities through the exchange of information, with comparative analysis and peer learning. This is done to improve accountability and development impacts. With more than two decades of experience in analysing strategies for informing and influencing public awareness and support for development co-operation, DevCom has built a strong capacity to generate, harvest and disseminate good practices in development communication globally. This study has a number of objectives: to compile lessons learned from the DevCom Network through the years; to create a collection of good practices; and to add to the wider dialogue on issues facing development communicators and practitioners around the world.

The topics covered in this study range from the broad, such as public opinion for development co-operation and the use of new media and communications tools, to the specific, such as the design of communication strategies by development agencies and the challenges faced in monitoring and measuring the impact of communication interventions. In addition, new issues on the agenda of international co-operation are analysed and unpacked from a development communication perspective. These include challenges such as addressing and financing climate change interventions, the changing traditional donor-recipient relationship, and the increase in the number of actors in development co-operation. Such global challenges mean that development ministries and agencies need to reflect more systematically on what their mission is and how to leverage their communication strategy to support their political and technical positioning.

The study also looks into ways of navigating these challenges by offering insights and suggestions for policy makers. The rapid increase in the use of new and social media is also assessed, contrasted with the opportunities and risks it poses for development communication, in particular for official ministries and agencies. The lessons, examples and policy recommendations from this DevCom study offer forward-looking insights for practitioners. These can help emerging

donors manage how they communicate on these issues that are quite new to the public, allow non-state actors, such as foundations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), to reflect on their own communication practices and provide a reference tool to heads of communication in development ministries and agencies. The rich experience of DevCom members is used as a basis to illustrate some of the challenges faced and to identify solutions and best practices.

The OECD Development Centre would like to thank the members of DevCom who shared their experiences and inputs in DevCom events, and on earlier versions of this publication. The development of the publication was undertaken under the leadership of Bathylle Missika, and co-ordinated by Alpha Barry and Joanna Wisniewska in collaboration with Florence Longuève. The team would like to express its gratitude to Peter da Costa for his substantive contributions, to Stephen Jessel for his inputs and constructive comments, and to Delphine Grandrieux for her support and guidance. Finally, the publication greatly benefited from comments and suggestions from Laure Brillaud, Chloé Coussen Dauban, Christophe de Sahb, Alessandra Fiedler, Emilie Romon and Noémie Videau.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the deadline for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) fast approaching, donor communication about the outcomes and the post-2015 development agenda is of critical importance. Communication about development is essential to ensure the sustained attention to the issues which is necessary in getting the essential commitment from world leaders and the wider public to give meaning to the process. Development communication is a vital part of the political and policy processes. It is not obvious that the original MDGs would have been agreed upon without the pressure and energy that came from the 2000 Millennium Summit and the Jubilee 2000 Debt Campaign (which started in 1995). There is also hope that the post-2015 agenda will have a broader impact than that laid down under the original goals in terms both of development outcomes and of the data needed to monitor these, as well as in terms of the range of goals and policy areas. Issues such as inequality, the environment and climate change, policy coherence for development (covering topics such as tax justice) raise the distinct possibility that truly global goals will be agreed – setting targets for both developing and developed countries. This will mean not only more complicated topics but also a more politicised development agenda. Communication to audiences in both recipient and donor countries will be more important than ever in creating the necessary momentum.

This report reviews and highlights some key issues in the current debate on development communication. To do so it draws on experiences and inputs from members of the Informal Network of Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Development Communicators (DevCom). DevCom is a global network of directors of public affairs and senior communication staff of foreign/development ministries and official agencies, multilateral institutions, and regional development banks. DevCom, which was founded in 1988, is a platform that supports donors in addressing the challenges of communication about development and development activities through exchanges of information, comparative analysis and peer learning.

The report starts by looking at one of the fundamental elements regarding development communication: the monitoring of public support. Not only is this essential to justify the use of public funds, but public support and understanding of development co-operation are also core elements of many organisations' mandates and missions. There are several concerns regarding the methodology of polling regarding development co-operation, since few polls are standardised through time and across countries (the Eurobarometer being the notable exception). This makes it difficult to reach conclusions about trends. Nonetheless, it does seem that the public in most donor countries are becoming more sceptical about development co-operation. Publics also tend not to be well informed about what their country is doing in respect of development aid and the economic crisis seems to have had an impact on support. For all donors – large development banks or small non-governmental organisations (NGOs) – understanding public opinion is crucial, as it is a key element of legitimacy. Linked to this is the second topic covered by this report: the question of understanding the audience. To reach people, whether to explain policy or to motivate them towards a certain action, it is essential to know that audience as a first step in determining the approach. Audience segmentation, with adjusted messages and tools to reach specific groups, can make all the difference.

Building on the above, the report then looks at communications strategies. Whereas only a few years ago they were somewhat rare among development ministries and agencies, they are now becoming common currency. Some are on their third or fourth generation and others have developed specific strategies (e.g. for the use of new media). This professionalisation of development communication is also seen in the next section, which covers the question of the measurement of the impact of these communications strategies and activities. Evaluation in this type of area is always challenging, and often ends up being built on the measurement of activities and output (and less on impact and effect). Nonetheless, steps can be taken to ensure that from the start interventions are designed to be monitored and that even if no perfect solutions exist much can be done.

One of the key challenges of development communicators, in particular when faced with sceptical audiences, is how to demonstrate results. Though this sometimes leads donors to simplify their messages and focus on the output of their activities, it is much more important to show the impact of the work done. With an international development agenda that is growing in complexity (the MDGs being one example) and an audience that is more aware of the world than ever before, simple messages are unlikely to be enough. Though there is no easy recommendation as to how donors can deal with this issue, it is clear that partnerships will be essential to the solution. Communication is central to accountability and with many actors (donors, partner governments, NGOs, private sector, etc.) all playing a part in the development effort it is difficult to imagine telling a complete story without partnerships. Two central pillars of successful communication on development co-operation are the use of new communications tools and global education. The former is essential in reaching younger audiences, as most ministries and development agencies now understand. Moreover, for development communications it offers unique opportunities to link an audience to activities and people far away. Global education in many ways provides the underpinnings that are needed to understand the positioning of development co-operation in the world. Furthermore, with messages on development co-operation becoming increasingly complex it will only become more important that audiences have a better grasp of the issues.

Since the creation of the MDGs, the landscape of international development co-operation has significantly changed. Emerging economies have joined as development actors and some of them now play an important role in shaping the context of international co-operation. They have also made the traditional "donor-recipient" framework obsolete, as some countries can be considered as fulfilling both roles. Also, the question of the nature and form of development co-operation with middle-income countries has now been put squarely on the agenda of policy makers.

Citizens and other stakeholders concerned about poverty reduction, the environment and the effective use of taxpayers' money have joined the conversation. Thanks to new media tools they can do so in ways unimaginable before. Whereas the design of the original MDGs was largely the remit of governments and international organisations, this time citizens, the private sector and foundations are participating actively in the global debate. The development sector is only just starting to discover the potential of new media, but it is clear that the impact on issues such as transparency, effectiveness and global education is significant. Finally, developing countries, at the heart of development partnerships, are more than ever taking the lead in designing their development strategies and programmes. This is partially due to the rise of new sources of funds (e.g. natural resource booms, improved domestic resource mobilisation, increases in remittances and foreign direct investment [FDI]). But it is also due to recognition that context and local ownership are essential for success, another development that is likely to grow in significance.

The further involvement of developing countries will support inclusiveness and broaden effects. It is also likely to strengthen MDG 8 and ensure “global goals” for the next development agenda which will include measures to be taken by donor countries which may be politically sensitive (such as commitments on climate change goals). As positive as this development is, however, it poses new challenges from a communications perspective.

In this evolving context, the importance of communication for development is likely to increase, as it already has since the inception of the MDGs. It is thus important to take stock of what worked and what did not. Understanding how this knowledge could be better applied to stimulate public and political engagement towards innovative, inclusive, sustainable development strategies is more important than ever.

Public dialogue around international commitments, aid budgets and the future of development co-operation is crucial to creating better-informed citizens committed to sustainable development. It can also provide impetus to the global development debate and help secure renewed political engagement for both the design and the implementation of development goals. Communication plays a crucial role in intensifying support, creating political space for policies and mobilising resources. Particularly in this time of economic crisis, public dialogue is an important instrument for sustaining commitment to fighting poverty.

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Chapter 1
Monitoring Public Support

In recent years, there has been an upsurge in investment in public opinion polling by donor agencies in both OECD and non-OECD countries. These agencies want to know, on a more consistent and evidence-based basis, how the people who live, work and pay taxes in their countries perceive their work, as both actors in, and funders of, development. Specifically, they want to acquire greater insight into the opinions and perceptions of those who vote and pay the taxes that enable governments of developed countries to maintain aid programmes in the first place. The financial crisis has affected budgets and put pressure on governments to cut back on expenditure related to official development assistance (ODA). Thus, polls tracking public support for aid have become all the more critical for aid agencies, which find themselves having to do more to defend their budgets, programmes and interventions in developing countries. Development aid from OECD-DAC members fell by 6% in 2012, as compared to 2011, according to the latest ODA figures.

This chapter starts by examining the figures, as well as the underlying trends behind an overview of polls commissioned by OECD and non-OECD aid agencies and governments. It seeks to shed light on what the recent polls are saying, to understand the patterns and shifting trends in public support, to establish why these shifts are happening, and to get a sense of what lies behind these poll figures. This includes understanding, for example, whether the public's knowledge about aid is or is not superficial, whether there is a knowledge deficit among the public at large, and to what degree there is scepticism about the effectiveness and utility of aid. The chapter also explores whether these polls are sufficient to point towards continued political and public support for development aid, and to what degree there is a need further to professionalise communication on development co-operation. To what degree is there a need to go beyond polling and to invest more in areas such as communication strategy, communicating results, improving evaluation and measurement? These are subjects of later chapters.

What the polls are saying: key messages and overall trends

While specific dynamics differ from country to country, a consensus appears among the public in OECD countries that, despite hard times in many donor countries, development co-operation is still worth supporting. This opinion is not simply the consequence of a sense of moral obligation to "do something", but also rational, taking into account the impact that development co-operation can register in reducing poverty and stimulating growth and jobs in developing countries. An overwhelming majority of Europeans believe today, as they did in 2009, that development co-operation is important and worthy of continued backing (DG Comm, 2012).

On the other hand, while people in a large number of countries remain broadly supportive of development aid, they are also wary of increasing aid levels given the need to cut domestic expenditure in the face of the financial crisis. In seven European countries the latest figures point to a clear decline in support for increasing aid and to a growth in support for reducing it. In the United Kingdom (UK), for example, a growing majority would support short-term cuts in the aid budget in order to manage the deficit at home, although the suggestion is that support for aid will rise again in the medium to longer term. This suggests a correlation between domestic hardship and willingness to help reduce poverty overseas (Lindstrom and Henson, 2011).

Some of those polled seem to believe that more, not less, should be sent overseas. Americans, for example, are relatively ill-informed about how much or how little their country spends on aid. Asked to take a guess, their responses largely overestimate their country's aid levels, suggesting that they would like the United States – the world's largest financier of development assistance in absolute terms – to spend as much as ten times more.[1] More than six out of 10 Europeans think aid levels should be maintained and a subset feels it should be increased. The majority of French citizens polled believe that for aid to be more effective it needs to be increased.[2]

There is also a sense that aid is seen by the public as having less than the desired effect, although the results are somewhat contradictory. More than half of respondents in an October 2011 poll believed that most UK aid to developing countries is wasted. At the same time, they felt that the UK government is performing relatively well in managing aid – an apparent contradiction (Lindstrom and Henson, 2011). More (though less than half) of the Belgians polled in 2010 felt that their aid was badly spent. In a separate poll, the majority of Europeans cite corruption as a key factor in whether or not aid is effective (DG Comm, 2012).

Another key message emerging from recent polls is that people are largely under-informed or uninformed about the impact of aid. This raises questions regarding the effectiveness and validity of opinion polls about aid and international development. Polling conducted for the latest (2012) Eurobarometer aid survey showed that 44% of Europeans said they had no knowledge about where their own country's development aid goes, while 53% said they know nothing about where European Union (EU) aid goes. In the UK, only one in five considered themselves to be well informed about aid (Lindstrom and Henson, 2011). There are also significant variations depending on the poll and the questions asked. However, once people are better informed, their views tend to change. For example, a UK poll found that 30% of those who were uninformed, when informed about poverty levels in India, changed their views and supported the levels of aid to the country (Lindstrom and Henson, 2011).

This information gap is seen as one explanation for many of the apparent contradictions in the polling results from country to country. A number of other factors, such as demographics, also raise interesting questions. The more educated people are, the more likely they are to think helping developing countries is important; the less likely they are to say that aid should be reduced; and the more willing they are to pay more for groceries and products from developing countries. Furthermore, according to one survey, the older respondents are, the more likely they are to support reducing aid (DG Comm, 2012).

Other trends also appear, with differing degrees of emphasis depending on the poll. One is that citizens trust governments less and want to do more directly (e.g. through voluntary activities). Another is that trade and private sector activity are increasingly being seen as more fruitful avenues for pursuing development co-operation than in previous years. Similarly more citizens believe that aid to emerging or middle-income economies, such as India and South Africa, should be phased out in favour of aid to the poorest countries and fragile states (DG Comm, 2012).

Some donors have thus developed more "economic" and trade approaches to their development co-operation and many have refocused official development assistance towards fragile states – though whether this has caused public opinion shifts, or is a result of them, is hard to assess.

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[1] In 2010, American Public Opinion on Foreign Aid survey by WorldPublicOpinion.org, Americans asked how much they thought would be an "appropriate" percentage of the federal budget going to foreign aid, the median response was 10%. In fact just 1% of the federal budget went to foreign aid.

[2] Almost one in two French citizens polled (44%) believed that despite the current financial crisis aid should be increased if it is to achieve the desired effect; 38% wanted aid levels maintained while 18% wanted aid reduced (Ipsos 2012).

What the figures say (country-specific findings)

To unpack these general messages, it is worth looking at the numbers emerging from recent polls conducted in OECD and non-OECD countries. While some of the polls are repeated at regular intervals, others are one-off studies, therefore making it harder to reach conclusions about long-term trends. The methodologies and questions used also tend to differ among countries and over time.

United Kingdom

Two independent polls commissioned in the UK came out with almost identical findings. The *UK Public Opinion Monitor*, published by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in October 2011, found that overall support for government spending on aid was falling amid growing concern over the budget deficit.

When respondents were asked in June 2010 whether the UK should maintain its current policy of exempting the aid budget from cuts aimed at addressing the UK budget deficit, only 33% supported the exemption. In principle they supported the idea of protecting certain budgets from being cut: but they overwhelmingly felt the National Health Service budget, not the aid budget, should be the first to be protected (Lindstrom and Henson, 2011).

The trend in this area seems clear. In June 2010, 63% of those polled said the aid budget should be cut to reduce the deficit; by November 2010, the number had risen to 71%. However, in March 2011 only 51% felt that aid should be cut over the next five to ten years, an indication that reduced support for aid might be related to the intensity of economic hardship. The IDS study showed that in the longer term, based on assumptions of a healthier economic situation, public support for aid is likely to be higher.

The second UK study, *Understanding Public Attitudes to Aid and Development* (IPPR/ODI, June 2012), largely validated the IDS findings. Going beyond the numbers, the report identified "considerable appetite for greater understanding of how development works, and a need for campaigns that communicate effectively complex stories of how change and progress happens." Given the decisive role of the financial crisis in shaping public opinion around aid, it proposed that campaigns and communication strategies should make the link between "responsible capitalism" and the challenges facing developing countries. Overall, it called for greater public engagement around UK aid as a means of encouraging a more productive debate (Glennie et al., 2012).

European Union

A special Eurobarometer survey commissioned to measure the perceptions of Europeans towards aid is particularly significant because the EU and its member states are the world's largest aid donors. Together they provide more than half of official aid (EUR 53 billion in 2011). The report, published in December 2012, tracks changes since previous polls in September 2011 and October 2009.[3]

In terms of general perceptions of development policy, the findings are largely consistent with the key messages in the previous section of this chapter. A consistently high number of Europeans (85% in 2012, 88% in 2009) think helping developing countries remains important. It is interesting to note that nearly one-third, up 11% since 2011, believe trade and finance have the biggest impact on developing countries.

[3] In addition to collecting perceptions on aid, the 2012 Eurobarometer *Solidarity that Spans the Globe: Europeans and Development Aid* attempts to go deep and wide in analysing European views on the future of development aid, including which areas and countries should be the subject of focus. It looks at what people think about private companies operating in developing countries, the extent of individual willingness to act to alleviate expressed concerns, and how much European citizens actually know about how aid money is being spent.

On the future of aid, seven countries – the Czech Republic, Finland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Spain – display a shift away from maintaining or increasing aid. However, in spite of the current economic climate, more than six out of ten Europeans think that aid to developing countries should be increased: 49% think current commitments to increase aid should be kept, and a further 12% think aid should be increased above what has already been promised.

There is also strong and growing support for targeting aid to address humanitarian crises. More than 60% of Europeans believe the EU should prioritise aid to countries in fragile situations (i.e. countries affected by conflict or natural disasters), a view that the majority of respondents in the EU member states share. A distinguishing feature of the Eurobarometer poll is its finding that 55% of Europeans believe in discontinuing aid to rapidly growing emerging economies, even if part of their population still lives in extreme poverty (DG Comm, 2012). This resonates with recent decisions by the UK government to phase out aid to India and South Africa, and of the Netherlands to focus more on trade relations with middle-income countries. Within overall development policy, Eurobarometer finds the public to perceive human rights (34%), education (33%) and health (32%) as the most important areas to which to allocate aid funds.

Another unique set of insights from the Eurobarometer relates to the personal commitment of citizens to development. It finds that although 85% of Europeans think it is important to help people in developing countries, only 44% are willing to pay more for products to support people in the developing world. There is a significant difference, however, between respondents polled in the original 15 EU member states (50%) and those in the new member states (25%). Willingness to pay more for groceries to support development has decreased by three percentage points overall since September 2011, with the largest fall recorded in Greece (11%). These trends are likely to be related to the impact of the economic crisis on countries such as Greece.

Gender equality was at the heart of a special (DG Comm, 2013) Eurobarometer released ahead of International Women's Day in 2013. According to the study, 78% of Europeans believe that having more women in positions of political power in developing countries would "make things better". More than nine in ten Europeans thought that gender equality improves the way societies in general function and that all aid programmes should take specific account of women's rights. In terms of how problems in developing countries affect men and women, most respondents thought that women were affected more by physical violence (83%), by problems in accessing education (63%), by lack of respect for basic human rights (61%) and by lack of an income/job (61%).

Finally, Eurobarometer provides interesting insights into Europeans' views on the role of private companies in developing countries. A total of 81% of Europeans think that private companies have a positive role to play in developing countries, with job creation (57%) and the provision of a source of growth to help overcome poverty (42%) as the two dimensions most mentioned. Some 50% of people polled see local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as the most important type of private sector company for a country's growth and development.

Belgium

As with other polls discussed in this chapter, an April 2010 opinion poll conducted among 1 500 Belgians reinforces the general sense that the public remains convinced of the need to address poverty in the Global South (Pollet, 2010). In all 69% percent regarded the north-south divide as unacceptable and the majority insisted that the north needs to act to diminish the gap. A more recent opinion poll, (Pollet 2012) conducted online in early 2012 with 1 700 respondents

(complemented by eight discussion groups),[4] indicated that this percentage had decreased to 62%.

By and large, development co-operation continues to be seen as relevant and having positive consequences for the developing world. However, as highlighted above, the public is becoming increasingly critical of the effectiveness of the aid money. More Belgians want to decrease aid than want to increase it, with this trend on the rise. In 2010, 28.3% felt the amount Belgium spent on aid should decrease, while 38.5% thought it should stay the same. In 2012, these percentages had changed significantly to 44.5% and 31.7%, respectively. This is all the more surprising for a country that has historically been a generous ODA provider.

In terms of "why aid", Belgians overwhelmingly support the need for solidarity. Education for local people in developing countries is seen as the most useful form of development co-operation, while public education and lobbying of citizens in the North scores low. The lack of visible results of aid is increasingly seen as a factor affecting the extent of support. Coupled with this comes a sense that citizens are losing confidence in development co-operation institutions, notably the Belgian government and NGOs. In 2010, 57.6% judged the Belgian government to be a competent actor, with 67.3% considering NGOs to be competent. In 2012, confidence in the competence of government fell to 46.9% and in NGOs to 63.9%.

It can easily be inferred that in times of economic uncertainty people become less interested in what is going on around them and more focused on themselves. This may partly explain the growing criticism.

France

A November 2012 study on the perceptions of French development aid, conducted by Ipsos, a French polling agency, demonstrated that, 72% of French people believed that providing overseas aid is not a waste of money. There was overall agreement (74%) that aid remains important but that levels are low given the challenges at hand. Some 70% agreed that corruption in developing countries can render useless the aid received, while 65% thought it was appropriate for France to help poorer countries amid its own financial difficulties, while only 28% said that aid was completely pointless.

However, while the commitment to aid remained overwhelmingly high, when it came to the effectiveness of that aid, opinions were more divided. Nearly half of those polled rated it to be "sufficiently effective", while 43% said it was "not sufficiently effective", 4% said it was "highly effective" and 3% said "not effective at all".

More than half of French citizens polled believed aid to Africa should concentrate on the French Development Agency's (Agence Française de Développement; AFD) priority countries in sub-Saharan Africa. This is a much more specific finding than in other countries' polls and may reflect France's colonial engagement in West and Central Africa. Another finding worth noting is that 87% considered environmental protection to be the major crosscutting multi-dimensional concern that aid should address.

In contrast to Belgians, who are losing confidence in the not-for-profit sector, French citizens rated NGOs as the most credible, effective and impartial actors in financing and delivering aid in developing countries. Finally, while most French people believed that the earnings from a Financial Transactions Tax being proposed by 11 EU member countries should first be used to stimulate economic growth, one in two believed that the receipts should be dedicated to fighting poverty and major pandemics.

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[4] Note that as part of the PULSE research programme specific surveys were also conducted among young people, private companies and politicians. See all results of the opinion polls and surveys at www.pulse-oplatform.com.

United States of America

As mentioned above, Americans appear to be surprised at how little the United States spends per capita on improving lives in developing countries; they seem to indicate they want their country to do more. A New World Opinion Poll published in December 2010 found that 848 Americans believed that their country spent 25% of its budget on foreign aid, and suggested it should be cut to 10%. They were subsequently informed, to their great surprise, that real spending on aid was actually closer to 1% of the US budget.[5] The pollsters took this to mean that Americans theoretically have a much higher threshold for spending. This, however, is an extrapolation that many would contest and is an indication of how the interpretation of such polls can be limited in value. According to the pollster, the results may also suggest that most people find it difficult to comprehend very large numbers. In a similar 2007 poll respondents apparently thought 24% of federal spending in the US went to NASA (the National Aeronautics and Space Administration) while in fact the real number was less than 1% (Freschi, 2010).

Australia

If the flash polling in the US leaves itself open to questioning when it comes to its interpretation, the same cannot be said of Australia's "Community attitudes to overseas aid" survey. Three editions of the survey have been conducted since the first poll in 1998.[6] The most recent, commissioned by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and released in March 2005, indicated that an overwhelming majority of Australians (91%) approved of their country giving aid overseas, a 6% rise from 2001. Of that number, those strongly supporting aid rose from 52% in 1998 to 58% in 2001, reaching 70% in 2005.

The numbers show that Australians are more optimistic than their fellow OECD citizens about the effectiveness of aid, whether disbursed by their government or by others. In 2005, 71% believed that Australian government aid was effective (up from 53% in 2001), while 76% believed non-governmental aid was effective (from 63% in 2001). This optimism extends to aid volumes, with small increases in Australians believing that their country does not spend enough on aid (39%, up from 34%), or should spend more (45%, up from 40%).[7] A declining number – fewer than one in ten Australians polled in 2005 – thought at the time that aid volumes should be reduced.

Poland

The polling data suggests that citizens of newer OECD member countries are, in general, less supportive of overseas aid than those of richer, more established donor countries. The numbers from Poland, however, seem to buck that trend. An opinion poll (Polish foreign ministry, 2012) conducted in November 2012 for the foreign ministry concluded that 74% of Poles felt that supporting poorer countries was the right thing to do and that their country had a moral responsibility to do so. While most felt the amount allocated to aid was adequate, more than 40% would have liked to see it increased. The big challenge for polling in Poland is the low level of knowledge about development co-operation; only 27% of respondents had ever come across information on Polish aid overseas. Only 11% had heard about the MDGs. It is worth noting that Poland has been committed to carrying out annual polling since 2004.

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[5] http://worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/brunitedstatescanadara/670.php?lb=btda&pnt=670&nid=&id=.

[6] June 1998 (Wave 1), March 2001 (Wave 2), March 2005 (Wave 3 - www.ausaid.gov.au/Publications/Pages/7778_4390_4628_1744_1633.aspx) www.ausaid.gov.au/Publications/Documents/newspoll_05.pdf.

[7] An important methodological consideration is that the polling is based on informed opinion. In other words, respondents were provided with information about Australian aid before the poll was conducted, resulting in greater support.

Sweden

A statistical study gauging Swedes' attitudes and knowledge about development has been carried out every year since the 1970s. It gives a fairly consistent picture of public support. According to the 2012 poll, Swedes' confidence in the process of how aid is implemented has never been higher. The latest numbers also reveal a slight increase in trust from the public at large in development agencies on the whole, and a slight increase in knowledge on living conditions in the developing world.

Emerging efforts to poll recipients' perspectives

Four studies have marked a turning point, going beyond the traditional approach of polling aid publics to solicit the views of people in recipient countries.

Firstly, a study (NCDO, 2010) conducted in Netherlands compared the results of a questionnaire administered overseas with the results of the Dutch development co-operation barometer. It found that an absolute majority of respondents in both the Netherlands (68%) and in southern (recipient) countries (87%) considered it "important that people in rich countries help people in poor countries to develop themselves."

As might be expected, overseas respondents (50%) tended to be much more confident in the contribution of development co-operation than Dutch citizens (18%); they were also much more optimistic that poverty can be eradicated. They believed more strongly than their Dutch counterparts that aid levels should be maintained or increased. Overseas respondents, however, were divided on aid dependency and corruption, with more than a third believing that dependency on aid could lead to addiction, while one-quarter saw aid as helping corrupt leaders to stay in power.

Published in November 2012, the second study, *Time to Listen: Hearing People on the Receiving End of International Aid* (Anderson et al., 2012), is not a poll as such. Instead, it is a one-of-a-kind participatory exercise that collates perspectives of more than 6 000 people in 20 southern locations who have received aid, observed its effects or been involved in providing it. The four main messages are very telling:

- international aid is a good thing that is appreciated on the ground;
- assistance as it is now provided is not achieving its goal;
- fundamental changes must be made in how aid is provided if it is to become an effective tool in support of positive economic, social, and political change;
- these fundamental changes are both possible and feasible.

The third study in this vein is the *MY World* survey, which stands out as an innovative example of engaging with citizens from around the world. *MY World* is a global survey for citizens designed and implemented by the United Nations, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), Ipsos MORI, the World Wide Web Foundation and their partners. It aims to capture people's voices, priorities and views regarding the new development agenda in the context of the post-2015 MDG process. The *MY World* initiative has provided input to the post-2015 High-level Panel meetings as well as to the rest of the consultation process around next-generation goals.

MY World asked people to choose six priority issues for themselves and their families. Respondents could either choose from a list of 16 issues,[8] or propose alternative priorities. People from 144 countries contributed with their votes in the anonymous global survey. Participants only identified their gender, age and country, which allows for filtering. The resulting data makes possible meaningful analysis and gives insights into each group's specific priorities.

Surveys were launched via the website, mobile technology and a traditional offline paper form to ensure inclusiveness, especially of poor people and those who are illiterate or digitally disconnected. The modes of data collection also provide interesting insights: in surveys carried out through mobile phone networks, 80% of responses came from men, which suggests that women have less access to phones in certain parts of the world. The power of having numbers and data is that they provide substance for policy making and give policy makers insight into the perspectives of people on these issues.

The data and results of the survey are fully available to the wider public and polling institutes. This open data approach encourages the use of data sets to consider alternative approaches, which can spark innovation. Category analysis enables interesting insights into citizens' priorities.[9]

The fourth study, the *Neighbourhood Barometer* (TNS opinion 2013a, 2013b), was conducted in 2013 by the European Union in the 16 partner countries and territories participating in the European Neighbourhood policy, plus Russia. The survey aimed to assess people's knowledge and perception of the EU, the EU Neighbourhood Policy, and co-operation activities and programmes. Its broader goal was to develop a stronger partnership with societies across the European Neighbourhood.

The findings released in March 2013 showed that the EU generally conjures up a very or fairly positive image for four out ten citizens from within the European Neighbourhood (43% for the southern partner countries, 42% for the eastern partnership countries). Support for human rights remains the characteristic that best represents the EU in eastern and southern partner countries.

When asked about the most important areas of co-operation between their country and the EU, respondents unanimously placed "peace and security" as the most important, followed by "trade" and "human rights in the south", and by "tackling poverty" and "human rights among citizens in the east". The same areas are mentioned when asked on which areas the EU should focus its development aid.

[8] Action on climate change; good education; phone and internet access; affordable and nutritious food; honest and responsive government; better transport and roads; better job opportunities; protection against crime and violence; access to clean water and sanitation; equality between men and women; political freedoms; reliable energy at home; protecting forests, rivers and oceans; support for people who cannot work; freedom from discrimination and persecution; and better healthcare. Source: Melamed, C. and Samman, E. (2013).

[9] For example, it seems surprising that climate change, while high on the policy makers' agenda, came out as low priority in the survey. However, related issues such as care of forests and rivers scored higher, suggesting climate issues could be better framed. This tool can also provide fresh ideas for new avenues of communication on certain issues. For instance, if good education is very important to people and gender equality is very low on the list of priorities, there might be ways of explaining gender issues through education (*e.g.* you cannot achieve maximum outcomes in education or health if gender equality is not taken care of). Source: C. Melamed excerpted from draft summary report, DevCom Workshop "Development Communication in a Changing Landscape", 17-18 June 2013, Paris.

Emerging lessons: what does it all mean?

On the basis of the above, some important lessons can be learned about the characteristics of public opinion on aid and development co-operation:

- despite variations in specific countries due to local factors, the figures seem to show that support for development aid and development co-operation is solid, even though economic times are hard in many OECD countries;
- getting a sense of the quality of citizens' support for aid from the polls is challenging;
- lack of knowledge about aid seems to be widespread and could be one of the variables that determine whether or not taxpayers engage with, or meaningfully support, aid and development-related issues.

Though the increasing polling activity around aid is laudable, because of the differences in methodology and issues raised questions about the ultimate value of such polls to track public opinion shifts should be asked (with the possible exception of the Eurobarometer which applies a reasonably consistent methodology across a large number of countries). Very little is known about the alignment (or misalignment) between polling and changes in government aid policy (which follows which?). Which factors, besides opinion polls, also affect changes in aid policy and practice?

As suggested by the NCDO and "Time to Listen" studies, there is a need to invest more and better understand how recipients of development aid view development cooperation and to hear what they are saying about aid's impact. More attention is needed in so-called "demand-side" or recipient polling, along the lines of the recent studies cited in this chapter.

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Chapter 2
Understanding the Audience

At the heart of all communication lies the ambition to reach an audience. Communication by governments and state institutions (even beyond development co-operation) has never been simple, as it involves complex matters that are not easy to present in an appealing way. Moreover, with a broad and diverse audience to reach, the task can be daunting. This chapter will examine three inter-related issues that in many ways are at the core of development communication. First, it will look at what factors underlie public attitudes towards development co-operation, and what the numbers in the polls suggest about the effectiveness of commonly deployed communication strategies. Secondly, with reference to communication with sceptical audiences, it will see what role audience segmentation can play and how this enables smarter and more effective communication. Finally, the chapter will look at how the practice of development communication can further stimulate greater engagement between and among different audience segments.

Beyond opinions and attitudes – engaging and mobilising the public

To inform continuing reflections and practices around why aid communicators consider it important to canvass wider support for development, this section reviews findings from an in-depth study (Debeljak, 2012) covering the four largest bilateral aid donors – France, Germany, the UK and the US – as well as China, probably the biggest player among the emerging aid donors. The study seeks to go "beyond typical analyses of opinions about aid policies to consider the actual drivers of and impediments to deeper engagement", an objective that coincides with the purpose of this section.

This study, done by InterMedia, begins by identifying three key audiences: interested citizens, "*influentials*" and government decision makers. It departs from the assumption that successful engagement with these audiences (defined as "connecting meaningfully to incite positive policy-focused action") can "steer development policies in a desired direction and help to sustain aid flows". It gives further insights, beyond traditional polling, highlighted below, on public opinion about development and ways of engaging citizens and influencing support for development.

Overall, the report finds that:

- *development advocates have fertile ground in which to sow deeper engagement among citizens*. In all five of the countries studied, interested citizens (as defined by themselves by having indicated an interest in international development issues) make up a significant proportion of the population, so the pool of people to target is substantial;
- *gaps and inefficiencies in the delivery of development information provide ready avenues for deepening engagement with all the target groups.* As the opinion polls discussed in the previous chapter repeatedly found, citizens are only little exposed to development-related information. However, with *influentials* and government decision makers, the problem is not so much a lack of access to information as a potential information overload. These groups need help sifting through the clutter and finding specialised information. This presents opportunities;
- *strategies for engaging the target groups should include both short-term and long-term approaches.* The study finds that people's attitudes about development issues tend to be formed through their own upbringing, personal beliefs and life experiences. Those wishing

to engage need to tap into these formative experiences and be prepared to engage over long periods. Thus, the importance of development education and initiatives such as volunteering programmes can make key contributions;

- *the digital sphere provides a wealth of channels through which various constituencies can be connected with, and involved in, the development discussion.* However, people are sceptical of social media that are effectively used for branding. Hence, the report proposes the creation of a common, "unbranded" digital space for gathering and sharing development policy information. Such a space could provide a platform for unbiased exchanges on development co-operation.

Particularly revealing with the first audience segment are the findings related to the key triggers and barriers to engagement. Key triggers include:

- upbringing, beliefs and experience shape citizens' propensity to engage in development issues;
- personal ties, such as impetus from already-engaged family or friends, or a personal connection to someone living in a developed country, can be stronger triggers of engagement than a development cause itself; and
- emotional resonance and evidence of the positive impact of international development are important factors that can motivate citizens to act.

Key barriers to engagement include constraints of time and money; and widespread perceptions or evidence of aid ineffectiveness, waste, and corruption in recipient countries. That said, interested citizens still tend to donate to development even if they believe that most official financial aid is being wasted. According to the report, the reason for this is partly that decisions to get engaged are often emotional responses rather than cerebral, policy-driven decisions. This tendency to respond emotionally is something examined later in this chapter when values and framing are discussed.

Influentials can be divided into two groups, the first being *established influentials*, including journalists and other (traditional) media practitioners, and representatives of academia, think tanks, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and faith-based organisations. The second are *new generation influentials*, including institutional bloggers (individuals working for recognised development organisations such as Oxfam and the Center for Global Development), as well as independent bloggers who discuss development issues online but do not have development-related careers outside of the blogosphere.

In respect of influentials, of note are the following findings:

- in terms of which development issues they care about, *influentials* tend to resist the notion that any particular challenge can be prioritised above others and tend to emphasise the interdependence of key issues such as health, poverty, climate change, education and structural problems such as governance;
- they acknowledge that the priorities of developing countries may not necessarily be in line with the priorities of donor governments. Established *influentials* draw on their own expertise to prioritise certain issues over others. By contrast, new generation *influentials* tend to describe challenges from a more generalist and sometimes politically-charged perspective; addressing inequalities is often the main sub-text;
- most *influentials* support and often praise the development efforts of their own national governments, citing key areas of progress such as debt relief, vaccination programmes, raising life expectancy and lowering infant mortality. This is unsurprising given the proximity of some of the leading international NGOs (Oxfam, etc.) to northern

governments, and that these INGOs are often credited with instigating government action that has led to some of these successes;

- at the same time, i*nfluentials* place the primary responsibility for international development on developing-country governments. Many of those interviewed see this within a moral framework, arguing that leaders of these countries are responsible for ensuring democracy, meeting basic needs and providing equal access to resources. This question of a moral world order will be addressed later in the chapter;
- *influentials* also see mainstream development champions (e.g. Bono, Hillary Clinton, Bill and Melinda Gates) as capable of creating broad appeal and swaying opinion across a range of development stakeholders. As will be seen, this appeal to celebrities as champions is increasingly being contested.

In contrast to the other groups, government decision makers appear to be much more reserved in their judgment. The study finds that there is no consensus among those interviewed on which issues should dominate the development agenda. Rather, this group is driven by their own governments' stated development policy priorities.

As might also be expected, government decision makers rely heavily on trusted sources for information, such as personal networks, specialised networks and development experts who are considered well informed, objective and able to provide information targeted at specific interests. They are sceptical of information provided by interest groups. They engage with traditional media sources and the Internet but not usually for policy information. They are highly distrustful of social media but follow blogs deemed authoritative.

On where they place responsibility for addressing development challenges, government decision makers in the five countries studied see international development as a shared responsibility, and often promote "joint enterprise" and other collaborative models of partnership. They tend to buy into globally agreed frameworks such as the MDGs, which they consider an effective common framework for development policy and planning.

Perhaps most interestingly, while government decision makers regularly monitor public opinion on issues related to budget allocations for aid, public opinion is viewed as "an important but not a central element to policy making on development issues". Not all of those interviewed agree that public opinion has a direct impact on policymaking, yet they tend to concur that increased public support for overseas spending is desirable.

The study concludes with a series of detailed recommendations for engaging the target groups identified. For interested citizens, these tend to focus on: raising awareness and filling knowledge gaps, largely through generation of value-added content (e.g. user-friendly information, video, authentic stories) using established media to reach them (e.g. BBC, prominent newspapers); avoiding development jargon; and behaviour change communication targeted at making individuals more conscientious and galvanising them to act. A second category of recommendations targets citizens in various spaces (e.g. digitally, in schools, universities) to get them to be more active, including in development projects overseas, through initiatives such as partnering them with organisations in developing countries or developing awareness-raising competitions.

For *influentials,* both of the established and the new generations, proposals include creating online and offline portals for information exchange and dialogue among the community, as well as with government decision makers around major development themes, and responding to the specialised information needs of this group.

For government decision makers, the emphasis is on providing targeted information aimed also at the gatekeepers in bureaucracies to reduce information overload, and on facilitating the engagement of decision makers and subject experts through information exchange, as well as debate on development issues. The needs of decision makers are diverse and hence the creation of networks, the holding of forums, and the provision of online digital spaces on specific relevant themes and issues are seen as the best means of reaching them.

Overall, the study goes well beyond standard opinion polling, offering deeper insights into how support for international development might be increased. Importantly, it provides a good template for disaggregating, segmenting and therefore better understanding key audiences.

Communicating with sceptical audiences

As discussed in Chapter 1, polls in many donor countries point to an increase in scepticism about the effectiveness and impact of development aid among the public. Even when there is a widespread sense that aid itself is a good thing (or the ethically right thing to do), its performance is not seen to have been optimal and there is a feeling it could do much better. Moreover, the financial crisis – in which many traditional, as well as emerging, donors find themselves – seems to be leading people to conclude that charity must begin at home.

At the same time, few people argue that development aid should be scrapped and many agree that it would be desirable to have greater public support for overseas development. This includes government officials working in the development sector who may be sceptical about the degree to which public opinion can really influence governments to give aid or not.

Given this mixed set of messages, what should aid agencies do to win over sceptical audiences? What are the challenges associated with communicating development in times of economic downturn? What have been the experiences of DevCom members and other development communicators? This section of Chapter 2 sets out to unpack some of the issues around communicating to sceptics, and to tease out ways of doing so with greater effectiveness.

In his keynote address to the annual DevCom meeting in Dublin in 2009, Simon Maxwell, former Director of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), spoke of a crisis of globalisation, which he broke down into three interlinked crises – food, fuel and financial. Maxwell also cited looming problems associated with climate change – resource scarcity, demographic pressure and urbanisation – as feeding an overall pessimism that, in his view, needed to be broken.

Arguing that fresh thinking was needed to turn these crises into opportunities, he called for a new narrative. In his view, and among other things, such a narrative should take people on a journey, reflect both altruism and self-interest and move from a risk framework to one of opportunities. Furthermore, it should embody a set of principles to inform principled decision-making; win the argument on the nature of the problem before setting out to win the argument on what the solutions should be; set realistic targets; and necessitate leadership from the very top.

Maxwell's proposals may not amount to a consensus, but they do provide pointers for a proactive manifesto for communicating in a crisis-ridden environment. Envisioning and communicating a compelling narrative for the future is the challenge all aid agencies have to grapple with. This challenge seems to be about a) convincing each other that the development enterprise is still worth pursuing despite the domestic economic situation (i.e. the financial crisis); b) building and testing new counter-narratives on the basis of which such communication can be built; and c) figuring out what works.

Megan Lloyd-Laney (2011) has developed a concise and useful DevCom toolkit for communicating with sceptical audiences, which prioritises identifying and understanding the different audiences as an important first step, crafting messages (bearing in mind that scepticism is not static over time), delivering messages in a variety of ways likely to resonate with different audience segments, and assessing impact.

Her rationale for why aid communicators should try to engage with sceptics, whatever the country context is, is clear:

- because the number of those becoming disillusioned with aid is growing;
- ignoring them will not make them go away, but conversely may fuel more extreme views that could proliferate over time;
- engaging with these sceptics provides insights into their scepticism and helps communicators craft powerful counter-arguments and proactively anticipate future criticism;
- successful conversion of these doubters will build a cadre of reformed sceptics who can be powerful allies and advocates;
- it contributes meaningfully to improving aid transparency;
- engaging proactively allows communicators to choose the time and place of engagement rather than being caught "on the back foot" in a reactive communications mode (a plea for continual engagement with the public, but also sharing both successes and lessons learned).

Principles and Values:

- never lie – you will be found out;
- don't adopt a defensive, aggressive or argumentative tone. These are not winning styles;
- instead, be persuasive, objective, evidence-based and passionate in your communication;
- respect people's right to their opinion.

Source: Lloyd-Laney, M., (2011) *Communicating With Sceptical Audiences: A Toolkit*, for DevCom.

Informed by the above, what can we learn from the experience of DevCom members actively grappling with sceptical audiences?

In 2009, the **UK**'s Department for International Development (DFID) analysed public opinion data on support for overseas aid and listened to different stakeholders. Subsequently, they developed a detailed blueprint for changing public opinion (Mylrea, 2009), premised on the need in tough economic times to tell the story of development impact better, and on demonstrating value for money to taxpayers. At the core of the DFID's analysis was a comprehensive study of the public, which included segmentation.

The main objectives of the explicitly audience-segmented strategy were to:

- increase confidence that UK efforts were delivering real results, thanks to British people;
- reduce the percentage of the population concerned about aid effectiveness and corruption to less than 50%;
- maintain and shore up support for development, particularly among core supporters (those who say they are 'concerned' about global poverty, disaggregated as *"active enthusiasts"* and *"interested mainstream"* audience segments, as well as "*young people"* aged from 13-19).[1]

[1] DFID's segmentation also identified a number of secondary audiences: *family first sympathisers, distracted individuals, BME* and *faith groups* (Mylrea, 2009).

The DFID's key messages to these three primary audiences were broken down as follows:

- for *active enthusiasts*, the assessment was that this group "needed reassuring, rewarding, and to see impact". Accordingly, the key message was: "You're part of something big and it's working. We are all changing the world together for our common future. Spread the word.";
- for the *interested mainstream*, the group was deemed to "need encouragement and to see the impact of how aid is reaching people". The key message was: "Join in and be part of something big. Together we can end global poverty. It's easy to do your bit and it's working.";
- for y*oung* p*eople*, the sense was they "need to feel they are not alone and can have an impact and that it matters". The key message was simple: "Be part of something big. Change your world."

It was agreed that for all communications, the overarching message would be that "Aid works and is delivering results thanks to the British people through UKaid."[2] The purposes of this overarching message were to "Reassure" (allay fears about aid effectiveness); "Reward" (feel part of something big and build a sense of common identity); and "See impact" (build "UKaid" as a trusted mark).

A brief developed for writers emphasised the need for a "creative tone" that was "reassuring, inspiring, conversational, personal and realistic". The assessment was that communications needed to be "motivational, making individuals feel they can and do make a difference. They should reassure taxpayers of the immediate and long-term successes to date and that we are working hard to make sure their money reaches the people who need it most."

The strategy included, as part of the message framework, a list of building blocks for each human-interest story, as well as a checklist of important points that communications outputs needed to show. These were: point out progress and success (i.e., not just problems); show the long-term developments; and include the elements of saving lives *and* empowering them. , Furthermore, they emphasised the need to focus on individuals first and then broaden out to "macro successes" the need to combine stories *and* facts, emphasise the maximum returns for small investments, lay out a clear and quick path from taxpayer to beneficiary, point out moral and fairness arguments only where appropriate and highlight self-interest arguments as by-products.

Finally, a significant talking point around the DFID strategy was the promotion of a new logo aimed at increasing the visibility of the UK government's development work with the UK public. This would then help build the UK public's understanding of international development and reassure the UK public about aid effectiveness and the risks regarding corruption as a quality symbol. The brand is visualised by a royal insignia next to the words "UKaid", in large letters, above "from the UK Department for International Development" in smaller type.

Like the UK, Australia (AusAID) relies heavily on opinion polling data to inform about its effort to communicate development in an economic downturn (McLean, 2009). The polling data from Australia was reviewed in Chapter 1. Here is a brief highlight of key elements of the communication strategy developed, based on public opinion to decode its underlying assumptions and intents. Here too, Australia made interesting use of audience segmentation to better understand the public and develop an appropriate communication strategy.

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[2] This overarching message was further broken down in a writer's brief, to address key aspects of aid in action, positive messaging and UK public active engagement (Mylrea, 2009).

The first point to note is that according to 2009 figures, Australian aid levels were at 0.34% of gross national income (GNI), and were projected to rise to 0.5% by 2015/16. This amounts to a significant projected increase in aid, no doubt aimed at reaching the internationally recommended 0.7% target. As such, AusAID's clear objective in communicating aid in a period of economic downturn is to maintain the very high levels of approval for overseas development among the Australian public (estimated at 82% in 2009).

In terms of understanding audience, AusAID derived its "community segments" directly from the polling data, as opposed to starting from an assumption of primary and secondary audiences. The largest segment is the *"it makes sense"* group (accounting for 26% of responses), followed by *"the investors"* (19%), "*focus on our own backyard"* (15%), *"inward looking but want status quo"* (14%), "*others first, we're lucky"* (13%) and *"haven't given it much thought"* (13%).

For each of these groups, AusAID assessed how willing they are to listen and developed key messages for each. They also identified a range of distribution channels that can reach all segments. Of these, TV and radio stories are found to have the highest levels of penetration, with talkback radio viewed as a promising medium and information from strong spokespeople is seen as having a high likelihood of being listened to. Internet sites are also a promising way to communicate, and AusAID wants to improve the interactivity of its websites, as well as explore if blogs could be better used to help deliver the agency's objectives.

What stands out with AusAID is that it does not take the consistently high levels of support for aid in Australia as a given. The agency does this bearing in mind the competing narrative of "economic downturn" and the small but growing "*focus on our own backyard*" community segment, which can both be critical. An important lesson that can be derived from this is that sceptical audiences might be only a small segment of some donor publics, but they should be of concern to donor governments and officials who value having as much of the public on their side as possible in the policy making process.

The experience of the **Czech Republic**, a small, emerging donor, stands in contrast to that of the UK, Australia and other more established OECD donors. Czech overseas development aid represents a very small fraction of the state budget, accounting in 2010 for less than 2% of the budget deficit. As such, it often goes unnoticed in the debates led by politicians and media analysts around budget time (Holý and Konrád, 2010). ODA/GNI levels in the Czech Republic remained constant at 0.13% between 2009 and 2012. Polling data shows that there remains low awareness among the public that aid is an instrument of public policy managed (and funded) by the government. Awareness is higher of international NGO activity overseas, largely because Czech aid is for a significant part channelled through projects that include technical assistance. This makes it easier to sell aid that goes via NGOs or the private sector, than to sell budget support.[3]

Given this relatively typical snapshot of the challenges facing an emerging donor, the communication response is modest, focusing primarily on NGOs, overseas travel grants for journalists, traditional tools and tactics (e.g. brochures, publications, press releases, press conferences), and websites. The economic downturn, as in many other countries, has forced the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) communicators to reduce the scope of their communication effort, scrapping brochures and publications and relying on cheaper means of engaging in public outreach.[4]

[3] Other exceptions to the lack of awareness relate to humanitarian crises such as the southeast Asian tsunami and Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar, the provincial reconstruction team in Afghanistan (in which Czechs presumably actively participate, meaning it is widely reported on prime time TV), and on climate changes issues, in particular adaptation.

[4] A 2009 DevCom survey on communications spending conducted among network members (internal document).

The main lesson here is that in light of such low levels of knowledge and visibility of their aid programmes, emerging donor countries may face significantly less pressure (whether real or self-imposed) to canvass their publics for increased support for their aid policy. Cutting back on communication budgets therefore comes across as an easy way of saving money, although it may paradoxically lead to higher levels of scepticism about aid as awareness gradually increases.

During the 2012 DevCom annual meeting, agencies and ministries reflected on what they seek to achieve with communication to the public and why they should communicate about their development programmes in the first place. One of the key identified reasons was transparency and accountability. For instance, Sweden strives to be accountable to the public since "the tax payers have the right to know where the money is spent and what results they generate."[5] The same strategy applies to engaging with sceptical audiences. Press officers at the European Commission respond to criticism by providing results, which enables them to demonstrate to taxpayers how EU development co-operation is making a difference.[6]

Connecting (with) people – emotions vs. hard data

So far, a number of issues have resonated in this chapter. One is the importance of audience segmentation to understand the component parts of a given donor public by breaking it down into categories, each with differing dynamics, levels of understanding, influence and engagement. Another is tapping into individual and collective values to elicit the kind of emotional response that will make the public more actively support and help advance development overseas. Donor publics need to be engaged in interactive, continuing conversations, as opposed to being passive recipients of information. This final section focuses on a body of behavioural theories that seeks to understand how language has been used to promote bad, as well as good, modes of communication. It also looks at why establishing the deeper meaning behind language is critical to interrogating the established "moral order", and why by working on values and frames can hold the key to evolving positive models for engaging the public.

During the DevCom Dublin meeting in 2009, participants in a workshop to brainstorm about the most effective ways of gathering stories on development effectiveness concluded that stories needed to be "attention-catching, emotional, visual, positive (and possibly critical)". Additionally, there was need for a "strong human focus on the individual level linking to system improvements…" and to "respect the people in the story and focus on their active role". Two years later, the annual DevCom meeting in Brussels sought to explore these dimensions further. The idea of tapping into the consciousness of individuals to spark action was proposed by Martin Kirk, Head of Campaigns, Oxfam UK. On the one had an organisation is tempted to use simple emotional language and promising quick results in campaigns using the "standard" development campaign frame. On the other hand Kirk who raised questions regarding the work of his own agency which at times in used a type of language that "promotes frames you are trying to move away from" (Kirk, 2011).

Mr Kirk characterised these as being guilty of: simplification (especially binary oppositions, imperatives, assertions and war metaphors); attributions or denials of agency (whereby language conveys subtle suggestions about who does what, to whom, which disempowers supporters and recipients of aid); and assumptions (about supporters, prospective supporters and local partners). Darnton and Kirk (2011) elaborate the values and frames approach in a study. In it,

[5] Communication with Hillevi Ekberg, Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (SIDA).

[6] Communication with Stina Soewarta, Directorate-General for Development and Co-operation - EuropeAid.

"values" are defined as, "the guiding principles that individuals use to judge situations and determine their courses of action." Empirical research shows that these values correlate strongly with patterns of behaviour. "Frames", on the other hand, are defined as "the chunks of factual and procedural knowledge in the mind with which we understand situations, ideas and discourses in everyday life." The study focuses on the challenge of public engagement, arguing that while significant progress has been made in tackling global poverty over the past three decades communication with the UK public has effectively been left behind and is stuck in how it engages with global poverty.[7]

The data offered in support of the approach are compelling. Since 1997, some 25% of the UK public have reported being "very concerned" about global poverty, with these levels rising to 32% in 2005 around the Make Poverty History Campaign. However, this has since fallen, down to 24% in 2011. At the same time, the DFID segmentation model discussed earlier in this chapter suggests that the proportion of the most engaged segment (the "*active enthusiasts*") has shrunk by one-third since 2008, down to 14% in 2011.

With regards to much of the polling, Darnton and Kirk point to the low quality of public engagement. Not only do they find that engaged people are ill-informed, but they seem not to be interested and find it hard to sustain a conversation about issues that matter (such as debt or trade). The prevailing values see the causes of poverty as being internal to poor countries, while there is a persistent asymmetry of power in the so-called "Live Aid legacy", which sees the giver as "powerful" and the receiver as "grateful". The conclusion is that public perceptions have been stuck in this negative frame for 25 years.

The study looked in detail at the Make Poverty History Campaign. It found that the model the campaign promoted was underpinned by a "transaction" mind-set whose primary purpose was to stimulate people to donate to charities. Communication thus reinforced a consumer culture, explaining why citizens did not sustain or internalise the need to stay engaged in "transformational" mode, beyond simply donating.

Space does not allow for a more comprehensive examination of the underlying theory behind values and frames.[8] However, in basic terms, the authors identify "deep frames", which relate to big picture questions, such as the moral order as related to global poverty. These are compared to "surface frames", which focus more on words, meanings and the stereotypes they convey and reinforce, for example, "war on terror" and "tax relief". Deep negative frames tend to reinforce binaries such as "them vs. us"; characterise some citizens as active while aid recipients are passive and unable to act, only to be grateful; and promote self-fulfilling reinforcement of consumerism. On the other hand, positive deep frames, if applied carefully to the language in which development communication takes place, can provide the impetus for active values to emerge.

The practical recommendations from this approach challenge many of the current approaches to development communication and will need further reflection. Key among them are what words to use and what words to avoid (including avoiding words such as "aid") and emphasises the need to shift from "transactions" to "transformations" with regard to the public (i.e. truly engaging with the public on global transformations beyond simply explaining what tax money has

[7] It argues that massive and highly visible campaigns – such as the Jubilee 2000 debt initiative Make Poverty History; the widespread adoption and harnessing of digital communication techniques and social networks; steady growth in NGO fundraising revenues; the successful take-up of the MDGs; and the establishment of a Westminster consensus on core elements of development policy – have largely left the public behind.

[8] For more on "values" and "frames", see also *The Common Cause Handbook* (PIRC, 2011); and *The Power of Asking* (Andreoni and Rao, 2010).

accomplished). It also calls for an for the use of communication models that are based on genuine dialogue and that encourage supporters and practitioners to deliberate together, as opposed to supporters being enrolled and set aside. Finally, it also cautions that celebrities should be used with extreme care in campaigns, as there are strong links between celebrity culture, consumer culture and the values of self-interest that might conflict with the overall message of development co-operation.

Conclusions

A number of key understandings have emerged from the above discussions that are worth summarising here:

- intelligent audience segmentation is a critical first step to understanding the different motivations, drivers and blockers to active citizen support for development co-operation;
- there is an emerging consensus that one-way communicating towards citizens (as opposed to engaging with them) may result in enrolment of shallow support. However, it is unlikely to result over time in the kind of depth needed to sustain support for development through crises;
- there are principles and approaches that derive from the combined experience of aid agencies in communicating in an economic downturn that could be instrumental in informing more proactive engagement going forward;
- appealing to human emotions and individuals, for example through storytelling, creates much greater resonance, empathy and likelihood that donor publics will be active supporters than does rational, fact-driven communication alone;
- communication campaign messages can be decisive in perpetuating a certain moral world order that reinforces old power asymmetries about the giver and the receiver. They can also build shared values that unite everyone around a common cause.

Finally, it should be recognised that such debates have tended to take place within donor agencies or, at best, among donor publics. While the literature on storytelling, emotions and frames would suggest a powerful role for citizens in aid-recipient countries in communicating directly, their perspective is almost entirely missing or absent. This constitutes a major shortcoming of aid-focused debates around development communication, particularly in light of the dynamic nature of changes happening within developing countries (among them the exponential growth of information and communication technologies, and the evolving debate about domestic resources for development in a shrinking aid environment).

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Chapter 3
The Communication Strategy

One of the key developments that has taken place in respect of communication in development ministries and agencies over the past decade has been the rising level of professionalisation. In many ways at the core of this phenomenon has been the increased use of communication strategies. This chapter focuses on communication strategy as an important prerequisite for engaging with different stakeholders in a structured and goal-oriented way. To do this, the chapter aims to:

- spell out the rationale for setting up a communication strategy;
- identify the elements of a model communication strategy (section 2);
- review and analyse a selection of communication strategies that DevCom members have developed and are in the process of implementing, building on discussions in Chapter 2 (section 3); and, finally;
- reflect on a forward-looking agenda for next-generation communication strategies.

Rationale for setting up communication strategies

The case for communicating development results is now well-known and has been widely accepted.[1] DAC peer reviews include a section on communication. In the 2007 OECD Development Co-operation Report (Manning, 2008), for example, former DAC Chair Richard Manning highlighted investing in delivering, measuring and communicating results of aid-financed activity as one of 12 key lessons from DAC peer reviews. The message for donor countries is that "… public awareness of, and support for, development co-operation is fundamental. Peer reviews demonstrate that strong public support is the best guarantee of political and legislative support for strong and dynamic national development programmes."

The Accra Agenda for Action (AAA)[2] also attests to the importance of communication, stating that (OECD, 2008) "attention will also be paid to improving and developing communications on aid effectiveness for long-term development success and broad-based public support."[3] Since the 3rd High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra in September 2008, the onset of the severe economic crisis, combined with a historic decline in world trade, has put extreme pressure on domestic budgets in OECD countries. This is severely challenging the commitments these countries had previously made to increase aid levels to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The latest figures[4] from the OECD suggest that major donor aid to developing countries fell by 4% in real terms in 2012, following a 2% fall in 2011, breaking a long trend of annual increases. Most rich-country budgets are under huge strain, and with mounting domestic social and economic problems, people prioritise tackling poverty in their own society ("charity begins at home") before spending money on poor people in other countries. Investing in development is

[1] In the run-up to Accra, the OECD-DAC Joint Venture on Managing for Development Results (JV MfDR) proposed that the following text be added to the first consultative draft of the AAA: "Donors and partner countries will invest more in measuring, delivering and communicating results from development activities and in demonstrating that the role of donor and partner country leadership and political will is very important" OECD-DAC (2008), *Contributions of the JV MfDR to the Accra HLF*. Agenda Item 3, Room Document 3.1 (18 June 2008).

[2] www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/34428351.pdf.

[3] Paragraph 30, footnote 4 of the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA).

[4] www.oecd.org/dac/stats/final2012oda.htm.

becoming a hard sell as many donor governments are focused on internal economic recovery and job creation.

The DevCom Network has posed the question of whether, in the middle of domestic budget cuts and austerity, communicators should scale down their work. In some cases, communication budgets have been cut. At the same time the development landscape has been rapidly evolving. Emerging economies have joined as partners and now play an important role in shaping the state of international co-operation. Citizens and other stakeholders concerned about the effective use of taxpayers' money have actively joined the conversation on the future of development, especially through online platforms and social media tools. The development impacts of non-aid policy areas (such as taxation, migration and trade) are featuring more prominently in the development debate. Finally, developing countries are at the heart of development partnerships, leading the design of strategies and programmes.

In light of this, the consensus among DevCom members is that there currently is a significant opportunity to intensify communication, reframe the development narrative, and make a better case for why it is now more important than ever for north and south to collaborate. This consensus was confirmed at DevCom meetings in Warsaw, Poland (June 2009), Haifa, Israel (June 2010) and Oslo, Norway (November 2012).

Given the above, the role of a structured and codified communication strategy becomes critical. In general, communication strategies seek to do one or more of three things: communicate *about* results (explain to donor taxpayers or other internal constituencies within the donor country how aid is working); communicate *for* results (harness communication as a tool as well as a process for the effective delivery of aid programmes, otherwise known as "communication for development" or "C4D"); and invest in development education (to stimulate or deepen the general public's interest in development and development-related issues).[5]

Data collected by the DevCom Secretariat shows that in 2006/07, 53% of aid agencies surveyed by the OECD had a formal development communication plan or strategy. Some 46% of agencies had a formal development education plan or strategy, with a further 29% in the process of developing one. By contrast, only 10% had a formal C4D strategy and 24% were in the process of developing one (Zimmerman, 2009). Recent anecdotal data gleaned from surveys and workshops suggests that the majority of OECD communicators, including those in aid agencies of MFAs, have developed communication strategies. Many are multi-year and vary in the level of detail and sophistication depending on the in-country dynamics and imperatives. This constitutes a rich body of knowledge from which to learn, and a number of these strategies are discussed later in the chapter.

Elements of a state-of-the-art communication strategy

Drawing on experiences from within and beyond the DevCom network, here are some critical elements that any state-of-the-art communication strategy should seek to include.

1. **Introduction**. This brief text, which appears at the beginning of a communication strategy document, should provide a clear sense of what the strategy is for, what it responds to, and what readers can expect. For example, in the 2012 Luxembourg Strategy five questions are listed that the strategy intends to answer: What are poverty and sustainable development?

[5] For more on definitions, see *Managing for and Communicating Development Results – Background paper Prepared for the DevCom Secretariat*, Peter da Costa (December 2008). Also see *Communication and Development* (Zimmerman, 2009).

Why is it necessary to act? What development results have been expected and achieved? What can be done to improve aid effectiveness? How can Luxembourg development assistance be situated in the wider international development effort?[6]

2. **Background and context**. Very few strategies devote sufficient attention to the policy context, which is essential in providing a rationale for the strategy, as well as for setting the stage for the specific interventions chosen. Ideally, this should be informed by evidence not only from polling data but also from tried and tested methods such as policy community surveys, political economy analysis and outcome mapping.
3. **Vision**. This should be a bold, positive and aspirational statement about the kind of world that the communication strategy, if effectively implemented, would help build. Increasingly, communicators articulate the Theory of Change[7] – which defines all of the building blocks required to achieve a long-term goal – behind the communication strategy. This is best visualised and includes assumptions about causality and correlation (i.e. "if this then that").
4. **Purpose/Objective**. This should be more down-to-earth, specific and measurable, for example: "To increase the number of citizens in the most informed audience segment who are actively engaged in interrogating, influencing and/or informing the country's new development strategy by 30% by 2015."[8] Depending on the level of detail required in a given communication strategy, objectives can be broken down into one overarching objective and more specific objectives (ideally no more than three). As an example, the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) 2009 Climate Campaign has three purposes: raising awareness among the Danes; creating knowledge and understanding; and contributing to changing people's attitudes and behaviour (DANIDA, 2009). Language should be straightforward and jargon-free.
5. **Target Audiences**. Segmentation has been discussed at some length in the previous chapter as holding the key to effective communication. The majority of first-generation aid agency communication strategies do a good job of identifying several audience segments. There is little attempt, however, to delve deeper into the characteristics of each segment.[9] Most importantly, there needs to be prioritisation. It is not always necessary, desirable or even feasible to design a communication strategy that engages everyone. A given campaign or strategy may decide to focus on engaging only one audience segment – sceptics for example – with a view to converting them into supporters. Other segments can be engaged over time.
6. **Key Messages**. As the discussion in Chapter 2 indicates, models that use medium to longer term interaction engagement and interaction with the audience (dialogic models) are much more likely to gain traction than sender-receiver ("monologic") approaches. It is becoming traditional for communicators to craft messages that they want to convey to target audiences. However, the underlying logic of messaging is that aid agencies or ministries send them, people receive them, and then they are expected to act or change their behaviour in some way. The evidence clearly shows that sender-receiver (monologic) approaches tend not to be effective Thus, even though organisations should be ready to engage in a real dialogue,

[6] *Communication 2012: Stratégies et Orientations*, La Coopération luxembourgeoise.

[7] "A Theory of Change is a specific and measurable description of a social change initiative that forms the basis for strategic planning, on-going decision-making and evaluation. The methodology used to create a Theory of Change is also usually referred to a Theory of Change, or the Theory of Change approach or method. So, when you hear or say "Theory of Change", you may mean either the process or the result". See www.theoryofchange.org/what-is-theory-of-change/#1.

[8] A useful online tool for communication planning, evaluation and review is SmartChart 3.0, developed by Spitfire Strategies in the U.S. See www.smartchart.org.

[9] The DFID strategy examined in Chapter 2 is among exceptions to this rule.

message development is a useful exercise for communicators as it helps them think carefully about the language they deploy and choose language that is more likely to foster active citizen behaviour than to simply enrol supporters.[10]

7. **Channels**. Often, channels are limited to media (print, radio, websites), which are often inadequate when set against the need to innovate and be creative. An example of a creative "channel" is fast-moving consumer goods, one of five networks identified by Twaweza, a ten-year citizen-centred initiative focused on large-scale change in East Africa.[11] Other networks identified by Twaweza are mass media, mobile phones, religion and teachers' unions. The idea is that all of these networks already reach millions of East Africans and are important in their lives. As such, stimulating citizen agency is achieved by engaging within these already vibrant and dynamic spaces. It should be noted that the Twaweza model is predicated on citizens already possessing power and the potential to change their own reality. This stands in stark contrast to the assumptions of many large-scale communication campaigns such as Live Aid, which are about the "haves" helping the "have-nots".
8. **Tactics**. Many communication strategies use this section to spell out the activities communicators intend to design and implement to generate the content needed to engage the priority audiences. The word "tactics" is preferred to "activities" because it leaves ample room for more creative thinking around what tactically needs to be done to deliver the strategy's objectives. Tactics can range from face-to-face meetings and focus groups to mass sit-ins, days of silence, flash-mob parties, lobbying of policy makers and op-eds in online newspapers or blogs. This is of particular relevance in the context of development ministries and agencies where emergencies from a political perspective may necessitate rapid interventions.
9. **Messengers**. Many communicators use champions, ambassadors or spokespersons (often celebrities or respected opinion leaders) as a key tactic for conveying messages to audiences. It is assumed that people will sit up and take notice because the messengers are respected, visible and famous. More research is needed into whether such approaches yield the desired results, in particular in the political context of ministries and official agencies. As seen in Chapter 2, the latest thinking from behavioural psychology suggests that excessive use of such messengers can be problematic. In general, it is better to invest in storytelling featuring the voices of real people, whether staff or citizens of donor and beneficiary countries. These messengers are much more likely to connect on an emotional level. As an example, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) encouraged UK-based staff members returning from stints abroad to share their experience with community members via interviews with local media in which they explained what they did, saw and experienced overseas.
10. **Implementation Plan**. No communication strategy is complete without an indicative implementation plan that spells out what will be done and when. A nice strategy with no implementation plan is a hard sell. A clear articulation of the timing for each intervention as well as the duration and key milestones is essential for high-level buy-in as well as for budgeting, monitoring and evaluation. If not already done in the contextual analysis, this

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[10] At the DevCom Warsaw meeting in June 2009, Marina Ponti, European Director of the UN Millennium Campaign, offered eight useful lessons learned in relation to messages. They must be adapted to local context; credible and delivered by voices that resonate with chosen audiences; simple and easy to understand; real (not just PR) and communicate clear objectives; relevant to the wider debate; supporters must be given regular feedback, not only asked for support; political will should be assessed to ensure strategies are ambitious yet realistic; and campaigns must be built on a narrative.

[11] See www.twaweza.org.

section should also spell out the major events and processes that could capitalise on existing momentum. For example, if the overarching objective of the communication strategy is to influence the future shape and trajectory of the post-MDGs discussion, it should identify key moments in the unfolding of the process that need to be influenced and are ripe for strategic engagement.

11. **Available Resources**. Alongside an implementation plan, it is important to provide detail on who will do the work involved (i.e. what team, made up of what functions) and with what financial resources. To the extent that the communication strategy envisages a combination of in-house staff, external contractors and partners working in tandem, this should be visualised. If a network is considered crucial for delivering on the goal, its attributes should be described and visualised. Ultimately, while a table of input costs is useful, a more holistic presentation of what it will take to deliver is likely to be more convincing to higher-ups, and makes everything more "do-able and chewable". Moreover, if non-communication staff are to be involved (e.g. experts, staff in embassies) then responsibilities and processes need to be clarified or communication risks becoming a lower priority.
12. **Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation**. To be discussed in detail in the next chapter is one of the important lessons learned – monitoring, learning and evaluation need to be built into a communication strategy from the outset. This includes the identification of baseline data that can be updated throughout implementation, mixed methods to tell stories about impact along the way, and planning for mid-term and end-of-cycle impact assessment. Learning on a continuing basis makes it possible to correct course midstream, as well as to influence the next generation of communication strategy development. Research is an important part of this.
13. **Managing Expectations and Risks**. Given the widespread recognition of the messy, complex, risky and often experimental nature of development, a good communication strategy should include a section that analyses the risks to successful implementation. There are many creative ways of doing this, beyond traditional SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) or Log Frame-type analyses. Ultimately, it should be possible to convey that potentially some of the most exciting outcomes of the strategy's implementation may be partially or wholly unintended.

Selected communication strategies

The various meetings of the DevCom Network have provided unique opportunities for members to share their perspectives on communication strategy development and implementation. This section briefly outlines the salient elements of selected strategies that have been shared by the network, reflecting on what it is that makes them unique.

Poland's communication strategy (Czaplinska, 2010) stands out because it reflects how much and how quickly a new donor can increase public support for development thanks to an effective communication strategy. Poland became an aid donor only in 2004, and yet was able to increase public support for development by a staggering 20 % (from 63% in 2004 to 83% in 2009). This exceptional impact appears to have been achieved by grappling with a number of challenges. First, the main goal was expressed in simple language "fostering public interest and debate", an objective that consciously sought to go beyond the standard "awareness-raising". Next, communicators in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs realised that "development assistance" was misunderstood and the term was rebranded "Polish aid", alongside a simple logo. Efforts were

then undertaken to convince the public that Poland, a country that was once in the economic doldrums, was now a donor.

Part of the strategy to convincing the public was to avoid the usual moral arguments about the need for charity. Audience selection was targeted and prioritised, with the focus on multipliers and those already interested and engaged (NGOs, media, film-makers and academia). The team avoided big media campaigns, deemed too costly and tending towards the dumbing down of messages; avoided fund-raising rhetoric; and stayed away from false promises about eradicating poverty.

As with all good communication strategies, active learning has been a hallmark of Poland's effort, which had identified a number of future challenges. These include the expectation that as the public becomes more aware about development, the pressure to show results will increase; the need for more sophisticated communication as aid modalities become more complex; the need for better targeting of messages to specific audiences; the need for greater coherence between what it funded and what is communicated; and how to ensure a focus on compelling results as opposed to not-so-compelling inputs (such as "technical assistance" and "capacity building").

Luxembourg's communication strategy (2012) is short and to the point, managing to communicate extremely effectively (and in a few pages) an elaborate effort. It has internal and external dimensions, a component related to the goals of the Grand Duchy's aid-giving and communicating results, and includes a detailed list of partners for each aspect of the strategy.

Also of note is the clear rationale for the strategy: the apparent disconnect between strong levels of public support for development co-operation and a profound lack of knowledge and awareness. The document also cites an extract from the 2008 OECD-DAC Peer Review for Luxembourg (DAC 2008), which provided added justification for the communication effort, and visualises the Theory of Change underpinning the strategy in an easy-to-understand, compelling way.

Sweden's communication strategy, in place since 2009, was developed on the basis of an excellent template worth reviewing (see annex). The strategy itself is unique because it is jointly owned by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the MFA and involves multiple organisational partners. Although the full text of the strategy and accompanying evaluation are in Swedish, the text box below describes its intent and approach succinctly.

Sweden – A Joined-up Communication Strategy

"We have had the integrated strategy since 2009. For us it has meant a more strategic approach to development communication. With a joint strategy we as well as the organisations can link up with each other, better take advantage of each organisation's mandate and better complement each other. The strategy brings us together under the same mission and we (at Sida) have taken on the role as coordinator for several events where organisations are participating such as the annual Book Fair and Politicians Week. The strategy was evaluated in 2012 and one of the findings was that the objectives of the strategy need to be broad to suit the operational work of the organisations. For example, where we are OK with the "increasing awareness" objective the organisations often aim higher, raising awareness yes but with a higher aim to stimulate some kind of action in the target audience. Another advantage is that we can work with the same indicators for evaluating results of the communication activities. We also do joint capacity building of communication officers of the organisations. We also save funds as we in some cases can use the same evaluations etc. One example is the opinion polling. Last year we did a study on how to reach the schools looking at what different organisations do in terms of reaching out to students. The study revealed that many organisations were duplicating work. We had a discussion on how to better complement each other."

Source: Hillevi Ekberg, Sida – Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

The **Belgian** Development Cooperation Communication Strategy was shared with DevCom members in Oslo in November 2012. It is the institutional/corporate communication strategy of the Directorate General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid of the MFA. Of all the strategies reviewed in this chapter it is the only one that, in response to the question "why we communicate", lists accountability to Belgian taxpayers as well as "beneficiaries" in the first bullet point. This resonates with the section on "context and challenges" (identified earlier in this chapter as a good practice in strategy development), which states clearly that "development co-operation results are mostly the result of common efforts (partner country – multiple donors) and thus not only of one donor." The analysis of context and challenges is also sanguine about the development enterprise and includes some important caveats that serve to manage expectations of what the strategy can achieve.

The section on "Method" includes strategic, longer-term objectives (such as "to develop a culture of communication") with more hands-on, practical objectives faced by aid communicators. These include, for instance, "to integrate institutional communication and development education" as well as the "optimisation of information and communication about development co-operation through partner/stakeholder communication". The rest of the strategy is equally well thought-through, notably the section on "implementation", which details ways in which the strategy should be put into operation.

Belgium has also developed a separate strategy note on development education, which is considered as indispensable a development co-operation tool as the interventions in the south, only this time aimed at mainly northern stakeholders. The strategy is based on four complementary working methods: calling upon and relying on third-party organisations; ensuring continuing dialogue and co-ordination among Belgian actors and government institutions; upgrading north-south partnerships; and monitoring development education results. The strategy note lists three priorities related to target groups, priority themes and complementarity and synergies among actors. Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC), the country's development agency, has also developed a concept paper on communication for development.

EuropAid has recently reviewed its communication strategy, which resulted in some major changes in the way it engages with internal and external audiences. Their aim was to embed the results communication element at all stages of development intervention and decision-making. It also aims to set the results of European development co-operation in a broader context of a changing economic and political landscape.

EuropeAid – Adapting to a Changing Development Landscape

The European Commission's Directorate General Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid adopted a communication strategy in 2012 that covers both the internal and the external dimension. It responds to the challenges of a changing political landscape, which is being reshaped by the arrival of new donors, the rise of the emerging powers, as well as the financial and the debt crises. Instilling a spirit of communication and creating the foundations of a communication culture inside EuropeAid is a central building block of the strategy. It stipulates that from the very beginning of any intervention and at all levels of decision making, the need for communication should be taken into account and mainstreamed. This should provide additional impetus for defining results and their measurement throughout the design phase and monitoring of results during implementation. External communication is centered around three core messages, currently tailored mainly to EU audiences. For the future, the inclusion of key messages for audiences in partner countries is planned. The strategy is implemented through ten main actions:

- develop a culture of communication;
- focus on results and impact;
- focus on digital and social media;
- strengthen relations with the media;
- focus on key events and improve planning;
- strengthen the image towards stakeholders as a centre of excellence;
- work in partnership;
- increase information transparency;
- improve communications and project visibility outside the EU;
- evaluate work.

Source: Stina Soewarta, EuropeAid.

Conclusions

There are many variables that determine what an aid agency or MFA communication strategy looks like. These differences are often expressed in the vision, goals, purposes and objectives – all of which vary from country to country. Despite this diversity, it is possible to agree on a number of commonalities underpinning a communication strategy:

- the majority of communication strategies tend to be outward-facing, with only a handful explicitly targeting internal audiences (such as within governments, agencies);
- most target donor publics, although in one or two cases aid beneficiaries are explicit targets;
- the impetus for a communication strategy could be reinforcing the importance of development co-operation, or demonstrating results, or strengthening aid delivery, or a combination of all three;
- communication strategies can be defensive in nature (reacting to crisis or adverse publicity) or more proactive (positioning ideas or policy changes, anticipating scepticism, seeking to capture policy space, etc.);
- some strategies focus on issues management (before, during and after the anticipated issues arise);
- an increasing number are evidence-informed (drawing on polling data, perception studies, etc.);
- many communication strategies employ a logic of needing to convey certain messages to target audiences, although there is a growing emphasis in second-generation strategies on interactivity, engagement and building a sense of community.

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Chapter 4
Measurement Matters – Evaluating Communication

The previous chapter highlighted the fact that monitoring and evaluation are integral parts of the development and implementation of a communication strategy. As the examples from DevCom members' communication strategies suggest, this aspect of development communication remains relatively underemphasised, mainly because many agencies and ministries are either still in the first (or second) cycle of strategy implementation, or because they have only recently completed implementation.

This chapter examines current understanding about evaluating the impact of communication within development co-operation, with a focus on:

- analysing why, in a world increasingly based on information and results, communicators have no choice but consistently and regularly to evaluate the impact of communication strategies;
- drawing on recent evidence, shedding light on the status of communication strategy evaluation among DevCom members and identifying some of the common challenges and limitations they face;
- with reference to the wider field, offering concrete ways of moving beyond the stalemate, identifying innovative approaches being used in related sectors, and examining briefly whether new and emerging social media tools for tracking impact offer clues as to the way forward.

Why measuring communication matters

The evaluation community is increasingly challenged to come up with better methods, instruments and approaches to measure development impact. As a recent paper (da Costa, 2012) commissioned by DevCom notes, current approaches coalesce around three broad schools: *evidence-oriented evaluation*, which dominates the development evaluation field, aims to find measurable changes that can be attributed to specific policies; *realistic evaluation*, which assesses how policy is received under certain social and cultural conditions and how it triggers a response; and *complexity evaluation*, which acknowledges that development is multifaceted and seeks to evaluate how policy makers respond to complex problems.

New approaches such as experimental impact evaluations have been developed. They seek to provide objective evidence on the development impact by applying scientific methods usually found in the laboratory, such as the use of randomised control trials. At the same time, some are contesting what they see as an excessive focus on scientific evaluation. In their view, such approaches are being harnessed by a "results agenda" that is too narrowly focused, politically motivated and self-serving.[1] Instead, their argument is for research and evaluation that supports wider accountability concepts and learning, which allow for more flexible though arguably less rigorous concepts of development impact. Fundamental questions are now being raised about who determines "success", on what basis, and who is excluded from evaluation processes. So-called "failures" and "negative experiences", traditionally ignored or concealed, are being re-evaluated as potential opportunities for learning and improvement (Byrne, 2012).

[1] For more on this school of thought, see the Big Push Forward blog: http://bigpushforward.net/.

Mixed method evaluations[2] are being advocated as an alternative to purely experimental approaches. In particular, participatory approaches are being promoted. The argument is that meaningful involvement of different stakeholders throughout the evaluation process will make it more likely that the findings are used because they are more widely valued, trusted and owned by the stakeholders (Byrne, 2010).

The approaches have been widely discussed among the evaluation community, and the same issues apply every bit as much too evaluating communication. Yet despite this context of debate in which communicators operate, the practice of evaluating communication among aid agencies is still at an early stage. Similarly, there is no miracle solution to prove that a particular set of actions carried out by communicators is causally responsible for positive outcomes, despite the diversity of approaches, methods, methodologies and tools available to evaluate communication.

Aid agencies or communication units in ministries are usually the main organisational bodies responsible for external communication of development evaluations. Thus they serve as the main institutional channels for official messages destined for the public. In recent years, OECD communicators have been making head way in developing and implementing communication strategies that identify objectives, audiences, activities and tactics. In order to acknowledge or even examine the effectiveness of these strategies, they should systematically include a Theory of Change, a results framework, clear outcome indicators and details on how their impact will be tracked.

With a specific focus on advocacy strategies instead of communications as a whole, the International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC) adds useful distinctions between monitoring and evaluation (O'Flynn, 2009). In this framework, monitoring is considered as a continuous activity that should be undertaken throughout the life cycle of a strategy. Monitoring is fundamental to assessing the strategy's success and adapting it accordingly over time; responding to unpredictable events; providing regular opportunities to build relationships by communicating collaborating and sharing experience; documenting the process to learn and improve future work; and demonstrating results to diverse stakeholders.

Evaluations are conducted at a specific moment in time, either halfway through the communication strategy life cycle (i.e. mid-term review) or at the end. Evaluations and reviews are useful to assess the progress of work in light of the strategy's objectives; to take stock of what works and what needs to be changed; to identify the most innovative and effective strategies; to show the results to different stakeholders; and to generate financial and political support for future communication work.

Overall, communication evaluation is deemed important "because it is the only way to control if you are reaching your goals and have used your resources effectively." Because such evaluations are costly, "you have to make sure that the costs and benefits are in the right relationship." Evaluations of this nature are also complex "because the communications processes themselves are extremely complex." (Voelker, 2007).

[2] These combine quantitative methods with approaches such as outcome mapping, most significant change approach, whole systems research, complex adaptive systems, and other network approaches to evaluation (Byrne, 2010).

Findings from DevCom

Beyond the intention to monitor and evaluate demonstrated in the strategies reviewed in previous chapters, there are signs from around the DevCom network that OECD communicators are actively grappling with the challenge.

For instance, the European Commission's Development Directorate recently commissioned an independent evaluation of its communication and visibility implementation.[3] In terms of collaboration between evaluators and communicators, the DANIDA evaluation department has published a handbook for evaluating communication that has been widely used in Denmark, including by non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

The Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida) evaluates one or two major communication activities every year. These can be either their own activities (e.g. magazine) or the activities of civil society organisations (e.g. reaching out to schools). For example, in 2013 it evaluated one NGO for its handling of communication funds and how well they contribute to the implementation of Sida's strategy.

As the case below demonstrates, evaluation and communication experts in the Belgian Development Agency (BTC) have teamed up to develop common approaches to evaluate communication and communicate results. In the same vein, the BTC Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) department organised writing workshops in three partner countries, to help its teams in partner countries in producing their annual reports.

Collaboration along the Results Continuum

BTC sees monitoring, evaluation and communication as key steps along a results information continuum. This shared perspective has provided the basis for M&E and communication professionals within the agency to collaborate. BTC developed processes and tools that link the two disciplines. Before any data is gathered, there is joint discussion around its purpose and a common language is developed that both groups understand. They developed monitoring and evaluation results templates tailored to the needs of specific users and updated them with inputs from both teams. Both consider evidence to be critical to effective results communication, and both are engaged from the outset in defining the data needed to tell BTC's story, developing hard and soft indicators, and articulating theories of change to frame analysis. There is an explicit focus on telling the story of how BTC interventions have impacted on beneficiaries. The teams also privilege unexpected results as an opportunity for learning. Most importantly, evaluators and communicators engage on an on-going basis, both formally (in team meetings) and informally. This helps build trust and mutual understanding, setting the stage for joint ownership of strategies to communicate BTC's impact to the wider public.

Source: Van Parys & Boeve, 2012.

The purpose of these annual reports is to monitor progress on outputs and outcomes, to understand the development process in which the work is taking place, to manage risks pro-actively, to contribute to reporting on the specific results in the sector, to suggest areas for adjustment, and to take stock of lessons learned. This rationale is not much different from that for evaluating communication. What it again demonstrates is that in agencies such as BTC thinking and action around evaluating communication and communicating results are handled jointly.

Furthermore, DevCom surveys have helped provide useful anecdotal evidence as well as data on the extent to which its members are increasingly aware of the challenge of evaluating the impact of their communication. In October 2012, communicators were asked i) whether their agencies

[3] Accessible http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/2012/1307_docs_en.htm.

systematically evaluate the impact of their communications strategies on a regular basis, and ii) if so, whether or not the communication unit drew on the expertise of evaluation colleagues. More than 50% of the 17 communicators responded negatively to the first question. A few respondents reported monitoring activities such as reviewing website hits, media reports, attendance and feedback. One communication unit reported conducting small-scale evaluations of campaigns and projects. The same unit said it was in the process of reviewing the impact of its communication effort over recent years. But, overall, the findings point to a major lack of systematic evaluation of communication impact.

In response to the second question, the majority of communication units that evaluated their impact did so on the basis of self-evaluation (i.e. within the communication unit itself). Only one unit reported commissioning expertise from outside the agency. Not a single communicator reported drawing on evaluation expertise from inside their own agency.

Evaluators were also asked to what extent their unit or department was involved in evaluating the impact of their agency's internal and external communication. A second question sought to establish whether, for example, evaluators received requests from communication experts to help them conceptualise or conduct evaluations. Out of the 18 responses, only one suggested that evaluators and communicators had collaborated in evaluating communication impact. Most of the respondents had never been involved in such assessments, and had never received requests for help. The above suggests that monitoring and evaluation of communication strategies and efforts are among the most urgent areas in need of attention.

Common challenges and limitations

To put the DevCom experience further in context, evaluating the impact of communication efforts keeps raising considerable conceptual and methodological challenges. A recent study (Lennie and Tacchi, 2011) has identified a number of these challenges, including:

- impact attribution of communication efforts in a complex and rapidly changing world;
- donors often wanting to see results in an unreasonably short time frame;
- reluctance of evaluation sponsors to fund longitudinal studies, although these are the best way of assessing lasting and sustainable change in attitudes and actions;
- high cost of impact assessment – inadequate funding, low capacity, little resources, lack of time to undertake assessment of communication activities;
- M&E is approached in a vertical – as opposed to integrated – manner with few examples of M&E and impact assessment integrated into early stages of the cycle, including project/programme design which would allow better evaluation;
- the complexity of social change which is what in the end development is – social and behavioural change needs to be assessed against a moving baseline, which is inconsistent with dominant organisational practice.

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) guidelines on the monitoring and evaluation of information and communication for development interventions have also highlighted significant challenges:

- problems behind the specific change theory used; behaviour-change initiatives rely on targeted messages to change an individual's behaviour, when in reality a person's behaviour is not always a logical response to a held belief: so the indicators used to measure change might be fundamentally flawed;
- some initiatives try to inspire social change by giving people information to use however they like (e.g. to inspire community dialogue or collective action) but the main problem

with evaluating social change is that it is often too fluid, too long-term, and too intangible to measure.

Scheunpflug & McDonnell (2007) find that:

- the funders of development education often drive the objectives of the activities undertaken and thus determine "indicators" of success that are later evaluated, which can cause conflict with education professionals who, for instance, consider that successful learning does not necessarily result in more public support or mobilisation for development co-operation. Instead, success may also be a learner who becomes critical of the aid budget;
- similar conflicts also occur in evaluation. Evaluations are regularly a donor condition and this contributes to the perception that it is used for control rather than for learning lessons or a combination of both.

Volker (2007) warns that:

- ticking checklist boxes does not guarantee that communication measures will be more effective;
- more subjective methods such as the "balanced scorecard" tend to be used incorrectly, focusing on the most simple tried and tested approaches, as these can easily be measured;
- numbers and percentages often draw consumers (i.e. the public) to make rushed interpretations;
- the obsessive collection of quantitative data (numbers) can quickly become extremely expensive.

As stated above, a reason why many communicators in agencies from OECD member countries are rarely in a position to measure their impact is because they are not equipped to conduct or commission a longitudinal study. Effectively to measure the impact of a communication system or campaign, a baseline of the original situation (e.g. level of knowledge about an issue, support of a certain policy, etc.) is needed to benchmark the point from which improvement is being tracked. Because the practice of evaluating communication is quite new, many communicators have begun to commission opinion polls as a proxy for robust longitudinal data.

Public opinion polls may provide indicators about awareness, which can be tested for correlations between awareness raising and learning strategies. Opinion surveys, however, do have limitations. They are rarely conducted under rigorous scientific conditions (i.e. longitudinally, before and after the intervention) due to high cost, limited time, and, often, poor planning. Surveys also have the tendency to be captured by political groups to seek endorsement of policies. For these reason polling is not always the best approach to evaluating a communication strategy.[4]

Ultimately, there is no simple solution to evaluating communication. Evaluations have limited potential for assessing the impact of a given activity or set of activities on public awareness and public action. In the end, communicators should harness a mixture of methods and approaches that can help them to tell a compelling story about their impact. There are many approaches being used, with varying degrees of success.[5]

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[4] Scheunpflug and McDonnell, 2007.

[5] These include case study method, stories of change, participatory rural communication appraisal, rapid assessment, most significant change technique, outcome mapping, market-style audience research, ethnographic action research, and experimental impact studies. For more on these, see (Lennie and Tacchi 2011) and DFID 2000, among others.

Beyond the impasse

In the private sector, for example in the advertising industry, the assessment of the impact of communication tends to be more advanced and sophisticated. This is probably because private companies are more under pressure to show a direct correlation between their spending on communication and the bottom line, sale of products and profitability.

A number of off-the-shelf approaches are available to help aid communicators sharpen their monitoring and evaluation. One such approach, developed by the International Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communication (AMEC), offers an interesting if somewhat elaborate metrics framework template for planning communication as well as measuring and tracking each key area of communication.[6]

For each of these key areas it is possible on the vertical axis of the tool to track and document progress in three communications phases (PR activity, intermediary effect and target audience effect). The horizontal axis of the tool tracks progress in the "communications/marketing stages" (sometimes known as the "continuum"), which begins with "awareness", moves to "knowledge/understanding", then to "interest/consideration", "support/preference" and finally to "action". With such a metrics framework, it should be possible to provide a compelling account of how a given development communication strategy is able to move its target audience segments from basic "awareness" right through to "action".

The AMEC framework also considers social media as a powerful set of tools that provide new and scalable ways for gaining input from audiences to find out how best to engage with them, but also to measure influence and track the impact of communications efforts on audiences. This is an emerging universe that potentially provides communicators with ways of leapfrogging monitoring and evaluation challenges, and developing new, exciting and more interactive ways of tracking their footprint. Chapter 7, on "Social Media and New Communication Tools", will discuss some of these metrics and possibilities in more detail.

Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated the need to take more seriously the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of communication strategies, suggesting that it holds the key to successful interventions. Good practices from the DevCom Network have been shown as examples, while demonstrating, with reference to recent survey evidence, that there is still room for improvement within the development community in this area. Moreover, the chapter has argued that evaluating communication efforts is challenging in all sectors. Some suggestions have also been provided regarding the kind of metrics and tools available to help move beyond the apparent impasse.

At a very basic level, and if evaluation of communication is to improve, communication strategies need to:

- include an evaluation plan right at the start that identifies the key pillars of the communication strategy to be measured;
- set goals and agree on a baseline that allows for performance to be monitored on an on-going basis;

[6] These areas are brand/product marketing, reputation building, issues advocacy/support, employee engagement, investor relations, crisis/issues management, not-for-profit, and social/community engagement.

- make use of small efficient instruments (e.g. templates and social media tools) throughout the process, making sure to evaluate their effectiveness so improvements can be introduced along the way;
- keep checking data as it comes in to ensure it is adequate and correct;
- triangulate and test the validity of the data gathered using old and new approaches with common sense and trust.[7]

[7] Adapted from D. Voelker, Neues Handeln, Presentation to DevCom meeting, Bonn (2007).

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Chapter 5
Demonstrating Results

Faced with growing pressure to demonstrate greater value for money, and at a time of fundamental shifts in geopolitics and international economics, the development community is grappling with the challenge of demonstrating and communicating development results. The DevCom network has been at the forefront of this discussion and has assembled an important body of knowledge that reflects on it. This chapter will document the evolving debate on demonstrating results as well as providing a sense of how aid ministries and agencies' communications staff are adapting to these challenges. Accordingly it will:

- spell out why results communication is more prominent than ever and explain what is driving this rapid evolution;
- explore the concepts and dimensions underpinning results communication, as well as practical implications for rolling out a conceptual framework;
- examine how donors organise their results frameworks in communicating evidence to various audiences;
- reflect on the state of communicating the results of evaluations done on development projects; and identify challenges and propose ways that evaluation results can be better communicated and how southern actors and perspectives can be better integrated into this.

The evolving results agenda

Driven by a number of factors, the prominence and complexity of results communication are stronger than ever. Not least is the fact that development is now widely understood not only as a series of discrete activities or projects, but rather as a large, complex enterprise involving donors, partner countries and other shareholders. In recent years, the discourse has accordingly shifted from a focus on *aid effectiveness* – primarily how aid money is managed – to include *development effectiveness* – how to ensure the best possible outcomes from what is a complex, multifaceted enterprise. This evolving understanding of the development landscape poses considerable challenges to those seeking to attribute success to any individual actor (such as a donor). In the past, the input of an aid agency to specific outputs in a developing country could be easily identified and cited as an indicator of success (at least in theory). Attribution is considerably more challenging in today's environment with the increasing number of actors and with the focus having shifted from output to impact, in particular over the long run.

Addressing this means changing the way in which development results are conceived and communicated. It implies telling a compelling story about how aid – as one of a number of inputs – can make a significant contribution to wider development efforts. As one recent presentation to DevCom put it, "Looking forward in the quest for 'communicating results' we need to re-think development and development communication beyond the shallow donor-recipient images that have distorted perceptions and misled public opinion for decades." (Hem and Nygaard, 2012). This, together with increases in demand for accountability in aid spending, has in turn pushed growing investment in results communication targeted at donor publics.[1] The expectation is that increased transparency on aid spending, will lead to sustained levels of public support for

[1] For more on the growing spend on promotion of development awareness by OECD aid agencies, see Zimmerman (2009).

development co-operation. Though reporting on output as results may not always yield behavioural change nor accurately reflect the long run impact of development aid, it is seen as being pivotal to ensuring transparency as well as to facilitating public debate.

Defining results in development co-operation

At the outset, it is important to point out that what constitutes "development results" remains subject to debate as development workers, communicators, officials and citizens of both donor and developing countries weigh into the debate. That said, most agree that development results tend to be "the output, outcome or impact […] of a development intervention" (OECD, 2002). In the past, monitoring and evaluation of development interventions tended to focus on "inputs" (i.e. the financial, human and material resources invested in a particular project of programme) and "outputs" (i.e. the products, capital goods and services that result from a development intervention implemented using these inputs). Current understandings of results are more holistic, emphasising "outcomes" (i.e. the likely or achieved short-term or medium-term effects of the intervention's outputs) and "impacts" (i.e. long-term effects – whether positive or negative, primary or secondary, intended or unintended, direct or indirect – produced by a development intervention) (OECD, 2002).

For many people, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) remain the most appropriate framework for measuring and communicating results. They were agreed globally and provided a series of concrete targets consisting of basic goals and indicators towards improved human welfare.[2] Widespread concerns have been expressed that the MDGs have set unrealistic targets for some developing countries. Furthermore, the expectation is that the new post-2015 development goals will reflect a wider array of development partners, cover a larger range of themes and targets as well, and metrics for measuring progress and accountability. Indicators derived from the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), Accra Agenda for Action (AAA, 2008) and most recently the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (2011) may also be considered as the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation evolves. Those advocating globally agreed commitments are likely to view these next-generation goals as the ideal starting point for framing a new results communication discourse and approach. None of these international norms and standards are mutually exclusive and in practical terms diverse indicators of progress can be measured, and reported on using the same approach and system. Indeed donors are increasingly using developing country systems for their results reporting.

Contribution or attribution?

An overarching concern remains how to reconcile international targets such as the MDGs with the fact that as the aid system is becoming increasingly complex. Reporting linear progress and attributing that progress to individual agencies becomes all the more difficult as interventions have taken more complex forms (e.g. budget support, pool funding, advocacy, governance reform, etc.). Individual donors are becoming, in a sense, shareholders in a larger enterprise. Attribution is thus a fundamental challenge: moving from reporting the effectiveness of specific projects in selected countries, to focusing on the aggregate contribution of several donors, in partnership with governments. This structural change can ultimately contribute to sustainable development.

[2] See www.un.org/millenniumgoals/stats.shtml.

As DevCom and other DAC meetings have noted in recent years, the attribution question is particularly challenging in relation to budget support. In some cases, donors are reducing their budget support operations or are using a different language for the instrument (e.g. “buying” results or “cash on delivery”) to be less open to criticism. Many early communication strategies focused on providing donor publics with project-level information. The donors that decide to shift to a more comprehensive approach to results communication, which is for example needed for budget support operations, need time to develop this. At the same time, though, sceptical public donors who consider straightforward input-output results reporting as the norm are likely to ask questions. In Norway, for example, communicators from the aid agency Norad (Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation) found that much of the criticism on aid had to deal with budget support. An important challenge lies in developing non-defensive tools, tactics and approaches for communicating budget support that can be developed.

Whose results?

The above question of attribution is also one of “ownership” of results (in particular successes). Different donors, other stakeholders such as the partner country government, beneficiaries or implementing non-governmental organisations (NGOs) may all feel they own the result to a certain degree. Among development ministries and agencies’ competencies, reporting results has been one of their tasks, including data gathering, editing results, reports and communications towards the relevant audience. To a large extent, this remains the standard approach for ministries and agencies that also have formal reporting obligations to parliaments, audit institutions, etc. Communicators are, however, making greater efforts to capture the voices of aid beneficiaries, using digital technologies as well as social media. These technologies make possible a different set of approaches that are not initiated, orchestrated or facilitated predominantly from donor capitals. For example, beneficiaries and field staff of the donor agency could easily provide content for blogs or a website. There are also significant differences between how donors and partner countries see results. Because of domestic political considerations, partner governments are less likely to recognise the significant impact played by external contributors. Instead, they would prefer to attribute development results to their own policy choices and actions. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), the partner government’s development strategy which is meant to co-ordinate donors’ efforts, are hard to imagine as a basis for communication with the public in donor countries.

Communication for and about results

This section provides an updated version of a conceptual framework for communicating results first developed in 2009. It was designed to inform on the development of OECD-DAC guidelines for results communication (da Costa, 2009). The aim of the framework is to demonstrate the role of communication in the wider results agenda in the development community. Underpinning the conceptual framework is an important distinction between “communicating *about* results” and “communicating *for* results”. In practice, there are overlaps between these two approaches and no clear boundary between them. However, the conceptual distinction has proven useful when promoting the wider understanding of results communication in aid agencies today.

Communicating *about* results is at the heart of the mandate of many aid agency communicators. It constitutes a core aspect of the accountability relationship. It aims at strengthening donor accountability towards key high-level policy makers, parliaments and the public. It is largely

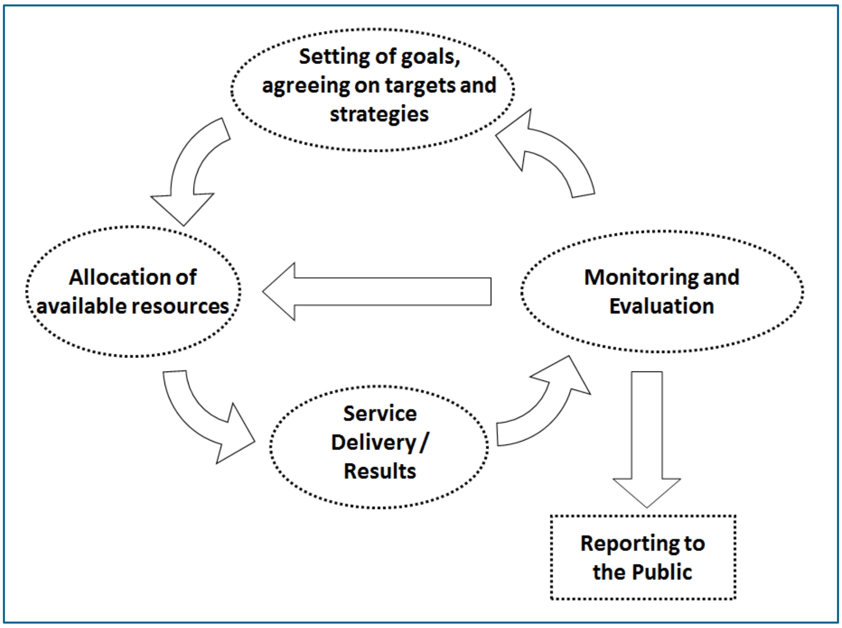
directed at stakeholders external to the ministry or agency. In some OECD countries, aid ministries and agencies are deploying part of their communication "*about* results" in order to position themselves in relation to other government departments for policy purposes (on issues such as agriculture, trade, or the environment) or competing for budgetary resources.[3]

Communication *for* results, commonly known as "Communication for Development" (C4D), is both a tool and a process for delivering effectively aid programmes. C4D privileges a role for communication as an integral part, throughout the programme cycle, as opposed to using communication exclusively as a dissemination function at the beginning and end of a programme. Integrating communication as a management tool for a project or programme has internal as well as external dimensions. Internal to the organisation improved communication can function as a tool for in-house learning and can increase the emergence of improved co-ordination of actions. As development programmes and projects do not exist in a vacuum, communication for development should be an essential part of the monitoring process. It can allow, for example, other development actors, beneficiaries and the donor public to be aware and react to continuing work, improving transparency and co-ordination.

The majority of OECD aid agency communicators focus on communicating *about* results as a core element of their mandates and less investment is made into communicating *for* results. Both aim to communicate results, and each requires clarity when expressing how results are defined and captured. The diagram below provides a simple representation of the conceptual framework (communicating *for* and *about* results). The communication *for* development dimension is involved from the outset of project or programme design, playing an important role in setting goals, strategies and indicators of the programme. It also influences resource allocation, part of which is dedicated to communication of results. Furthermore, communication *for* results works throughout the implementation of the programme, acting both as a means of gathering intermediate results and a tool for ensuring effective delivery. At the end of the programme, results gathered as part of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes are fed back into the next generation of programme development. At the same time, M&E results are packaged and communicated to the general public.

[3] Some OECD aid agency communicators favour development education, a strategy aimed at stimulating the general public's interest in development issues. Since it focuses on raising donor public awareness, development education helps aid agencies to communicate *about* results. Yet it is important in its own right as some 80% of OECD countries conduct development education activities – even if these are not always distinct from corporate communication. The Belgian foreign ministry defines the role of development education as: "to promote, stimulate and support global education and active world citizenship. Global education is about a globalising and increasing interdependency and the awareness that we are becoming world citizens. North-south issues and underdevelopment are important issues." (Zimmerman, 2009).

Chart 1: Conceptual framework, communicating for *and* about *results*



Source: da Costa, Peter (2009), *Study on Communicating Development Results*, Final Version, commissioned by OECD-DAC Development Co-operation Directorate and DevCom Network.

In this conceptual framework, communicators are core members of the project and programme team and as such, they are present throughout the cycle. In practice communicators still tend to be seen as "downstream" packagers and purveyors of information *about* results. That said, understanding of the importance of communication for development is growing.

How do donors organise and use evidence in communication?

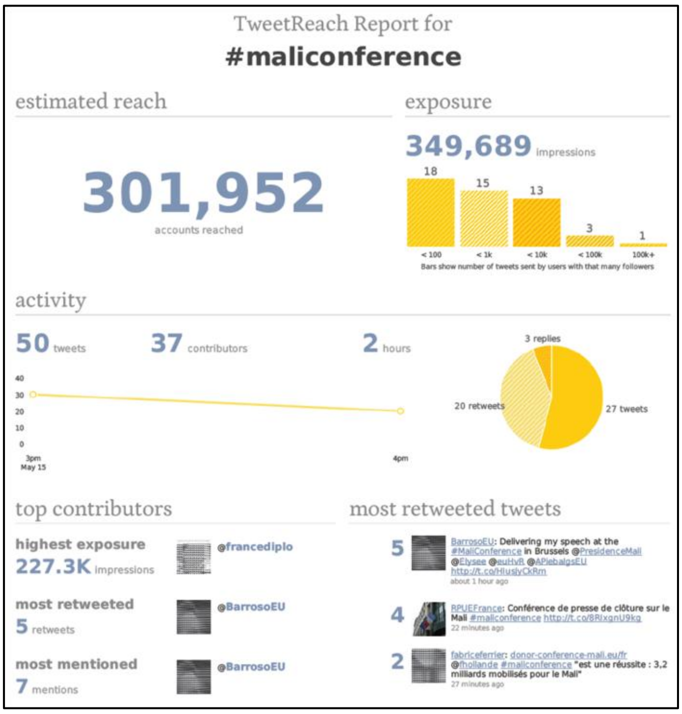
This section highlights three areas where donors are grappling with the challenges of collecting and organising data better to communicate results. The first area is at the *global level*, where development co-operation is a collective effort of partner countries, the numerous donors and other stakeholders such as NGOs, the private sector, and foundations. Work is under way to develop shared principles for results reporting by donors, as well as to see how these principles can be piloted to stimulate further learning. In 2011, the Global Partnership on Managing for Development Results set out a series of guiding principles for results reporting, known as "Results TRAINS" (MDF, 2011). The aim was to streamline the cumbersome reporting requirements that often failed to meet stakeholders' information needs. The partnership noted that results reporting changed in parallel with aid perspectives, roles and modalities. In part, this is due to the emerging trend among donors to commit themselves to using and developing partner country strategies and systems in line with agreements at Busan. As such, the following principles were developed to provide common standards for OECD donor results reporting. Hence the name "Results TRAINS" that stands for Transparency; Results-based decisions; Alignment with country reporting; Investment in country results systems; National results rather than attribution to donors; and Subscription to good practice in managing for development results (MDF, 2011). Efforts are currently being undertaken to test those principles with country-level learning initiatives on joint reporting being explored. This initiative helps illustrate how the Busan commitments on results and accountability can be implemented at national levels.

The second area in which donors are dealing with data collection and communication challenges is at the *bilateral level*. This is evidenced by the increasingly diverse and innovative results communication undertaken by development ministries and agencies that have shared their experiences in DevCom meetings over the past few years and shown in the following examples:

- **Belgium**, an active member of DevCom, has been working on results communication from the outset. It is pioneering collaboration between evaluators and communicators in order to explore the benefits of a joint approach and Belgian Technical Co-operation (BTC) has also introduced writing workshops for its staff to improve the way results are collated and communicated. Another innovation worth pointing out is that BTC is building a local communication officers network in its partner countries to help gather stories and information from where the development work is taking place. This will help in improving accountability back home as well as in communicating with target audiences in partner countries;
- **DANIDA** (Denmark) recently launched three activities aimed at communicating development results to the Danish public around the agency's 50th anniversary: a travelling exhibition, "DANIDA's experience circles", that allows visitors to interact with and experience the reality of people living in developing countries; the "I Love" campaign, a quiz aimed at improving young peoples' knowledge of overseas countries and development issues; and "the world's best news", a joint campaign with the UN Millennium Campaign around the MDGs;
- **Norway**, in addition to initiating an aid results report in 2007 intended for the wider public, produced a distinct results report aimed at development specialists. The report included comprehensive, quantitative data on aid disbursed, disaggregated in different ways. Norway has found that there is a slim line between reporting results on a selective basis (i.e. focusing on a few thematic areas and a few aid recipient countries) and comprehensive reporting. As an example, Norway's research community criticised the 2007 aid results report for being too anecdotal. To address this, the 2008 report narrowed its focus by undertaking a more in-depth results reporting on three countries – Mozambique, Nepal and Sudan. A key lesson drawn from this experience relates to the importance of gathering and communicating good and bad results, failures as well as successes. Aid communicators in Norway found out that results transparency was the approach most likely to foster debate and engagement, knowledge-sharing and increasing visibility for development co-operation in society;
- **Sweden** has developed four levels in its new model for results communication: global trends, the Swedish contribution to the global level, the Swedish contribution at the developing country level and the human interest story on results for the individual (called the People First initiative). The content is generated both from global statistics and through the regular reporting and contribution management system. The human interest story is based on the voice of the individual beneficiary. Content is differentiated with different colours and symbols representing the various levels and themes, and adapted to specific channels of communication depending on target audience;
- **U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)** has results reporting that reflects a strong accountability framework, explaining who gets American aid and on what basis. It firmly links US overseas assistance to the country's foreign policy. The centrepiece is a website, ForeignAssistance.gov, created in response to the Paris Declaration aid effectiveness principles as well as the Open Government Initiative, initiated by President Obama. The plan is ambitious, to provide an overview of all US government foreign assistance and related performance data in a standardised format. Once the programme

is completed, users should be able to track down, analyse and monitor aid investments from the time the funds are requested from Congress in the budget to the time they are spent in developing countries. The plan is to make this data visual through charts and graphs that users can generate and download;

- **The European Commission (EC)** has since mid-2005 actively sought to make communication a chief element in its management processes, as well as throughout the project cycle.[4] A number of innovations in results communication include the European Development Days (EDD), billed as "Europe's premier forum on development co-operation", which brings together thousands of development stakeholders, practitioners and advocates each year (see "tweet reach" visual from recent EDD Mali conference, below). Additionally, the EC organises tailored seminars and journalist briefings in Brussels as well as in partner countries. The commission also produces an annual results report for the European Council and Parliament. In addition it also calls on think tanks to produce an annual thematic European Report on Development. The commission has launched the DEAR (Development Education and Awareness Raising) initiative which provides grants to civil society organisations to organise development education and awareness-raising activities aimed at EU citizens. Lastly, it and created the "back to school" initiative, which involves EU staff members going back to their old schools to talk about their work in development co-operation.



TweetReach Report, Mali Conference, May 2013 (European Commission).

[4] Since 2007, each project or programme wanting to communicate *for* or *about* results has to undergo a mandatory communication assessment at the design stage, and the necessary budgetary and human resources must be allocated. The adequacy of communication measures and availability of resources is routinely reviewed as part of the quality review of every project or programme. A communication and visibility manual mandates that each project or programme must submit a communication plan. A web-based application collects "results-oriented" case studies with facts and figures, testimonies as well as pictures. The results are published on the web as "stories from the field", integrated in presentations, inserted in annual reports, thematic publications or press packs, and used as a basis for more sophisticated communication products such as multimedia productions. Staff from EC field offices can upload project pictures, complete with meta-data, into a photo library accessible via the Internet. A communication award singles out projects as well as individual staff that have communicated in innovative and effective ways, both *for* and *about* results. Source: Philippe Loop, EC.

The third area of activity is among *multilateral agencies* and *development banks*, some of which are at the forefront of innovation in results communication. This can partly be explained as a result of greater resources, the clearer development focus (at least compared to ministries that often combine development co-operation with another policy area), as well as difference of perception between multilateral and bilateral donors. A recent Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)/DevCom seminar identified a number of characteristics that tend to shape multilateral communication efforts:

- multilateral aid comes with different expectations from bilateral aid;
- in some countries multilateral agencies are considered more credible and trustworthy than bilateral development organisations;
- one of the arguments for multilateral agencies and development banks is the fact that they provide a platform for strong financial management and a high technical level in respect of development co-operation;
- multilaterals are seen to focus more on value for money and to have fewer short-term political influences. They also present practical results and position themselves as honest brokers working on behalf of all their partners.

For example, the World Bank[5] has taken major strides in harnessing results communication, which, it argues, is pivotal in delivering four results: reduced political risk, improved programme design, increased transparency, and enhanced voice and participation. As a result, the bank has developed a number of communication tools. These include communication-based assessment, which investigates all relevant issues in a given sector at the design stage of an intervention. Through this assessment, the bank reduces the risk threshold and manages issues pro-actively throughout the life cycle of specific initiatives and operations. Its approach is also known as "operational communications".

Communicating the results of development evaluations[6]

Alongside the evolution in evaluation theory and practice (Chapter 4), aid agency evaluation units are increasingly paying attention to the dissemination of their work to broader audiences. The emphasis on communication and dissemination of evaluation information stems from internal as well as external demand. Internally, there is a sense that not enough is being done to ensure effective learning. Opportunities for discussion and feedback on evaluation findings are limited. Externally, agencies recognise that the findings of evaluations are too rarely disseminated, acknowledged and used, either by specialist audiences or the general public (O'Neill, et al*.,* 2007). There is a growing body of literature related to communicating evaluation results. EvalNet, in particular, has been thinking about these issues since 2001 when it held a workshop in Tokyo that resulted in the publication of *Evaluation Feedback for Effective Learning and Accountability*.

In 2010, EvalNet conducted a survey and study (EvalNet, 2011) among its members that confirmed use of evaluations to be emerging as a priority concern. The survey found that "a lack of attention to, and use of, evaluation findings" as "perhaps the primary area of weakness within the evaluation process today". Similarly, Scheunpflug and McDonnell (2007) found reporting,

[5] The World Bank harnesses communication for development in four distinct ways: internal communication, which seeks to achieve internal consensus before going public; corporate communication, which seeks to build trust in the institution and belief in its product (development); advocacy, which brings issues to the point where action is taken; and communication support to operations, known as development communication. Mitchell, P. and C. Gorove (2006), *The Impact of Communication on Development* (DRAFT), World Bank Development Communication Division.

[6] This section draws heavily on *Communicating Evaluation Results* (da Costa, 2012).

communication and discussion of results to be “the most neglected part of the evaluation process”, albeit “probably the most crucial stage”.

An EvalNet seminar on *Using evidence to improve aid policies and demonstrate results* was held back-to-back with a DAC Senior Level meeting in April 2011. The report of this meeting underlined that “the increasing scrutiny of results has created a growing need for better evidence on, and better communication about, results.”

Three distinct functions of evaluation are identified:

- evaluation as a tool for accountability: a symbolic focus on “value for money”, and communication is primarily aimed at parliamentarians, taxpayers, etc.;
- evaluation as a tool for programme improvement: a focus on utilisation and communication with programme units/management and peer agencies;
- evaluation as aid effectiveness: a focus on lessons learned of previous experiences, knowledge management (OECD, 2010).

While learning with the goal of improving practice is widely acknowledged as a key function of evaluation, accountability to funders often overshadows this.

Key challenges in communicating evaluation results

When asked in a DevCom survey to identify the major challenges of communicating evaluation findings, evaluators provided a range of interesting responses, summarised as follows:

- achieving clarity of message and avoiding jargon/technical-speak;
- sticking to the goal of publishing reports (fewer than 20 pages) and distilling a complex series of factors into a clear narrative;
- striking the right balance between formulating easy-to-digest information for general audiences, whilst not oversimplifying the often complex evaluation findings;
- transmitting evaluation results to ordinary informed people and communicating in a fast and efficient way;
- ensuring that key stakeholders are aware of and able to use the evaluation results;
- identifying the key findings of the evaluation, as different audiences have different interests;
- differing mind-sets between evaluation and communication departments/units;
- rendering the key messages from evaluation reports into user-friendly language;
- ensuring the timely communication of results and recommendations to policy makers;
- exploring new communication tools such as social media to reach a wider audience;
- connecting with the various audiences in a constrained telecommunications environment in Africa. Beyond electronic dissemination, face-to-face engagements, printed documents, mobile phones and radio could be used to deliver evaluation results to a broader audience;
- respecting the confidentiality of development practices.

These findings resonate with the results of a June 2011 survey conducted by EvalNet among its members. It identified the following challenges faced by evaluators in communicating evaluation results:

- how to use evaluation results as learning tools;
- the weak communication skills and systems that most evaluation teams have because of the way that evaluators are recruited and trained;

- decision makers are often busy and don't take the time to look extensively at evaluation results;
- low political interest in evidence and learning from evaluation (daily political cycle more urgent);
- defensive reactions from those being exposed to the evaluation if improvement areas have been identified;
- how to present concrete and relevant recommendations that are useful to policy makers and those working with the issues and programmes daily;
- targeting different audiences at the right time (i.e. providing input on time for decisions to be made) and in the right way (using the right format beyond extensive reports);
- communication with partner countries.

An additional challenge, highlighted during a presentation (Ward, 2010) on recent findings on communication, public opinion and development awareness in DAC Peer Reviews,[7] is "striking a balance between reporting honestly about where ODA has not been so successful and lessons have been learned without discrediting the aid effort." A significant insight is that the communication and dissemination of evaluation results can generate tensions in relation to the other aims and objectives of evaluation units (O'Neill, et al. 2007). The report notes that "sometimes, the pressure to communicate effectively and in a simple and accessible manner to diverse audiences could result in dilution of the more challenging findings or oversimplification of the more technical and rigorous aspects of evaluation. This could undermine the objective of impartiality in the evaluation process." This tension is not inevitable, as the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) shows. It is well known for its ability to design and implement sophisticated communication strategies that involve interactive engagement with different stakeholders using a variety of tools, including social media. The Asian Development Bank Independent Evaluation Group (see box below) is also highly innovative in its approach to communicating evaluation results.

A Multi-pronged Toolbox to Spread the Influence of Evaluation Results

The Asian Development Bank's Information Disclosure Policy compels it to communicate evaluation results, regardless of whether the findings were positive or negative. An Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) aims to ensuring that evaluation findings are communicated without interference. The IEG maintains a team of communication specialists, who work in complete autonomy from the bank's corporate communication and external relations unit. The team within IEG has developed a series of innovative technological applications as part of a multi-pronged communication and outreach toolbox aimed at making evaluations more influential in the design and implementation of future initiatives. These include:

- Management Action Records System, an electronic tool for tracking key recommendations of evaluations. The system is able to identify which recommendations have been subject to management action, and brings pending recommendations to the responsible officers;
- targeted face-to-face meetings with senior officials, staff management, and key stakeholders;
- presentations, seminars and workshops aimed at specific audiences;

[7] The DAC Peer Reviews on public opinion and development communication cover four areas: level of public awareness of development issues and public support for aid and how it is measured; strategy and budget for public awareness and for communicating the vision, plus evidence of impact; mainstreaming development education in school curriculum; and public consultation on policies and strategies.

A Multi-pronged Toolbox to Spread the Influence of Evaluation Results **(cont.)**

- tracking of events (via electronic calendar) to which the IEG can target evaluation findings and lessons in order to have an impact on policy/decision makers and major stakeholders;
- tracking the calendar of board meetings, and targeting evaluation pieces and information briefs to decision makers;
- website platform with modern web content management, multimedia content (text, audio, video, photo) and easy content sharing for all evaluation landing pages, reports, derivative products, and other resources;
- internal communications through existing enterprise/corporate platforms (daily e-news, IT portals), talks, briefings;
- monthly electronic newsletter that reaches 2000 subscribers;
- press releases, media relations, and media interviews, as well as op-eds by the management leadership;
- deployment of social media platforms for engagement with the public beyond disclosure, with the use of these tools to benefit from evaluations and raise awareness;
- production of derivative evaluation products and dissemination of syntheses to promote learning from evaluations (two-page Learning Curves and four-page Learning Lessons);
- evaluation database (open data; http://evis.adb.org/accessible) by the public through the Internet. This is searchable by several parameters and downloadable.

Source: From discussions by the author with Asian Development Bank staff and Asian Development Bank (2011).

Conclusions: the needed paradigm shifts in results communication

Donor countries that believe development remains a worthwhile venture logically believe they must invest more in communicating its successes (as well as failures and lessons learned). In particular as the international development community starts focusing on global goods and development activities and alliances get more complex, communicating will likely become more important. Development co-operation will increasingly move beyond expenditure of money in developing countries towards taking steps and measures in developed countries (for example buying fair trade items and reducing pollution to impact climate change). Open communication will be essential to garner political support and to keep the local public on board.

In principle, the same accountability relationship exists between partner country governments and their citizens. The state leads and co-ordinates the development effort and citizens play their role in holding their governments accountable. Unfortunately the budget process and PRSP review process in many partner countries are not yet successful tools to engage the public. Despite enthusiastic take-up of the results agenda by a handful of partner countries following the Accra HLF, efforts have been limited with regards to results communication in partner countries. Thus, results communication runs the risk of being labelled as a donor agenda. In an effort to change this, partner country governments should also be able to communicate effectively with their audiences, and indeed with audiences in donor countries.

The needed paradigm shift in reporting results is two-fold: moving from attribution of agency to communicating progress on the basis of collective endeavour, and superseding the donor-driven development discourse with one of partner country ownership and leadership of its own development agenda. This builds on donor co-ordination efforts in developing countries, poverty reduction strategies as co-ordination mechanisms, and other such initiatives. In many ways the MDG agenda is also an important step in this direction. Citizens of donor as well as partner countries are no longer merely passive recipients of information. Interactive technologies and increased mobility of people mean that organised citizens are increasingly becoming providers of

new kinds of data and information on development impact. Connectivity between citizens of developing countries and those in developed countries is increasingly easy. Examples of citizen engagement in developing countries include the following based in East Africa:

- Uchaguzi, a user-driven platform providing a visual map of the progress of elections in March 2013;
- Mzalendo, a website that allows citizens to keep a track of parliament's activities on a daily basis;
- Huduma, a web-driven platform to help citizens identify and fix problems related to the delivery of local services.

This challenges aid agencies to think "out of the box" and recognise that in this interconnected world, it may be necessary to move beyond conventional wisdom.

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Chapter 6
Partnerships

This chapter analyses the importance of building partnerships for effective communication campaigns and presents the experiences of some DevCom members in this area. Budgetary pressures have challenged development agencies to do much with limited or reduced means. They are operating in a challenging internal and external environment and must look for supporting voices from elsewhere: agencies, civil society, the private sector, media and entertainment. Moreover, as development co-operation links up with more policy areas (e.g. trade, environment, security and immigration), broader exchanges are essential to understand the issue and to communicate better.

Partnerships for improved outcomes

DevCom members have acknowledged the importance of partnerships in the successful implementation of their strategies: for example by leveraging and multiplying limited resources to obtain greater impact and reach from their actions, as participants of the DevCom workshop in Haifa suggested. They are linking up with actors such as other ministries, multilateral institutions, non-governmental development organisations, partner countries, media, foundations and the private sector. Partners may offer learning from local communities, provide access to specific knowledge or enable them to embrace their specific communications skills. Partnerships may also allow members to gain privileged access to certain audiences either in a practical sense (i.e. providing access to a specific event) or by providing credibility (e.g. through technical expertise).

Dialogue between all types of development stakeholders is taking place in the continuing debate around new sustainable development goals beyond 2015. Government, civil society organisations (CSOs) and the private sector are involved in this process of unprecedented inclusiveness. The OECD-DAC played an important role in the work that led to the creation of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation agreed to in Busan by 160 nations, international organisations, civil society and the private sector. As an inclusive partnership for development, it makes a tangible contribution to the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by providing a new political platform for bringing the “what to achieve” closer to the “how to achieve it”.

Forging alliances with partners in awareness-raising is considered a key factor in success for effective communication. With fewer funds for communications, agencies have to be strategic with resources and seek partners to obtain synergies and create a multiplier effect. Data collected through a communications spending survey of DevCom members showed that between 2007 and 2009, expenditure on certain categories of public information/communications had risen, whilst it had fallen for others. Perceived as costly and inefficient, publications and advertisement spending has been gradually decreasing. By contrast, expenditure on public events and television and radio communications has been rising.

There has been a proliferation of popular initiatives focused on development: development days, Africa day, international co-operation forums, public photo exhibitions and development film festivals. These activities enable governments to build partnerships with a wide range of actors and reach the maximum audience within a short period and engage them over the longer term. More joint work is needed not only to maximise the outcomes and influence of awareness

activities, but also to build bridges between different development stakeholders and through this coalition contribute to MDG 8: Global Partnership for Development.

Collaboration with CSOs, media and academia

There are many types of partnerships in respect of communication. The Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (2011) called for support for CSOs in their vital mission to enable people to claim their rights, promote rights-based approaches and shape development policies and partnerships. *Twelve Lessons from the DAC Peer Reviews: Partnering with Civil Society* calls on DAC members to prioritise partnerships with, and support to, CSOs to build public awareness and understanding of development issues in donor and developing countries (OECD, 2012). Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are common partners for government in public outreach in many countries since they are perceived by the public as independent, having expertise and as being highly committed to change. With a common goal of strengthening support for development, civil society and government have different – often complementary – expertise, capacity and resources.

The Estonian foreign ministry recognises the potential of non-state actors to carry out certain projects more efficiently and views them as a great resource for fresh ideas. NGOs implement more than one third of Estonia's bilateral development co-operation projects, are engaged in policy making and strengthen Estonian civil society in general.

Sida (the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency) implements its communication strategy via CSOs and the majority of funds are channelled directly to them. CSOs design their communications work based on comparative advantage and mandate while still fitting into the broad objectives of the strategy and reporting back on its implementation. Collaboration also takes place within a specific project, for example through joint campaigns based on the MDGs and the Global Municipality Project where Sida collaborates in a number of municipalities around Sweden with various local partners, including civil society.

In fostering public interest in development, PolishAid (Polish foreign ministry) focuses on partners already interested in the topic: NGOs, media and academia. The ministry strengthened its co-operation with these groups by directly supporting or engaging with them. Examples of this include: support for academics to facilitate participation in international scientific conferences; co-production with radio broadcasters and film-makers; awareness-raising in development projects; and a development volunteering scheme that encourages recipients of grants to communicate their work to the public. "Development assistance" as a topic appeared in the media 239 times in 2009 (divided equally between press, TV and radio), proving that development can be attractive to media.

The Austrian Development Agency (ADA) carried out a broad public campaign called "Ke Nako Africa – Africa now!". The ADA and African civil society organisations in Austria decided to use the huge media interest around the 2010 football World Cup to foster a multifaceted, positive image of the African continent. The campaign challenged the stereotypical images of Africa that persist among the Austrian public and revolved around 300 actions and events attended by 200 000 people (photo exhibitions, concerts, etc.). The activities were mentioned 700 times in Austrian media – an unprecedented media success for development issues. Among the key ingredients for success were partnerships established with strong local actors: the Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation and the Africa Network Platform, a network of approximately 30 associations of Africans in Austria. Universities, sport clubs, cultural associations and youth organisations were also involved throughout the campaign. This is an

example of the strategic pooling of resources for public awareness and of an intelligent division of roles according to each partner's comparative advantage: an official agency allocated the budget and facilitated a national campaign and CSOs reached out to specific target groups, building upon their expert knowledge of the local context.

The AECID (*Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarollo*, Spanish Agency for International Development Co-operation) has benefited in the last couple of years from a strong partnership with media that support development communication through various initiatives:

- agreements with several Spanish media corporations as well as Spanish television, through which, among others, development co-operation enjoys wide coverage of its most important events;
- the free transfer of certain advertising space for development (*pro bono*);
- agreements with national Spanish radio and the international news agency EFE that has a strong presence in Latin America, allow AECID to reach Spanish-speaking populations abroad;
- development education (e.g. communication training for professionals in the social sector, support to training programmes and providing information resources for journalists).

Partnerships have been central to **United Nations Development Programme** (UNDP) efforts in communication. Fundamental to their communication strategy is a belief that allowing other people to speak on your behalf is more authentic than self-promotion. In collaboration with the Discovery Channel, they produced "Revealed: the Himalayan Meltdown", a documentary examining the impacts of climate change on the lives and livelihoods of people in Asia and how they are adapting to it. The film also shows what donors are doing collectively to combat the global problem. The UNDP promotes its partners' support by highlighting their work as a contribution to the collective effort and work in partnerships.

Partnerships are essential in adopting open data strategies. The private sector, CSOs, the tech industry and research institutions may have technical capacities that other actors (e.g. bilateral agencies) might not, as well as knowledge and experience that can be tapped into. Thanks to open data technologies, surveys can be conducted in a more cost-efficient manner. As an example, the Open Knowledge Foundation in Germany is an NGO working to show how open data can deliver added value – greater transparency and accountability, and more responsibility on the part of organisations and companies. For many years the foundation has been a main critic of the transparency and public information policy of the **KfW** (*Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau*, Reconstruction Credit Institute/Development Bank). It has charged, for instance, that "Germany is a developing country!" with regards to transparency because of German "data perfectionism" (KfW, 2013). Yet it is precisely the Open Knowledge Foundation that has become KfW's partner in designing and implementing a new transparency portal on development finance that was launched in 2012. The foundation praises KfW for making a difference in the open data field in Germany.

The European Commission (EC) has entered into strategic partnerships and financial and administrative framework agreements with several UN agencies in the field of development co-operation. These are complemented by joint visibility guidelines for EC-United Nation (UN actions in the field), which lay out visibility obligations for the implementing partners. For instance, a communication partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) includes an interactive joint web portal,[1] *Partners for children*, where material on the joint projects of the two institutions is uploaded. As part of the partnership, the commission and UNICEF produce

[1] www.unicef.org/eu/index.html.

joint press releases and videos, and share communication material that may be of use for both parties.

In general, participants in discussions at the Washington DevCom meeting (2012) stressed the importance of building alliances with such partners:

- for awareness-raising, for example, as independently produced communications might not be well-suited for media (unappealing, too self-promotional, etc.) or credible, hence the interest among audiences will be low;
- to leverage the know-how of people and organisations that can write for a broader public, crafting stories for specific audiences;
- to build *pro bono* partnerships that are cost-effective;
- with the private sector, as there is greater demand for presenting results, which offers opportunities for learning;
- also to forge alliances within your organisation;
- to share footage with the media as it is saves on costs for journalists who are also experiencing deep cuts.

Collaboration with partner countries

Developing countries are at the heart of development partnerships and ideally they lead the design of strategies and programmes. Their involvement can help ensure inclusiveness and improve impact. According to the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action principles, as well as the Busan High Level Forum Outcome Document, partner countries should play an equally important role in defining development results and reaching a common understanding of the impact and progress made. Joint projects and close collaboration between donor and partner countries should lead to strategies that effectively capture and communicate results from development programmes. It is a two-way process: good practices in communication and awareness-raising are transferred from donors to recipients while local knowledge is transmitted to donors. The potential of local experiences and regional practices should not be overlooked, as truly global partnership will be realised only when developing countries participate as both contributors to, and users of, knowledge. For their part, donor countries will have actively to listen to those who receive aid, try to understand the local context and culture, and harness the knowledge existing in the field. Donors should aim to bring partner country communities into the conversation about how they are represented. These narratives need to reflect equality and a shared humanity between citizens in donor and partner countries. While engaging audiences with good storytelling, donors need jointly to create stories with partner communities, bringing them into information and media production, and build avenues for donor publics to listen to partner community voices.

The Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida) has launched the *People First* project based on engaging storytelling by and about those who actually benefit from development assistance. Beneficiaries explain how their lives have changed and how they personally were involved in bringing about the results. It is an effective way of highlighting resilient people as well as how development empowers. The building blocks of these results stories were two-minute videos, blogs, appealing narratives, etc.

At the IDB/DevCom seminar in Washington, participants suggested the creation of a working group within DevCom Network around generating joint results stories. Stories could be collected from the field with donors supporting the same issues in the same countries as well as in co-operation with partner countries. The narratives could demonstrate collective efforts between

donors, and between donors and partner countries, through the voices of local people and government representatives of partner countries. Stories would be based on in-depth research and done in an accessible way.

Reflecting policy coherence

Development aid needs to be anchored in the broader development context and regarded as a long-term investment. Policies in areas such as trade, environment, agriculture, investment, taxation, migration and others have a profound impact on developing countries, yet the policies of countries in these areas do not always reinforce each other. Donors understand this need for policy coherence and must ensure that their communication campaigns also reflect aid results in a broader context and include a long-term perspective. Communicators try to convey to domestic audiences the complexity of global development. They also aim to make the public understand that development results cannot be attributed to a single factor or actor, but are rather the outcome of reinforced global collaboration between all stakeholders – governments, NGOs, media, partner countries and citizens. The broadening of the development agenda for post-2015, the strong link between development and the environmental agenda, and the recent attention devoted to tax evasion on the international agenda are all proof of this. This narrative should be expanded to show, for example, partnerships with the private sector or collaboration with "southern" actors. This will position aid as one element of a broader effort with diverse sources of financing as well as depicting donors striving for better effectiveness.

In respect of cross-sectoral and cross-ministerial collaboration for awareness-raising, the **Polish foreign ministry** established a partnership with the ministries of education and the environment to develop a national strategy on development education. Such close and well co-ordinated collaboration between three ministries not only ensures policy coherence but also raises development issues higher up on the overall government agenda.

Development co-operation is increasingly collaborating with the private sector and other non-traditional partners to achieve development results. Communicators respond to this increased awareness when designing their campaigns and linking aid to other sources of development finance. **France's *Agence Française de Développement*** (AFD) is in partnership with institutions such as development funds, NGOs and private foundations, among others, in their work on innovative finance and investment for development. One example is the jointly organised competition "Marketplace for innovative finance 2010".

In addition, co-operation between results experts, evaluators and communication experts, as well as between partner and donor countries in the field of results must be improved. Communicating results is a critical element in the accountability relationship between governments and citizens. It can also help to strengthen domestic accountability in partner countries. Results professionals are encouraged to go beyond being merely "results specialists" to becoming better communicators of these results, which can happen only in close collaboration with development communicators. Likewise, communication experts need to enhance their understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of results and evaluation to design better-informed communication strategies and campaigns.

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Chapter 7
Social Media and New Communication Tools

This chapter examines the changing nature of the media and the growing importance of new tools for communicating about development. It looks specifically at the evolution of social media as a tool for development communication and their adoption by donor agencies. The chapter aims to analyse the most effective approaches to reaping the benefits of social media and looks into the experiences of DevCom members experimenting with social media.

According to Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein, social media are “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content.” For the purposes of this publication, the terms social media and Web 2.0 (Cinco and Novotný, 2010) are synonymous and understood as a combination of technologies and behaviours that enable people and organisations efficiently and effectively to:

- connect with other people and organisations via social networks;
- collaborate with other people and organisations;
- create and share content;
- find, use, organise and reuse content.

Social media are here to stay – making the most of them

“Digital is not another channel; it is the delivery choice for this generation,” according to British cabinet office minister Francis Maude in June 2012 at the Channel Shift in the Public Sector conference. In the digital age the media landscape is rapidly changing. The fast growth of electronic communication and the use of mobile technologies are changing the consumption patterns of media content. Social media are revolutionising information dissemination and transforming traditional media outlets. The emergence of online social networks in recent years has changed the communication ecosystem, leading to a more collaborative environment. Communication experts agree that interactive multimedia platforms are the future of their discipline. Information consumers are now spending more time with online media than they are with traditional forms of media. Globally, digital usage (including social media and mobile Internet) now accounts for 57% of daily media time. Overall, consumers spend an average of 10.7 hours a day with all forms of media – 5.6 hours of that is on digital. Data, highlighted below from socialmediatoday.com and youtube.com,[1] on the state of social media influence in 2013 reveal that:

- in 2012, 50% of Internet users signed in to a social network regularly (a figure that is rapidly increasing);
- in the US, 67% of the online population is using social networking sites (2012);
- on a typical day, Internet users post 2 million blog entries, which is enough to fill *Time* magazine for 770 years;
- over 6 billion hours of video were watched each month on YouTube in 2013 — that is almost an hour for every person on Earth, up 50% from last year;
- 100 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute;
- 700 YouTube videos are shared on Twitter each minute.

[1] YouTube Statistics: www.youtube.com/yt/press/statistics.html.

Americans are turning in large numbers to government websites to access information and services. Fully 82% of Internet users (representing 61% of all American adults) looked for information or completed a transaction on a government website in a year. Statistics on specific government website activity include: 48% of Internet users have looked online for information about a public policy or issue with their local, state or federal government; and 35% have researched official government documents or statistics. In respect of social media tools, nearly one-third of adults online use digital tools other than websites to get information from government agencies or officials.

Social networking sites have become an important additional resource for political news, information, finding like-minded, issue-oriented people, and for voter outreach in the run-up to elections. In November 2010, **Pew Research Center**'s Internet & American Life Project's (Pew Internet) research (Rainie et al., 2012) on social networking among American citizens found that Facebook users are much more politically engaged than most people. Another study by Pew Internet found that 31% of social media users have used social networking to encourage other people to take action on a political or social issue that is important to them.

Facebook, Twitter and YouTube make it easier than ever to share information, receive news, provide feedback or commentary, create content and participate in the discussion. New technologies and their broad adoption by users have expanded the definition of traditional journalism with terms such as blogging, tweeting and citizen journalism. Also, traditional journalists are increasingly using social media tools and platforms to search for information and produce stories. Traditional media owners and editorial offices no longer have a monopoly on producing content. The production of media is happening everywhere and all the time. Citizens have embraced these new technical ways to communicate and organise their news, and thus are fully enjoying their right to free expression and free media. Social media and user-generated content – photos and videos taken and uploaded by citizens – played an important role in covering and influencing events in Syria, Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, as well as complementing traditional media coverage.

With the role of media rapidly changing from print to electronic, development communicators, who often focus on the "supply side" of their messages, have started fully to appreciate the new demands of today's vibrant and global media. As a result, they are upgrading their online presence. New audiences, "news cycles" and channels can provide fresh opportunities for messaging about development. Communicators must adapt, to share and deliver their messages to this new type of public.

Social media have become an integral part of communication orientations in most organisations. This includes some development agencies, such as the **British Department for International Development** (DFID), which has even developed a separate digital strategy in addition to its communication strategy. Online presence and engagement is crucial to an organisation's impact, identity and reputation. It can be especially effective when built around a specific event (e.g. World Environment Day, Women's Day). Social media help harness the momentum of campaigns and engage the public intensely, thanks to their reach and success in propagating a message. However, the use of social media requires time, resources and understanding; each institution has to determine its relevance for its communication goals.

From a monologue to dialogue with citizens

There are two key areas that development communication must embrace to become a more powerful tool: deeper involvement of citizens in the process, and leveraging the opportunities as

development tools that new technologies offer. Social media achieve both and thus enable development communication to evolve – from a one-way process of pushing information to the target audience, into a two-way process of consultations with citizens. They enable the gathering and transferring of citizen feedback back into the policy information loop. This in turn allows for adapting, responding and further engaging with audiences.

The openness of technologies enables communicators to organise and interpret a range of data through fast and interactive analytical tools, turning open development data into better policy and information. This new technology is fundamentally transforming international development co-operation – the way people perceive it and the way stakeholders do it. For instance, the data emanating from mobile phones can paint a picture about the needs and behaviours of individual users. Building user-centric solutions offers compelling possibilities for providing better access to health, education, finance and agriculture services for people living in poverty. Digital data also provide opportunities for gaining a real-time understanding of changes in human well-being and better detecting the social impacts of crises. One of the most important outcomes of the democratisation of communication is that it enables the feedback and engagement of those who are directly concerned by the results of development – the beneficiaries of development assistance. As such, it improves opportunities for the world's most vulnerable people to build a better life and lift themselves out of poverty.

Social media platforms have rapidly become an influential means of communication between civil servants, policy makers and the public. Communication happens without the intervention of traditional media (i.e. the print and electronic media), and public opinion and responses can be provided on a real-time basis. Social media are therefore considered an unmediated channel of interactive communication between governments and citizens, and between citizens themselves. The issue is no longer about one-way communication from government. It is a dialogue — dynamic and often not under the control of the state. Social media thus appear to offer an unprecedented channel through which to engage constituents in policy making, actively to collaborate and consult. By establishing new forms of interaction and engagement in policy making, social media have the potential to help improve the design (or redesign) of policies and programmes, and the delivery of more responsive public services. The best examples of this two-way conversation are more frequent public consultations seeking qualitative and quantitative feedback from citizens through online and social media platforms.

In 2006, the **Irish Government** developed Ireland's first policy on overseas aid, *The White Paper on Irish Aid*, following extensive public consultation. In 2012, it invited members of the public to take stock of progress and review the policy through another public consultation. People could participate either by submitting their comments to Irish Aid or by attending one of four meetings scheduled around the country. The public could also contribute to the review in writing or by email; by organising a discussion on any matter of interest and sending responses in writing; or by following the review on Facebook, Twitter and elsewhere online.

The **World Bank** social media team discovered that feedback from users and followers could be very useful for adapting work to demands. On the basis of online conversations and comments on a food security report, for example, they prepared a concept note for a new study on how people deal with food security.

Social media and innovative online platforms enable communication on the complex stories of progress in development in a creative and accessible way. They also allow agencies to look at the bigger picture of what is working well on the ground. Wikiprogress[2] is a global Web 2.0 platform

[2] www.wikiprogress.org.

created by the OECD Development Centre in 2009 to engage in dialogue on measures of progress. It explores and documents how change happens and what drives progress on the ground. It also helps elevate the voices and stories of those living in developing countries. It currently has on average 27 000 unique visitors per month and a database of over 1 000 articles maintained by more than 1 000 registered users. Wikiprogress also has regional networks in Europe, Latin America and Africa to facilitate policy dialogue in those regions.

Wikigender[3] is a global Web 2.0 platform also created by the OECD Development Centre in 2008 to engage with different audiences in a dialogue on gender equality. It currently has on average 50 000 unique visitors per month and a database of over 1 600 articles on gender equality maintained by more than 2 500 registered users. Leveraging this wide reach, several times a year Wikiprogress and Wikigender bring together strategic partners to conduct policy dialogue online.

Experiences from Wiki Consultations by the OECD Development Centre and its Partners

From 4-13 February 2013, Wikigender conducted an online discussion on "Transforming social norms to prevent violence against women and girls". The 2013 theme for the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was on the "Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls". In this context, Wikigender hosted an online discussion on "Transforming social norms to prevent violence against women and girls". The discussion was organised by Wikigender, Breakthrough, End Violence Against Women (EVAW), Partners for Prevention (P4P), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDPO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Women and United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Asia-Pacific Regional Joint Programme for Gender-based Violence Prevention, Womankind Worldwide and the Finnish foreign ministry The outcomes of the discussion were presented at CSW by the Development Centre on a panel with three ministers (Finland, South Africa and the UK). The purpose of this policy dialogue was to bring together a range of perspectives and "on the ground" experience on how social norms can be transformed to prevent violence against women. A total of 70 insightful and expert comments were posted.

From 6-15 March 2013, Wikiprogress conducted an online consultation on "Poverty Reduction – finding those who are hidden by inequalities". In the run-up to the OECD Global Forum on Development (GFD), Wikiprogress partnered with Paris21, Save the Children, ODI's Development Progress, the Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative (OPHI), UNICEF, *Jeune Afrique*, *The Africa Report*, the *European Report on Development* (ERD), Wikigender, Wikichild and the Global Progress Research Network (GPRNet). They gathered a total of 60 interventions highlighting the stories of individuals, families, communities and societies that have been excluded by social and economic inequalities. Comments also included examples of successful programmes, policies and methodologies that have made a difference in people's lives, as well as recommendations for a new development framework. The outcomes of this dialogue were presented by the DAC Chair at the Global Forum on Development in April 2013.

Community brainstorming can also provide promising solutions to policy problems. Social networks contain immense knowledge through their users. The donor community could leverage human intelligence to solve critical problems and answer questions that otherwise might be impossible, or take longer, to answer.

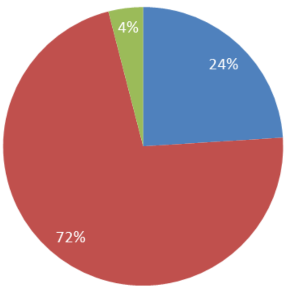
The state of social media use by development communicators

In response to these new trends in the field of communication, donor agencies and ministries have gradually started experimenting with and adopting a wide range of social media platforms, such as blogs, wikis, webcasts and social networking sites. All of these have become popular channels to increase participation, transparency and collaboration of government with the public.

[3] www.wikigender.org/index.php/New_Home.

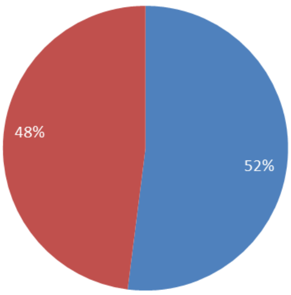
The topic of social media has stimulated DevCom members' interest over the last two years. Many have expressed as much during special social media sessions and practical workshops organised during DevCom meetings. New communications technologies and Web 2.0 provide innovative ways for messaging about development, and members have indicated a strong need for innovation in the ways they communicate.

An informal survey of social media adoption by development communication professionals was carried out among DevCom members in October 2012.[4] It provided a detailed picture of how donor agencies and ministries have adapted social media to their "communication mix" and what the current challenges and barriers are to innovating further. While virtually all respondents agreed that social media play an important role in development communication, 20% revealed that they have not started using them for development communication. Among those who already use social media, 85% started using it between 2009-11 and 10% started using it as early as 2007 and 2008. Still, many organisations have no procedures or policies for managing social media channels and protecting information accessed and disseminated on social media platforms. In the above mentioned survey, 48% indicated that they do not have guidelines on the use of social media for employees. They need to develop clear rules, which are best when tailored to their institutional identity. There is a vast body of social media policies and guidelines publicly accessible. For instance, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) prepared an extensive guide, *IFAD social media guidelines: good practices on getting the most out of social media tools*, by Roxanna Samii www.ifad.org/commtoolkit/toolkit/D_Toolkit_IFADontheInternet.pdf. In another example, the European Commission developed concise and handy guidelines for staff with a framework for social media use (e.g. core principles, golden rules, support contacts) http://ec.europa.eu/ipg/docs/guidelines_social_media_en.pdf.



Question 15. Do you have special financial resources allocated to social media?

72% have no special financial resources allocated for social media



Question 16. Does your organisation have any guidelines for the use of social media for employees?

52% have guidelines whereas 48% do not have guidelines for the use of social media for employees

Source: DevCom (2012)

According to DevCom members, some benefits of social media engagement are:

- if it is wished to reach people online, it is easier to engage with them where they already interact. Facebook, for example, is the biggest website in the world;
- those using social media are part of the conversation and more people will be able to discover their work. It is engaging – not passive, which means people can participate at a deeper level in activities;

[4] Presented at the DevCom/DFID workshops in London, UK, October 2012.

- it has a multiplier effect: If someone comments on a photo, or RTs an update, or likes on Facebook, people are sharing information by themselves;
- it is possible to bring top-level people into the dialogue, mobilise people for events and truly engage with the audience through social media;
- social media enable feedback from people in the developing world. They are usually more active on social media platforms and are more responsive;
- social media help to humanise the organisation by putting a face to the institution (i.e. personalising it), and enabling live chats and interviews with top leaders and thinkers who come to the meetings, among others;
- donors who are not fundraising or asking people to sign a petition can organise a call for action. In one example, the World Bank created Think Equal, a call for sharing knowledge about women's economic and political opportunities. Participants were invited to write a blog post or news story about gender equality;
- some staff members actually like social media. For example, an economist might want to raise their profile if they see that there is a quality discussion taking place on social media of which their expert peers are a part.

Social media strategy and tools – experiences from peers

A clear social media strategy is necessary to make sure that the use of various platforms is in line with an organisation's mission. It provides guidance to government employees responsible for social media accounts and helps mitigate the risks posed by using highly interactive third-party platforms. Organisations using web tools effectively are very clear about why they are communicating, with whom they are communicating, what information they are transmitting and how they send it. Designing such a strategy includes: defining communication goals; understanding the Web 2.0 community and stakeholders; clarifying the messages and adapting them to the Web 2.0 environment; and selecting communication tools and channels.

Seasoned social media strategists advise; "Don't be afraid to experiment." Social media involve a constant series of corrections – learning by doing and adjusting to what feels most in tune with the identity of an organisation. One never gets there: with social media, the journey actually *is* the destination. So there is no pressure that the first step might not be in the perfect direction. Moreover, taking into account the speed at which new media are evolving and the number of new platforms and tools being introduced, it makes sense to experiment on the spot.

Starting With Social Media
Tips from the UK Department for International Development (DFID)

Which social media should you engage with?

1. Think about what your organisation already offers:
   - do you have staff who can tell a story about their work?
   - are there opportunities for exciting photos or videos?
   - have you got regular updates and announcements to make?
   - are you looking to build a community or seek feedback on specific work?
2. Think about your audience:
   - are you aiming to reach a wider public audience or a targeted community?
   - explore more specialist channels (SlideShare - for academic presentations; Vimeo - for arts and design films; Habbo hotel - based on a younger demographic, etc.).
3. Think about what you can maintain:
   - social media needs time and attention to build and engage your community;

Starting With Social Media

***Tips from the UK Department for International Development (DFID)* (cont.)**

- if you think it might be a struggle to maintain a YouTube, Flickr and Twitter account all at once, consider focussing on Facebook or a blog that can host all your different types of content.

How do we get started?

- practice in a personal capacity;
- start small - but start. DO!
- learn from others and use web resources;
- while searching for bloggers, think of people within the organisation who could have a particular interest in blogging (i.e. raising their visibility or profile, getting in touch with other bloggers in the country, etc.);
- get partners in social media space (NGOs, experts in a certain area, thought leaders, etc.) and connect with them: place your link on their websites, as well as promote their blogs or posts on your website. Joining networks brings synergy effect;
- keep the traditional media stuff, as well as the conversation in the real world ongoing.

The **Belgian Technical Cooperation** (BTC) started experimenting with social media communication in 2009 and gradually expanded its presence on social media channels. With limited staff dedicated to communication, everyone in the team needed to take part in the roll-out of social media activities. Roles were divided between staff members according to their skills, talents and preferences (e.g. one person is in charge of monitoring the Facebook account, another is in charge of Twitter). Detailed weekly planning was set up with tasks and roles clearly defined. Each channel and tool had a distinct audience and objective.

The following are BTC Belgium’s rules of thumb for social media:

- make a content publication schedule;
- avoid overkill. Do not spam your audience and your network. Spamming is the first reason why people will “unfriend” or “unfollow” you. Do you like being spammed?
- create valuable content for the reader: is it news, what is so special about it, would you like to have this item posted on your wall? Be critical. Quality first;
- set goals and live by them, even if they seem arbitrary at first. It will help you to find a direction and it will motivate you to keep going;
- experiment: Nothing should keep you from trying. Don’t be afraid. Start and see how it works for you. If it doesn’t work, try something else;
- don’t brag: Do not always talk about yourself; it is bad for your credibility. Be honest – it is the best long-term strategy. And the online community will slaughter you if you’re not;
- think in terms of (expert) communities. Where are the health experts, agriculture experts, education specialists? Make sure you are present where they are present. Do they have specific platforms, pages, etc.?
- participate in the debate, be an active contributor. Take and give, be generous. Don’t hesitate to put the spotlight on somebody else, “like” and “share” other people’s content. Retweet! Show respect, value others;
- don’t ignore negative comments. Answer in a positive way, be grateful for the feedback, and try to find solutions. This is a learning opportunity;
- watch your privacy and copyright settings. Give credit where you should.

Social media are especially relevant when trying to reach a young audience as these tools offer innovative ways of engaging with them on a deeper level. According to the new study by Pew Internet (Duggan and Brenner, 2013), Internet users between the ages of 18-29 are the demographic group most likely to engage in social networking sites (83%). Youth now consume news through participatory channels from family and friends via Twitter or Facebook feeds. Social media might soon be the most popular channels for young people to access information, read news and engage online. It is important to realise how young people are using new media to amplify their voices in the political realm and for social engagement.

Open data – new avenues for transparency and accountability

Open data is about making large amounts of aid information available and mapping it by country, sector and activity with visual functions. Open data brings abundant possibilities for developers and tech geeks, but above all it offers insights for crafting public policies in international development. The overarching aim of open data is to make more accountable and effective decision-making, whether it is about delivering public services, allocating budgets or addressing corruption risks. It enables donors to make information about their activities more accessible and useful as audiences can find and interpret aid information more easily.

Essentially, open data is about the increased transparency and accountability of donors in relation to: the donor country public, partner country governments and citizens, and other donors and stakeholders in development co-operation. By making aid information more transparent and accessible to a wide range of stakeholders, donors increase the impact of development assistance and improve the quality of research on aid allocation and effectiveness.

KfW-Entwicklungsbank (Germany) launched the online transparency portal www.transparenz.kfw-entwicklungsbank.de. KFW's aid data are presented there from a number of angles including alongside the typical financial data. The results of project evaluations are also shown in a school grade format. Data can be downloaded in machine-readable form. In addition, KfW is using OpenStreetMap geodata and maps, as well as World Bank indicators for each country. The agency will be also adding an exhaustive data bank. It is precisely this combination of data sets in real time that constitutes the beginning of fuller data disclosure.

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) released a platform that tracks British aid, http://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/. It enables the public and interested users to follow how the UK "invests in developing countries". It also features highlights such as the top five places where DFID works, the top five fields of co-operation and the top five things DFID achieves. The development tracker is completely open source, and uses data published according to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standard.

Sida (Sweden) gathers and publishes aid data from several official Swedish agencies through www.openaid.se. The site provides online viewing as well as machine-readable downloads. Data on activity level are updated monthly and are available from 1975 to the present. There are also over 100 000 documents on activities that can be searched and downloaded directly from the site. Openaid.se publishes all recent data according to the IATI standard.

These open data platforms will, it is to be hoped, encourage other donors, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and development stakeholders around the world to start harnessing open data and thinking in categories of results and accountability. The more actors who publish their aid information, the more transparent and useful these data will be.

Measuring effectiveness of social media

Participants in discussions of the DevCom workshop "Development Communication in a Changing Landscape" agreed that social media enable organisations to reach a much broader audience than traditional outlets and websites. They also concurred that it allows for more qualitative contact; for instance, by attracting people to content on social media channels and then redirecting them with a link to the website of the ministry or agency. Participants shared a common concern about what constitutes success in social media communication. Is it the number of likes, fans, etc. or other more sophisticated (less easily visible) dimensions? Simple (free or paid) analytical tools can be used to study audience engagement and interactions. Goals of communicating via social media should be clearly defined so it is possible to measure outcomes. For instance, the outcome of a campaign aiming to engage people by getting them to upload pictures could be measured by the number and quality of pictures uploaded. Furthermore, audiences have evolved from passive followers and recipients of messages to active respondents who seek two-way interaction by commenting and providing feedback. It was agreed that there was no better tool for moving into this dialogue with the public than social media and that organisations need to acknowledge this reality, adapting their communication behaviour accordingly.

By comparison with traditional media outlets, social media offer much more precise and diverse tools for measuring communication activities online. The answer to the key question "How do you measure the success of social media activities?" depends on the objective of communications, e.g. awareness raising or mobilising people for specific action. Some recognised measurements include:

- user traffic to websites (e.g. number of views, followers, fans, subscribers);
- depth of engagement (e.g. number comments, re-tweets, shares, top post views, uploading a picture in response);
- total dissemination of documents and papers measured by downloads and viewings of pages;
- increases in visits to a page via other channels such as video and animated and interactive functions.

With the widespread adoption of new social tools, more sophisticated ways of measurement have emerged. These offer detailed audience insights that go beyond the number of followers or likes. For instance, one indicator of the impact of social media engagement could be not only the number of people reached but also how influential these people are (e.g. influential bloggers, thought leaders). Quantitative analysis from social media metrics can be complemented with qualitative studies of impact and social media content. For example, some donors monitor their social media channels and produce regular (weekly or bi-weekly) summaries of comments and highlights from online debates. Many social media channels propose free tools to monitor activity on an account. For instance, YouTube facilitates an analysis of viewer retention by learning at which point someone stops watching the video. Facebook also offers detailed statistics for followers of a page (e.g. demographic data, geographical location). Semantics and the analysis of the user-generated content (UGC) offer new possibilities to communicators with regards to audience research. Doing a keyword search and analysing the words people are using to discuss an issue can help understand the audience and give insights for framing a discussion and developing a communication strategy. Custom tools that perform such keyword searches are already in use. For instance, the Netherlands foreign ministry carried out an analysis of the language that people use when talking about development.

Barriers and risks

In a 2012 survey, DevCom members were asked, “What would be the challenges or barriers for your organisation if you wanted to build or expand your social media practices?” Most challenges revolve around having limited staff and resources to dedicate to social media. Other obstacles reported include hesitation within governments, issues related to data security and a lack of knowledge about social media. Some 65% of respondents indicated that they received negative comments or criticism from their audience on their social media channels. Asked about how they handled that, 53% said they commented with a counter argument, while 35% reported that they did not comment at all; 12% responded that it depended on the situation.

Criticism flourishes on social media and is something an organisation should think about. Dialogue is continuous and the flow of comments is steady, hence it is important to maintain this dialogue and set up a comment policy that supports the organisation’s overall social media strategy. A study in the Netherlands looked into where the international development debate is happening. It found that the debate is dominated and controlled by sceptics. A group of NGOs founded a community that is responding to the criticism, ID-Leaks. Its objective is to feed the Internet with discussions that provide positive, realistic stories of development co-operation. Of the most common questions on development 25 were identified to help respond to the negativism. There is a need to spread the effort more broadly, also to those people who are doubtful.

The World Bank social media team adopted a position of being part of these conversations, including the negative ones. By responding online to negative comments they were able to balance the conversation and audiences knew that they are being heard. The ways such crises are handled online make a huge difference. At the bank, the social media team will answer simple questions with data they can find in reports. However, if the remark touches on reputational issues, the original comment is sent to people working on the project being criticised. Project staff will then provide data, figures and links to reports in response. If the problem cannot be resolved, the issue needs to be taken off-line. Risk definitely exists and a negative tweet or comment can turn into a negative blog post by an NGO or media outlet. However, the most important rule is to address the negative feedback transparently and set up tools and a strategy to monitor the conversation.

One of the other barriers to expanding social media can be an organisational culture that is not receptive to new media adoption. Many DevCom members struggle to implement social media strategies and find allies inside their organisations. This is despite wide agreement about the need to engage on social media platforms. There is, at times, reluctance – or even fear – among management to engage in social media. The challenge is to embed a social media culture organisation-wide. Some donors are tackling this challenge by providing basic training on social media use for the staff of other departments in their agency or ministry (e.g. evaluation staff, results experts). DFID (UK) is involving its field staff in writing blog articles and taking photos that could be used on social media platforms. On the DFID bloggers[5] platform, staff gives real life perspectives from those working on the ground to fight poverty.

In the realm of social media, the lines between the professional and the personal become blurred and reputational issues come into play. During a DevCom workshop in Paris (June 2013), some DevCom members admitted that their agency or ministry was concerned about the reputational risk posed by engaging on social media, not to mention the personal use of social media by employees. This risk can be reduced by designing social media strategies and guidelines, defining

[5] http://blogs.dfid.gov.uk/.

where it is best to invest effort and by supporting staff and management. One way this can be done, for instance, is by introducing a code of conduct for social media that includes directives such as “Keep it classy”, “Avoid embarrassing the institution with your choice of words” or even rules for taking and sharing photos. The European Commission (EC) mandated one person channels – who draw clear lines of accountability – to be responsible for content on social media. It is important to sensitise staff, create policy on personal and professional use of social media and have a clear, common understanding of the risks associated with using it.

However, it was agreed that eventually social media engagement is about trust and freedom. It cannot be about tight control, which might only discourage staff from being active on new media platforms. Organisations should adopt a forgiving culture in social media engagement, where mistakes are accepted. IrishAid (Ireland) found that clearing approvals for social media messages was very time-consuming and that it slowed down the communication process. They opted for trust and granting their staff the freedom to choose messaging. There are only a few scenarios requiring management approval. Regarding crisis management or responding to “sensitive issues” via social media, for example, the European Commission established a hierarchy: responsibility for political issues lies within commissioners, while non-political issues are dealt with at the corporate directorate-general level.

Another risk concerns security. Social media encourage widespread, spontaneous use and platform providers frequently change their technological features. Government agencies therefore need to develop clear guidelines for social media administrators, lawyers, public affairs officials etc. This will help to avoid violations of, and ensure compliance with, existing laws and regulations. Furthermore, it should be made clear to staff when things are not to be disclosed online.

Technology, somewhat ironically, can also be a barrier to effective social media practices. With the increase of mobile technologies, consumption patterns show that more time is already spent in some countries on mobile apps than browsing the web, a trend that may continue. Communicators must learn to interact with the public via these “mobile remotes”. This involves creating content that is flexible and smart so that it not only gives information but receives it as well. Content must become adaptable to multiple screen sizes and scenarios. Also, geographical mapping offers new avenues for communication and transparency. One DevCom survey showed that 52% of respondents use geo-mapping in their communications, and that it is under development for another 9% of them.

Finally, social media strategists agree that new media are innovative channels of communication that are particularly relevant to development cooperation. However, they note that their function should complement and support existing ones: face-to-face interactions, community engagement, traditional media campaigns and events. They enable the reinforcement and deepening of audience engagement. Communicators must be tuned into the mutual influences between different channels and spaces.

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Chapter 8
Global Education

Global education, or development education, is an important dimension of development co-operation and is recognised as such by donors. For example, the 2013 Irish White Paper on the country's policy for international development states that "…development education aims to deepen understanding and encourage people towards taking action for a more just and equal world." However, the concept of global education varies, as does the institutional embedding of the associated responsibility in many countries. Although in some ministries and agencies a separate officer is, or separate officers are, responsible for education activities, for many in the DevCom network the same person or team also manages development communication. There are also different approaches to development education, ranging from formal inclusion in school curricula to more *ad hoc* and less institutionalised approaches. In this chapter some of the issues surrounding global education will be set out, together with examples from DevCom members that have been presented during exchanges on good practices. Finally, it is important to look ahead at the remaining challenges for the future of global education.

Definition and rationale

While there are many definitions of global education, the definition as agreed to at the 1st European Global Education Congress in Maastricht 2002 is: Education that opens people's eyes and minds to the realities of the world, and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all. Global education is understood to encompass development education, human rights education, education for sustainability, education for peace and conflict prevention." The 2nd European Global Education Congress in Lisbon 2012 re-emphasised that global education should include what some would call development education. In this chapter, unless explicitly stated otherwise, the two terms are used interchangeably. It is impossible to adopt one standard approach to global education since each country has its own unique context – historical, cultural, political and economic.

Most development actors these days agree that to view global education as public relations for development aid is inappropriate. Rather, it aims at enhancing action of the audience for global justice and sustainability. Scheunpflug and McDonnell (2007) observe in the OECD study *Building public awareness of development: communications, educators and evaluation*: "Often, other types of interventions that use similar instruments but do not pursue the same aims, principles and methodologies, are mistaken for development education. One of the dividing lines to be considered is the one that distinguishes the idea of a complex education – with multiple approaches, non-doctrinaire, allowing each person to make his or her own judgements and choices – from the attempt to influence individuals into a given perspective or to act in certain ways, through communication and marketing." The 2012 Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) European Commission working document specifies that high-quality development education programmes use a critical approach to development issues, covering issues such as development policies, justice, and sustainability – explicitly going beyond awareness-raising.

In the changing landscape of the global economy and development co-operation, with new priorities and social challenges, global education is experiencing a revival in national and international multi-stakeholder processes. It could be related to a revitalised interest in global governance; a recognition of "global public goods and bads" (Ingram, 2012) and problems

without borders; or the presence of ever more complex cultural identities due to the increase in international migration. (The total number of international migrants has increased over the last ten years from an estimated 150 million in 2002 to 214 million persons in 2008.)

In times of crises and disruptions, and when budgets are thin, societies are more likely to be inward looking. Solving "problems at home" becomes a principal national preoccupation in many donor countries. In this context, building a better-informed global public committed to sustainable development is even more important. Global education needs to be streamlined as an international dimension into learning and teaching methods in both formal and non-formal education. This will facilitate a better understanding of current global issues – including international co-operation and its impact locally and worldwide – as well as helping orient the global consciousness towards sustainable development. Indeed, with the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDG) discussions likely to include global goals it is likely that a stronger interaction with publics in traditional donor countries will be needed.

Engaging young constituencies in development debates can be particularly important as it contributes to building long-term engagement. Specifically, investing in global education could potentially secure long-term political engagement and sustained commitment to fighting poverty. Awareness-raising contributes to the quality of democratic practice and governance: those who are exposed to global education at a young age today are the policy makers and voters of the future.

Institutional set-up

In most OECD countries the government has established mechanisms for supporting global education. Ideally activities in this area are co-ordinated broadly among all national stakeholders involved in the process. The emphasis of global education and awareness-raising is usually on the primary and secondary phases of formal education. However, in some cases tertiary education and life-long learning are also included.

Usually, the following actors play an important role in the global education landscape:

- the foreign ministry – or another ministry or agency that is responsible for development co-operation – finances global education as part of its official development assistance (ODA). In many cases the operational aspects of implementing the global education programme or programmes are outsourced. Many of these ministries and agencies participate in international forums or policy networks in global education (e.g. Global EducationNE, the North-South Centre, or DevCom);
- non-governmental organisations (NGOs) involved in development co-operation are often important actors in implementing global education initiatives. They tend to work at all levels, from grassroots initiatives to transnational global education programmes. Specific global education budget lines provided by the foreign ministry frequently fund their activities;
- ministries of education can play an essential role in making global education a part of formal school curricula and practice in countries where that is the case;
- many other actors can also be important in the process, depending on the national context: local and regional authorities (municipalities and regions); other ministries, such as the ministry of the environment; broader civil society (beyond development NGOs) such as trade unions; youth organisations; political foundations; companies with strong corporate social responsibility programmes; institutions of higher education, etc.

A survey of DevCom members indicated that definitions, objectives and modes of implementing global education vary among countries. In some, it is the foreign ministry that co-ordinates development education activities, as with Belgium. In other countries, development education activities are carried out by the development agency (e.g. the Austrian Development Agency). Only about half of communication departments have a formal development education strategy document. Recent discussions underscore that establishing global education activities of itself is not enough but that the quality in education should be considered concurrently. A key variable is whether global education is integrated into school curricula. However, global education is a part of the formal education curriculum in only about half the countries that responded to a DevCom survey.

During the 2010 DevCom annual meeting in Helsinki, Eddie O'Loughlin, co-ordinator of the global education network Europe (GENE), presented the European global education peer review process. He noted that the national report[1] on Poland affirmed the rapid development of global education in that country, the good co-operation between the ministries involved in the process and strong commitment from NGOs. The review praised the foreign ministry for establishing the basis for a sound structure for annual global education funding. The ministry adopted a strategic approach and displayed a vision of long-term commitment to global education. This approach was shared with the NGO sector. Many global education topics have been included in the curriculum of secondary schools during the ongoing curriculum reform. The education ministry estimates that after implementation of the reform, 5% of the instruction carried out in Polish schools will be high-quality global education. One of the keys to this rapid growth, integration and mainstreaming of global education was the close co-operation and co-ordination between stakeholders. These include the foreign, science and education, and environment ministries as well as NGOs. The environment ministry is working on a strategy for "education for sustainable development". The Polish case is an example of cross-sector dialogue in global education enhancing policy coherence.

In Portugal, the National Strategy for Development Education was designed through a process of broad stakeholder consultation that included civil society. It was officially launched in 2010. The strategy seeks to:

- build the capacity of Portuguese public bodies, civil society organisations (CSOs) and development education actors;
- promote development education in the formal education sector at all levels;
- promote development education in non-formal education settings;
- promote awareness-raising and political advocacy for government action for development.

During the Helsinki Annual Meeting, Antonio Torres from IPAD, Portugal's development agency, outlined how Portugal sees development education as an ongoing educational process that favours north-south social, cultural, political and economic interactions. It promotes the values and attitudes of solidarity and justice that should characterise responsible global citizenship. Development education is itself an active learning process aimed at raising public awareness of, and mobilising society around, the priorities for sustainable human development.

Unfortunately, in spite of its value, global education could be at risk given the economic crisis. Political leaders may consider it a luxury that cannot be afforded in difficult economic times, when money should be spent on "interventions in the south that directly benefit the poor".[2] For instance, in the Czech Republic, because of the recession, resources for development education

[1] Global Education Network Europe Peer Review: National Report on Global Education in Poland.

[2] European Development Education Monitoring Report *DE Watch*.

and awareness-raising for 2010 were reduced to one third of the 2008 level (Holý and Konrád, 2010).

Participants in the DevCom annual meeting in Helsinki, which featured a session on “innovation in awareness-raising and development education”, concluded that the link between development communication and development education is important and should be strengthened. They recognised the necessity to use more diverse and innovative tools to raise awareness. They also acknowledged the need for political leaders to be open about their commitment and devote time to debating development issues (“Use your minister well!”). At the same time, they underlined that some sort of support should be provided to ministers to interpret surveys, public opinion and research about development.

The above-mentioned DEAR Study (European Commission, 2012) highlights as good practice:

- incorporating “southern perspectives” (i.e. creating personal links to citizens of beneficiary countries; and situating southern experts in key roles and southern organisations as equal project partners);
- embedding global education in long-term advocacy processes as a clear strategy for concrete change at the structural and institutional levels.

Reaching out to youth

Creativity and innovative tools are crucial for engaging with young people. As raised by representatives of Norad (the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation, communicators need to “meet the youth in their playing field”. To do so, DevCom members have suggested the following:

- publishing (e.g. web site, magazine, printed materials, brochures);
- schools (e.g. education programmes, school visits);
- events (e.g. socio-cultural activities, conferences, exhibitions, concerts);
- campaigns (e.g. public campaigns, awareness-raising campaigns, NGO campaigns);
- new media channels and social networks.

Social media tools can be effective when trying to reach a young audience and are increasingly becoming essential with this demographic. Quick and frequent interactions change the rules of engagement with young citizens who often consume more social media and online games than print media, radio or TV. Often, the activities they chose have some element of entertainment. Yet while they clearly engage in these activities for entertainment, they can at times combine this with the desire to learn a skill, get informed or connect with their peers (i.e. social community). Indeed, serious attention is now being directed towards the potential of online games for learning and global education. A new term, “edutainment”, is often used to describe interactive educational games that aim to help young people understand international development and global problems, among others. Moreover, recent research (Paraskeva et al., 2010) suggests that combining education with gaming can bring academic benefits and increase understanding of targeted issues. With the increase in gaming and social networking among the young it makes sense to apply these tools in global education.

Following this new trend, the Finnish foreign ministry launched Hodihodi (www.hodihodi.fi), “an online browser game about life and dreams in the developing world.” The goal was to make an amusing game that also helps players to understand the challenges people face. The Estonian foreign ministry participates in the friendship schools network, a project started in 2002 by an English doctor, Sarah Fane. Today it is supported by the European Commission and connects Afghan and European schools. Estonia encouraged the use of video to link students from schools

in Tallin with students in Kabul. This "live" connection enabled Estonian schoolchildren to discover the realities of the lives of Afghan schoolchildren and learn that they share the same ideas and interests. This fits in with a consensus among DevCom members on the necessity for children to learn about differences and variations in the world, but also about similarities. The ministry sees this project as one way to include "real things" in the curriculum for Estonian schools, as Pihlak mentioned during the Haifa workshop in 2010.

Norad established a "development house" in the centre of Oslo. It is an information and activity centre for young people and students where they can learn about the possibilities, dilemmas and challenges of development co-operation. The house intends to engage in and contribute to greater reflection and debate on development. (Norad works with the Nobel Peace Centre for daily operations.) The house has a permanent exhibition, which is also the starting point for engaging experiences and learning. For students, there are two educational programmes related to poverty alleviation and community development: development lab, available only in Norwegian, and development trail, which also exists in English. In one of the games, students role-play a conflict situation in a fictional African country. In 2012, Norad launched the Norwegian championship of development co-operation, which consists of two elements: a knowledge competition, and Reborn. *Bli født på ny,* or *Reborn*[3] asks "What would your life be like if you were born in a different country?". It is a web application that resembles a Facebook profile (Norad received Facebook's permission for this special design). After signing in to the application, a user is "reborn" in one of the countries receiving development assistance from Norway.

The user's new life is presented as a Facebook-like timeline where they can explore facts about their new country of origin, such as statistics comparing the country and Norway in terms of the population, gross national income (GNI) per capita, life expectancy and human development index. There are also fun interactive elements about the culture and tradition of the country. These include Instagram pictures (mostly from the Norad archives), YouTube videos of local music and status updates. As well, there are articles about the results of Norwegian development co-operation and news stories from *Bistandsaktuelt*, the Norwegian independent newspaper on development co-operation.

The campaign were created to raised awareness among Norwegians, by telling them how lucky they are to be born in Norway and through this increase the public's knowledge about Norway's international co-operation and to drive traffic to the Norad portal. *Reborn* is meant to awaken users, invigorate their interest in development, be an emotional experience, entertain, and at the same time make people reflect on their own society and relate to people living in poverty. Through interactive elements, it tries to dismantle stereotypes created by the media that people from developing countries are starving and unhappy. Norad placed great emphasis on the visual appeal and packaging of the application as key to reaching young audiences.

In terms of measuring the campaign's success, research showed that the awareness of Norad went from 31% to 46% among Norwegians under 30, the main target group. The proportion of Norwegians agreeing that Norway has an obligation to provide assistance to other countries rose from 61% to 67%. People shared and commented extensively on social media. It attracted international attention too, and other donor organisations showed a strong interest in developing similar activities.

[3] To see the web application, visit www.gjenfodt.no.

Evaluating global education

Global education activities are seldom evaluated in a rigorous and systematic manner, which is an issue in light of current results-based management trends and evaluation pressures. Monitoring and evaluation should accompany the integration of global education strategies and "focus not only on measuring the effectiveness of activities aiming at changed attitudes and behaviour which is appropriate for campaigns, but also on the learning process and its impact on the perceptions, understanding, skills and competencies of the learner which is paramount in education", as the latest European Development Education Monitoring Report, *DE Watch*, recommends (Krause, 2010). The ODA Academy of the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) carried out a study on the evaluation of development education effectiveness as a means of increasing support for going "beyond the 0.7% ODA/GNI target". It proposed an evaluation model based on "quantitative and qualitative analysis on the impact of the KOICA educational programme on individual, team, organisational and societal level outcomes" (Cho, 2011). The study found that, following development education classes, support for increasing aid to developing countries grew from 48.5% to 62.9%.

Conclusions

Global education can be described as a marathon towards a better-informed public. International development should be taught from an early age so as to develop a better understanding of its importance. Equipped with competencies of critical engagement, they can one day take better-informed decisions about investing in international development. Global education also equips future voters with the competencies needed to act responsibly within their communities, advocate for change and to form sustainable, just societies. Global education is integral to public life: by helping citizens to develop social, economic and political understandings and skills, it engages them in participating in development and enables them to add their voices to the discussion on the future of the discipline. In particular with the development of an ambitious post-2015 agenda with global goals, global education needs to become a fundamental part of public learning, discussion and exchange. However, this takes place against a backdrop of the financial crisis, with public budgets under pressure, and global education funding faces a serious risk of cuts. To avoid these, global education actors need to make a stronger case for its importance, seek conceptual clarity and develop advocacy.

As argued in this study, global education is most coherent and strong where a dedicated department or unit is in charge of it. Strengthened collaboration between foreign ministries / agencies and other ministries (e.g. education, environment), the formal education sector and civil society are crucial for increasing access to global education and improving its quality. It is also important that different actors have opportunities and platforms – nationally, regionally and globally – to learn from each other, to enter dialogues on tasks and challenges, innovate their practices and co-ordinate their actions at different levels.

Communities are coping with poverty, climate change and youth unemployment across the developed world and, to a greater extent, in developing countries. It is thus more important to promote an increased understanding of development as a shared responsibility and to foster commitment to a fair world. Global education contributes to creating societies where responsible citizens are demanding rights, mobilising their communities and holding governments and policy makers accountable. It enhances critical public understanding of the foundations of poverty and incorporates the values of solidarity, equality, inclusion and co-operation. Governments need to recognise the role of global education as a facilitator of citizen engagement in the debate on a collective future. It is a reminder of our global interconnectedness and the fact that empowered citizens can actively contribute to making the world a better place.

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Chapter 9
New Narratives and the Evolving Development Agenda

This final chapter offers a set of forward-looking perspectives and challenges in respect of the future of development co-operation and the extent to which a new narrative is, or should be, emerging. It also looks at how best to reconceptualise, reconfigure and provide new tools for development communication so that development communicators are better equipped to deal with the challenges likely to emerge in the future. It starts by briefly examining the dynamics underpinning the evolving context of international development co-operation and using this to signpost some key elements of an emerging narrative that communicators will need to understand and shape. Finally, the chapter reflects on how the combination of data and stories, combined with the use of new technologies, is supporting efforts for the new narrative taking shape.

The case for revitalised partnership

The development effectiveness agenda coupled with the narrative underpinning the post-2015 debate seems to emphasise that one key lesson to be learned from decades of mixed performance in development co-operation is that partnerships and enhanced collaboration remain paramount. This clearly emerged from the principles underpinning the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (Paris, Accra, Busan) and from the narrative of the post-2015 agenda (e.g. the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda).

So what are the dynamics underpinning this apparent push for a renewed partnership in international development? First, the volume of aid, at least from official OECD donors, is visibly and rapidly shrinking. Pressured by austerity at home, donor countries are cutting their overall budgets and in particular allocations for overseas development assistance. In 2011, aid volumes from major donors fell for the first time after nearly 15 years of increases. This called into question a long-standing consensus on the need to increase aid levels to 0.7% of rich countries' gross national income, first agreed to in 1968. Some traditionally strong donors such as the Netherlands and Canada, long committed to the 0.7% official development aid (ODA) target, recently indicated they would reduce their development co-operation budgets and might not hit the ODA target.

Second, as has been seen in much of the polling data, there are mixed messages emanating from the citizens of donor countries. People continue to believe that supporting developing countries is the right thing to do, even in times of economic hardship at home. Yet there is a widespread criticism that official development co-operation has not worked as well as it should have, that money has been wasted, and that taxpayer money has helped fuel corruption. Some argue that it is up to poor nations to develop themselves, or that aid only benefits certain elites or risks strengthening developing nations to compete economically with donors. Though some criticism of aid is well founded and supported by facts (in particular with regard to specific projects or efforts), the debate takes place in a political context and is often more ideological than fact-based. Regardless of development aid's success (specific projects or overall), the decision by any government to provide development assistance in funds or in kind remains a political one. However, the reality of increased scepticism in certain donor countries is undeniable and thus calls for reflection on how the development community is working and communicating.

Third, the global political context is also changing rapidly. The financial crisis has exposed the fragilities and risks of the international financial and economic system. Moreover, various crises, such as the spikes in food and energy prices or the Arab Spring, have had a significant impact on developing countries. These crises have provided opportunities but also threaten hard-won gains in addressing hunger and the need for better health, once again giving cause for the development community to reflect on the threats and opportunities posed and for how aid works.

Amid this complex crisis environment, new poles of growth, however fragile, have emerged from the global south. The rise of the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India and China) as development actors and the increasing economic weight of other emerging countries are evident, as illustrated by the growing influence of the G20. At the same time, as pointed out by McKinsey consulting firm (Roxburgh et al., 2010) Africa's economies, long seen as lagging behind have grown at more than 5% annually over the past decade, performing second only to East Asia. In many of the 20 African countries identified by the International Monetary Fund as "resource-rich", the prediction is that some are looking at potential annual revenue windfalls of as high as 150% of current gross domestic product (GDP) given new discoveries of oil, gas and minerals and the current commodity super-cycle, should it hold. Referring to the continent's progress McKinsey, called its report "Lions on the move".

This has, in some donor countries, raised the question of what forms, if any, development co-operation with middle-income and/or rapidly growing countries should take. Some donors have addressed this challenge by strengthening the links between their development co-operation and their domestic trade policies (e.g. by appointing a single minister for both portfolios). This should allow for the improved use of economic tools in a development partnership, with both countries benefiting from increased trade and economic activities (through increased foreign investment, the introduction into value chains, exchange of know-how, etc.) In particular middle-income countries, for which ODA may be only a small financial flow, could benefit more from this type of relationship. The combination of the global financial crisis and the rising influence of emerging nations has led some to conclude that "the post-World War II era of OECD/DAC-led development aid is coming to an end with mixed results as the hegemony of the West is fading" (Hem and Nygaard, 2012). These old and new sources of growth and development are potentially transformative, meaning that they could eradicate poverty if managed well. However, this will not happen automatically. Some have pointed out the risk of increased inequality of income and human development both between and within countries. One further concern is the African demographic surge, with the population set to triple from 670 million to 2 billion between 2000 and 2050. This will likely mean that questions of urbanisation, youth employment, etc. will play a bigger role on the development agenda and means that those working in the sector need to reflect on how their tools and programmes match this new scenario.

In light of these shifts, some are pointing to what North-South Institute President/CEO Joseph Ingram dubbed at a recent IDB/DevCom seminar as a "crisis of multilateralism". The rise of the BRICS and other emerging countries on the international scene poses fundamental questions about the international system and thus development co-operation within it. The assessment so far seems to be that these BRICS, at least with regard to development co-operation, are somewhat hesitant to join the institutions of the "traditional custodians" of multilateralism, including in respect of development co-operation. For example China's, only limited engagement with efforts such as the Global Partnership, and the setting up of the "BRICS bank" are just two examples of this. Some of the difficulties in trade negotiations have also stemmed from the positions taken by BRICS countries – even when at odds with groupings of lesser developed countries. Ingram's response is that the emerging world order needs to be framed in terms of

shared global challenges and solutions. In many ways, the joining up of the "classical" Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with broader sustainable development goals (and maybe even including global public "goods" and "bads" as an intellectual foundation) is a step in this direction. This will have a significant impact on development communication in donor countries as the narrative will have to further evolve from "us helping them" to one that includes joint ownership of problems and solutions.

In search of the elusive new narrative

Taking into account the changing world of development co-operation described above, there is a need to identify elements of a possible new or emerging narrative. This discourse needs to help make the continued case for multilateralism and influence how both development and development co-operation are communicated. The following was inferred from discussions about the new narrative at a joint IDB/DevCom seminar held in Washington D.C. in April 2012.

First of all, the old narrative of "aid for charitable purpose" ("We're good people doing well") is having limited resonance with the public. The increased scepticism regarding aid in many donor countries, regardless of whether or not it is justified, means that as a narrative this traditional frame that has for a long time underpinned development co-operation discourse has less and less effect. Furthermore, the old tropes of "north versus south", "rich versus poor", "them versus us" and "empowered versus powerless" have severe limitations in today's globalised world and should be excised from any new or emerging narrative. However, solidarity has always been a central element of development co-operation discourse, and that does remain a value shared by many.

There are common challenges that are conceptually and politically complex. One example is migration, which developed countries often see as a risk; yet poorer countries may consider either a boon, thanks to migrant remittances (that some cases surpass official development aid in size), or a curse through loss of labour. The shared environmental and climate change challenges are another example of a complex agenda shared between all countries. In these types of complex challenges, development aid is only part of the solution, but it can, nonetheless, play a role and might be part of a larger overall solution to a complex problem. The funding of climate adaptation and mitigation measures through development co-operation is one such area where development projects can have a real impact on the lives of poor communities while at the same time these countries take steps to participate in global efforts to reduce the pollution driving this phenomenon. One participant in the IDB/DevCom seminar said that donors were casualties of their own communication. They tended to be stuck in telling positive stories of aid, directly linked to their efforts. This locked donors into a certain logic that prevented them from communicating about the complexity of the aid system, of its failings or issues beyond its narrowly defined parameters.

The recognition of this shared agenda and interconnectedness is being increasingly recognised, but this needs more and more to be communicated. Sample messages include: "In an era of globalisation and ageing societies, migration may be a solution", or "We need to invest more in researching and tackling viruses that are a risk to all of us." Global problems require global solutions, and arriving at these solutions requires better international co-operation – which includes development co-operation. Furthermore, audiences are not stupid. There is a growing understanding about the interconnected and complex nature of development, about the need for local ownership, about aid-as-politics, as well as about the issues at stake in the wider world; thus, simple, straightforward communication that conveys the truth while getting across the

complexity of development. Official development aid contributes only modestly to development, and complex global problems require much more than aid to fix them.

Communicating complexity can be done gradually, consistently and in ways that are measurable all along the results continuum, from informing to stimulating action. However, it does mean a commitment to a sustained communications effort that understands its audience. Communicating complexity also involves convincing others of the long-run nature of development and social change. Sustainable development is not a quick-fix undertaking that can be easily measured and reported. It is a long-term investment by everyone, and implies both risks and new behaviours over the long term (especially in securing the planet's future, etc.) This new narrative should also reflect the engagement of a multitude of players – developing nations and their citizens, the private sector, social entrepreneurs, foundations, civil society, development aid donors and their citizens – in a shared enterprise, without seeking to attribute too strongly agency to any particular group (while reducing that of others).

In this context the MDGs have been an important process and it is important that what has already been achieved as a result of development co-operation be communicated and celebrated. From a communications point of view, a key lesson learned from the MDGs is that it is possible to attribute success to a set of globally-agreed standards that everyone has signed up to and worked hard to deliver or support. This is well captured in the Post-2015 High-level Panel Report when it states:

> "The 13 years since the millennium have seen the fastest reduction in poverty in human history: there are half a billion fewer people living below the international poverty line of USD 1.25 a day. Child death rates have fallen by more than 30%, with about three million children's lives saved each year compared to [that of] 2000. Deaths from malaria have fallen by one quarter. This unprecedented progress has been driven by a combination of economic growth, better policies, and the global commitment to the MDGs, which set out an inspirational rallying cry for the whole world."

On the basis of such an optimistic and clear message, it is thus possible to chart the future in a positive and inspirational way that transmits a collective will to make a difference – as opposed to a negative set of messages. The emerging post-2015 narrative should thus emphasise the unfinished agenda, taking the MDGs to the next level. Where one of the criticisms of the current MDGs was the fact that the partnership element, mainly set in MDG 8, was weak and the indicators were the least concrete, these can now be strengthened. "Global public goods", such as reaching the very poorest and most excluded people; tackling conflict and violence; improving governance; ensuring inclusive growth that creates jobs; integrating the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development; tax justice and promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production worldwide might help a more complete global agenda. This will also mean that a more ambitious communications effort will be needed in donor countries to argue for not only a certain amount of official development financing, but also measures to reduce pollution, reduce tax evasion, etc.

Data *and* stories

A narrative combined with facts is ideal to communicate about development in ways that resonate both intellectually and emotionally with individuals. Building on the need to identify a "new narrative", this section highlights the practicalities of using data to tell powerful stories in ways that can have an impact.

The quest for reliable statistics has long been a central preoccupation of many development actors. Decades of investment in capacity for statistical production and data production in general have led to improved data collection. However the frequency and reliability of the statistics collected in developing countries are still insufficient. This is true for data on national accounts, educational achievement, demographic health surveys etc. More importantly, even where data sets exist in large numbers (e.g. in the evaluation of donor projects), the emphasis has been on the supply side, as opposed to measuring the demand side of projects.

The data issue is now higher on policy makers' agendas, while new technologies make it possible to generate new data in automated ways. This allows different users to generate data that are visually appealing, useable and credible. One good example has been Hans Rosling's famous Gapminder initiative (www.gapminder.com). In short, data can be brought to life. The Canadian International Development Agency has also developed a mobile application, CIDA on the Go, which provides instant access to results information via mobile phone.

A second lesson learned is that it is not about data *versus* stories. Data and evidence are not optional: stories that convey success and progress must be underpinned by solid data and evidence to be credible. It is also important for evaluation purposes that stories are subject to analytics that can derive some quantitative patterns or findings. Connecting with people, though, requires tapping into their emotions – and this is where storytelling comes in. UNDP combines the creative use of film and video with smart website design to report results. A powerful example is *One Day on Earth*, a collaborative film featuring footage from every single country in the world, in which UNDP staff tell the story of the agency's work.

The World Bank emphasises presenting information on results with multilingual and multimedia content. The bank's acclaimed International Development Association's 16th replenishment campaign, themed "Delivering Development Results", combined figures and human-interest stories to illustrate key achievements from 2000-2010. UNICEF also uses storytelling to good effect. On the one hand the agency is adept at getting top thinkers, leaders, ministers and other key figures in development to speak on its behalf (i.e. third-party endorsement). On the other, it provides platforms for ordinary people to tell their own stories. One example is *2 Lives: 2 Miles Apart*, a series of critically acclaimed films that highlight crucial issues affecting children in an urbanised world, such as migration and child trafficking. UNICEF also specialises in using analytical tools to target communication and better understand user feedback. In sum, data need not only provide facts for storytelling, but that they can also be an important outcome of storytelling and provide the basis for smarter, next-generation story construction and communication.

Another good example of how data can be used is the Canadian International Development Platform, a new web-based data and analytics platform developed by the North-South Institute. It is used to respond to mounting concern within Canada over the apparent erosion of public support for international development co-operation and aid. The idea is to present a vast array of data and information on Canadian aid, trade, investment and migration flows as an analytical tool for policy makers, researchers and the general public. The logic is that giving the public access to data and analytical tools will enhance the capacity of communicators to tell stories about the benefits of aid and development co-operation. The ease and openness of new technologies enable different development actors to organise, interpret and analyse a range of data through fast, interactive tools which can support better policies.

Technology is also providing new ways of gathering feedback from development beneficiaries; for instance, through mobile phone surveys administered directly to people in developing countries. Technology also allows the sea of data that is now available to be visualised in ways

that facilitate communication. It is also much easier to analyse and draw robust conclusions from content previously considered as unreliable, such as stories and videos. All in all, technology makes it possible to use data well, to stimulate conversations, to tell stories and to listen.

Citizens of developing and developed countries alike are building and using applications that respond to their particular realities, needs and interests. At the same time, development agencies and ministries are generating new kinds of content and data that are more demand-driven. Both of these advances will inevitably affect how the development system communicates in the near future. It is now possible, through a combination of data and storytelling, routinely to include the perspectives and voices of the world's poorest and most marginalised citizens in defining and deploying a new narrative on development co-operation

Government departments and ministries of donor countries do not control the development discourse in the way they once did (or at least thought they did). With the broadening of the policy agenda, the inclusion of new development actors, the increased awareness and scepticism of publics in donor countries, the stronger position of developing countries, and the rapid and continuing rise of new forms of communication and media the complexity of the field of development communication has greatly increased. Development ministries and agencies that want to play a role will have to match this with increased professionalisation (use of communications strategies, evaluating the impact of their work, using new media, new and more partnerships etc.) and think for the long term. Opportunities exist for great innovation in development communication, linking more than ever before citizens in developing countries with those in donor countries. Through this, development co-operation and development communication can help contribute to a truly global agenda for improving lives around the world.

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