PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
OF THE ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT
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This publication is produced in the context of co-operation between the Development Assistance Committee and the Development Centre of the OECD. It falls within the overall remit of the Centre's External Co-operation Programme.
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The Informal Experts' Consultation on Public Knowledge and Public Attitudes to International Development Co-operation was organised by Bernard Wood and Elena Borghese of the Development Co-operation Directorate, and Giulio Fossi, Henny Helmich and Ylva Bergström of the External Co-operation Programme of the OECD Development Centre. In addition, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of Ian Smillie and Andrew Rice to the conceptual preparation for this meeting, and we wish to thank all participants who contributed to its success. The OECD Development Centre gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of the Government of Canada.
The past half century has witnessed unprecedented human progress through the evolution of international co-operation in furtherance of sustainable development. Much has been learned during that time, and much has been accomplished. Lifespans have been extended by decades, diseases have been eradicated, literacy rates have multiplied, incomes have increased substantially, and the quality of life has improved for millions of people at a pace never before experienced. At the same time, not all have shared in this remarkable progress. Indeed, more than one billion people, one-fifth of the world’s population, continue to live in extreme poverty. In many countries the poor constitute a majority of the population and are losing ground every year.

There now exists a broad international consensus on an integrated, people-centred and participatory approach to sustainable development, supported by international co-operation in a spirit of genuine partnership that fosters local responsibility and local capacity. The record of past accomplishment, the passing into history of the distorting influences of cold-war competition, and a generally favourable global economic environment all point to an extraordinary opportunity for fostering increased human security and well being in the coming decades. A concerted international effort could contribute to the ability of hundreds of millions of people who have not shared in growing global prosperity to overcome their poverty and participate fully in the economic, political and cultural life of their societies. It could contribute significantly to the capacity of many more countries to participate in the increasingly interdependent global economic system.

Diminishing the poverty that lies at the root of so much of the world’s misery and conflict and expanding the base for co-operation in addressing a host of issues of broad international concern on the basis of shared interests and shared values are obviously worthy goals. Yet, in a number of the industrialised countries, it is evident that the importance of development has receded as a major policy concern. Aid volumes for a number of major donors are in decline. Arrears to the development programmes of the United Nations, the World Bank and other multilateral institutions are accumulating. Neither political leaders nor the general public seem to give priority to development or to demonstrate confidence in the efficacy of development co-operation.

What can be done about the lack of congruence between this extraordinary opportunity to act effectively on a matter of fundamental importance for our own and future generations, and the lack of enthusiasm and interest in responding to that opportunity? That is the puzzle that was addressed in a “Consultation on Public Knowledge and Attitudes Towards International Development”, conducted by the OECD Development Centre and the Development Assistance Committee in October 1994.

In the course of this consultation, reported on the following pages, the participating development practitioners came to realise that the same principles of local ownership and participation which they had learned to appreciate as important elements of success in their work with the people of developing countries had too often been neglected in engaging the publics of the industrialised countries. There was inadequate understanding of the processes by which public opinion was formed and inadequate effort on a sustained and co-ordinated basis to promote public knowledge and understanding of development and development co-operation.
Among their conclusions, the participants in the consultation agreed that strengthened public understanding and support were essential in order to sustain development co-operation. Public apathy and scepticism must be converted into energy and confidence. This calls for the following:

- the establishment of clear goals for development policy, so that the people will know the standards against which performance should be measured, and will understand the stakes involved;
- a reorientation of development education so that the challenges and obstacles, as well as the progress, are portrayed realistically rather than in sensational terms, and so that development issues are addressed in school curricula in greater depth than is possible in traditional media coverage;
- an intensified effort to assure efficient and effective programme management, including emphasis on achieving set aims, in order to demonstrate that greater public confidence is merited by results;
- a continued awareness that development co-operation deserves support not only because of the mutual interests that it serves, but also because of the moral imperative of helping others to help themselves in overcoming poverty and achieving a decent standard of living and social justice.

The difficulties recognised and discussed in the October 1994 consultation remain, and in some ways are even more acute. The need for effective action has certainly not diminished. It is our hope that this publication, a collaborative effort by the Development Centre and the Development Assistance Committee, will be of value in the effort to demonstrate the importance of international development co-operation and the importance of gaining the public understanding and support that are essential if we are to realise the opportunities that lie before us.

Jean Bonvin
President
OECD Development Centre

James Michel
Chair
Development Assistance Committee of the OECD

March 1996
Summary Report of the Consultation on Public Knowledge and Attitudes Towards International Development

Andrew E. Rice

How can public understanding of, and public support for, international development be strengthened in OECD countries? That was the central topic of a two-day Consultation of journalists, scholars, development practitioners and educators held by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and the OECD Development Centre in Paris on 24-25 October 1994.

The major questions discussed were:

1. What is the present state of public opinion on development?
2. How is this opinion formed?
3. What needs to be done to make public opinion more supportive? Who are the major actors in this effort? What should be their message and their means of transmitting it?
4. How can those interested in furthering public awareness and support work better together to that end?

Everyone taking part in the Consultation was committed to the idea that international development is essential to the future well-being of the world. There was no attempt to reach consensus on an exact definition of development, although everyone agreed that in operational terms it means a process of providing a better life for the world's poor people in a way that sustains the overall environmental integrity of the planet. It was also agreed that this is a complex and long-term process, and that, although it cannot succeed unless the countries where the great majority of poor people live are committed to it, the governments and peoples of the richer countries can make a significant contribution to its achievement. In practical terms, therefore, expanding public support for development in the North means expanding public support for development assistance to the South.

Despite allegations that “aid fatigue” (in the United States perhaps better described as “leadership fatigue”) is reducing public support for development assistance in OECD countries, the evidence presented to the Consultation suggested that on the whole—despite differences among countries—the level of support for development assistance in the abstract has not changed significantly in recent years. Almost everywhere, a majority of citizens continues to favour development aid.

Japan stands out as a country with an unusually high and strong level of support for development co-operation. Its own successful development experience and the general economic growth in East Asia, together with a lack of the social ills that plague other industrialised countries, have created a favourable climate in
which the government and a growing number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play active roles in disseminating information. The two-day International Co-operation Festival in Tokyo, organised under government auspices, with 80 to 100 booths displaying the programmes of the many actors in the development field, attracts 100,000 people.

In most countries, however, the priority given to development assistance relative to the other demands on the public treasury has diminished. Almost everywhere, development aid is now given a somewhat lower status than in earlier years. There seems to be a higher level of anxiety about the future, which has led to a turning inwards in the OECD countries.

Moreover, the evidence is quite clear that support for aid is often based on little knowledge of the actual situation in developing countries and of the nature of development aid programmes. There is also evidence of scepticism as to the effectiveness of aid in actually improving the quality of life for poor people in developing countries, and indeed, of scepticism as to the ability of government programmes to provide effective aid at all.

In short, there is a strong strain of ambivalence in popular attitudes: support in general for development co-operation, but not at the expense of other public programmes (essentially domestic ones) deemed more important, and serious reservations about the accomplishments of aid.

People in OECD countries say their support for aid is based on several factors, of which the most important is a feeling of humanitarian concern for people less fortunate. The second most mentioned reason is a recognition of global interdependence and the fact that poverty in developing countries adversely affects the quality of life in richer countries in a number of ways. In other words, a combination of moral values and enlightened self-interest underlies aid support.

How is public opinion formed? At a deep level, people's attitudes are shaped by value systems and basic knowledge absorbed from family, religious institutions and schools. As for current information, in general, people are overwhelmed with information on many subjects, and the vast majority derive their knowledge of the developing world from brief reports in the mass media, particularly television. In 1991, for example, 86 per cent of Europeans stated that the media were their principal source of information on developing countries. The images of the developing world presented by the media are mostly "mad news" — i.e. news of misery, atrocities and disasters. Stories of successful development are rarely reported.

Far down the list as a source of information on the developing world are the NGOs involved in development activity. Despite their direct involvement, NGOs also often stress needs and disasters, instead of presenting a more balanced view of both problems and progress.

If one believes, as did those taking part in the Consultation, that the falling levels of development assistance during the past two years are a serious misstep — particularly in light of the long-standing international agreement, reaffirmed at the Earth Summit, to raise the amount of aid — then the importance of enlarging public support is evident. All governments face difficult choices in allocating public resources, and a stronger constituency for aid will be crucial to obtaining larger funding for development.

The steps towards enlarging awareness are several:

— doing a better job of factually informing the public on development issues;
— doing a better job of explaining why development is important to the public in the North;
making sure that development policy has clear goals and is a coherent part of overall foreign policy, so that the public does not receive "mixed signals";

— striving to ensure that development programmes actually bring about the goals of development policy, so the public is not disillusioned. Although many economic and social indicators clearly show that development has taken place over the past four decades, there are also disturbing examples of Northern assistance, given in the name of development, that has failed to improve living conditions of the poor; or has been ecologically damaging, culturally insensitive or corruptly misappropriated by local political leaders; or has brought about a reproduction of all the social ills of Northern societies.

It was made clear that building genuine public support must be a slow process. To move from superficial public opinion to informed public judgement requires passing through several stages of public involvement. Lessons can be learned from experience with other public issues (e.g. the environmental movement) where some of this transition has taken place. Even at best, it is unlikely that support for development co-operation can become a real mass movement, but the existing active constituency for development can certainly grow in size and sophistication and become a more effective pressure group, supporting constructive aid policies and programmes and monitoring them for consistency and effectiveness. How should this be done?

The public education system in each country obviously has a major role to play, even though it already has a very heavy mandate and is subject to many pressures. Although the Consultation did not go into detail on how the curriculum might be changed or what other learning experiences might be included in it, in general it was agreed that educational materials in all disciplines needed to be "internationalised". In addition, young people at the university level and beyond who have taken part in volunteer service programmes in developing countries were seen as a valuable resource in educating the public upon their return home.

It was agreed that the mass media could do a better job of informing the public, although it was recognised that reporting in depth on development issues will always be difficult because so much of development is a long, slow process which lacks dramatic moments and takes place far away. Where drama does arise, it is often in cases of failures or scandals. Development agencies therefore need very good, honest press officers, attuned to the needs of the media and able to steer them to where they will get a good story.

Human interest stories (including stories of personal involvement of people from the North), in which the development process is personified in an individual, family or community, are effective ways of providing information in a reader- or viewer-friendly fashion, although they are sometimes misleading if not presented in context. Some newspapers, as in Belgium, prepare dossiers on development questions which are available to schoolchildren, while others (e.g. the Los Angeles Times) devote one page each week to in-depth reporting on development-related global issues. While the media will reject pressure and cannot be "used", editors are always receptive to good story ideas, while ombudsmen are a good channel for criticism of inadequate reporting on development.

Government information activities are also important, although they are subject to the charge of being self-serving. It is therefore important that government materials be frank and honest, not making extravagant claims but also not dwelling too much on problems while ignoring accomplishments. Information officers should reach beyond the mass media to work with the many kinds of special-interest media which serve particular constituencies.
Governments should also provide strong support for development education. The example of Japan has been cited. In Germany, too, where support for development co-operation is relatively high, a “quadrilogue” has brought together the federal government, parliamentarians, local authorities and NGOs in a joint programme to foster sustainable development both in Germany and in the South. The experience of the Netherlands and the Nordic countries suggests a close correlation between the level of government support for development education and the level of public support for development co-operation. The recent UNDP Human Development Report argues that up to 2 per cent of aid budgets should go to communications.

Responsibility falls also on aid ministries to advocate vigorously the claims of development assistance within the government establishment and to fight against other government programmes, such as subsidised arms sales or trade barriers, which might be undercutting the aid programme. This task is very difficult, given the junior level of most development co-operation ministries, and requires strong support from concerned parliamentarians.

Political leadership from the very top is probably the single most important element in building a strong development constituency, but since political leaders generally prefer to be only a small step ahead of their citizenry, concerned citizens need to push them. Thus, NGOs have a very important role both in education and in advocacy. Some may lack the research capacity to draw the lessons of experience, but in general they can be effective in using all the channels by which public attitudes are shaped: influencing educational curricula, educating their own members, getting stories or editorials into the media, setting up Third World shops, inserting ideas into the platforms of political parties, lobbying parliaments and so on. The concept of NGOs must be broad, embracing not only those actively engaged in overseas development activities, but also groups interested in the many specific aspects of development.

NGOs are not always effective, especially because there is often a built-in conflict between their educational goals and their need to raise funds. They have found that disasters and stories of personal tragedies usually bring in the most money, but this approach leaves donors with a sense of having charitably lent a hand to people unable to help themselves, thus perpetuating stereotypes of developing world incompetence. NGOs may also promote so strongly their own institutional importance that the development message becomes suspect.

Many NGOs, while supporting development aid in principle, are critical of the way existing aid programmes are carried out. In extreme cases they may become hostile to existing agencies, but an honest dialogue on these matters is an essential part of the democratic process.

The corporate sector has generally not played as important a role as it could, given its stake in development. Attention should be paid to how its public information activities could embrace development issues.

Experience has shown that the best way to educate people on development is to relate it to their personal, professional or community interests. A connection must be shown between what is happening “over there” and our national and individual values and concerns — in effect, our self-interest. Terminology must be used that is appealing and understandable and not freighted with ideological connotations.

The message of development education must include information, since generally speaking, the provision of correct information does seem to enhance people’s support for development. Information can include not only facts but serious scenarios of what might be expected to happen in the coming years if development does not take place. It can be argued fairly that development is crucial
to the solution of most global problems in the post-cold war world — ending conflict, limiting population, preserving the environment, expanding human rights, slowing migration and so on. In short, it is crucial to human security everywhere, including our own. We are all passengers, and crew, on Spaceship Earth.

The development education message should also appeal to the heart — that is, to the humane value system to which most people subscribe. Development must be seen as the "right" as well as the "politic" thing to do.

Expanding public support for development co-operation should be geared in each country to the particular traditions and concerns of that country. There seem to be opportunities within each country for greater collaboration among government agencies, parliamentarians, NGOs and others who share a concern with building such support. Co-operation with those committed to educating on the environment, population growth, women's rights and other issues is also desirable. At the same time, there is a need for greater international exchange of experience and ideas among like-minded people. Perhaps the OECD units concerned with development could play a more active and constant role to this end.
Conclusions and Recommendations from the Joint Consultation

1. In democratic societies, any public policy must be accepted by a broad base of citizens if it is to be successfully carried out. Although majority acceptance does exist in the OECD countries for assistance to developing countries, it is not a robust consensus.

2. The fragility of popular endorsement of development co-operation reflects an ambivalence in the thinking of most people. On the one hand, humanitarian values (based on ethical principles and a sense of solidarity) and long-term enlightened self-interest (based on recognition of global interdependence) lead them to support development abroad. On the other hand, their awareness of the strong demands of economic and social needs at home on a limited public treasury, coupled with a sense that development aid may foster damaging competition with domestic economic interests while failing to improve the quality of life in developing countries, cause them to question the value of aid.

3. Part of the doubt about development co-operation is due to a lack of accurate knowledge. Most citizens receive their information about developing countries almost entirely through the media, which provide a very limited and skewed picture of what is happening there. Crises and disasters receive coverage, while the successes of development are rarely reported.

4. Doubt also arises because governments and aid agencies are not always candid in admitting mistakes or because they pursue policies which lack consistency and focus. Some NGOs, seeking to raise funds, present a misleading picture of developing world helplessness.

5. How can public understanding and attitudes be changed? Actions are needed on several fronts both by government and inter-governmental authorities, including parliamentarians, and by those citizens' organisations which already form the small but committed constituency for development co-operation. These actions include:

   a. More clearly defining to the citizens of the OECD countries why development co-operation is important to them. The fundamental, although not the only, reason is that development assistance fosters development, and development is essential to creating a more secure world by resolving conflict, promoting human rights, protecting the environment, reducing population growth and coping with other transnational problems that affect us all;

   b. Within this broad rationale, presenting the various elements of development in ways which show OECD citizens that it is relevant to their home communities, to their professional interests and to their own national experience;
c. Since poverty is the greatest cause of global instability, more sharply directing development co-operation to support human development concretely improves the quality of life for those least privileged;

d. Admitting mistakes when they have occurred and encouraging full and open dialogue with the public;

e. Working with the media to make it easier for print and television journalists to report a balanced, human interest picture of development, while at the same time using the “public” pages and programmes of the press and television to present information in favour of co-operation;

f. Working with the formal educational system to incorporate development issues into the regular curricula;

g. Encouraging and assisting NGOs, religious groups, professional associations and local governments to carry on development education activities among their members and supporters; and

h. Establishing mechanisms for better transnational communication among people, such as those represented at the Consultation, who are professionally concerned with increasing public awareness and knowledge of development co-operation.

6. In carrying out these steps — whose application must be adapted to the specific political, economic and cultural situation in each country — it must be recognised that the general public’s views on development issues will change slowly. If through these efforts, however, a somewhat larger share of the public becomes more committed to development co-operation, this constituency can have positive political effects.
Account of the Experts’ Consultation

Bernard Wood

At the end of the two-day meeting, the varied group of participants, including a good number of DAC delegates and representatives from capitals, clearly seemed to agree that the Consultation had succeeded in breaking new ground on vital topics. Many of the results were in line with the stated objectives (see Annex 1 to this chapter), but there were also unexpected outcomes.

The issues, tone and results of the meeting differed sharply from those of a 1983 DAC meeting on public support for aid. The meeting confirmed that the approach today needs to be wider and deeper, and to look at the issues of development and development co-operation in the total marketplace of public concerns, in a more balanced, comparative perspective.

Far from unique in being a complex, controversial field of activity and facing a demanding, even sceptical public, development co-operation today shares these challenges with many other domains. Daniel Yankelovich particularly helped to set the frame of reference with his depiction of the “public judgement” model of how individual citizens actually grapple with such complex issues (see page 65).

Yankelovich suggested that the large majority of citizens in OECD countries still find themselves at the threshold of “awareness”, where their views may be unstable and contradictory, and where they are not necessarily conscious of the implications of those views. This contrasts with the stage of “judgement”, at which point a person’s views are stable and consistent, and he or she is conscious of their implications. Many citizens are still “working through” their views on development issues: grappling with “reaction” and “resistance” but finding it difficult to do the “choice work” involved.

The Challenges for Development

Existing opinion is often based on little knowledge of the actual situation in developing countries and of the nature of development aid programmes. While tacit interest and support are still wide, they are not deep. Many are sympathetic to the goal but sceptical about the effectiveness of actions to improve the quality of life for poor people in developing countries. In part, this is one manifestation of much wider scepticism about the efficacy of governmental and social action to address contemporary problems.

Part of the special difficulty in this field is the abstractness, elusiveness and dynamic character of the concept and experience of development. The challenge is to make “development” more comprehensible and to trace its links to the interests and values of people in industrialised countries. The average citizen in an OECD country could now ask, in all fairness, “What is ‘development’ anyway, and how does it matter to me and my family?”
Those who carry responsibility in the field should be able to provide a coherent answer. If they are obviously plagued and paralysed by ambivalence themselves, it would seem almost axiomatic that they will not achieve powerful or convincing communication. Some participants argued that there is now a much stronger consensus in the specialist community than there has been, and that a great deal of learning has been internalised, but others in the development community are prepared to make strong counter-arguments. To the ears of the non-specialist, the effects of this debate may go beyond constructive criticism. To be capable of attracting understanding and support, the field needs better to define its operating consensus in a persuasive way and to rally to that consensus.

International co-ordination is part of making a mobilising consensus real. A broad working definition is needed, and the DAC community believes that it has such a definition in the “Policy Statement on Development Co-operation in the 1990s”, which is fleshed out elsewhere and may itself be updated, probably in the spring of 1996. Of course, any such consensus approach needs to include the right kind of capacity for self-criticism, feedback and civil dialogue.

Is “development” as such a manageable concept? We may increasingly be able to capture the broad underlying goal in a concept of global human security or in a broad sense of sustainable development. At the same time, for certain purposes we probably need to disaggregate that broad goal again. People may tend to rally more to issues of poverty elimination, shared environmental concern, links between conflict and development, humanitarian aid, population, the role of women in development, AIDS or others.

The thorny challenge is that while one may have to break “development” down to make the component phenomena more comprehensible, one must also be able to bring it back together, for the sake of its integrity and of wider public understanding. To respect and effectively handle the integrated character of development, single-issue dogmatism — loudly claiming that the only part of the challenge that really matters is population, environmental preservation or any other single issue — must also be contained. This sectarian dogmatism is probably now part of the problem in public knowledge and attitudes.

The challenge of clarity in public understanding is also vital. Two encouraging examples of clarity emerged in the discussion. One was in the case of Japan, where the concepts of development and development co-operation can be understood and can rally support because 1) there is a living memory in Japan of self-help in economic development, and 2) Japan’s south-east Asian neighbours are examples of recent and relatively promising experience. The Japanese, specialists and non-specialists, draw sustenance from that in saying, “We know that people can do this for themselves because we’ve lived through it within living memory.” Sometimes this kind of direct experience can lead to a very prescriptive approach, but it certainly engenders confidence that the job of development can get done.

The base of opinion in Japan is different from that of most other OECD countries, but the like-minded countries also have a relatively clear base. Whatever the reasons, the Dutch and Nordic societies have been able to engender a relatively clear and shared sense of the broad rationale and desirable direction for development co-operation. Here the clarity of the shared vision may also correlate with performance, since these countries have been able to maintain a relatively strong performance.

A further pillar of development opinion is that of confidence: there must be a sense that one can do something about development. This relates back to the Japanese case, but it goes further. Extending the base of supportive opinion from development to development co-operation calls for a reasonable confidence, as a senior political participant stressed, that co-operation can work, has worked and will work under the right conditions. This confidence also depends, however, on
saying clearly what you are doing in the real conditions of an imperfect world. Effectiveness evaluation and the honest sharing of evaluation results are important confidence-building materials. Credible success stories are powerful and valuable to share. Moreover, issues of integrity — both in the machine that is delivering the co-operation and in the machine that is receiving it — are fundamental to confidence in the whole operation.

Motivations

The group confronted the need for a combination of values and interests to support opinion on development and development co-operation. The values can be seen as a series of “gut beliefs”, humane instincts or a broad sense of fundamental solidarity. The interests must be articulated in understandable terms and evoke powerful self-interests. The basic underpinning of motivation, however, is the conviction that development matters, in shared human terms from the perspectives of our societies.

The combination of these different impulsions was repeatedly summarised in the concept of global human security. This recurring theme seems to capture and integrate the elements of interests and values, but as another political actor said, it will obviously take more time to filter through, to mature in the marketplace of ideas within societies. The distinction drawn during the meeting between the “lifeboat” and the “Spaceship Earth” views of the global prospect underlined this unifying motivational theme.

With respect to this motivational base it is vital to connect, but not overstate, the direct effect that aid can have in helping to meet the problems of global human security. Moreover, both the policy and the product of development co-operation must convincingly embody and reflect the combination of deep values and interests. In this context, some drew attention to the question of whether in fact a good deal of development co-operation is a fundamentally flawed product. Donors are trying to do so many contradictory things — sometimes contradictory to what they are claiming — that those in the marketplace will sometimes sense and resist the misrepresentation — that those in the marketplace will sometimes sense and resist the misrepresentation.

“Audiences” and Actors

The prevailing attitude in the Consultation was a healthy respect for the impact of public knowledge, attitudes and inputs into public policy on the legitimacy of development questions in OECD countries. The public matters, and not just because development co-operation agencies want its money for things they consider important. In fact, the cases of a number of OECD countries — both “good” and “bad” aid performers — demonstrate that there is no immediate or necessary linkage between informed and supportive public opinion on the one hand and rising aid budgets on the other. In a more profound and long-term sense, the attitudes of publics are now seen to matter in the very legitimacy of development co-operation as an ambitious and high-risk project on the agendas of OECD societies.

We have learned that the entire society must be engaged at some level. It is not enough to seek “strategic target groups”. The debate suggested that all citizens must be touched at some level and must have access to the resources to judge this field for themselves in as much depth as they choose.
The activist constituency or constituencies may have a special role — it was perhaps revealing that the Consultation was unclear on whether there is one constituency or several. NGOs, practitioners and analysts are all seen to have important functions, but these are limited, to the extent that these actors may be seen as having a particular vested interest that lies at the root of their advocacy. The sense emerged that new, non-specialist constituencies need to be more seriously engaged, in order to help de-mystify the field and to demonstrate that it is far broader than a single-issue cause.

The Consultation shed some new light on the roles and limits of the media in shaping public knowledge and attitudes. It emerged that the media are powerful but not totally independent or impervious actors, that they are still, in a very fundamental way, primarily transmitters of the reality within which they operate.

Nor can “leadership” or “leaders” offer the simple panacea for strengthening public knowledge and attitudes. Although stronger leadership has proved in cases to be a powerful motor, democratic leaders too grow out of, and draw their priorities from, the societies in which they function. No one should expect politicians to act against their own interests — for a sustained political investment in an area when there are insistent competing demands, the area must yield a commensurate political return. This is a basic precept that requires more serious analysis and follow-through in the development co-operation field.

A Learning Approach

The Consultation recognised that this expanded involvement has a great deal to do with learning, more so than with teaching. The approach to learning as a lifelong process in this field should obviously be consistent with the best philosophy of development itself — the philosophy of helping to equip people to form their own judgements and to act upon them, which is the only durable way of achieving forward movement.

Here, the Consultation did suggest a broad framework for defining and responding to the learning needs of individual citizens. These needs depend on where citizens are in this chain of judgement that Daniel Yankelovich traced from the average child (which brings in the linkage to the formal educational system), to the average citizen or media user, to opinion leaders, to the decision makers themselves. This framework is also valuable for defining the public’s varying needs in relation to information, knowledge, attitudes, opinions, judgements, policies and action.

There is also growing scope for strengthening the learning possibilities between schools and other, less formal educational systems, including the media. Interesting insights came on the kinds of feedback that can be created, with promising models from Colette Braeckman’s description of the experience of Le Soir and Mort Rosenblum’s of the Los Angeles Times.

The Way Ahead

The Consultation was careful at this stage not to go too far into specific, concrete examples of opinion building and tactics, because the strategies still need to be better crystallised. It is clear, however, that different approaches or emphases are needed for the diverse conditions of OECD countries. At times, for example, the discussions evoked government roles in some countries that would be inconceivable in others because of the levels of trust required or the levels of traditional
government activity. One way or another, however, the government is part of the picture. Moreover, it was very clear from the enthusiastic interest expressed that DAC Members have much to learn from each other in relation to public knowledge and understanding. Many concrete examples came out, and many more are suggested, in the DAC survey.

A number of broad precepts emerged quite strongly, as to how to encourage effective learning about development and development co-operation in today’s increasingly tough marketplace of issues. A first precept is: **Be interesting.** People’s time is a scarce commodity which they spend according to their preferences. They still respond instinctively to the development challenge when and if it is presented intelligibly, constructively and interestingly. “Connecting” the experience of developing countries with the personal, professional or community concerns of people in industrialised countries can be highly effective. **Be respectful.** People must be reached where they are. This point came across in various ways. Sometimes it has to do with code words, with ideological frameworks, which clearly can be somewhat different from one OECD country to another. If you are going to engage people, however, you must engage them as they are, not as you might like them to be. **Be transparent and build confidence.** People are sceptical, they have reasons for being sceptical and their confidence must be earned and maintained.

Many participants stressed the value and timeliness of the Consultation’s fresh approach to the challenges of public knowledge and understanding, and expressed the hope that the learning process can be extended, both in individual countries and in international exchange. Both the Chair of the DAC and the organisers from the Development Centre expressed a strong interest in working to maintain the momentum.
Background Note on Objectives of the Joint DAC-Development Centre Informal Experts’ Consultation

The aim of this Experts’ Consultation is to go deeper than the traditional discussions of public education and public support for development assistance.

Too much past discussion among development specialists has been inward-looking, narrow and defensive. Often, specialists have focussed on prescribing remedies with no clear conception of how the organism in question actually functions and whether in fact there is a malady.

Many, if not all, fields of public policy today share the need to compete for constructive public attention and supportive public attitudes. Development and development co-operation are no longer “sacred cows”, enjoying immunity from debate and automatic support in the competitive marketplace of society’s objectives. In fact, governmental and non-governmental actors in this field face the special challenge of enlisting support for policies and activities which are destined to benefit societies outside the donor community. In defence of their claims they cannot count on automatic support from an affected constituency with a direct short-term interest.

Moreover, international co-operation as an area of foreign policy is subject to particularly intense public scrutiny, especially, but not exclusively, directed at governmental programmes.

Some developing countries are now increasingly perceived as competitors, threatening jobs in industrialised countries. This new visibility coincides with increasing concerns in several OECD countries over growing unemployment, growing immigration and revulsion at the spread of violent conflicts with ethnic undertones.

We need to start with an inventory of the evidence in hand on the current state and trends in public knowledge and attitudes on development and development co-operation. For this purpose a survey has been conducted among DAC Member governments, partial results of which will be available during our meeting.

We then propose to focus on several basic questions:

— What kind of public information on developing countries and development co-operation is actually available? How broad is the coverage of this information? Does it give a fair picture of the actual state of the countries concerned and the objectives of current development co-operation policies?

— How are knowledge and attitudes actually formed among various segments of public opinion in the donor countries?

— How is information communicated and who are the major agents in this process (audiovisual and written media, schools, NGOs, etc.)?

— How does the public in our societies receive information on development co-operation and what does it do with this information?

— How do different segments of public opinion influence overall public support?

— How do “public opinions” differ among OECD countries in this respect?
In trying to respond to these basic questions, we should undertake to learn from a general analysis of how these “learning cycles” actually work in contemporary society. We should also include in the analysis some comparative experience in other fields, and then see how the processes work in our different societies.

Next, in light of our understanding of the functioning of public knowledge and attitudes, we need to make a frank appraisal of what, if anything, may be ailing us and what may be done about it. With the help of journalists, politicians and others who face the hard realities of competing public interests and demands, we need to ask to what extent the “problem” or challenge of public knowledge and attitudes is one of:

- lack of adequate interest in development among our publics or even, possibly, a growing perception of competing interests between our societies and those of developing countries;
- scepticism about progress in development, and/or about the usefulness of development co-operation and assistance;
- lack of information, lack of balanced and credible information, outright misinformation or negatively biased information;
- a wider and more systematic deficiency that could legitimately be called an “education gap”;
- lack of understanding among opinion leaders in development co-operation (NGOs and politicians) of their proper role in fostering public support;
- inadequate response of agencies to the challenge represented by constructive criticism of policies, which is often looked upon as improper, whereas it may be evidence of positive public commitment.

Finally, we will aim to formulate some realistic prescriptions for identified ills and think about who, in our various societies, might best take responsibility for acting on them.
Mixed Messages: Public Opinion and Development Assistance in the 1990s

Ian Smillie

Summary

Despite a strong sense of “compassion fatigue” within the development community, the evidence from dozens of recent and past opinion polls in OECD countries shows that public support for international aid programmes has remained consistently and surprisingly high for three decades. This is reinforced by an analysis of recent non-governmental organisation (NGO) donor statistics.

High levels of public support notwithstanding, there are problems with both the statistics and the reality. Public opinion polling has limitations and is open to misinterpretation. Certainly the quality of public opinion on development issues is poor. Knowledge levels are weak, and development issues rank low as a priority. Support for aid is strongest around short-term humanitarian issues.

The credibility of governmental aid programmes is low throughout Europe and North America. The credibility of NGOs as a delivery mechanism is much higher, while the United Nations ranks highest by a wide margin throughout Europe.

Can the quality of public opinion be changed? The chapter discusses three stages in the evolution of public opinion, using the women’s movement, the environmental movement and the AIDS crisis as benchmarks. Before there can be a satisfactory resolution to any issue of international importance, there must be a level of awareness that allows the public to work through its response. Time is needed for this. Events that dramatise the issue are essential. Other factors include the relevance of the issue to one’s own circumstances, the concreteness and clarity of the issue, the credibility of the information sources and the quantity of information devoted to the issue.

Throughout the North, there is overwhelming evidence that the media have done a poor job of raising public consciousness on international development issues. The situation is not improving. The South is almost universally portrayed — and therefore perceived — as a disaster zone, beset by corruption, disease and a series of unconnected calamities. Dramatic events abound, but the context, the clarity and cogency, and the relevance of the issues to one’s self are absent. Journalists and media scholars place their hopes for change on “the public” and on citizens’ organisations.

Many NGOs struggle inconclusively with issues of development education. Profound tensions arise from the choice between successful, emotive fund-raising messages, and messages which attempt to build better long-term public
understanding. In financial terms, development education loses out to fund-raising by a wide margin. Private funding for development education is scarce, and throughout the OECD, government support is either very low or non-existent. Although “starving baby” advertising has been somewhat modified in recent years, the media take up where NGOs leave off. Government budgets for public information range from a high of about one-half of 1 per cent to tiny fractions of that.

The chapter ends pessimistically. Little has changed since the conclusions reached at a 1983 OECD Development Assistance Committee meeting on the subject of public opinion and development assistance:

— the main rationale for aid in the public mind was and remains emergency relief;
— ignorance about development, about aid programmes and about the South remains widespread;
— there was growing doubt then — now more or less solidified — about the effectiveness of official aid.

Here, however, we make a distinction between public support for international development assistance and what people perceive to be their government’s efforts. When people are critical of government aid programmes — a common phenomenon throughout the OECD — this is not the same as opposing development assistance. The high levels of public support for the United Nations throughout Europe and the relatively high levels of support for NGOs throughout the OECD can be seen as evidence of this. Nor should lack of public understanding be mistaken for a lack of public concern or values. These remain strong. If there were greater cogency and clarity of the development effort within aid programmes, and less emphasis on the commercial and political interests that characterise so many, credibility might rise.

Our conclusion is that, while aid agencies could do much more to build public support, the more fundamental solutions lie beyond them and the NGO community. The basic issue is one of political leadership on the ultimate purpose of, and scope for, international development.

Measuring Support for Development Assistance

God Down, Devil Up in French Survey

PARIS (Reuter) - Belief in God is declining, but belief in the devil is rising in France, an opinion poll on religious attitudes showed Wednesday. The CSA Institute poll for Le Monde newspaper found 61 per cent of French people believed more or less in God, compared with 66 per cent eight years ago. Thirty-four per cent said they believe in the devil, up from 24 per cent in 1986.

Reported in The Ottawa Citizen, 12 May 1994

Although “straw polls” began almost two centuries ago, public opinion polling has become big business throughout the world in the past three decades. Most widely used by political parties and private-sector firms to test ideas, products and attitudes, it has become increasingly popular among governmental and some non-governmental development organisations as a means of investigating public attitudes towards development assistance.
In Canada, the government spent $100 million in 1992 polling Canadians on a wide variety of subjects. After ten years of polls, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in 1994 had learned the following about Canadian attitudes:

- support for government spending on foreign aid remained fairly stable from 1979 to 1983, rose sharply in the mid-1980s and has been declining since then;
- since 1991, more Canadians have chosen aid for emergencies over aid for long-term development when asked which they believe it is most important for Canada to provide;
- the majority of Canadians are neutral in their opinions on aid. They do not think of aid very often, do not feel it has an impact on them and do not consider themselves part of the global community. Four out of ten Canadians are neutrals who tend to support aid, and two out of ten are neutrals who tend to oppose it.

Similar findings have been reported throughout the OECD area for at least three or four years. In Norway, public support for development assistance dropped from 85 per cent in 1986 to 77 per cent in 1990. In Sweden, traditionally high support had plummeted by 1991 to only 56 per cent among the important 25-34 age group. A 1993 opinion poll in the United States found that support for economic assistance to other countries had declined since 1986, and that “Americans do not view foreign aid, given its track record, as warranting continued support... The public does not have confidence that aid is helping to improve conditions in other countries or reaching the people it is intended to reach.”

It is now received wisdom that recession, aid fatigue and compassion fatigue have taken a disastrous toll on public support, and that as a result — in some of the more extreme scenarios — development assistance as we know it may not survive.

The “sky is falling” school of public affairs is not new, at least in the development community. A report of a 1983 DAC meeting observed gloomily that “the climate for aid is deteriorating.” As far back as 1969, the Pearson Commission Report stated that “public support for development is now flagging. In some of the rich countries its feasibility, even its very purpose, is in question. The climate surrounding foreign aid programmes is heavy with disillusion and distrust... we have reached a point of crisis.”

Public Opinion: Detours on the Information Superhighway

In the space of 176 years, the Lower Mississippi has shortened itself 242 miles. That is an average of a trifle over one mile and a third per year. Therefore, any calm person, who is not blind or idiotic, can see that in the old Oolitic Silurian Period... the Lower Mississippi River was upward of 1,300,000 miles long... One gets such wholesale returns of conjecture out of such a trifling investment of fact.

Mark Twain, Life on the Mississippi

In the previous section, downward trends in public support were cited for four countries — Norway, Sweden, Canada and the United States. These are worth examining more closely. In each case, these trends — frequently and pessimistically discussed at aid gatherings — are debatable, transitory or simply false. By 1993, for example, support for aid in Norway had rebounded from its 1990 drop, and had returned to its 1985 level of 85 per cent, the all-time high. In other words, public support for development assistance in Norway has never been higher. In Sweden, the decline that began in 1988 reversed itself three years later, and the 25-34 age group...
that had registered only 56 per cent positive in 1991, had become 72 per cent positive by 1994. While Canadian polls show that support has fluctuated over the years, and was as high as 80 per cent in 1984 and 1985, the 1993 level (nearly 70 per cent) was almost precisely the same as that of 1979.

The 1993 US poll quoted above is particularly interesting, because two polls were conducted at almost the same time by different firms, both using questions and comparative data derived from an earlier 1986 poll. The two new polls used the same techniques and the same sort of probability sampling, and both claimed to vary in their findings by plus or minus 3 per cent, but they emerged with quite different findings. While a Belden & Russonello poll found a lack of public confidence, and concluded that “Americans do not view foreign aid...as warranting continued support”, an Intercultural Communication poll conducted only three months later found that “despite Americans’ domestic concerns, they strongly favour assistance to other nations”.

The different conclusions are deduced from answers to a variety of queries, but on the fundamental question — “Are you generally in favour of or opposed to the US giving economic assistance to developing countries?” — the answers were very different. In 1986, 50 per cent were in favour of aid. The Belden & Russonello poll found that by December 1992, only 43 per cent were in favour, while the Intercultural Communication poll of March 1993 found that support had actually increased to 53 per cent. (In addition, the Intercultural Communication poll also found that a full 72 per cent favoured “humanitarian” support.)

Reasons for these rather significant differences will be explored below. Here, it will suffice to say that polls do not always agree, and therefore cannot always be accurate. If an average of these two polls were taken, however, it would bear out the findings of a 1983 opinion survey conducted by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations: “The foreign policy attitudes of the American public have maintained a basic stability. This continuity is all the more surprising because the period from 1978 to 1982 witnessed the election to the presidency of Ronald Reagan, who pledged to set the nation on a new path in foreign as well as domestic policy.” Chicago Council opinion polls found that 52 per cent of the public favoured foreign aid in 1974, 46 per cent in 1978 and 50 per cent in 1982. A 1994 Pew GSI poll found 47 per cent of respondents to be positive.

In the European Community, the results of three consistent and comparable opinion polls (1983, 1987 and 1991) are revealing: in 1991, 80 per cent of European respondents (based on a sample of 12 800 people) — 13 and 5 points more than in the surveys of 1983 and 1987 respectively — considered it important or even very important to “help poor countries in Africa, South America, Asia, etc...”. Broken down by country, the percentages vary from 73-75 per cent (France, Belgium) to 85-88 per cent (Greece, Spain, Italy, Portugal). Eighty-six per cent of Europeans — an increase of four points since 1983 and a drop of three points since 1987 — are “For (very much, or to some extent) helping Third World countries”. Seventy-eight per cent of respondents to a 1994 Swiss poll said that aid should remain unchanged or be increased, a slight improvement over 1984. In Japan, the trend moved the other way by 2 per cent between 1991 and 1992, but remained over 80 per cent in favour of aid. In Australia, 73 per cent approve of aid, and only 11 per cent disapprove.

Can it be said that we have now reached “the point of crisis” in public support that Pearson described in 1969? Despite fairly conclusive evidence to the contrary, there is a persistent, strong and perhaps irrational sense in many parts of the aid establishment that we have. Why? It may be that the crisis, and the climate of disillusion and distrust, actually lie within foreign aid programmes, and do not extend as far into public opinion as is thought. Examples of the crisis within the aid establishment can be found in the United States, where a wide variety of respected pro-aid NGO and advocacy groups began calling in the late 1980s and early 1990s for a fundamental overhaul of USAID. The author of Disasters, Relief and the Media
says that in Britain, “Compassion fatigue, donor fatigue and appeal fatigue are expressions frequently heard in the aid agencies”. A detailed 1993 interview-study of senior Canadian development executives found the community “marked by pessimism and despair” over budget cuts, politicisation and the rise of commercial priorities.

One might say there is strong evidence of “aid-agency fatigue”, not of aid fatigue among the public. The Reality of Aid 1994, an NGO-created review of development assistance, says that “among politicians and commentators, there appears to be a lack of confidence in aid, which translates itself into nervousness about asserting the needs of the poor overseas in a time of austerity at home”.

Several factors may be contributing to aid-agency fatigue:

— the chronic inability of committed aid managers to de-link official development assistance (ODA) from commercial and political interests; a concomitant inability among aid agencies to focus on human priority concerns (as noted in the UNDP Human Development Report 1993);

— failure of the infrastructure, capital-intensive and “integrated development” approaches of the 1960s and 1970s; divisive internal debates over structural adjustment in the 1980s and 1990s;

— the decline and even collapse of many Southern economies;

— deep cuts to many aid budgets in the 1990s (that of the Finnish International Development Agency was slashed by 70.5 per cent between 1992 and 1994);

— a decreasing level of direct control and involvement because of increasing recourse to consulting firms, commercial executing agencies and NGOs;

— a public belief, strongly expressed in most opinion polls in Europe and North America, that national governments are not the most useful or effective means of channelling development assistance (this is discussed further below);

— the “greying” of aid management. Individuals who entered the field in the 1960s and 1970s have reached the top, and will not move on until they retire, which for most will be well into the next century. “Age”, the poet observed, “makes a winter in the heart, an autumn in the mind.”

Donations: Another Way of Measuring Opinion

There are not many trustworthy measures of public support for international development assistance. A tangible one, however, has to do with donations to NGOs. Donations are made consciously by individuals, over and above the taxes they contribute to ODA. Leaving aside, for the moment, the questions of whether donations are intended for emergency relief or development, and how an NGO raises the money, it is worth considering whether or not aid fatigue is a fact in the NGO world.

In the past few years, many NGOs have had noticeably less success in fundraising. This is ascribed alternately to recession and to aid fatigue. (It is unlikely that an NGO would openly describe it as a programming or fund-raising failure.) Trustworthy statistics on national giving to NGOs are problematic. Despite the best efforts of the OECD to gather such figures, many national statistics are simply “guesstimates”. This statistical problem notwithstanding, there is at least comparative consistency over time in OECD figures. Between 1980 and 1992, bilateral aid disbursements rose by 110 per cent. During the same period, NGO spending rose by 129 per cent. More recent statistics, however, show an even
greater spread in the rate of growth: between 1990 and 1992, bilateral disbursements grew barely 4 per cent, while NGO disbursements rose by almost 8 per cent\textsuperscript{13}. The general trend, therefore, has been one of continuous growth over the past decade.

In fact, some of the largest Northern NGOs are growing consistently and rapidly. The private Canadian cash income of World Vision Canada rose 121 per cent between 1987 and 1992. World Vision Australia's income grew 20 per cent between 1990 and 1991. In Japan, the Foster Parents Plan grew by 25 per cent between 1991 and 1992, and in the Netherlands, between 1986 and 1991, the same organisation grew by 104 per cent. In Britain, Action Aid had a 15 per cent income increase between 1992 and 1993; Christian Aid grew 46 per cent between 1991 and 1992. The income of Save the Children grew from £56 million in 1991 to £100 million in 1992, a 79 per cent increase\textsuperscript{14}. In fact, international agencies registered the biggest gain — 20 per cent after adjustment for inflation — among all British charities. Religious missionary work was next, at 7 per cent\textsuperscript{15}.

In the United States, the first six NGOs listed in the 1993 InterAction Directory (ACCION, Adventist Development and Relief Agency, the African American Institute, AMREF, Africare and the Aga Khan Foundation) recorded average growth rates in private donor income of 28.9 per cent between 1990 and 1991. Some of the larger NGOs such as SCF(US), World Vision and Childreach were relatively stable, but CARE income from donations rose 13 per cent between 1990 and 1992, and Oxfam America had an increase of 15.6 per cent between 1990 and 1991.

It is not difficult to find holes in such statistics. Many of the organisations mentioned are heavily engaged in emergency relief work, and there were, during the years cited, a wide variety of major disaster appeals. This does not in any way enhance the "aid fatigue" or "diminishing support" arguments, however. To the contrary, it demonstrates that humanitarian appeals, at least, have not lost ground.

While some NGOs in all OECD countries are suffering from a decline in voluntary income, this can be ascribed to reasons that have nothing to do with aid fatigue or declining support for development assistance:

- the real impact of recession. This may have some effect on donor giving, but not necessarily on attitudes;

- government cutbacks and the growing need of domestic charity NGOs for welfare assistance at home. Again, this may affect donor giving, but not necessarily attitudes. As shown above, it is certainly not the case in Britain;

- the ever-increasing number of NGOs has made fund-raising more difficult. Growth of the "pie" may be outpacing inflation, but it must be divided by more organisations — 1 600 NGOs in OECD Member countries in 1980, 2 500 in 1990, 3 000 in 1993 and well over 5 000 in 1995\textsuperscript{16}. If donors are moving increasingly towards "name-brand" NGOs like Save the Children, Médecins sans Frontières and Oxfam (as their income seems to indicate in several countries), the problem may well be aid-agency fatigue, rather than aid fatigue. A 1992 survey of British social attitudes found that "three-quarters of those questioned agreed that it is difficult to decide where to give, because there are too many charities"\textsuperscript{17};

- donors to development NGOs (and development NGOs themselves) are being drawn more and more towards emergencies. Hence the obvious and sometimes remarkable growth of organisations with emergency appeals. This may well lead to a decline for those working only in longer-term development, but it does not indicate a decline in support for international assistance;
the increasing fund-raising sophistication and growing international media presence of larger “transnational” NGOs such as CARE, Médecins sans Frontières, World Vision and Plan International are drawing donors away from smaller organisations. Smaller NGOs may be mistaking a loss of market share for “aid fatigue”.

**The Abused Statistic**

*Quality in Polling*

*There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies and statistics.*

Benjamin Disraeli

Although the preceding sections suggest that public opinion seems generally supportive of development assistance, there are reasons to worry. While polling offers a simple and cost-effective way to learn what a good cross-section of the public thinks on an issue, polls can be wrong (or at least can have very different findings, as in the US case cited above). Professional pollsters are the first to decry the weaknesses and limitations of public polling, and polls are open to rampant abuse and misinterpretation. In his book *The Super Pollsters*, David Moore says the views people express in polls “are very much influenced by the polling process itself, by the way questions are worded, their location in the interview, and the characteristics of interviewers”.

A list of problems that bedevil public opinion surveys was provided by the president of the American Association of Public Opinion Research in 1988:

— there is a problem of truthful responses to survey questions;
— there can be a failure to do justice to the richness of people’s experience;
— people fail to understand certain types of questions that depend on memory or insight into their own feelings;
— survey researchers tend to impose their own framework on the public;
— certain words mean different things to different people;
— people tend to give an opinion even when they do not have a real point of view on the subject; and,
— people tend to modify their answers to questions when the context shifts or question wording changes.

Depending on the context, the words used, how questions are phrased and whether information is provided in advance, opinions can be badly skewed (or easily manipulated) on any emotive issue: capital punishment, abortion, sex education in schools, immigration, gun control. A 1985 *Los Angeles Times* survey found that when US citizens were asked whether the country is now spending “too little”, “too much” or “the right amount” on “assistance to the poor”, they replied in a ten-to-one ratio that too little was being spent. When the same question was asked about “welfare” spending, 42 per cent said spending was too high. The same problem can occur with use of the word “big”. When a poll asked Americans whether they thought government should regulate “big business” as opposed to just “business”, support increased by 19 per cent. Support for “increased” regulation jumped by 22 per cent.
In 1990, one of Canada's top polling companies tested some words and phrases commonly used by development agencies and found that some worked, while others simply created negative images in the public mind. Effective phrases and concepts included "basic needs" (food, water, fuel, shelter), "human rights", "helping the poor to help themselves", "Canadians making a difference". Negative or ineffective phrases included "empowerment", "partners in development", "global village", "global partnership" and "social justice". The presence of such phrases in a Canadian opinion poll could obviously affect its conclusions.

There is a further problem with opinion polls. Polling can be very expensive, and polling companies, therefore, tailor their questions specifically to suit the needs of the client. If the client is the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, therefore, questions will certainly and almost exclusively relate to Norwegian opinions and knowledge about development assistance. In the dozens of polls examined for this article, not one asked questions which might compare attitudes and knowledge on aid with those on any other complex or emotive issue, such as defence spending, domestic welfare spending, immigration or the environment. Not one asked questions — except in the most oblique manner — which might remotely suggest a priority for aid spending against other types of government expenditure.

The Quality of Public Opinion

Q: Should Richard Nixon have resigned?
A: Yes.

Q: Do you care?
A: No.

The previous sections demonstrate that general public support for development assistance is probably high — even surprisingly high. Pessimism in the aid community notwithstanding, public opinion does not appear to be undergoing any profound downward shifts.

There are, however, a number of serious concerns about the quality of public opinion. As another president of the American Association of Public Opinion Research observes, "There is a tremendous hunger to represent what public opinion is on a given issue." In view of all the possible response effects, however, "it's very dangerous to sum up a complex issue with a single number". Daniel Yankelovich, a prominent US pollster, argues that "public judgement" is a much more useful concept. Yankelovich defines public judgement to mean a particular form of public opinion that exhibits "(1) more thoughtfulness, more weighing of alternatives, more genuine engagement with the issue, more taking into account a wide variety of factors than ordinary public opinion as measured in public opinion polls, and (2) more emphasis on the normative, valuing, ethical side of questions than on the factual, informational side.

If more public opinion polls investigated the knowledge levels on which respondents base an opinion, the need for Yankelovich's distinction would be obvious. In the few cases where polls do investigate knowledge levels, the results are depressing. A 1993 Harris poll discovered that US citizens know to within a few percentage points how much the federal government spends on social security, medicare and defence. For some reason, however, the public believes that 20 per cent of government spending goes to foreign aid — a figure more than twenty times the actual amount. All questions relating to whether the aid budget is too high, too low, or "just right" become tainted by this single fact. (For example a 1993 NORC poll found that 70 per cent believed the US government was spending "too
much” on foreign aid.) In a Canadian poll, only 10 per cent of respondents could independently identify CIDA as the agency responsible for Canadian aid. The 31 other institutions named included UNICEF, the Red Cross and McDonald’s. When respondents were asked to name NGOs involved in development work, only half could name two, and fewer than a third could name three.

In 1994, the Times Mirror Center for People and the Press conducted a comprehensive, 10,000-person international survey on opinions about the media in eight countries: the United States, Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy and Spain. It found that knowledge of current events varied tremendously, but for those concerned about public awareness, there were disturbing results. When asked a series of five questions, 37 per cent of the US respondents got all five wrong. One of the questions was, “Who is the President of Russia?”

A deeper analysis of the many available opinion polls shows that development assistance and the developing world rank very low on the list of world problems in unprompted responses. The issue of the day takes precedence over others; thus nuclear war, a major issue until about 1988, has tumbled on most lists. The environment, which was very high in polls around the time of the UN Conference on the Environment and Development, is now being replaced in many polls by AIDS and immigration. A high proportion of respondents in most countries favour emergency aid over long-term development assistance.

Many polls show that the public does not trust government agencies, and there is a high rate of scepticism about whether aid actually reaches those in need. In Canada, roughly 80 per cent believe Canadian aid to be effective, but ironically, 81 per cent believe that most aid sent to poor countries never gets to the people who most need it. (This sort of contradiction occurs in virtually every poll.) While beliefs about the positive effects of aid are relatively strong in the United States, only 18 per cent believe that the US government does the best job in delivering it. In 1993, a remarkable 47 per cent favoured the United Nations, and 16 per cent favoured NGOs. In a Canadian poll, where the United Nations was not offered as a choice, 52 per cent said that aid should be channelled mostly through NGOs, with 38 per cent favouring government. A broad 1991 European poll showed that 41 per cent believed the most useful aid to developing countries was being provided by the UN and its agencies; 19 per cent believed that NGOs were most effective, while only 8 per cent cited their national government.

Some government aid agencies are placing increased emphasis on the private sector as a delivery mechanism and as a catalyst for development — and also as a potential beneficiary of aid spending — but questions regarding the private sector as an appropriate actor in development assistance meet regularly with very low public enthusiasm. In the United States, private business ranks lower than all other options (at 15 per cent) in terms of “doing the best job”. In Europe, the private sector ranks at 1 per cent or less in perceived usefulness in seven countries, and only 4 per cent at best (in Denmark). The Guardian conducted a British poll in the wake of a 1994 scandal which linked aid for a Malaysian dam with business concessions and, allegedly, with arms sales. Asked if they agreed with the general principle of trade-for-aid or arms-for-aid, only 2 per cent of the 1,300 people polled favoured the latter, while 33 per cent supported the former. By far the greatest proportion (49 per cent) said that aid should be unconditional. In Canada, 7 per cent see business as “very effective”, and 45 per cent see it as “somewhat effective”. Ironically, a 1993 survey found that Canadian business executives believe the first reason for an aid programme should be simple altruism (49 per cent). The second reason given was development, and the third, economic benefits.
All this demonstrates that the knowledge-base concerning development issues is extremely low, that people in most countries do not understand development and would rather provide assistance for emergencies than for long-term development assistance. It also shows that trust in governmental development programmes is universally low, a rather dangerous statistic for the health of ODA.

The Meaning of Public Opinion

Public awareness is not an aspiration that you can only yearn for, but is something you buy. You pay in your time, your skill and your budget — for consultants, printers, and suppliers to communications specialists — and what you get for that is awareness.

Dorothy Levy

Can the general public ever be expected to have enough information on a complex subject such as international development — one far down the general list of public concerns — to make an informed judgement when asked difficult questions? Daniel Yankelovich believes that moving from ill-informed and dangerously fickle “mass opinion” to the more thoughtful “public judgement” upon which democracy should be based is a three-stage process.

His first stage is that of “consciousness raising”, which is more than simple awareness: it is a blend of increased awareness with concern and readiness for action, as can be seen in the women’s movement, the environmental movement or responses to the AIDS epidemic. There are usually a number of serious obstacles to consciousness raising. One highly variable factor is time: some things take longer than others. The women’s movement has taken more than a century to get to its present position, while consciousness raising on AIDS took less than a decade. Another factor is the “cogency of events”. Nothing advances consciousness raising as forcefully as events that dramatise the issue. Other factors include the perceived relevance of the issue to one’s self, the concreteness and clarity of the issue, the credibility of information sources and the quantity of information devoted to the issue.

Yankelovich calls his second stage “working through”. Sometimes this is relatively easy, often it is not. The result may depend upon how the consciousness raising was carried out. “Working through” means, essentially, that attitudes must change along with overt behaviour. An issue will be poorly launched into this stage if:

— people do not understand what the possibilities for action are;
— or they are given insufficient and inadequate choice;
— or they do not grasp what the consequences of the various choices would be;
— or their attention is diverted from an issue before they have a chance to come to grips with it;
— or they are given contradictory information about it;
— or they believe that those who propose the action are acting in bad faith.

Much of the problem in moving from “consciousness raising” to “working through” on an issue has to do with the way news is reported. Yankelovich says that “the media are superb at beating the drums and getting everyone agitated, but once people are whipped into a state of high anxiety, the news media then move on to
the next task of consciousness-raising, as if arousing people’s concerns were an end in itself”. As this problem relates to opinion on development co-operation, it will be addressed more fully below.

Political leadership is another problem. Leaders are often at fault in not leading; rather, they seek to determine what the public thinks on an issue in order to take action. Yankelovich gives an example from the United States which could apply to almost any country where development co-operation is concerned (the actual issue has been replaced with an “x”):

In a democracy, the function of the leadership is to alert the public to the existence of any serious threat, define it, develop a strategy (or alternative strategies) for dealing with it, and seek to mobilise and focus the energies of the people to meet it. One of the principal reasons for America’s failure of political will in confronting the “x” challenge is that America’s leadership has not presented the public with realistic choices, and on occasion has actually created obstacles deflecting the public from working through the issue.37

Yankelovich argues that much of the necessary “working through” on important issues is given over to “experts”, and public opinion is either manipulated or ignored. He believes, however, that the public’s frame of reference can be a partial substitute for knowledge; that if values are resolved correctly, technical solutions will follow. There is an obvious opportunity here for development co-operation, because all opinion polls from all countries show a very strong public desire to help when people elsewhere are in trouble. Communicating the extent of the trouble and the complexity of solving it, however, has so far been either subverted or left largely to chance.

The third stage, “resolution”, may be extremely difficult, because it involves cognitive, emotional and moral resolution — a clarification of thinking and a recognition of how other issues relate to the subject in question. It also requires an ability to grasp and accept the consequences of the available choices, and to “do the right thing” despite the personal costs or sacrifices that may be involved.

Where development co-operation is concerned, it would appear that most Western countries are somewhere in stage one — consciousness raising — and that most are not getting very far with it.

The Means of Consciousness Raising


Ernest Hemingway38

The Media

A commonly asked question in many opinion polls has to do with a person’s source of information. Not surprisingly, in most countries television is increasingly given as the most important source of information on the developing world and development issues. In the 1983, 1987 and 1991 European polls, it featured most prominently for 71 per cent, 73 per cent and 86 per cent of respondents respectively. In 1991, newspapers, radio and magazines provided information to 49 per cent, 30 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. Findings for North America are similar.
There is little doubt that television in particular and the media in general are doing an almost uniformly inadequate job of consciousness raising on the developing world. That the media focus on disaster and bad news is not news. What is more insidious is their preoccupation with quantitative data rather than qualitative analysis of the context in which an event takes place. With the closure in recent years of more and more foreign news bureaux, the increased reliance on television news wholesalers and wire services and increased commercial competition for audiences, much news about the developing world has become authorless, anchorless and impossible to understand or to follow.

A ten-year study of foreign news coverage on US network television concludes that between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s — when television basically replaced radio and the print media as a source of public information, and when the technology that enabled fast, cheap access to international stories became available — there was no marked increase in foreign news coverage. A ten-year study of developing world coverage in the New York Times and the Chicago Tribune found that conflicts dominated the news. The authors concluded that there was a stereotyped bias against the South which fostered “images of Third World nations as political systems rife with conflict.”

In November 1986, an ambitious study examined the foreign news content of five US, two British and two Swedish news outlets. The results were striking: Swedish radio carried the greatest number of international stories and devoted the most time to them, while CNN carried the least (with the exception of a local television station in California). Of greater interest, perhaps, were the “black holes”, about which almost nothing was reported in any of the three countries. Africa was basically reduced to a few stories about South Africa, while important trading countries such as Japan (and Canada in US news reporting) were more or less ignored. The Middle East cropped up regularly, but Central and South America were rarely reported.

In 1992, a two-month analysis of ten French newspapers and journals, as well as the 8 p.m. news bulletins of the two major television stations, arrived at the same findings. Although there were differences among the various outlets, the image of the South was globally negative: it was portrayed as a largely abstract and almost singular society, prone to war, famine, disease and natural disaster. The most common stories, derived almost exclusively from Northern observers, dealt with “the incompetence of [the South’s] governments, the misery and submission of its peoples, the assistance needed by its children, the corruption of its administration.”

In 1979, Mort Rosenblum, a seasoned Associated Press foreign correspondent, wrote that there was a crowning irony to the poverty of international news reporting: “Producers and consumers both want better coverage. And coverage could be improved, almost easily, at no added cost. To do better, we need not crowd out domestic news — or the juicy scandals and comics which help sell newspapers ... But since few consumers know how easy it is to make themselves heard, there is little change.” Editors and executives take silence as tacit approval, he said, and could easily be persuaded to include more and better coverage if pressured to do so by readers. Fifteen years later, with a lot more experience and a stint as editor of the International Herald Tribune behind him, Rosenblum was still asking the same question — “Who stole the news?” — and his advice had not changed: “We can get the news back, with little fuss and no more money than we are already spending. But we have to decide to do it. Readers must say what they want. Correspondents must provide it. And then, if editors open the gates, the rest will follow.” No one will open a bureau in Utopia, he warns, but concerted audience influence can work.

The absence of this influence has created something that Australian journalist John Pilger describes very poignantly:
When a group of London schoolchildren were asked for their view of the Third World, several of them wrote "Hell". None of them could provide a coherent picture of actual people. The majority of humanity are not news, merely mute and incompetent stick figures that flit across the television screen. They do not argue or fight back. They are not brave. They do not have a vision. They do not conceive models of development that suit them. They do not form community and other grass roots organisations that seek to surmount the obstacles to a better life.\(^46\)

There have been attempts to address this problem. One was the ill-fated New World Information Order (NWIO) a cause célèbre in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The idea, to redress the imbalance in reporting and the domination of Western media in the developing world, was attacked by most Western media as a blatant attempt at state takeover of the news, with "shadowy committees [drafting] media policies to help countries impose controls over all reporters working within their borders".\(^47\) A few individuals, such as Edward Herman, saw this kind of remark as "a caricature of the real positions of the contending parties, reflected in an undisguised conflict of interest on the part of the Western media, as well as remarkable hypocrisy".\(^48\) Whatever its merits and flaws, the NWIO eventually died on the vine. An interesting effort has been the creation of Inter Press Service (IPS) which, with support from some Northern development organisations, has become a South-oriented, pro-development news agency.

Today, in addition to the problems identified by journalists, there are two new trends: a blurring of the line between news and entertainment, and the populism of television news. Along with many others, communications specialist Daniel Hallin decries the fact that news in North America and elsewhere is increasingly reduced to tiny "soundbites", and to what is becoming known as "trash television": tabloid "news programmes" and talk shows such as Larry King Live, which may feature transvestites and diets one night, and the President of the United States the next.\(^49\) While Yankelovich puts much of the onus (and hope) on the media to raise consciousness and assist in the "working through" of important issues, Hallin says this is virtually impossible, at least as far as the US news media are concerned:

Discussions of the media and public policy are traditionally dosed with exhortations to the media to provide the public with more and better information, "an informed and active public being essential to a vigorous democracy" (as the saying goes) ... [but] the problem with American news media [lies] with the fact that the major relation of political communication has become a relation of seller and consumer ... The modern mass media cannot play the role of sparking active public participation in deciding the direction of public policy. I use the word cannot deliberately. Individual journalists ... can certainly from time to time break out of the focus on technique and strategy to raise the direction of public policy as an issue ... But all of this must remain within relatively narrow limits; the anti-political tendencies ... are deeply rooted in the structure and professional ideology of the American news media.\(^50\)

He concludes by saying, "to the extent that life is to be breathed into the public sphere of liberal capitalist societies, the initiative must come from outside the [media] institutions now dominating that sphere". Like Rosenblum, Hallin puts his faith in the public, in citizens’ organisations — i.e. NGOs.
Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

NGOs relate to the public in two principal ways: through fund-raising, and through development education and campaigning. Although for most NGOs these activities are distinct, they are basically two sides of the same coin. Within the development community, NGOs are regarded as one of the best hopes for improved public information and better education on development issues. In many countries, they are virtually the only purveyors of thoughtful development education.

It may come as something of a surprise, therefore, to both supporters and critics of NGOs, to learn how limited the spread of their information services actually is. When asked about sources of information, most respondents in most opinion polls put television first, newspapers second and radio third. Of course, people have many sources of information, including books, school, friends and relatives, the government. As a primary source of information, NGOs appear relatively low on most scales. In the European Community, only 11 per cent of respondents list NGOs as a source of information (a high of 16 per cent in Germany, and a low of 4 per cent in Portugal). In Switzerland, the proportion is higher: 26 per cent. Churches, which work much like NGOs and in many countries collaborate closely with them, are listed as a source of information by 13 per cent of Europeans. In Canada, 12 per cent list NGOs as their primary source of information, and 17 per cent list religious organisations. Polling done by NGOs themselves is usually carefully guarded for fund-raising purposes, but two representative examples are of interest. A 1989 British Harris poll conducted for Action AId found, surprisingly, that only 3 per cent of respondents received their information about poor countries from NGOs (and a further 3 per cent from churches). Another British survey, carried out for World Vision in 1993, found that NGO advertising accounted for 12 per cent, and other information from charities for a further 4 per cent. Churches were mentioned by 7 per cent. A 1989 poll conducted by the Australian Council for Overseas Aid (ACFOA), an NGO umbrella organisation, asked for “top of the mind” recall on sources of information; it found that churches were mentioned in only 2 per cent of the responses, and NGOs were not mentioned at all.

These rather uneven results probably underestimate NGO impact. Respondents are naming what they believe to be their primary source of information. In all countries, however, information leaflets (with a 7 per cent response factor in Europe) and television fund-raisers (13 per cent in Canada) would be almost exclusively NGO-produced. Many television documentaries and magazine stories (with a 25 per cent response factor in Europe and Canada) focus on NGOs. Many television and newspaper news stories are also generated by or are about NGO activities.

NGO Fund-raising

By far the greatest investment in NGO public communication is related to fund-raising. Overheads, and particularly fund-raising costs, are a thorny subject for most NGOs because of the powerful but erroneous public myth that development is cheap. Overheads of 15 per cent are the most the average NGO will admit to, although the real figure is probably higher. For example, Artsen zonder Grenzen, the Dutch version of Médecins sans Frontières, spent 37 per cent of its 1991 gift income on publicity and fund-raising. Higher costs are certainly a characteristic of the child-sponsorship agencies. Save the Children US calculates administration (“independent cost recovery”) at 28.5 per cent. World Vision Australia spent 32 per cent of its gross 1991 income on fund-raising and administration; the high cost of its German operations became the target of journalist Graham Hancock in the late 1990s.
Where public attitudes are concerned, however, the issue is not so much what an organisation spends — except as an indicator of the quantity of messages delivered — as what it says in the messages. This has long been a contentious issue for Northern NGOs. The debate usually revolves around what has become known as “the pornography of poverty” — the use of starving babies and other emotive disaster imagery to coax, cajole and bludgeon donations from a guilt-ridden Northern public. The argument is not that starving babies do not exist, but that such pictures, repeated year after year, create an image of horror and helplessness that far outweighs reality. This is generally recognised by most NGOs to be counterproductive in terms of creating understanding and awareness of long-term development assistance. In 1987, Oxfam and the European Community sponsored a report on “Images of Africa” which showed beyond doubt that negative images had contributed to a stereotype of a doomed and helpless continent, of people who were unable to help themselves.

A further problem relates to child sponsorship, a form of fund-raising that has proved exceptionally successful for many organisations, including World Vision, Plan International and the Christian Children’s Fund. Widely debated in the early 1980s, child sponsorship is criticised because helping one identifiable person can cause divisions and exacerbate inequality in a community. Direct correspondence with a child is very expensive, and it can raise high expectations while maintaining a sense of aid and dependence. Although most child-sponsorship agencies now target communities as much as the child in their field work, the child remains the publicity anchor, and projects are therefore smaller, more parochial and are often less cost-effective than those of other NGOs. Moreover, the high administrative cost remains. Despite the continuing criticism (most recently in the 1993 UNDP Human Development Report), child sponsorship continues to grow. Plan International grew from 200,000 child sponsorships worldwide in 1982 to 660,000 a decade later. In 1982, World Vision supported 270,000 children worldwide; by 1993 there were more than a million on the roster, 516,000 supported from the United States alone.

Charged with everything from exploitation to racism (usually by smaller NGOs), many NGOs that were successful in fund-raising began to change their imagery in the 1980s. Some NGO communities subsequently developed codes of ethics which dealt with the question of images. In Australia, for example, members of ACFOA undertake to “respect the dignity of recipient communities in advertising, audiovisuals, written materials and presentations.” In the United States, InterAction requires that a member’s “communications shall respect the dignity, values, history, religion and culture of the people served by the programmes. They shall neither minimise nor overstate the human and material needs of those whom it assists.” Similar codes have been developed in other countries, as well as by the Non-Governmental Development Organisation Liaison Committee of the EC.

The problem with most of the codes is that there are no sanctions, and violators are rarely if ever challenged. With increased competition in a tough economic climate, in a time marked by an escalation in emergencies and disasters, evidence of the temptation to return to what works in advertising can be found almost daily in newspapers and on television throughout Europe and North America. More cautious NGOs have discovered that they can have their cake and eat it too. It is no longer so necessary to pay for “starving baby” advertising, because if a disaster becomes bad enough, the media will provide free publicity. Visiting journalists — no longer resident in Africa, for example, and therefore unfamiliar with the context — regularly seek out the local representatives of Redd Barna, Oxfam or CARE to get the sort of story that was described above in the section on the media.

In 1969 a British fund-raising consultant provided a formula for dealing with the public: babies. “Show babies”, he said, “all the time show babies and more babies.” The advice, by and large, seems to have been adopted.
The Silver Bullet: Development Education

The greatest tension for the thoughtful Northern NGO today lies in the attempt to balance fund-raising messages for a public most easily moved by short-term disaster appeals, with recognition that longer-term development depends on the willingness of that same public to support difficult and costly structural change. It is the tension between the “appeal” of helplessness and an antipathy towards empowerment; between concern for children and indifference towards parents; between the provision of food and the creation of jobs; between aid and trade; between charity, as some NGOs say quite clearly, and justice.

Inevitably, the balance almost always tips heavily in favour of fund-raising. In 1993, the US Bread for the World Institute interviewed media and public relations directors of the 25 largest US charities dealing with international development, hunger and poverty. The Institute found that these organisations, with budgets totalling $3 billion, were spending approximately $7.5 million, or 0.25 per cent of all expenditures, on what might be called development education. Of this, only 12 per cent was being devoted to advocacy or influencing specific hunger legislation.

Development education is not new. It began in many countries in the 1950s and 1960s, and over the years has undergone a variety of transitions. Today a broad spectrum of development education organisations — some large, some small — is working with the formal educational system, churches, organised labour, media and cultural institutions, to take development messages into the school, the workplace and the home.

Development education began in most places with basic information about the South, and about development assistance. Gradually, in the 1970s and 1980s, it grew into a more mature form of education, encouraging a critical process — not unlike what Yankelovich calls “working through” — of analysis, reflection and action on the information provided. From the beginning, some NGOs took development education a step further, moving into campaigning and advocacy on the scale and focus of ODA, and into more political issues such as the independence struggles in southern Africa, human rights, racism, immigration and the environment.

Increasingly, Southern NGOs have urged their Northern partners to devote greater energies to an activist style of development education, to re-orient their activities and to attack, for example, the “policies of their governments, corporations and multilateral institutions ... which adversely affect the quality of life and political and economic independence” of the South. This wording, from a 1986 declaration of African NGOs meeting at the UN Special Session on Africa, is neither unique nor unusually strident. At a major 1987 NGO forum in London, the message was the same, as it was in a 1989 “Manila Declaration”, at an Arusha meeting the same year and at many North-South gatherings since.

The tension builds. Within NGOs, staff members criticise senior management and boards of directors for unrealistically limiting development education budgets, and for undue timidity in their approach. Some NGOs have come under serious fire from the media, politicians and the public for being anti-government, anti-capitalist, even pro-revolutionary. The Charity Commissioners for England and Wales are notorious throughout the international NGO world for their policing of British NGO campaigns and development education. Some governments — in particular the United States — are expressly forbidden from supporting activities which might be considered propaganda or lobbying in support of government positions. Under such circumstances, an NGO would therefore be unable to lobby in favour, for example, of an aid budget increase (or against a decrease). While not forbidden in other countries, lobbying, campaigning and advocacy are often only barely
tolerated. As most NGOs today rely on their governments for a high proportion of their income, there is inevitably a measure of self-censorship, even where government funding for development education is not explicitly involved.

**Funding for Development Education**

Private donor support for development education is severely limited. If long-term development loses out to disaster appeals in general NGO fund-raising, development education is a virtual non-starter. Larger NGOs can afford to divert a small percentage of their general income into education, but organisations that have been expressly established for development education purposes live with short institutional horizons and extremely small budgets. Their underpaid staffs are often made up of young returned volunteers, or committed part-timers who work long hours with meagre resources. The generic development education centre, whether in Australia, Japan, North America or Europe, has almost always a cramped, threadbare look.

Most individuals who write about development education and campaigning list the more notable successes. Among these, John Clark counts:

- a code of conduct for the marketing of baby milk;
- the drafting of an international list of essential drugs;
- the removal of certain trade restrictions;
- the creation of an emergency EC food reserve;
- the imposition of sanctions against South Africa.

British NGOs have campaigned successfully, twice in the past decade, to prevent cuts to the aid budget. NGO-run trading firms like Tearfund, Oxfam Trading and the Max Havelaar Coffee sales points in Belgium and Holland give both a personal and a commercial dimension to development education. The Swiss NGO Coalition school service, the International Broadcasting Trust in Britain, the “One World Campaign” in Canada and the “Africa Alive” campaign in Australia are all evidence of successful NGO initiative and innovation.

Where evaluation has emphasised the quality of development education — rather than the breadth of its reach — there are other positive signs. A detailed 1993 evaluation of a ten-year USAID-NGO programme found that “audience members for DevEd programmes learn, believe and do things they didn’t before. And, compared with the general American public, DevEd audiences have much stronger support for foreign assistance and understanding of the US stake in the Third World”. Similar findings, though perhaps not as scientific, are available in other countries.

There is, nevertheless, a paucity — almost a fear in the development education community — of serious impact studies. A forthcoming book on the subject says, “Grassroots development education in Europe is healthy and vigorous ... activities are based upon the premise that people are concerned about global issues, have imbibed information ... The general standard of planning, target-setting and evaluation is increasing.” But, it asks, “How far are we going to be pushed down this [evaluation] road? How many NGOs are asking questions of how effective their work is, not with a view to improving it but, perhaps, with a view to cutting back on it?”

This not uncommon defensiveness has to do with a constant refrain from government agencies: has public opinion improved? A more appropriate question might be this: How can we expect deeply ingrained public attitudes to change when
they are reinforced every day in a variety of ways by television, the print media and NGO fund-raising messages which governments tacitly encourage through the provision of uncritical matching grants?

Just as pollsters criticise polling and journalists are often the most trenchant critics of the media, NGO managers can be the most critical of failings in development education. Citing an NGO-commissioned opinion poll, a senior Canadian NGO communicator observes that even NGOs with the highest public credibility “have a major problem communicating with the public. The report noted that not only does the public find their terminology incomprehensible, but NGOs have an attitude that is ‘patronising, self-righteous, joyless and defensive’.”

He went on to say:

A 1988 report commissioned by CIDA on public education strategy identified a broad range of strategic problems in the development community’s approach to public education, including a lack of critical mass, no perspective, a fragmented approach involving a number of messages and methods, absence of leadership and planning by CIDA, the inability of DevEd groups to popularise the development message, and counterproductive procedural tensions between CIDA and the NGOs. Despite some progress, most of these problems remain today [1994]. A final strategic issue for the development community is the lack of human and financial resources devoted to public education. To put this in perspective, the development community as a whole spends less on public education on development issues than Labatt’s brewers spend on marketing beer71.

These comments might be considered unduly pessimistic, but they will strike a resonant chord in the development education communities of almost every OECD country72.

Throughout the OECD area, government support for development education is ambivalent at best. Some governments believe that NGO criticism of official aid programmes undermines general public support, which makes them reluctant to support NGO development education efforts. Many governments manage their own programmes with the formal school system (e.g. Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Australia, Canada), and each, of course, has an information department which produces reports, studies, evaluations and in some cases, films and videos. The co-financing of television productions made by independent producers is becoming a more common means of “leveraging” tight information budgets, and of surmounting the media’s fear of government “propaganda”73. The budgets for these endeavours, however, are notoriously small in relation to the task. The Swedish International Development Authority’s 1994 information budget represents roughly one-tenth of 1 per cent of its overall annual budget. CIDA spends about one-half of 1 per cent of its budget on public information; in real terms, this is less than World Vision spends on fund-raising in Australia74.

A handful of governments have given serious attention to co-financing development education by NGOs: Austria, the Netherlands and Canada devote about one-half of 1 per cent of their ODA to this purpose. Denmark and Finland devote about one-fifth of 1 per cent, while Germany, Australia and Switzerland spend roughly one-tenth of 1 per cent. Japanese, Italian, Spanish, British and US spending on development education is minimal. The British government explains its position this way: “It is ... considered unethical in the United Kingdom for the government to finance pressure groups or to use public money to advocate policies which are not already approved by Parliament. At the same time, the British education system is very jealous of its professional independence and does not
want any outside interference. In 1994, France allocated one franc towards co-financing NGO development education for every 45,000 francs it spends on ODA. In percentage terms, the number looks like this: 0.002 per cent.

Conclusions: Prologue to a Tragedy

A popular government without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy, or perhaps both.

James Madison

This is the point in a pessimistic report where hopeful solutions should be offered: lights at the end of tunnels, recipes, prescriptions and road maps leading to bright sunlit uplands. In his book on resistance to change, The Culture of Contentment, John Kenneth Galbraith concludes without hope, except to say that government action is inescapable. The same, unfortunately, pertains to this article. Very few of the findings are startling or new: a 1983 DAC meeting on public opinion and development assistance recognised many of the basic issues discussed in this paper:

— the main rationale for aid in the public mind was and remains emergency relief;
— ignorance about aid programmes and about the South remains widespread;
— there was growing doubt then — now more or less solidified — about the effectiveness of official aid.

In the end, perhaps public opinion about development assistance does not matter. A question was asked at the 1983 meeting — “How important is public opinion to policy making?” Maybe the answer is, “not very”, but if James Madison and the countless others who have written about democracy are correct, this answer is dangerous — not in the sense that aid budgets may be cut, but in the sense that if people in the Northern democracies are not equipped to deal with the biggest and most integrated global challenge of the coming century, they are bound to do so badly.

In discussing successful consciousness raising on important issues like the women’s movement, the environment and AIDS, Daniel Yankelovich identified six crucial factors:

Time variability: The environmental movement was able to move towards resolution after a consciousness-raising period of about 30 years. For AIDS, the process took less than a decade. North-South charity dates from the days of Wilberforce and the anti-slavery movement 200 years ago. It has gone through starving babies in the Congo a century ago, starving babies in China half a century ago and the starving babies of our time in Biafra, Ethiopia, Somalia and Rwanda. Little seems to have changed. The more complex development movement is much younger — roughly 35 or 40 years old — but it too is old enough to have made more headway than it has.

Cogency of events: “Nothing advances consciousness raising as powerfully as events that dramatise the issue.” Unfortunately, the events that dramatise development issues are usually portrayed in the media as a series of disconnected tragedies, having little to do with each other or with the North. They can be variously assigned to mismanagement, corruption or natural events beyond the
control or responsibility of ordinary people elsewhere. Thus far, most have led only to “simple” solutions and temporary measures: unpredictable aid programmes, peacekeeping and charity.

**Perceived relevance to self:** Today, the women’s movement has direct relevance to a large majority of people in the North: men, women and families as a whole. People understand it in clear, personal terms. Around AIDS and some environmental issues, personal relevance has been fundamental to the creation of a readiness to grapple with solutions. Although development is occasionally marketed from the viewpoint of commercial self-interest or from that of a “global village”, it remains distant from the lives of most people in the North. Speaking of development, President Kennedy said, “A rising tide will float all boats.” The public has not been told that all boats are at risk in the gathering storm.

**Concreteness and clarity:** Development messages from the media, from NGOs and from government agencies are confusing, self-serving, contradictory and, more often than not, negative. Writing about public understanding of global warming, Yankelovich could well be discussing international development: “An inherently abstract and difficult issue has been made even more abstract and difficult by treating it in a fragmented way with confusing and misleading semantics.”

**Credibility:** Lack of credibility is a serious impediment to consciousness raising. Most of the opinion polls examined for this paper show that governments have especially low credibility where development assistance is concerned. Although NGOs survive on public donations, the giving public is not the same as the entire public. Questions about the credibility of NGOs as a source of information show that they too have credibility problems. The media, with all the failings described above, come out well on top in most surveys.

**Publicity:** In order to arouse concern for action, people must be aware of the issue. Messages must be clear and unambiguous, and quantity is an essential feature, both in getting the message across and in reinforcing it. Where quantity is concerned, public messages on development are virtually non-existent compared with the bad news provided by the media and the self-serving fund-raising of NGOs.

Before concluding, we should make a distinction, in case it has not been made clear enough throughout the chapter, between public support for government efforts and for development assistance in general. When people are critical of government, they are not necessarily opposing development assistance. The high levels of public support for the United Nations throughout Europe and the United States can be seen as evidence of this. Nor should lack of public understanding be mistaken for a lack of public concern or values. If there were greater cogency and clarity of the development effort within aid programmes, and less emphasis on the commercial and political interests that characterise so many, perhaps credibility would rise. In short, the problem is rather more fundamental than choosing the right words and images in order to “sell” development assistance, as it is now practised, to the public.

Is this the winter of despair, or can it be the spring of hope? As a way of dealing with the problems of public support, some recommend much more spending on information and development education. The 1994 UNDP *Human Development Report*, for example, recommends that 2 per cent of ODA — about $1 billion a year — should be earmarked for communication and development education, for greater work in the formal education system and with the media — “not to mislead or manipulate public opinion, but to fulfil the duty of accountability”. This would probably help, as there is nowhere to go in this field but up.
Some place their faith in the coming “information superhighway”. They believe that the disintegration of mass audiences and mass media will encourage like-minded people to seek out unfiltered news. The public will be better informed because there will be 150 television channels to choose from instead of three or four. There may well be one or two or even six channels dealing with development issues. News from the South will no longer be filtered. Much more of it will come into our homes directly, and at our discretion, rather than at the discretion of editors and gatekeepers in commercially driven networks.

This may well be true, but the Elvis Channel and the Oprah Channel and the Larry King Live Channel will also be available. This solution suggests that television (or computers, or virtual reality or some other technology) is the answer. It ignores the failure of previous silver bullets, like the elusive “peace dividend”, the almost forgotten UN Conference on the Environment and Development and the totally forgotten Cancún Summit. It ignores the fact that discerning readers and viewers already have access to reasonable sources of cogent and coherent information, and that even though there are 30 or 40 television channels in most North American homes today, one US citizen in four cannot identify Boutros Boutros Ghali and half cannot name the President of Russia. It also ignores the fact that societies have somehow come to grips, at least partially, with environmental issues in 30 years and with AIDS in only five, without the need for an information superhighway.

The answers lie well beyond the scope of this paper. They also lie well beyond the scope and mandate of government aid agencies, and beyond the power of a fragmented, charity-bound NGO community.

Galbraith sees a special occasion here for a sad ending:

For what is needed to save and to protect, to ensure against suffering and further unpleasant consequence, is not in any way obscure. Nor would the resulting action be unpleasant. There would be a challenge to the present mood of contentment with its angry resentment of any intrusion, but, in the longer run, the general feeling of well-being would be deepened ... Economists regularly invoke the subtle, even incomprehensible, to imply or demonstrate a deeper competence or wisdom, or to cover a grave difficulty that conveniently defies corrective action. No one should be misled. The central requirement cannot be escaped: almost every action that would remedy and reassure involves the relationship between the citizen and the state.

These actions would surely include a recognition in trading relationships and in North-South aid programmes that development is much more than a short-term sideline, and an admission that if we are to remedy problems, the effort will have to be much greater. The effort would, no doubt, be costly for this generation, but if action is not taken now, it will be considerably more costly for the next.

It will require uncommon national and international leadership, leadership that can rise above, or at least make workable bargains with, short-term economic and political self-interest. It will require leadership that can inspire ordinary people as well as the media, that can draw many more constituencies into the task and obtain their support rather than their animosity. It requires leadership that itself understands and can convey the message that long-term self-interest lies in long-term disaster prevention rather than short-term crisis management.

It requires leadership that has faith in what hundreds of opinion polls and simple common sense tell governments about people in Europe, North America, Japan and Australia — that they do care, they want to help and they will make sacrifices if they understand them to be in the genuine interest of a better and more secure life for their children.
Notes

3. OECD, 1983.
12. The problem of national NGO statistics is discussed in Smillie and Helmich, 1993, pp. 40-41.
14. Figures derived from annual reports of the NGOs mentioned.
29. Intercultural Communications, 1993. The Belden & Russonello poll found support for the UN slightly lower, at 45 per cent; 61 per cent believed multilateral aid programmes would be more effective than bilateral. A word of caution is needed on the US figures:
a 1992 UNICEF poll found that roughly the same number (19 per cent) believed US
government support to be effective, while only 22 per cent favoured UN agencies and
UNICEF. Religious organisations came out ahead in this poll (37 per cent), and NGOs
received only 11 per cent support (InterAction, 1994).


31. European trust in national governments ranges from a high of 15 per cent in Germany,
to a low of 1 per cent, 3 per cent and 5 per cent respectively in Greece, Italy and the
Netherlands. The highest support for UN agencies was found in Greece and Spain
(65 per cent and 57 per cent), and the lowest in Germany and Britain (30 per cent). The
greatest confidence in NGOs was found in Ireland and Britain (33 per cent and 30 per
cent), and the lowest in Portugal and Greece (3 per cent and 8 per cent). Confidence
in NGOs was relatively weak in the Netherlands, Denmark and Belgium (15 per cent,
16 per cent and 19 per cent) (European Commission, 1992).

poll was based on 1,384 interviews, conducted on a country-wide basis.


34. COMPAS, 1993; the Canadian question was asked in a way that elicited first, second
and third reasons. In offering three choices (altruism, development and economic
self-interest), the poll ensured that each would always be mentioned. In what might
be considered a genuflection to CIDA’s emphasis on Canadian economic self-interest,
the poll analysis was therefore able to claim that economic benefits were “mentioned”
as often (66 per cent) as altruism (65 per cent). Another way of stating the findings is
that altruism was the first and strongest aid justification offered by Canadian business
executives (49 per cent), and that only 33 per cent saw economic benefits as being the
first and foremost reason for an aid programme.

35. Dorothy Levy, “The Emerging Wisdom from the Great PR Firms”, Public Relations


39. Weaver, Porter and Evans, “Patterns in Foreign News Coverage on US Network
Television”; cited in Wallis and Baran, 1990, p. 156.


42. Wallis and Baran, 1990.


50. Hallin, 1994, p. 35.


52. CIDA, 1991.
57. Hancock did a film exposé of the German World Vision branch, but many of his criticisms appeared in his book Lords of Poverty (Atlantic Monthly Press, New York, 1989). Not all NGOs, of course, have high overheads. For SCF UK, publicity, fund-raising, administration and education costs in 1991 represented 14 per cent of total income. The organisation's phenomenal growth in the following year (a 77 per cent increase in income) brought these costs down to less than 10 per cent.
59. See, for example, the May 1982 issue of New Internationalist, for several stories on child sponsorship.
66. Although not universal, high levels of dependence are endemic throughout OECD Member countries (see, for example, Smillie and Helmich, 1993). In order to prevent intrusion, some organisations limit their governmental income (e.g. Oxfam UK, Redd Barna, Radda Barnen), and a few (e.g. Oxfam US) refuse to accept any. Some organisations with high levels of government support do not appear to suffer from self-censorship. This is particularly true of some NGOs in the Netherlands and Canada.
68. USAID, 1993, p. 5.
69. For Europe, see Kirby, 1994; and North-South Centre, 1993. For Canada, see Roche, 1990, 1991; and Lambert and Prieur, 1993.
72. Similar findings were reported in DRG Consulting, 1993.
73. This is now a relatively common feature in Canada, and will be a new focus for AIDAB’s public education work in Australia.
74. CIDA’s 1992-93 Communications and Development Information Program had a budget of C$15.7 million (CIDA, Main Estimates); in 1991 World Vision Australia spent more than A$20 million on administration and fund-raising (Annual Report, 1992).
75. OECD, 1983; DAC (83)25.
76. North-South Centre, 1993; Kirby, 1994; SIDA correspondence, 1994; Riddell, 1994.
77. For example, Canadian polls between 1987 and 1991 gave NGOs a credibility rating of about 25 per cent — behind television (about 35 per cent) and churches (about 32 per cent), but ahead of newspapers (20 per cent) and government (18 per cent).

78. The 1994 eight-country Times Mirror survey found that television had the highest credibility with two-thirds of the public in all eight countries. It ranked highest in Germany (90 per cent), followed by the United Kingdom (85 per cent). Newspapers were comparable with television in seven countries (84 per cent in Germany), with the United Kingdom as the low exception (53 per cent). The church ranged in credibility from 79 per cent in Mexico to 35 per cent in France, while the nation's leader — a volatile subject in any country — ranged from 26 per cent in the United Kingdom to 72 per cent in Mexico (Times Mirror Center, 1994).


80. Times Mirror Center, 1994. None of the other seven countries surveyed did so badly on Boutros Boutros Ghali. Only Mexicans had more trouble than US citizens with Boris Yeltsin.


82. An effort has been made to draw on characteristics of public opinion in as many OECD Member countries as possible.

A rather lengthy bibliography accompanies the document. For the reader wishing to pursue the subject of public opinion, one of the best works on the subject is *Coming to Public Judgment: Making Democracy Work in a Complex World*, by Daniel Yankelovich. John Kenneth Galbraith’s 1992 book on the dangerous illusions and delusions of our times, *The Culture of Contentment* is also recommended.

ACTION AID, Series of public opinion polls conducted between 1987 and 1992, by various British polling firms.


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Public Judgement on Development Aid

Daniel Yankelovich

Summary

Ian Smillie’s article (in this volume) offers both good news and bad news. The good news is that the core values of the public in OECD countries remain fundamentally sympathetic to the goals of development assistance. The bad news is that a formidable array of unfavourable conditions — low morale in the development community, public cynicism about government, media stereotyping of developing nations and “starving baby” fund-raising — produce a great disparity between public values and the relatively negative public opinion about development aid.

How can the poor quality of public opinion be overcome? Conventional methods of communication — directed from the top downwards and designed mainly to raise public awareness of information that experts and leaders believe the public ought to know — have not worked. These methods assume that the public is a tabula rasa, while in fact, people come to any message with a lifetime of prejudice, convictions, personal experience, information and misinformation. Conventional methods for creating awareness of development are all too likely to have the unintended side effect of reinforcing the public’s resistances.

Major examples of these resistances include:

— preoccupation with troubling domestic problems — economic, social and moral — which make people feel frustrated and not in control of their own lives;

— suspicion of leaders’ priorities. Government is seen as unable to cope with domestic problems, yet willing to give attention to the troubles of strangers;

— a conviction that money is being wasted.

A new communication strategy is needed. First, the content of the messages that leaders transmit to the public needs to change:

— We must aim at building up positive reasons for wanting development assistance to succeed, so as to overcome the negative obstacles. We need a combination of appeals, based both on national interest and altruism. These appeals should aim at strengthening both practical and altruistic values. On the practical side, the strongest argument is that development assistance can set in motion a new wave of global prosperity. On the altruistic side, the argument revolves around the kind of world we want to leave to our children.
Here the theme with the most universal appeal is the need for transcendence — the deep yearning of people to reach out beyond themselves in order to be part of a larger whole.

— We must make explicit the ways in which development assistance can be made compatible with domestic concerns. Factual information alone — e.g. the relatively low cost of development assistance — will not suffice, but there are positive linkages that must be stressed.

— We must make sure that aid produces credible results, which means aid must be put where it can be used effectively. Fortunately, there are already success stories that can be pointed to.

— We must avoid the abstract term "development" and concentrate on specific attention-getting aspects of the process. The very word "development" carries too much left-leaning ideological baggage, as do other trendy terms like "empowerment". We need to use words that will have a universal appeal.

Second, we must change the process of communication with the public. Among themselves, policy makers communicate through dialogue, discussing choices and taking time to reach mutual understanding. With the public, however, policy makers practice one-way communication downwards, through "education campaigns" in which the public is expected to grasp virtually overnight what leaders may have taken years to digest.

An effective communication strategy for development assistance, therefore, calls for a radically different relationship between leaders and public — a strategy based on genuine dialogue among equals. People must work through hard choices, weigh pros and cons, and arrive at considered judgement.

In Coming to Public Judgment, the author has described seven steps, from awareness to considered judgement, in the evolution of public opinion on complex issues. It appears that public opinion on development assistance is now stuck in the resistance stage, and far different communication processes will be needed to move it further.

Breaking the Impasse

For policy makers in the development assistance field, Ian Smillie’s "Mixed Messages: Public Opinion and Development Assistance in the 1990s" (in this volume) contains many items of good news. For example, in his review of a wide range of opinion-poll findings he shows that, contrary to expectations, there has been no dramatic fall-off of public support, and no reason to believe that public values have turned negative.

Nonetheless, his overall conclusion is pessimistic. For Smillie, the bad news far outweighs the good. He is discouraged that after 40 years of strenuous efforts to raise public awareness of this issue, support for long-term development assistance is not more robust than it is. Despite the stability of sympathetic public values over time, he is not optimistic about overcoming the great disparity between the public’s values, which favour development goals, and the poor quality of public opinion, which is largely ignorant of development aid programmes, cynical about government effectiveness in managing them and dominated by negative stereotypes of developing countries as failed nations incapable of helping themselves.

In Smillie’s view, the poor quality of public opinion implies that the communication efforts of the development community have been unable to translate sympathetic public values into knowledgeable public opinion that recognises the
importance of long-term development assistance, as distinct from short-term humanitarian aid. Seeing no way to improve the situation, he ends on a pessimistic note.

It may, nevertheless, be possible to strengthen public support for development assistance. Smillie’s pessimistic conclusion assumes that to improve the quality of public opinion we are dependent on traditional methods of mass communications, and that these are no match for the obstacles that must be overcome. This assumption is fully warranted, but we need not rely on conventional strategies of communication. It should be possible to develop new strategies that will enable the development community to break out of the impasse in which it finds itself and effectively mobilise supportive public values.

The Obstacles

The first requirement for shaping a new strategy of communication is to be fully cognizant of the nature of the public’s resistances. To have any chance of overcoming or even reducing them, one must start by knowing what they are.

Preoccupation with Domestic Problems

For the majority of people in the industrialised democracies, the present era is a deeply troubling one. Although the recession is past for the United States and is beginning to lift in Western Europe, people are not recovering their former optimism about the future, because they are just beginning to realise the true depth of their economic and social problems. Such fundamental economic problems as structural unemployment or underemployment, especially for unskilled workers, and growing disparities between rich and poor are independent of the vicissitudes of the business cycle. They are more closely linked to powerful and growing trends in technology and in the emerging global economy.

These economic changes are exacerbated by cultural and social trends. Traditional family life in the advanced industrialised democracies is everywhere threatened by changing mores. New cultural values are playing havoc with social morality and concern for others.

Governments everywhere seem impotent to cope with the cumulative effect of these economic and social changes. People feel frustrated and sense that their lives are spinning out of control. The resulting anxiety makes them preoccupied with their own problems and those of their own societies. Under these circumstances, they tend to avoid worrying about the problems of people in remote regions of the world.

Smillie quotes John Kenneth Galbraith’s conviction that the main obstacle is “the present mood of contentment“. The present writer’s research among various publics reflects precious little contentment. Rather, the present mood is one of disorientation, fed by the suspicion that we are losing rational control over events.

Suspicion of Leadership Priorities

While experts and pundits may warn us of the changes wrought by the new information society and global economy, average citizens have hardly begun to adapt to the momentous shifts in culture and technology that are unfolding at breakneck speed.
It is these shifts that are causing governments so much difficulty. The public, however, is not sympathetic to these legitimate difficulties. It does not perceive governments as struggling honestly and intelligently with unprecedented challenges. To the contrary, people attribute the difficulties to bad faith. They suspect that their leaders are more concerned with their own careers and fortunes than with advancing the public interest.

As public cynicism and mistrust of government grow, people become ever more disposed to respond to development assistance programmes with the suspicion that their leaders are neglecting urgent domestic problems because they are too busy with other people’s concerns. Not only do development issues have low priority for average citizens, they also foster resentment of leaders who seem more focussed on the troubles of strangers than on those of their fellow citizens.

**Throwing Money into Black Holes**

Another major source of resistance is the suspicion that development assistance programmes, other than immediate humanitarian aid, are futile. People regard many developing nations as unable to help themselves. The media inadvertently reinforce this image, as do some appeals for humanitarian aid.

Nothing undermines public support more quickly, even when people’s values are sympathetic, than the conviction that money and other resources are being wasted. Consider, for example, the public’s attitude towards school reform in the United States. In local communities throughout the country, efforts to raise public funding for school reform are rejected by the citizenry as throwing money into a “black hole” where it disappears without leaving a trace. Citizens do not trust the educators and administrators who manage the school system to use the money effectively and efficiently. In these communities, people’s values strongly support education, but these values, however deeply felt, do little to persuade them to support programmes which they see as a waste of money.

**Shaping a New Strategy**

With such imposing obstacles in mind, Smillie identifies some of the requirements for more effective communication, e.g. the desirability of utilising the United Nations and well-established NGOs as aid vehicles in order to bypass public scepticism of official government assistance, and the need to distinguish long-term assistance from humanitarian emergencies.

Two other sets of requirements could be added. The first concerns the content of the messages that leaders transmit to the public; the second, the process of communication with the public.

Concerning message content, leaders will need to learn a great deal more about how to (1) counter the negative side of people’s ambivalence, (2) make explicit how development assistance can be made compatible with domestic concerns, (3) give the public greater confidence that assistance programmes will be cost-effective and produce significant results, and (4) replace the present concept of development assistance with a number of less abstract concepts.

With respect to the communication process, leaders need to learn a new set of skills as they shift emphasis away from top-down methods of creating public awareness to radically new methods of engaging the public in dialogue.
The Message

Confronting the Public’s Ambivalence

As was shown above, people hold anti-development as well as pro-development values. They put concern for their own families, communities and nations ahead of concern for others, and they give greater priority to putting their own houses in order than to getting involved with other people’s problems. In short, people hold supportive and non-supportive values at the same time. This is the very definition of ambivalence. Indeed, there are few issues about which people show more ambivalence than that of development assistance.

Unfortunately, the negative values and attitudes are growing stronger. With so much confusion, instability and rapid social change influencing their lives, people are falling back on the desire to look out for themselves. If the positive reasons for supporting development assistance are not powerfully reinforced, they will be overwhelmed by the negative ones.

One imperative for a new strategy, therefore, is to learn how to strengthen people’s reasons for wanting development assistance to succeed. How can this be accomplished? The best way is to find a combination of practical and altruistic reasons for not succumbing to the emotional impulse to forget about the rest of the world.

The need for a combination of appeals should be stressed. Neither practical nor altruistic reasons are potent enough to stand alone: it is almost impossible to make a compelling case for development assistance to the public solely on the basis of national self-interest, and it is equally difficult to make the case solely on the basis of altruism. Experience suggests, however, that a combination of the two can do what neither is capable of doing by itself.

Development assistance belongs in that special category of issues where people need to rationalise their altruistic impulses in terms of self-interest, and their self-interest in terms of serving a larger, more altruistic purpose.

An example from another policy issue may illustrate how the two types of appeals can reinforce each other. In the United States, there have been a number of discussions of immigration policy with cross-sections of voters. At the beginning of these discussions, participants were invariably opposed to open and generous immigration policies. Even if they or their parents were immigrants, they now want to close the door behind them.

As the discussion evolves, however, certain idealistic and practical themes begin to emerge. On the practical side, participants observe that immigrants do a lot of the nation’s menial work and ultimately add to its economic well-being. On the idealistic side, frequent reference is made to the Statue of Liberty and what it stands for. For all citizens, the Statue of Liberty is a uniquely potent symbol of US values. This symbolism exercises a strong emotional appeal in favour of immigration.

The combined force of these two arguments gradually transforms attitudes. More often than not, citizens modify their positions in the course of such discussions and wind up supporting more generous immigration policies.

The issue of development assistance is precisely analogous. In the current climate of opinion, people are likely to start out preoccupied with concerns inimical to such assistance. It becomes the task of leadership to formulate and communicate a blend of practical and idealistic arguments to counterbalance these concerns and bring people’s pro-development values to the fore.
Leaders cannot create values where they do not exist, but they can strengthen latent values. What patterns of latent practical and altruistic values can be aroused and strengthened in the case of development?

Yasuo Ushida (in this volume) cites the striking example of Japan where, in sharp contrast to the other industrialised democracies, the national budget for development assistance is due to increase by 50 per cent in the next five years, with strong public support. On the practical side, Japan has demonstrated to its business community and to its citizens that aid can be made to benefit the Japanese economy; on the idealistic side, young Japanese who already hold stable jobs are showing increasing interest in getting involved in development assistance work, in order to expand their horizons and “make a difference”.

For the other industrialised democracies, the strongest practical argument would be that development assistance, strategically conceived, can set in motion a new wave of global prosperity, just as the United States did with its aid programmes after the devastation of the second world war. Developing nations hold 75 per cent of the world’s population. Their material and infrastructure needs are bottomless. Supplying them could, with good planning, help to solve the North’s structural unemployment problem. The present pattern of exporting jobs to poorer nations could be counterbalanced by creating more jobs at home. These are powerful appeals. The virtue of this argument is that it is true, or can be made to be true through enlightened policies.

There is also an effective altruistic argument that reinforces the practical one. It lacks the symbolic force of the Statue of Liberty, but it packs a strong emotional punch nonetheless. It concerns the condition of the world we wish to leave to our children. The majority of the public do not realise the extent to which development assistance can have social as well as economic benefits. It can lead to higher levels of literacy, fewer unwanted children, less destruction of the environment and enhanced freedom for women.

Given these immense benefits, it should be possible for leaders to formulate a vision of a vital and healthy world to leave to our children, instead of a world destined to overpopulation, famine and environmental degradation. The theme with the most universal appeal is that of transcendence — the deep yearnings of people to reach beyond themselves in order to be part of a larger whole. It should be possible to imbue development assistance with this powerful vision of transcendence.

Reducing Inner Conflict

A closely related imperative is that people should not be left in a state of cognitive dissonance. If leaders succeed in strengthening the positive side of people’s ambivalence, they may exacerbate the internal conflict in the minds of voters between helping poorer nations and giving priority to domestic concerns. Leaders must help voters to resolve this conflict.

Traditionally, leaders have done so by minimising the costs of development assistance. The usual message to voters is: support our aid programme because its costs are minuscule in the grand scheme of things. For a number of reasons this approach rarely works. When people dislike a programme they invariably exaggerate its costs. As Smillie points out, US citizens have the impression that foreign aid costs 20 times more than it does in reality. This exaggeration is so gross that one’s first impulse is to give people the facts, on the assumption that more accurate factual information will correct the distortion. It rarely does. US citizens also grossly exaggerate the proportion of their federal budget that is devoted to welfare, for the same reasons: misgivings about the programmes. Factual information is no match for emotional rejection.
A better way to reduce cognitive dissonance is to bring people’s fears into the open and, if possible, to address them constructively. Consider, for example, US attitudes towards giving aid to Russia. Although the majority of citizens endorse the goal of encouraging democracy and a free economy in Russia, most citizens are apprehensive about increasing aid. They fear that US aid will so strengthen the Russian economy that Russia, like Germany and Japan after the second world war, will become an economic competitor to the United States, posing a threat to US jobs and standard of living. Here the fear is not that the aid will be ineffective, but that it will prove all too effective.

Foreign policy experts may scoff at this concern, but perceptions, however distorted, have their own reality. They cannot be ignored or brushed aside; it is folly not to take them seriously. US policy makers can greatly enhance public support for development assistance to Russia by evolving an assistance plan which features an economic *quid pro quo* that allays public concerns and promises US citizens a practical economic benefit as well as an altruistic one, in accordance with the principle enunciated above.

The Japanese model is instructive here as well. The most effective way to resolve the dissonance is to develop positive linkages between domestic concerns and development assistance.

**Credible Results**

The public needs to believe that assistance programmes will achieve their stated purposes effectively and not be marred by waste, corruption and bureaucracy. People need to be confident that positive results will flow from their efforts and that what they contribute will make a difference.

In giving the public hope that positive results are possible, hard-headed leaders are desirable. To persuade people that aid programmes are results-oriented, leaders must be seen to refuse to give aid where it would be futile, as well as to offer aid where it can truly make a difference. In this respect, the public is often more realistic than its leaders. The reality is that some developing nations are not able to use long-term assistance productively. Humanitarian aid may be the only kind of help they can absorb.

When leaders fail to distinguish between nations that can benefit from long-term assistance and nations that cannot, the credibility of all assistance programmes is undermined. One of the main reasons for Japan’s success in winning public support for its assistance programmes is that Japan’s point of reference is south-east Asia, where people can see how effective assistance has been, instead of Africa, where only humanitarian aid has worked.

Fortunately, there is a new reality at work in the global economy that promises to change the stereotype of developing nations as helpless. In the past five years, the flow of capital from the developed world to selected developing nations has increased dramatically, and the economies of these nations are showing immense vitality. Where development assistance has played a role in stimulating this vitality, it is important that case histories be compiled and that communication programmes cite them to demonstrate what can be done. For the public, the most compelling proofs of effectiveness are examples of assistance that did what they were supposed to do.

**Finding New Concepts**

An obstacle that should not be underestimated is the abstractness of the concept of development assistance. For most of the public, this concept is far too general. Many NGOs have understood this reality and have built their organisations
around specific and concrete appeals, conveyed in the very names of their organisations — Save the Children, the Hunger Project, Foster Parents Plan, Médecins sans Frontières and so on. Governments would be well advised to heed the marketing truth underlying the success of these NGOs and to pattern at least some assistance programmes on projects that are specific enough to catch people's attention and to focus their concerns.

More important, among some segments of the public, is the ideological baggage associated with development. In many places, development is associated with the political left. The drawback is that only a fraction of the OECD public holds left-leaning attitudes. This fraction varies from nation to nation, but is rarely a majority. This is a serious constraint since, ideally, development should have universal appeal, cutting across ideological lines.

Smillie cites a revealing study conducted by the Angus Reid Group. This polling company tested certain words and phrases for their effectiveness. High among the negative or ineffective phrases were “empowerment”, “global village” and “social justice”. The present writer's own research uncovered a similar phenomenon. “Empowerment”, in particular, is a trendy word that carries ideological baggage. Words such as these may have strong appeal to some cultural elites, but they evoke a stony resistance among business executives, political conservatives and the general public.

In the Angus Reid poll, Canadians reacted positively to phrases such as “Canadians making a difference” and “helping the poor to help themselves”. These concepts have a more universal appeal. Everyone, regardless of political leanings, wants to make a difference, and the concept of helping people to help themselves transcends the left-right political dichotomy.

These considerations underscore the importance of a firm grasp of the values and motivations that support development, as well as the specific concepts, symbols, images and words that communicate them.

**The Process**

However important the message may be, the biggest mistakes in development assistance are made in the process of communication with the public. Unfortunately, this complex issue requires a more lengthy discussion than space permits here. In highly compressed form, the issue is that policy makers' conventional method of communicating with the public is seriously flawed. This flaw is not confined to development assistance; it distorts all the relationships between leaders and publics. Indeed, it is creating policy gridlock and public cynicism all over the industrialised world.

For communicating with the public, leaders typically employ a top-down, expert-driven, information-based method. The method is primarily designed — and this last characteristic is its principal feature — to raise public consciousness of information that leaders believe the public ought to know.

How does this method work? Smillie cites an instructive message from a leading practitioner of public relations: “Public awareness is not an aspiration that you can only yearn for, but is something you buy. You pay in your time, your skill and your budget ... and what you get for that is awareness.”

It is true that awareness can be bought by the pound, as if it were a commodity. Moreover, to do so efficiently requires a high order of effort and technical skill. Buying awareness, however, does not always produce the desired result. The annals of business are full of ironic examples of companies which had, at great
expense, purchased awareness for their products — only to discover too late that they had also made the public aware of compelling reasons for not buying those products.

This unintended consequence occurs frequently because the conventional method wrongly assumes that the public is a *tabula rasa* on which one can write whatever message one wishes to convey. In reality, people come to any message armed with a lifetime of prejudices, convictions, personal experience, information and misinformation. Much of the time people react to leaders’ messages in ways that diverge wildly from the intentions of those conducting the public’s so-called education.

In the case of development assistance programmes, conventional methods have the unintended side effect of reinforcing the public’s prejudices. Given the public’s profound resistance to many aspects of development assistance, purchasing greater awareness with huge expenditures of time, money and talent may prove useless — or worse than useless. As we have seen, while people’s values may be in sympathy with development goals, the public also harbours suspicions, prejudices and competing priorities that clash directly with its pro-development values. Heightened awareness of development programmes may simply amplify these negative attitudes.

In short, the great drawback to conventional methods of creating awareness — in which leaders transmit messages to the public via the mass media — is that they do not take the public’s resistances sufficiently into account. When issues are simple and resistance low, the conventional process may work, but when issues are complex and resistance high, it quickly proves either ineffectual or self-defeating.

A moment’s reflection makes this point self-evident. Policy makers rarely, if ever, use the conventional method to communicate among themselves. Unwittingly, they practice a double standard of communication: they communicate with each other in one way and with the public in another. Their method of communicating with each other is reasonably effective, in striking contrast to their grossly ineffective methods for communicating with the public.

Among themselves, policy makers communicate through dialogue in the interests of gaining mutual understanding; they discuss and criticise policy choices and leave ample time to grasp pros and cons and likely consequences. When complex issues are at stake, it is not unusual for this process to take years.

When it comes to public education, an entirely different set of standards and methods is brought to bear. The emphasis is not on deliberative discourse, the development of choices and taking time to gain understanding and take consequences into account. To the contrary, the emphasis is on “education campaigns” of limited duration that highlight the use of information, mass media and messages to be communicated downwards, from leaders to the public. It is not unusual to hear leaders speak blithely of the need for campaigns in which the public is expected to grasp virtually overnight what leaders took years of briefings, readings and discussions to digest.

To be sure, the type of face-to-face communication in small groups that leaders favour cannot easily be translated to mass communications, where severe constraints are inescapable. Even within these constraints, however, it is possible to accommodate in some form the two essential features that policy makers automatically bring to communication among themselves.
The first is making provision for questions, discussion, debate, dialogue, feedback, interaction — there are many names for the kind of give-and-take needed to grasp complex issues. Applying this approach to communication with the public makes many leaders uncomfortable. In their experience, information flows only one way: from leaders to the public.

An effective communication strategy for development assistance calls for a radically different relationship between leaders and the public. Leaders must be prepared to enter into dialogue with a worried citizenry on how to allocate limited resources. They must discuss these matters with the public as equals, not as audiences to be manipulated or as simpletons to whom leaders impart a small fraction of their superior knowledge.

Second, the dialogue must be genuine, in Martin Buber's sense of an encounter between "I" and "Thou" where both sides change in fundamental ways. The least effective techniques are the lawyer-like debates that take place in parliaments all over the world, the undigested packages of policy-linked information whose consequences for the public are not clearly spelled out, and the media-based campaigns of public education that fail to take into account the public's need to reconcile conflicting values.

If the leaders do all of the hard work of weighing and balancing conflicting priorities among themselves and simply expect the public to accept their conclusions, then people's narrow self-interest will inevitably prevail. If, however, leaders share the task of weighing and balancing resource allocation with the public (with leaders vigorously advancing their own points of view), then the quality of public opinion will improve immeasurably. People do not have to absorb a lot of detailed information, but they do have to arrive at thoughtful judgements by the same process that leaders do — by working through hard choices, weighing pros and cons, and arriving at considered judgements.

Contrary to prevailing theories, information is the least important element in helping people work through issues. More often than not, blanketing people with information only creates confusion and frustration. (This is one of the central confusions of the new "information society" concept.) What people need more than information is enough time, help and incentive to decide which values to sacrifice when values conflict with one another, as they do in the case of development assistance.

Once this approach is accepted, it then becomes obvious that mere awareness of the leaders' message cannot be the main goal of communication. The main goal is to have people arrive at their own independent judgement, taking leaders' arguments and perspectives into full account. Awareness is a stage in the communication process, not its final objective.

In his book Coming to Public Judgment, the present writer describes three major stages through which public opinion evolves on complex issues. Each is divided into sub-stage, for a total of seven distinct steps through which public opinion on an issue proceeds from ignorant, superficial opinion to considered judgement. Successful communication with the public may be impossible without a good understanding of what these stages are, where in the multi-stage process the public stands at a given time and how to assist the public, when it is stalled at one stage, to move on to the next.

In Coming to Public Judgment, a model of public education is presented that takes a more realistic view of what is required to achieve high-quality public opinion on any complex issue. The Public Judgement Model on the facing page identifies the seven steps through which public opinion needs to evolve in order to transform raw opinion into high-quality judgement.
Figure 1. The public judgment model

I. Consciousness raising
1. Awareness
2. Urgency

II. Working through
3. Reaction
4. Resistance
5. Choicework

III. Resolution
6. Cognitive stand
7. Judgment
The first is awareness that an issue deserves public attention.

The next step takes place only if the public develops a sense of urgency about the problem. (Many issues never even make it to this step.)

Once people come to feel that a problem is urgent, they want to hear ideas for solving it. The third step is launched once people begin to react to proposed policy solutions.

The next step is the critical one, and the least understood. Only when people have been exposed to specific policy ideas are their emotional resistances fully mobilised. Step 4, then, is the stage at which people confront their resistance.

People are often stalled until their resistances are worked through. Only then are they ready to take the fifth step, “choicework”. This is the hard work of deliberating the pros and cons of alternative policy choices.

After choicework comes a sixth step when people reach tentative conclusions, largely cognitive in character.

In the seventh and final step, people add strong elements of emotional and moral conviction to their cognitive conclusions.

In practice, of course, the life cycle of an issue from raw awareness to mature judgement is not nearly as orderly as this model would suggest, but extensive research supports the proposition that important issues do pass through all of these stages of public deliberation.

Typically, it takes years to make the journey though all seven steps. More often than not, people stall at the resistance stage (step 4) or the choicework stage (step 5) and remain there for decades. Our mass media and policy-making institutions are well equipped to help the public in the early and late stages, but are poorly equipped to help in these middle stages.

In planning communication strategies for development assistance, the objective is to improve the quality of public opinion so as better to align it with people’s supportive values. In light of this model, leaders must help the public to get beyond the resistance stage where it is now stuck. To accomplish this, they must use far different communication processes than now prevail.
Building a Constituency for Development Co-operation: Some Reflections on the US Experience

Andrew E. Rice

Summary

The heavy involvement of the US Congress in aid policy has made the question of public support for development aid particularly relevant in the United States, especially as congressional action on development assistance has generally mirrored public attitudes.

These attitudes have changed little over the years, even during the cold war, when aid was presented by the government largely in terms of its effectiveness in stopping communism. There has always been a small but active constituency for development assistance, but for most of the public this is not a prominent issue. As polls have consistently shown, US citizens generally agree in principle that the United States should help developing countries, but they are sceptical about the effectiveness of aid, as now given, and they believe that the amount of aid should be reduced. Although they accept intellectually the concept of global interdependence, they generally are more aware of its negative effects on US society than of its benefits.

Evidence exists that when citizens are provided with more information about development issues, their level of support rises. Development education initiatives have touched only a small segment of the public, however, and the formal educational system is only slowly “globalising” its curriculum. The probability that a major social movement will arise in support of a stronger US role in development is extremely slight, since this issue lacks the kind of basic emotional appeal that has animated the environmental or women’s rights campaigns.

The active constituency for development aid, centred in NGOs, appears to be playing a more vigorous role, embracing more special-interest groups and also becoming more critical of traditional development policy and practice. Although alliances among advocacy NGOs have been successful when focussed on specific events or targets, several attempts to create a lasting coalition of aid supporters have failed. The International Development Conference, an educational organisation dating from the 1950s, remains the largest framework body.

How can the percentage of the public which is informed and articulate on development issues be enlarged? Experience shows that when the various elements of development are separately identified and “brought home” — i.e. related to personal concerns of citizens — then the level of interest and support rises. It is also important to talk about the achievements of development co-operation, not merely
its problems and failures, and to see development as a requisite for maintaining peace, expanding human rights, protecting the environment and reducing population pressures — that is, to see it as an indispensable element in the new definition of global security.

Introduction

Development co-operation officially started in the United States with President Truman’s inaugural address in 1949. Truman declared that the fourth point of US foreign policy was a “bold new programme” to provide assistance to developing countries. With singular prescience, he predicted: “We are here embarking on a venture that extends far into the future. We are at the beginning of a rising curve of activity, private, governmental and international, that will continue for many years to come.” One year later Congress passed the Act for International Development, with an initial appropriation of $35 million.

Nobody in the United States used the term “development co-operation” then, and, indeed, nobody uses it today. “Development assistance” has been the term of choice, but in common discourse and political practice, aid for development has been submerged in a package of programmes lumped together as “foreign aid”.

US foreign aid programmes did not start in 1950. Forerunners of aid to development include post-war emergency relief through UNRWA, military aid to Greece and Turkey in 1947 in the first manifestations of the cold war and, above all, the Marshall Plan for European recovery in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The record of European nations in using US aid effectively in their rebuilding became, in fact, both a positive and a negative factor in later consideration of aid — positive in providing an example of the successful use of aid funds, but negative in suggesting that development aid should achieve equally rapid results.

Over the years, foreign aid has had two distinctive components: military aid and economic aid, the latter embracing humanitarian relief, economic support (essentially balance-of-payments assistance) and development assistance. Since the first year or two, all economic aid, whatever its objective, has been administered by a single government agency, known first as the Mutual Security Agency, then as the International Cooperation Agency and since 1961 as the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

Foreign aid has been a key component of US foreign policy throughout the post-war years. Until the present decade, it was justified primarily as an instrument in the cold war against communism, but it has been used for a variety of short-term and long-term purposes, some highly political (e.g. aid to Israel and Egypt as part of the Middle East peace-making process) and some primarily economic (such as building markets for US exports).

The various kinds of aid have customarily been combined in a single annual bill submitted to Congress by the administration. This legislative mingling of aid designed to serve different objectives — particularly the combination of military and economic aid — has been a subject of continuing controversy. Some have seen this package approach as necessary to ensure passage of the legislation, since it brings together supporters of each kind of aid, while others have argued that each was tarnished by its connection with the other and that both would fare better if presented separately.

Every president, Democrat and Republican, has strongly endorsed foreign aid, and, over the years, at least ten high-level national commissions or advisory bodies, set up by the White House or by Congress to review the programme, have given it solid backing. Presidential endorsement has never been enough, however,
to ensure smooth sailing for the aid programme. The US system of separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches of government has given Congress a strong voice in determining aid policy and appropriations.

In many foreign policy matters only the US Senate has a significant role to play (e.g. it alone can ratify treaties), but on foreign aid the more "popular" House of Representatives has been directly involved. The House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee have been particularly active in overseeing all aspects of aid policy and practice. Especially in later years, they have initiated — and Congress has enacted into law — many conditions regarding the use of aid money. This "management" role of the legislative branch has sometimes pushed USAID in effective new directions, but often has tied its hands in time-consuming and sometimes conflicting administrative requirements.

The heavy involvement of Congress in aid policy has made the question of public support for development aid particularly relevant in the United States. To be sure, the legislative battles over foreign aid have rarely been fought on development issues. Most of the really controversial debates were related to more immediate political questions such as the war in Vietnam or counter-insurgency in Central America. Nevertheless, each year, almost without exception, Congress has appropriated less money for development aid than has been requested by the administration.

Did public opinion play a role in these legislative debates? For the major political issues, where public argument and organised expression of views were intense, the answer is certainly yes. On the question of aid to development, however, it would be hard to maintain that the views of the general public affected the actions of Congress.

The multiplicity of objectives in the foreign aid programme has made it difficult to identify public opinion on the specifically developmental parts of the aid package. Nevertheless, as we shall see, over the years a consistent, although never large, majority of US citizens have held opinions favourable to development co-operation. The intensity of this opinion has never been great, and its expression in public opinion polls has varied noticeably, depending on how questions have been phrased or on the order in which they were asked. Moreover, the polls have shown that the majority have generally favoured cutting rather than expanding the level of aid and that a strong strain of scepticism about the effectiveness of aid has emerged over time.

Some organised voices among the public have actively expressed views on foreign aid. Those critical of aid have always relied primarily on four closely related arguments: that the US government cannot afford, for budgetary reasons, to spend so much; that domestic needs should be attended to before funds are "given away" overseas; that the record of aid proves that it is inimical to US interests (e.g. that it promotes economic growth that directly competes with or damages elements of the US economy); and that it is ineffective. In support of the last argument, a broad range of alleged shortcomings have been brought forward, from waste and corruption in administration to enriching the elite at the expense of the poor. The critics of aid, at first largely restricted to the political right, gradually began to appear on the left as well.

Contrary to the often repeated assertion that "foreign aid has no constituency", the supporters of aid have made their voices heard through the press and, even more important, through a spectrum of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) including traditional economic groups, religious congregations, universities and special-interest organisations of many kinds. This "active constituency" has grown in variety over the years, while at the same time becoming more articulate and more discriminating in what it supports.
Before discussing the present state of public opinion and support for development co-operation in the United States, we shall make a very brief survey of its record over the past 40 years.

The 1950s

Public Opinion

What appears to be the earliest opinion survey on development aid was taken about a year after President Truman announced the “Point Four” programme. In response to a 1950 Gallup poll, 23 per cent of the population said they were “familiar” with the programme, with 9 per cent generally favouring it, 9 per cent being generally unfavourable and 5 per cent having no opinion.

Other polls followed. In 1953, for example, Gallup asked: “If defense spending can be safely cut, would you favor or oppose having the U.S., along with other nations, use part of the money they would save to help the needy countries of the world?” In response, 65 per cent said they would be in favour, 26 per cent were opposed and 9 per cent had no opinion.

Opinion concerning development assistance specifically was rarely identified, however. Questions normally asked about “foreign aid” in general. For example, in 1957 respondents were asked: “President Eisenhower says that there should not be a big cut in U.S. aid to foreign countries. Some members of Congress say there should be. Do you think there should or should not be a big cut in foreign aid?” The responses showed that 42 per cent thought there should be, 32 per cent thought there should not be and 25 per cent had no opinion. A year later, however, to the simple question, “In general, how do you feel about foreign aid?”, 51 per cent said they were for it, 33 per cent were opposed and 16 per cent had no opinion.

Organisational Voices

The “active constituency” had begun to appear almost immediately after the launching of the programme. An informal “Point Four Information Service” was created by a number of NGOs in 1950. This led in 1952 to the National Conference on International Economic and Social Development, the first of a series of national NGO conferences on development issues and US aid, which continue to this day under the name “International Development Conference”.

The original consensus for development aid was remarkably broad, bringing together business groups and trade unions, religious bodies of many kinds, educational associations, women’s organisations and other citizens’ associations — a combination of what have been called a “constituency of interest” and a “constituency of conviction”. Many of these organisations began testifying before congressional committees in support of development assistance, in general endorsing uncritically the administration’s requests.

Pressure against aid also appeared, however, and by the late 1950s an organised anti-aid group (the Citizens’ Foreign Aid Committee) was actively lobbying members of the House and Senate. Members of Congress observed that, while the leaders of pro-aid organisations testified in favour of aid at committee hearings, the letters received from voters — even members of a church that supported the aid programme — were more likely to be against aid.
Government Action

In 1950, at the peak of the Marshall Plan, the public information section of the Economic Cooperation Administration, which administered reconstruction aid to Europe, had about 100 employees. Paul Hoffman, the first ECA administrator, argued that “to run the ECA without a strong information arm would be as futile as trying to conduct a major business without sales, advertising, or customer relations departments”. Indeed, the ECA turned out an enormous amount of publicity, running its own radio and television programmes, taking journalists on tours, meetings with editors and so on.

In 1955, the public information office staff had shrunk to 16, and a provision in the aid legislation (the Dworshak Amendment) prohibited the agency from using its funds for “the dissemination within the United States of general propaganda” in support of the aid programme.

Faced with growing criticism, the Eisenhower Administration in 1958 convened a national citizens’ assembly to arouse public support for foreign aid under the title “Conference on Foreign Aspects of National Security”. Using the White House itself as a base, and led by a charismatic entrepreneur (Eric Johnston, president of the Motion Picture Association of America), the conference was a two-day jamboree, with the leaders of both political parties, the heads of the major religious denominations, leaders of organised business and trade unions, and scores of NGO executives. A new super-NGO emerged, the Committee for International Economic Growth (CIEG), which launched a vigorous public information campaign.

The 1960s

Public Opinion

The 1960s was named the “decade of development” by the United Nations; it produced new development institutions such as the UNDP and the Inter-American Development Bank; and President Kennedy launched the Peace Corps and the Alliance for Progress, a major development programme for Latin America. General public opinion on aid, however, hardly changed at all. Asked in 1965 the same question as in 1958 (“In general, how do you feel about foreign aid?”), the public responded with remarkable consistency: 57 per cent for, 33 per cent against, 10 per cent no opinion.

The annual battle over aid levels continued in Congress. On this subject, the public was asked in 1965: “President Johnson has proposed that Congress set aside $3.4 billion for aid to countries in other parts of the world, or about 3 per cent of the total annual budget. Would you like to see this amount increased or decreased?” The answers: 6 per cent for increased aid, 49 per cent for decreased aid, 33 per cent for maintaining the level of aid.

Organisational Voices

By 1963 the CIEG had collapsed, following Eric Johnston’s death and the change of party control at the White House. Efforts were made, with a tacit White House blessing, to build new support groups — e.g. a Citizens’ Committee for International Development in 1961, and a National Committee for International Development in 1964 — but both failed.
By the end of the 1960s, however, impetus for a new public support organisation took on renewed momentum. With strong leadership and funding from private foundations (especially the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations), the Overseas Development Council (ODC) was created to serve as a think tank on development issues and policy, and as a disseminator of facts and ideas. Respected for the professional competence of its staff, the ODC has operated successfully ever since, cultivating opinion makers of various kinds, including journalists and the staffs of members of Congress. It has without doubt been the leading centre of policy-oriented pro-development thinking in the United States.

**Government Action**

During this period, USAID itself was becoming increasingly conscious of the politics of foreign aid. Its presentations to Congress carefully broke down aid expenditures (for services and goods) by state and congressional district, thus demonstrating the beneficial economic impact of aid spending on the domestic economy. Major contracts were signed with US universities to provide technical assistance overseas, thus creating a continuing interest in foreign assistance within the educational community. Many NGOs also became USAID contractors.

The 1970s

**Public Opinion**

In 1972 the newly formed Overseas Development Council undertook the most in-depth investigation yet attempted of US public opinion concerning development. While 55 per cent of the respondents favoured cutting economic aid to other nations, a large majority (86 per cent) said that helping to improve the living standards of less developed nations should be either a very important (39 per cent) or a somewhat important (47 per cent) goal of US foreign policy. Asked specifically, “If you could be sure that the economic aid we send to countries abroad ended up helping the people of those countries, would you then favor or oppose our giving such economic aid?”, the replies were: 79 per cent in favour, 13 per cent opposed, 8 per cent not sure.

**Organisational Voices**

During the 1970s, some gradual but noteworthy changes in NGO activity took place. Private voluntary aid organisations, which had already begun to shift away from relief activities to longer-range, community-oriented development projects, accelerated this movement. The number of these organisations also began to increase, as new groups were formed and private development aid became a growing expression of public interest in development. At the same time, with the Stockholm environmental conference of 1972 and subsequent international conferences on other global problems, there began to emerge a new breed of US NGOs whose interest centred around some specific aspect of development.

Both of these changes were clearly reflected in the gradual transformation and expansion of the long-standing International Development Conference (IDC). Representatives of the organisations that had founded the IDC in the 1950s — multi-interest groups such as the American Association of University Women, the National Council of Churches or the American Federation of Labor — began to be replaced by representatives from private voluntary organisations or by special-
interest groups such as the Population Crisis Committee or the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (which, like other trade organisations of its kind, was now a regular executor of USAID-funded programmes).

**Government Action**

The 1970s also saw Congress taking a more proactive, rather than a reactive, role in development policy making. In 1973, at the instigation of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the foreign aid legislation set forth a “new direction” for development aid — namely, towards increasing substantially the participation of the poor in the development process. Another congressional initiative, the Percy Amendment, directed USAID to devote special attention to the role of women in development.

The 1980s

**Public Opinion**

In the mid-1980s, the ODC undertook another extensive review of US public opinion on development. The survey, released in 1986, revealed that US citizens still held very mixed views. Summarising its findings, the survey report described this mixture as follows:

1. Americans are aware of the problems of poverty and underdevelopment that face the Third World and do not believe that much progress has been made in improving Third World living conditions over the past decade.

2. Americans have strong negative perceptions of Third World *governments* but not of the *people* of these countries.

3. A majority of Americans favour US efforts to assist Third World countries with development.

4. Most Americans are poorly informed about US foreign policy in general, about Third World development issues, and about US relations with developing countries.

5. Most Americans are aware, in very general terms, of the existence of economic relationships between the United States and the Third World and believe such relationships to hold potential mutual benefits.

6. The perceived trade-off between promoting *domestic* well-being and helping those *overseas* limits public support for specific US trade, aid, and financial policies to promote Third World growth or alleviate poverty.

7. Most Americans recognise that the United States has political and strategic interests in the Third World, but many are concerned about US overinvolvement in developing country affairs.

8. The major reasons for public support for economic assistance are humanitarian concern or a sense of responsibility; economic or political self-interest rationales are generally less compelling.

9. Americans express a strong preference for those types of U.S. economic aid programmes that most recognisably aim to deliver help directly to poor people.
10. Economic aid is widely perceived to be ineffective or wasted; however, this opinion does not dissuade many Americans from supporting assistance efforts.

**Organisational Voices**

The ODC findings were certainly a spur to a major initiative of the 1980s among the active constituency for development: development education came to the United States.

Until the late 1970s, the term "development education" was virtually unknown to the US public. During the 1980s, it became increasingly recognised as a distinct activity, although within the formal educational system it was — and still is — seen as a part of the larger concept of "global education".

For NGOs, the Biden-Pell Amendment to the 1981 foreign aid bill (named after the two senators who proposed it) led to the first government funding of development education. The term "development education" is not used in the law, which speaks only of providing "assistance to private and voluntary organizations engaged in facilitating public discussion of hunger and other related issues".

Although USAID allocated only modest funds to its grant programme for development education, NGOs were required to match government funding with money from their own budgets, thus stimulating a substantial increase in spending on such activities. Overall, from 1982 to 1993, 88 US non-profit organisations received Biden-Pell grants.

In 1984, representatives of a number of NGOs (mostly private voluntary organisations carrying on overseas development operations) met in Brattleboro, Vermont, and hammered out a document called *A Framework for Development Education in the United States*. In a statement of principles, the document declared:

Development education has as a primary goal the building of a committed constituency for development both at home and abroad. It begins with a recognition of global interdependence and the continuing need for justice and equity in the world. Its programs and processes convey information, promote humanitarian values, and stimulate individual and community action aimed at improving the quality of life and eliminating the root causes of world poverty.

Over the following years, development education became modestly professional, promoted strongly by InterAction, a coalition of US NGOs engaged in international development and relief work created in the mid-1980s. USAID began holding an annual conference on "dev ed" theory and practice, and the International Development Conference added the topic to its biennial agenda. A newsletter for development educators was started, and later a computerised clearinghouse of information was established.

The emphasis on interdependence in the Brattleboro framework document reflected an increasing awareness of this concept as a rationale for active US involvement in world affairs. In the 1970s, the oil embargo had demonstrated US vulnerability to distant events. The series of UN-sponsored conferences, beginning with the 1972 Stockholm Environmental Conference and continuing with those on food, population and women, brought global issues to organisational agendas, and this trend continued in the 1980s.

It was reinforced during that decade by the appearance of Ted Turner’s Cable News Network (CNN), which provided immediate worldwide coverage of news, and by a number of television specials on global issues, many of them supported
by the Better World Society (a non-profit educational group strongly backed by Turner). Development educators began to pay more attention to the power of the media. An example was “Prime Time to End Hunger”, an NGO-stimulated collaborative effort of the three major US television networks in which the themes of hunger and poverty were introduced in six very popular television shows during the first three weeks of December 1989.

At a different level, an advocacy group called RESULTS effectively promoted meetings of concerned citizens with the editorial boards of local newspapers and the preparation of articles for publication on “op-ed” pages. At the same time, a small body of journalists began to express an interest in contributing to the education of US citizens in world affairs. Main Street America and the Third World, a collection of articles from local newspapers across the country showing how local communities are connected with developing countries, became a popular text for development educators. (Main Street built on a pilot project conducted as early as 1974 called “Columbus in the World, the World in Columbus”, which examined the international links of Columbus, Ohio.)

The 1990s

With the 1990s, a new period has begun in development thinking and, more slowly, in development practice. Although earlier decades had seen shifting emphases (some would say “fads”) in development theory, the development community in the 1990s took a long, hard look at all that had gone before and came up with a great deal of self-criticism. A new phraseology emerged — “sustainable development”, “participatory development”, “human development” — and the GNP measurement of development progress, already long mistrusted, was further de-emphasised. In the United States, the end of the cold war brought to a close a long-established rationale for development aid, while a second round of UN-sponsored conferences on global issues engaged the attention of a steadily increasing number of NGOs. With the election of President Clinton, a fresh breeze swept through the State Department and USAID, symbolised by the creation of a new high-level position, that of the Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs.

US public opinion, however, did not yet reflect these changes. Polls taken in the early 1990s showed support for aid to the developing world still hanging around the 50 per cent mark, even though a majority believed that improving the economies of other nations would have a positive effect on the US economy. The polls also showed that US citizens who supported aid generally gave humanitarian reasons first place in justifying aid, followed by environmental and economic rationales. Specific types of assistance that were favoured by a majority of citizens included humanitarian relief, as well as aid that protected the environment, helped to prevent the spread of AIDS, addressed the problem of drug trafficking and assisted family planning.

Opposition to aid, according to these polls, rested primarily on two grounds: unmet needs in the United States and a continued perception of the aid programme’s ineffectiveness in meeting real human needs abroad. By a large majority (80 per cent), US citizens continued to favour cutting aid in order to help reduce the federal budget deficit.

The “active constituency”, while growing and becoming more articulate, has begun to show fissures within its ranks. For example, the environmental movement, which for the first time responded to the cause of international development through the UNCED experience, now contains groups which question the very existence of the World Bank.
The development education community is also going through changes. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, working relationships were established between many US NGOs and the newly emerging NGOs in the South. Southern views on how rich countries should amend their life styles have an increasing influence on US NGOs' thinking about development.

Owing to these changing views and other factors, representatives of a number of NGOs met again in Brattleboro in 1990 and adopted a new "framework" for their educational activities. Abandoning the term "development education", the group called for "education for global change", declaring:

In 1984, when A Framework for Development Education was published, our goal was to build a committed constituency through programs and processes that would convey information, promote humanitarian values, and stimulate individual action aimed at improving the quality of life and eliminating the root causes of poverty. We have made some progress toward that goal.

The time has come, however, for a new vision and a new goals statement. Our goal for the decade that will take us into the twenty-first century is more complex, more difficult, and even more urgent. The new global vision of our interdependent world requires nothing less than a decisive movement toward a just, sustainable, and inclusive global community.

It will require:

— transformation of institutions and systems;
— participation in popular movements for global change;
— establishing new life styles for individuals of all generations, genders, ethnic and religious groups.

While the phrase "education for global change" has not yet been adopted, the new outlook clearly animates much current activity in development education, including the Alliance for a Global Community, which was recently established by InterAction with a $1 million USAID grant. USAID also supports more traditional educational activities, such as the National Planning Association's dialogues with business and labour or the "Reach-out" programme of Partners of the Americas, a "sister-city" type of organisation.

A major event of the early 1990s was a thorough independent evaluation of the first ten years of USAID-supported development education projects. The evaluation report estimated that some 37 million US citizens had been reached by these projects in some fashion. Overall, the report found, these individuals, compared to the general US public, showed stronger support for foreign assistance and understanding of the US stake in the developing world.

The 1990s also saw a noticeable intensification in the advocacy of NGOs involved in development work. A good example is a letter sent in November 1993 to President Clinton urging a reallocation of budgetary resources from defence and foreign intelligence to sustainable development programmes. The letter was signed by the heads of 117 NGOs covering a wide range of interests — environment, population, peace, education, humanitarian relief, agriculture, health, children, refugees and religion.

In 1994, a new USAID programme called "Lessons without Borders" was initiated to take advantage of the expertise that USAID has acquired in dealing with urban poverty, health and environmental problems in developing countries. The programme makes this expertise available to US cities that face similar problems and that in fact often lag behind the accomplishments abroad (e.g. the infant
mortality rate is higher in many US urban centres than it is in many developing countries). This kind of “reverse aid” offers the possibility of affecting many US citizens’ opinions concerning aid.

The state of public opinion today

As the polling reports make clear, on the whole US public opinion on development aid has changed little over the years. Carrol Joy, in her 1990 book *Believing Is Seeing*, tried to put into words what the average citizen might say if asked to articulate his or her views:

We don’t really know very much about the third world and development — except for what we have seen on the media about famines and disasters. But based on what we do know, third world people just can’t solve their own problems. They need help from countries like the United States — not just food and equipment, but the kind of know-how that has made us so successful.

We’d really like to help the third world help themselves, only nothing really seems to work. The problem is too big; there is too much corruption among their governments; and our own bureaucracy — even when it’s trying to help the poor and not just use them for political ends — seems incapable of delivering what’s needed to those who should get it. Though their motives are better, even private agencies don’t seem to do much good. So if those who really know how to help can’t make any difference, there’s nothing, except to send a few dollars when we can, that any of us ordinary citizens can do.

Of course we would like the lives of the starving millions to be better and feel we should make the effort. That’s what our churches teach us, and it’s the responsibility of the world’s greatest nation to try — even if it won’t do any good.

And besides, we have a whole set of our own problems to deal with in the United States. Resources aren’t unlimited, you know, and we have to use what little we have to take care of these problems first. Not that Americans aren’t affected by what happens in the third world. But this is not necessarily a good thing. Though we should probably support development anyway, it’s possible that we — and maybe even the whole world — will end up worse if the third world does develop. Things are changing so fast that it’s just hard to know what’s going to be good or bad for us in the long run.

Joy goes on to speculate that these attitudes are based on deep-seated convictions regarding the national identity which were forged at a time when the United States could truly be called isolated from the rest of the world. Certainly no one can doubt that there exists a deep vein of US belief that to this day can properly be called isolationism. Hallowed by long tradition, this value system holds that US citizens built their nation — and their individual lives — through their own efforts. Giving a helping hand in times of emergency was also part of this tradition, and industrial society brought many changes in social values, but a concept of independence has always lain at the heart of US belief.

The concept of interdependence, no matter how smoothly it is accepted intellectually, is not a comfortable one emotionally for many US citizens. By definition, it means that they have lost their independence. For many citizens, the
benefits of living in a steadily more closely linked world are much less evident than
the negative effects. Foreign economic competition costs US jobs; foreign wars cost
US lives; foreign peoples bring social problems to the United States.

Nevertheless, the 20th century has inexorably drawn the country into closer
contact with the rest of the world. The polls show that, like it or not, US citizens
today are generally willing to accept the fact that the line between “domestic” and
“foreign” problems is increasingly blurred. In a fine turn of phrase, the US attitude
towards the world today has been characterised as “reluctant internationalism”.

The fact that, over a 45-year period, US public attitudes on foreign aid have
changed so little suggests that they are not likely to change rapidly in the future.
Development aid will continue to provoke controversy, like virtually all other
areas of public policy. Some would argue that the essentially lukewarm level of
interest is not necessarily damaging to development co-operation. Indeed, the low
public salience of development aid may make it easier for policy makers to change
aid policy.

There are some hopeful signs, however, for those policy makers who wish
that there could be a stronger constituency for aid. There is evidence that providing
more information and education can, to some extent, change attitudes. The active
constituency for development aid has become larger, more global and, even if
somewhat fragmented, more able and willing to exert pressure on Congress.
Development is increasingly being understood in more broad and humane terms,
and is becoming recognised as vital in dealing with the global issues highlighted
by the UN conferences of the 1990s and in maintaining peace, security and human
rights. At the same time, the realistic limitations of what development co-operation
can accomplish are better understood.

Educating the Public

The effect on US attitudes of greater knowledge about development does not
seem to have been widely studied, although polling data show that people who are
more educated generally accept more easily the fact of interdependence, and the
consequences for US policy that flow from this acceptance, than do those who have
less education.

What little evidence we have suggests that providing factual information
may well change people’s attitudes. For example, the following question and
responses derive from the 1972 ODC poll:

Here are some statements concerning the total US budget for fighting hunger
and poverty both domestically and internationally. With which statement do you
agree the most?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The total budget should be used for domestic poverty</td>
<td>13 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A small percentage of the budget should be used to fight</td>
<td>55 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poverty in other parts of the world</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The budget should be divided about 50-50 between the poor of</td>
<td>18 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the US and the poor in other parts of the world</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The budget should be divided proportionally so that most of it</td>
<td>6 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would go to help the poor in other parts of the world</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>8 per cent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respondents were then asked: “If you were told that 95 per cent of the poor people in the world lived in other countries, and the United States had only 5 per cent of the world’s poor, would you reconsider your distribution of money?” To this question, 26 per cent said they would reconsider, while 59 per cent said they would not.

The 26 per cent who said they would reconsider were then asked to respond again to the first question, and this time their responses were quite different: 35 per cent now said that the budget should be divided 50-50, and 53 per cent said it should be divided proportionally.

Another study, in 1985, examined the views of people in Richmond, Virginia, before and after they had read two stories in the Sunday newspaper, one describing how the state’s tobacco industry benefited from overseas sales, the other reporting on the closing of Virginia shoe factories due to Brazilian competition. Several questions were asked, such as: “Do you agree or disagree that economic growth and progress in poorer countries affect economics in Virginia?” and “Do you agree or disagree that political and social upheavals in poorer countries affect Virginians?” Before the newspaper articles appeared, 55 per cent of those polled agreed with the first statement and 61 per cent with the second. After the articles appeared, those who had read them (about 41 per cent said they had read some or all of the text) were polled again. Of this group, 67 per cent agreed with the first statement and 73 per cent with the second.

Other polls have shown that even limited discussion of the issues tends to increase public support. A 1992 poll undertaken for the Rockefeller Foundation reported that only 43 per cent favoured economic assistance to developing countries when the question was asked "cold". After some discussion with the interviewer, the proportion of those favouring assistance rose to 64 per cent.

Evaluation of ten years of development education certainly allows us to infer that increased knowledge can be important in changing attitudes. The USAID evaluation found that the attitudes of people who had been in development education audiences during the preceding five years differed significantly from those of people who had not been exposed. Moreover, this held true even for the most educated segments of both the general public and the development education audiences. When asked whether they favoured economic assistance to developing countries, for example, 85 per cent of those who had been touched by a development education programme responded “yes”, as against 53 per cent of the general public. Among the most educated segments of the responding groups, 88 per cent of development education audiences said “yes”, compared to only 66 per cent of the general public.

To argue, however, that more development education is the way to build a stronger constituency for development co-operation would lead us into slippery territory. For one thing, there is often conflict between the kind of information which helps to raise funds for private overseas development programmes and the kind of long-term, deep-seated education implied by the term “education for global change”. NGOs which attempt to do both are frequently caught in internal tensions.

Tension also exists between those who would emphasise the continuing problems which face humankind and which demand continuing development aid, and those who would give more attention to the progress that has been achieved. The latter argue that building a broad public awareness of successes in improving health or education would counteract the “CNN effect” (i.e. reporting only on crises) and would expand public support, particularly in light of the prevailing view that aid is ineffective.
Despite these differences, some positive lessons have been learned. “Dig where you are” — i.e. start the educational process at the point where people are in their own thinking and attitudes — has become a watchword for all development educators. Emphasise relationships between problems abroad and problems at home. Be goal-oriented: concentrate on ways of achieving specific development targets. Each of these findings is exemplified in the new USAID “Lessons without Borders” programme in US cities.

Whatever the successes of development education, they are small compared to the total population of the United States. Clearly, expanding understanding and support for development co-operation among the general public is a very long-term proposition. If the formal educational system can bring more attention to global interdependence into its curriculum — a difficult task in the United States, where it is the individual states and cities, not the federal government, that mandate curriculum changes — the next generation of citizens may have a broader view. Unlike major social movements of recent years, however — which began at the grass roots and then moved upwards to the policy makers — a campaign aimed at making it comfortable to live with global interdependence and its implications lacks the personal, “gut feeling” quality of, say, the environmental movement or the campaign for women’s rights.

**The Development Co-operation Constituency**

Despite the state of general public opinion, it is clear that development co-operation does have a small but active constituency. Its size is really unknown — possibly 2 to 4 per cent of the population — but it is revealed by the organised voices of substantial elements of the business, media, education and NGO worlds. In earlier years this organised support came largely from big, multi-purpose membership organisations and in general was uncritically supportive of government proposals; today, it has become more diffuse and critical, and the various actors tend to focus on specific elements of development aid.

These groups are slowly expanding both their educational activities and their advocacy efforts. In an era when governments generally are regarded with considerable mistrust, these elements of civil society are increasingly leading the way in development policy. Some might even see them as a late 20th-century manifestation of the populist campaigns that have blazed the way in many areas of social change in recent decades, although on a much smaller scale and with no real prospect of becoming a mass social movement.

It has proved very difficult over the years to create a strong unifying structure among these elements. Many efforts have been made to form an embracing organisation for the development constituency. In addition to those already mentioned, one could cite New Directions (in the 1970s); Action for World Development, the Citizens’ Network on Foreign Affairs and Worldwise 2000 (all in the 1980s); and the Advocacy Network for Development (in the 1990s). Each of these undertook to fill this role in one way or another, and each collapsed or changed its nature after only a few years. Some temporary alliances have worked well — e.g. the US Citizens’ Network on UNCED — but only a few broadly based bodies seem to be permanently established: the Overseas Development Council, an intellectual stronghold; the International Development Conference, a meeting ground; InterAction, a still-growing alliance of private voluntary organisations engaged in development activities overseas; and, somewhat outside the strictly development community, the Global Tomorrow Coalition (a group of profit and non-profit groups that promote sustainable development), the US National Committee for World Food Day and one or two others.
The prospects for the future are encouraging, however. Development supporters are steadily becoming more skilled at advocacy. RESULTS has been mentioned; another effective grass roots group is Bread for the World, which can effectively mobilise thousands of letters to members of Congress. Particularly noteworthy are the “alumni” of the Peace Corps, organised in the National Peace Corps Association. These former volunteers abroad have taken on a growing responsibility for expanding public understanding of development in communities across the nation.

The positive way in which the Clinton Administration has responded to the challenges of the 1990s is also encouraging. It has recognised that the principal threats to US security — and, indeed, to global security — are not the traditional power relationships but the spectre of growing chaos through poverty and social disintegration of all kinds. In this respect, the US political leadership is closely related to the new thinking which animates the revived United Nations system as it adopts such important new concepts as global human security.

Final Observations

1. In 1952 the US political scientist Frank L. Klingberg developed a theory of “mood-interest” cycles in US foreign policy, during which the country moved from a period of extroversion to a period of introversion. The extrovert phase averaged 27 years, the introvert phase 21 years. Looking backwards, he noted that the United States in the mid-1890s had entered a period of imperialist expansion; this period was followed by a period of introversion in 1920 after the First World War. A new period of extroversion began in 1941. Klingberg therefore predicted that the next introvert phase would start in the late 1960s, and in fact, that was when the United States began pulling back from its commitment in Vietnam and even from its exploration of space. According to this theory, an extrovert phase would have begun 21 years later, in 1989. Panama, the Gulf war, Somalia, Haiti — merely listing these names suggests that this has indeed happened. At the same time, the United States is clearly playing a more active role in dealing with global issues such as population. If Klingberg’s theory is correct, this natural rhythm alone may produce a more active programme of development co-operation in the years immediately ahead.

2. The very term “development co-operation” is firmly based on the existence of national sovereignty. It accentuates the concept of separate entities, of “we” and “they”. Within an individual nation, however, transfers of wealth between the richer and poorer parts are commonplace. Although there are disagreements as to the terms of these redistribution programmes, the basic idea of such transfers is well accepted.

Perhaps the expansion of global institutions and the gradual globalisation of governance will lead to the same result on a planetary scale. Already the nation-state is showing signs of losing power, not only to the organised forces of civil society within its borders, but also to the supranational institutions of the United Nations. Is it possible that, owing to the slow emergence of what some have called the sense of the “global us”, development co-operation in its present meaning will no longer be an international issue?

3. How important is public opinion on development co-operation? The evidence shows that most people are poorly informed about development co-operation and have very thin opinions, but this is equally true of many public issues. The general public is not — and indeed cannot be — attentive to the details of most public policy.
If people are given a chance to admit their inattention “honourably”, they will do so, as a US poll in 1985 made clear. At a time when the Reagan Administration was giving strong and vocal support — well reported in the media — to the contras in Nicaragua, a CBS/New York Times poll asked, “Which side does the U.S. Government support in Nicaragua — the current government, or the people fighting the government, or haven’t you been following closely enough to say?” The response: 6 per cent said the current government, 26 per cent said those fighting the government, while 69 per cent answered frankly that they did not know.

Even the terminology used in seeking opinion is often not understood. Everett Ladd made this point in a 1985 article:

If I conduct a poll and ask respondents whether they like dogs better than cats, or vice versa, I can be confident that almost everyone will have a common referent: We all know what dogs are and what cats are. If I ask a group of foreign policy experts questions about foreign aid, I can be confident that, although evaluation of specific programs will vary, there is a general agreement on what the term means.

When, however, I ask a cross-section of the general public about foreign aid ... I can be certain of the opposite: That the lack of specific information and attention ... will mean that the term will raise very different pictures in people’s minds. The dissimilarities will be so great as to make it hard to know how to interpret the responses.

This does not mean that public views are unimportant. Traditional democratic theory makes it clear that the role of the general public is to set the larger goals and directions that specific policy choices are to achieve, not to formulate the choices themselves. The public has expressed its opinion on these goals and directions in many polls. In his paper, Ladd summarised (much as Carrol Joy did later) these basic goals, little changed over the years:

(1) That it really is “one world”, and the United States must attend intimately to developments beyond its shores; (2) that helping individuals in need, which in some cases means helping nations in need, is a worthy end of American public policy; (3) nonetheless, that programs with worthy objectives often fall short of their objectives and need to be viewed skeptically; and (4) that aid should be conditional on recipients' making commensurate efforts.

4. Policy makers, however, must make policy choices, and here the role of the informed and articulate public can be very important. Can that public be enlarged from the very small percentage of the general public that it constitutes today?

Probably it can be — indeed, it has been — but this process will always be slow and incremental. There can never be a pro-development movement on a large scale. Social movements which engage the support of a substantial number of people are based on the personal importance of the issue to the people involved. Civil rights, women’s liberation, environmental preservation — to name three movements which have significantly transformed the United States in recent years — all had individual meaning to those who took part in them.

While development co-operation can never have this meaning for most people, there are ways of “bringing home” the issue to more people than presently consider it important. This is needed, because in the process of democratic policy making, interventions by the concerned public (or the perception of their concern by elected officials) can influence policy makers.
The latter are subject to pressures from every side, and without evidence of some public support for aid, it is easy for them to succumb to pressures to cut the budget, give more attention to domestic problems and so on.

The evidence seems to show that being specific is the key to success in more ways than one. Presenting the specific goals of development co-operation — alleviating hunger, slowing population growth, reducing environmental destruction or empowering women — make the programme more attractive than merely talking about "development". Similarly, reaching out to interest groups and presenting development co-operation in terms of their specific interests and well-being can help to enlist their support. In this connection, an encouraging prospect is the growing number of young US citizens who have taken part in development through their service in the Peace Corps.

5. In trying to build public support, the emphasis should be placed on both problems and achievements, but we have talked too little about achievements. While we must frankly admit that failures exist, as they do in all public endeavours, we do development co-operation a dis-service if we do not point out all that has been accomplished: expanded educational facilities, decreased child mortality, greater opportunities for women and more.

In today's more chaotic world, the recent words of UNDP administrator Gus Speth are persuasive:

Conflicts and emergencies fill the daily headlines, but underlying these tragic events is the silent crisis — the crisis of underdevelopment, of chronic and growing poverty, of mounting population pressures, and widespread environmental deterioration ... Whatever the causes of particular instances of violence and social disintegration, development is surely the major ingredient of the cure ... Indeed, it is doubtful that any of the goals for which the community of nations is working — not peace, not human rights or democratization, not environmental protection, not reduced population pressures, not disease control — can be achieved and sustained except in the context of development.

In other words, development must be seen as an essential element in the new definition of global security.

In this connection, perhaps the time has come to replace the concept of the "global village" with a more accurate metaphor, that of the "global city". Calling the world a village suggests to some a bucolic community of happy tradition and harmony, while for others it evokes a backward and isolated existence of poverty and hopelessness.

Neither vision is true. The world today more closely resembles an urban conglomeration, with its interlocking infrastructure, its polluted atmosphere, its extremes of rich and poor, its ethnic conflicts and its social ills of many kinds. Even the most prosperous urban dwellers suffer from the malfunctioning of the modern mega-city and recognise the need to deal with its pathological conditions for their own well-being. Thus the urban image would improve understanding of the global development effort.

6. An important change in recent years within the development co-operation constituency has been its increasingly active role in development advocacy, not merely in support of government policy but often through strong but constructive criticism. This advocacy role extends to the United Nations system — particularly to UN conferences — on an unprecedented scale. It reflects one of the major, but often unattributed, fruits of successful development: the emergence of effective NGOs in the South which are able to
influence not only their own governments but also the views of Northern NGOs. The agendas of most US development educators today, for example, include such issues as consumption patterns in the developed world.

The men and women who have devoted their energies to development education over the years should take satisfaction in the development constituency's new spirit of international activism. Public knowledge may not have changed significantly, but those who have been doing the educating have learned a great deal.

Notes and References

1. The US election of November 1994, which occurred after this paper was written, produced a Congress in which, for the first time in many years, both chambers were controlled by the Republican Party. One result has been an even more interventionist role in development matters by the Senate and House committees concerned with foreign affairs. As of July 1995, major reductions in development aid are almost certain, and USAID is likely to disappear as a quasi-independent agency and be absorbed entirely into the Department of State.

2. Other evidence suggests, however, that this would be true only for people without strong pre-existing convictions. A study at Stanford University found that when two groups of students, one strongly supporting and the other strongly opposing capital punishment, were presented with a balanced presentation of the pros and cons of the issue, each group became more opposed to the other's views than when they started.
Japan: Public Knowledge and Attitudes Towards ODA

Yasuo Uchida

Summary

Official polls always indicate that a large segment of the Japanese population supports official development assistance (ODA) provided by the government, but it is not clear how much the Japanese people actually know about development activities. The high level of support may reflect the fact that most Japanese feel no personal responsibility for ODA, but simply trust their government to manage it well. Many people appear to believe that because international trade has been the basis of the country's economic success, Japan should participate more in the international community. Thus, there is no urgent need to increase public support for Japan's ODA.

Nevertheless, recent public opinion polls conducted by the prime minister's office have indicated that segments of the population which feel that ODA "should be terminated" or "should be reduced to a minimum level" have been gradually increasing for the last 15 years. These two categories accounted for about 14 per cent of respondents in 1993. We must not overlook the fact that some people in these groups may well support various activities to assist underprivileged people in the developing world, but may tend to doubt the effectiveness of a government-initiated approach.

There has been a great increase in the number of people, particularly young people, who are concerned with the actual circumstances facing people in developing countries and with environmental deterioration. Partly for this reason, NGO activities have been slowly increasing in number and scale.

The growing interest in development activities has been enhanced by increased amounts of information on developing countries and development activities. As far as ODA is concerned, the Japanese government plays a very active role in publishing information and supporting information activities, although the information provided may sometimes present an overly optimistic view.

The mass media, and especially the newspapers, do not provide satisfactory coverage of these issues. News reports from developing countries often lack in-depth analysis of actual circumstances, and do not contribute much to improving the Japanese public's knowledge of development assistance.

Although the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has put a great deal of effort into activities such as publishing teaching materials to supplement social studies in school, development issues have yet to be formally incorporated in mainstream school textbooks. Other activities designed to educate and inform a wider public
on development issues — informal education, general publicity, lecture meetings for citizens and so on — have been actively promoted, mainly by NGOs and local governments. Development education in Japan has recently entered a new phase, moving from simple dissemination of facts to deeper analysis and understanding of the issues involved.

Public Opinion

The Level of Public Support

As discussed by Ian Smillie (in this volume), Japanese opinion polls show high public support for international aid programmes, but this support is not based on a thorough understanding of the programmes. Smillie states in general: “High levels of general public support notwithstanding, there are problems with both the statistics and the reality. Knowledge levels are weak, and ... international development issues rank very low as a priority for most people.” This is particularly true of Japan.

Regular opinion polls conducted by the prime minister’s office show that over the last 15 years, 75 to 80 per cent of respondents have supported Japanese ODA. This large segment of the Japanese population is composed of those “actively in support of ODA” and those who support “the present level of ODA”. The number “actively in support of ODA” has been steadily declining, however, from 44.1 per cent in 1978 to 32.6 per cent in 1993. Those who believe “the present level of assistance is acceptable” now form the largest group, as this proportion has grown from 32.3 per cent in 1978 to 45.1 per cent in 1992. These trends may reflect various attitudes towards the government’s activities, as will be discussed below.

The number of people who believe ODA “should be terminated” or “should be reduced to a minimum level” has been gradually increasing; these two categories accounted for about 14 per cent of responses in 1993, as against 4.5 per cent in 1978. In particular, the percentage of those who think that ODA “should be reduced to a minimum level” has increased steadily during this period, from 3.7 per cent to 12.1 per cent. This increase cannot be simply interpreted as indicating a growing opposition to international development assistance. One may indeed infer from this trend that a gradually increasing proportion of the population considers that taxes revenues should be allocated more to domestic investment, to improve domestic social infrastructure and living conditions. It may be also assumed, however, that some respondents in these groups may support activities to assist underprivileged people in the developing world, but are suspicious of a government-initiated approach.

The proportion of those who expressed no opinion has declined from 17 to 19 per cent in the late 1970s to about 8 per cent in the 1990s. This may be due to greater public awareness of development activities, owing to the increase in the amount of available information concerning developing countries.

In light of these data, we can safely say that rallying public support for ODA is not a pressing problem for Japan.

Reasons for the High Level of Public Support

The high levels of public support could be due to the following factors:

1. The Japanese have not experienced “compassion fatigue”, because the steady economic growth that Japan enjoyed until the recent recession has made people less concerned about how public money is used. Although people may
not trust the capacities of their elected officials, they trust the administrative function of government. On the whole, they do not appear to feel much individual responsibility for supporting international development activities, but simply think ODA should be managed efficiently by the administration.

2. People believe that as Japan’s economic success has been heavily based on international trade, the country has a duty to help developing countries, and should participate more in the international community.

3. The Japanese people are little inclined to question the decisions and actions of their government. Nominal protests may be made, but people do not, on the whole, maintain long standing interest in the ways public money is spent.

4. Economic growth in the Asian region has created a positive image for assistance to these countries. The general perception is that ODA meets needs effectively.

5. “Starving babies” images are widely effective in demonstrating the importance of providing emergency aid to populations stricken by calamities, and most people may not make the distinction between such emergency aid and development aid.

The Growing Interest of Young People

Young people’s interest in development assistance has strongly increased. Interested youth can find plenty of information on development activities and developing countries. In fact, an increasing number of young people would like to be involved in development assistance on a full-time or part-time basis. This is indicated by the recent large increase in numbers of applications to join the Japan Overseas Co-operation Volunteers (JOCV) or United Nations Volunteers, although the effect of the recession on the job market may also be a factor here.

The number of development NGOs is also increasing. In Japan’s ODA - Annual Report 1994, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported that there were about 300 officially registered groups in Japan in 1992. An increasing number of Japanese NGOs (120 applications in 1994) apply for NGO aid funds. A similar trend is found in the Postal Savings scheme. More and more NGOs participate in government-supported events, such as the International Co-operation Festival, although some participants may take a critical stance on the government’s development approach.

Information from the Government Concerning ODA

The Japanese government has been taking an active role in promoting public understanding about ODA, and in general the tone of the information is unwaveringly positive and optimistic. The ODA Charter, which was set down in 1993, calls for the promotion of open access to information. The government approach ranges from the provision of relevant information in publications to the sponsorship of an International Co-operation Festival.

Publications

Several government agencies produce and distribute information in annual reports, evaluation reports, booklets and statistical data books. Increasingly, video materials are also produced and distributed through government agency channels.
**International Co-operation Plaza**

The government has set up the International Co-operation Plaza to heighten the transparency of ODA by allowing people ready access to information. The ODA Consulting Centre in the Plaza responds to visitors' questions, listens to proposals and complaints about ODA and provides information on how to participate in assistance activities, including voluntary programmes. The Plaza also sponsors a variety of meetings, seminars and so on.

**International Co-operation Festival**

The government uses International Co-operation Day as the occasion for a range of events related to international co-operation, and carries out nationwide campaigns including government information activities, commemorative symposia, lectures and photographic panel displays to promote awareness of and interest in the importance of economic co-operation. The largest and most influential event is the International Co-operation Festival, sponsored since 1992 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Open to the general public, jointly organised by the government and NGOs, it is intended to provide the public with an opportunity to understand the needs of developing countries and the importance of international co-operation.

The festival has now become a unique event, in which people are able to talk directly to members of each organisation or group at individual booths where photographs and all sorts of information are displayed. Entertainment is provided in the form of traditional music and performing arts of developing countries. Apart from government agencies, the number of participating NGOs has increased to more than 80 since 1992. The festival is said to have attracted more than 100,000 people over two days in 1994.

**International Co-operation of Local Governments**

Local governments have taken on a more significant role in meeting developing countries' diversifying requests for aid, particularly as regards the management of public utilities. One outcome of this trend is the promotion of greater public understanding of assistance activities at the local level.

**The Role of the Media**

Ian Smillie's conclusion that “the media have done a poor job of raising public consciousness on international development issues” is also valid for Japan. The newspapers frequently report news from developing countries, and occasionally report some Japan-funded development projects, but the reporting tends to be superficial, whether it bears on successful aid activities or on negative aspects (such as pay-offs in the bidding process, unutilised facilities and extraordinarily expensive input costs).

Reporting of the more substantial and complex issues concerning development activities is seriously deficient. Although the quality newspapers publish many analytical articles on economic topics, there is hardly any economic analysis in articles on development assistance. Topics such as the linkage between the country's macroeconomic position and the assistance required, sectoral perspectives on development problems, or the main issues at the project level (project identification, the implantation process and so forth) are rarely addressed.
Newspapers have also failed adequately to monitor and comment on ODA policy issues. The government has stated, “Japan is working towards the implementation of aid in accordance with clear philosophies and principles to address the needs of developing countries and their people” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan’s ODA - Annual Report 1993). The government’s basic philosophy of ODA is set forth in the ODA Charter, adopted in June 1990. It stresses environmental conservation, along with humanitarian considerations and recognition of interdependence. A particularly noteworthy statement is the 1991 ODA Guidelines, which explicitly relate Japan’s ODA to developing countries’ military expenditures, respect for human rights and other matters.

The ODA Charter

The Official Development Assistance Charter was adopted by the Cabinet in June 1990. The Charter clauses can be interpreted as the basic philosophy of ODA. The Charter stresses environmental conservation, along with humanitarian considerations and recognition of interdependence, which have traditionally formed the basic philosophy underlying Japan’s ODA principles.

The term “humanitarian considerations” in the Charter refers to “a world in which over a billion people are still suffering from famine and poverty — which all countries, developed and developing alike, must work together to tackle”. With these basic concepts in mind, Japan attaches central importance in its aid activities to “supporting the self-help efforts of developing countries towards economic take-off”.

Furthermore, the Charter mentions that it is important for Japan, as a peace-loving nation, to play a role commensurate with its position in the world, to maintain world peace and to ensure global prosperity.

Four ODA Guidelines

The following guidelines were adopted in 1991:

1. Pursuing environmental conservation and development in tandem.
2. Avoiding the use of ODA for military purposes or for aggravation of international conflicts.
3. Paying close attention to trends in recipient countries’ military expenditures, and their development and production of weapons of mass destruction, and export and imports of arms.
4. Paying close attention to efforts to promote democratisation and introduce market-oriented economies, and to basic human rights and freedoms.

In light of the Charter and the Guidelines, we would expect the mass media to pay full attention to issues such as developing countries’ military expenditures, democratisation and environmental protection. In the years since the announcement of the Guidelines, various questions should have arisen concerning, for example, Japan’s ODA provision to China or Indonesia. With few exceptions, however, the media have not criticised government failures to comply with the Guidelines in implementing ODA (the exceptions involve small countries, such as Myanmar).
Postal Savings for International Voluntary Aid

Postal savings accounts in Japan are much like bank deposit accounts. Total postal deposits exceed those of all other financial institutions combined. Owing to the government’s policy of providing access for depositors in every community, savings accounts can be held at more than 24,000 post offices across the country. Deposits in postal savings accounts are the major source of funds for the Fiscal Investment and Loan Programme, which is run by the Ministry of Finance. This mechanism largely funds government investment in domestic infrastructure and public works.

The Postal Savings for International Voluntary Aid is a new and unique mechanism which allows anybody to participate, albeit indirectly, in international development activities. Under this scheme, 20 per cent of the interest earned on savings deposited with the Post Office is used for international aid projects. These funds mainly support projects for emergency aid and poverty alleviation, or small-scale projects handled by NGOs (see Table 1). Most of the contributors are persuaded by the significance of this type of assistance approach. The scheme makes an enormous contribution to enhancing Japanese public awareness of development activities.

The Postal Savings for International Voluntary Aid was launched in January 1991. In the first three years, more than 13 million depositors contributed to the scheme. The funds collected have been allocated to 240 projects which are managed by 185 NGOs.

In addition to official notices of the employment of funds, depositors receive pamphlets and public relations magazines which include descriptions of the ways in which funds are utilised.

Development Education

Although development education has been actively pursued, Japan lags behind other countries in this respect. Around 1979, some Japanese NGOs and other non-profit organisations initiated development education in Japan, and the government also began to provide support for this kind of activity. Since then, the number of publications on development issues has been increasing.

At the official level, the Development Education Study Group, set up in July 1986, provides recommendations on the dissemination and implementation of development education to the Director-General of the Economic Co-operation Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As a result, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has put considerable effort into activities such as publishing materials to supplement social studies texts in school. Development education is provided through formal education and also through informal channels, such as open lectures for citizens. This approach is reinforced by the widespread provision of publications. Nevertheless, development issues have not yet taken their place in the core curriculum of schools, and the effectiveness of development education remains to be seen.

To represent the private sector, the Development Education Information Centre was established in July 1988. The Centre has amassed data and materials about development education and development problems and has made this information available to the general public, attempting to consolidate relationships between NGOs, school groups and social educational organisations.
Table 1. Postal Savings for International Voluntary Aid: contributions and performance, 1992

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of depositors: 3.7 million (approx.)</th>
<th>Total interest earned: Y 10.45 billion (approx.)</th>
<th>Aid contribution: Y 2.42 billion (approx.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allocation of aid contribution:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total allocation (after tax)</td>
<td>Y 2 420 million</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>100 million</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency reserve</td>
<td>120 million</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992 allocation</td>
<td>2 190 million</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient organisations</td>
<td>185</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient programmes</td>
<td>240</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient countries</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Allocation by Major Recipient Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipient groups</th>
<th>No. of programmes</th>
<th>Amount (Y million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Needy women</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>294.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child welfare</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>540.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>258.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underprivileged urban residents</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>68.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee and disaster relief (excluding Gulf war)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>251.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of Gulf war</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>155.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General public welfare</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>617.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>240</strong></td>
<td><strong>2 185.63</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Allocation by Categories of Aid**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No. of programmes</th>
<th>Amount (Y million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>56.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical care, hygiene</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>667.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medical care</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>347.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public health guidance</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>215.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medicines, medical equipment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medical and health facilities</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>87.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>358.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anti-illiteracy education</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>general education</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>75.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scholarships, educational materials</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>47.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>educational facilities</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>177.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job training, technical instruction</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>305.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local agricultural development,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agricultural instruction</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>295.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of general welfare</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>247.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental conservation</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>431.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>261</strong></td>
<td><strong>2 362.72</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications.*
Development education activities have thus been spreading, but new problems have also become apparent. For example, the activities of the central government, local governments and NGOs are not well co-ordinated, largely because of different stances towards development. Today, development education in Japan has moved from providing introductory information and knowledge into a second stage: involving the public in a more in-depth discussion of development issues. What kinds of development issues should be introduced and analysed, and from what points of view, and which ones, are becoming major issues of development education.

Notes

1. Despite the high level of support for ODA, people tend to hold contradictory opinions on international issues. This was apparent in arguments about liberalising rice imports. On the one hand, people who willingly support parliamentarians’ proposals to send surplus rice to poor countries struck by disaster do not understand that this rice should be carefully handled so as not to affect local farmers’ price incentives. On the other, the same people may oppose liberalising rice imports from developing countries, because of the need to maintain high rice prices for Japanese farmers.

2. Taking into account discussions in publications and at NGO-organised meetings, many people who think it imperative to help the needy and protect the environment in developing countries tend to show their doubt, suspicion and criticism of a government-controlled approach to aid, believing that government ODA often supports dictatorships and privileged classes in recipient countries, thus providing little benefit to the needy, or else contributes to rapid environmental degradation.

Who Shapes and Leads Public Attitudes On Development Co-Operation?

Tony German

Summary

Do public attitudes really inhibit rich countries' actions on development co-operation? If so, how are these attitudes formed? Might a change in public attitudes lead to Development Assistance Committee (DAC) countries' placing a higher priority on development?

In fact, most of the public does not have an attitude towards development co-operation. People do have a clear attitude in favour of relieving poverty, but they do not see development co-operation as a strategy for poverty reduction, nor do they see the complexity of development co-operation, which goes well beyond aid policy.

Public attitudes are influenced by several actors, of which the media are undeniably the most important in shaping opinion on developing countries. Although television coverage is often hackneyed, at its best it is unrivalled in presenting the issues of development. Moreover, it can have a lasting impact, particularly when broadcasters have worked together in several countries to present a series of programmes (for example, the six-week period known as One World 1992). Merely increasing media coverage of development, however, is by no means a certain way of moving development up the public agenda.

Governments have a major responsibility to their citizens to account for appropriate use of resources and can lead public opinion if they choose to do so. The case of Japan is illuminating. The government has announced its intention to increase official development assistance by 50 per cent over the next five years. At the same time, the public information budget of the aid agency was increased fivefold in 1992 and curriculum changes to promote international understanding are taking place in schools.

Most governments do not seek to lead opinion on development, however, and they are not likely to do so until they change their own attitudes towards development co-operation, which now generally plays a role subordinate to foreign and trade policy.

Improvements in the quality of aid, to which the DAC has given much attention, may contribute to a positive public attitude on development co-operation. At present, some of the strongest supporters of development co-operation — the NGOs — have serious doubts as to the effectiveness of official aid in actually reducing poverty.
NGOs generally are viewed more favourably than governments on development issues, so that their appeals to the public, although sometimes contradictory in presenting both positive and negative images of aid, can be influential. Their indirect influence, through their effective use of the media, may be even greater.

Putting more resources into educating the public appears to pay off in better aid policies; at least, the example of the Netherlands supports this view. NGOs can also educate the public by promoting "fair trade".

Two other possible actors — the corporate sector and Southern governments— have generally kept low profiles in promoting development awareness in the North, although Southern NGOs often help their Northern partners in educational work.

The primacy of the personal stands out in all development information and education activities. Using returned volunteers, approaching interest groups on their particular interests, building connections between localities at home and abroad — all these actions help to build understanding through participation.

The challenge facing all those committed to development is to channel the sustained humanitarian impulses of the public, and to articulate a coherent view of development co-operation which shows the public where it fits into the picture. Many can play a part — NGOs, the media, the corporate sector, schools and churches — but given the global scale of the challenge, there can be little doubt of the need for vision and clear political leadership.

Introduction

Many DAC donor governments would have us believe that when it comes to development co-operation, to quote US Vice-President Al Gore, “the maximum that is politically feasible still falls short of the minimum that is truly effective”2. The suggestion is that public attitudes towards development co-operation are a key obstacle to increased aid, substantial debt reduction and further action to give developing countries a fair chance to compete in international trade.

Do public attitudes really inhibit rich countries' actions on development co-operation? If so, how are these attitudes formed? Might a change in public attitude lead to DAC countries' placing a higher priority on development, and to their becoming more energetic and effective partners with developing countries in the shared task of ending poverty and promoting sustainable development?

Public Attitudes Towards Poverty, Aid and Development Co-operation

On the premise that it is always wise to address public attitudes as they are, not as one would like them to be, we should recognise from the start that strictly speaking, most of the public does not have an attitude towards development co-operation.

The public does have a clear attitude towards poverty. Opinion polls and fund-raising appeals for emergency relief have repeatedly demonstrated public concern for families in acute need, for children growing up without enough to eat, denied basic health care and the chance to go to school. When presented with clear cases of inequality or injustice — to people, even to whole countries — the public does care. Women denied literacy and real choice over the size of their families,
men denied the dignity of earning even a meagre living for their families, whole countries being burdened by unpayable debts or impossible terms of trade — these are issues which can and do stir millions of ordinary members of the public.

This is not the case for development co-operation. Outside the development lobby — governmental, non-governmental and commercial aid organisations, a handful of academics, journalists and politicians — the term is barely recognised, much as the term “environment” was not understood a decade or two ago.

Development co-operation is, in fact, a broad and complex idea. It encompasses not only the issues of poverty and aid, which are widely understood, but also aspects of foreign policy, international economics and post-cold war concepts such as “humanitarian security”, which many politicians are still coming to terms with. Many governments still behave as if development co-operation were really just “aid policy”. It would, therefore, be asking a lot to expect the public to perceive development co-operation as a strategy for poverty reduction and sustainable development.

Starting from things as they are — with the public not seeing development co-operation as a whole, but seeing some of its component parts (poverty, aid, the paradox of destroying food whilst children are malnourished) — we shall examine how the attitudes of different sections of society have been shaped. This may provide some clues as to how the public may be helped to understand development co-operation as a model for the relations between peoples and states.

Some Key Considerations

Public attitudes in OECD countries are shaped by a wide variety of influences. Some of these are pervasive: most people will have received some exposure to development issues at school and through the media. Governments, churches and NGOs may not achieve such universal coverage as schools and the media, but directly or indirectly, they are major players in shaping ideas and attitudes towards development.

Other influences may be narrow in scope, but their impact on the perceptions of sections of the public may be more substantial: personal experience of developing countries is growing, and its multiplier effect in shaping attitudes to development has long been important in many countries.

In examining the contributions of different players to the formation of public attitudes, three considerations should be borne in mind.

First, we must distinguish between quantitative and qualitative influences on opinion. Almost everyone sees acute need on television several times a year, but relatively few people have worked as volunteers overseas. The latter experience may encourage a lifelong commitment to development, but how should this be weighed against the impact of a few seconds of famine footage between soap operas will have on millions?

Second, how do the different actors who shape public opinion perceive their role? Is it to provide information (a government department’s duty to explain how taxpayers’ money was spent on aid)? Is it to shape perceptions (the development educator explaining the idea of interdependence)? Or is it to lead public attitudes and even rally commitment (Brandt, Brundland, Geldof, NGOs)?
Third, is the public being led to believe that development is mainly about aid for people “over there”? Or is there potential in the post-cold war world for a more profound change, for development co-operation to be seen not as essentially about “the poor” but about mutual interest in economic development and human security.

The Actors who Contribute to Public Attitudes

The Media

The importance of the media is undeniable. Polling evidence suggests that television, the press and radio are, by far, the primary means by which the majority of people in OECD countries learn about developing countries. What is less clear is how the information presented helps to shape public attitudes.

Some argue that the news focus on conflict and famine perpetuates a public perception of developing countries as dangerous, crisis-ridden and helpless and therefore leads to negative attitudes. At the same time, however, the media are an essential ally for aid agencies that wish to put public pressure on governments to respond to emergencies. Although television coverage of development is often hackneyed — the Hercules being loaded with sacks of grain, the (expatriate) nurse injecting the African child — television at its best is unrivalled in its capacity to present both the problems of the developing world and the shared issues facing developed and developing countries.

Whilst many professional fund-raisers argue that the large initial response to television appeals is difficult to translate into long-term commitment, some television has made a lasting impact. In 1977, as the direct result of “Five Minutes to Midnight”, a documentary shown in the United Kingdom, five local overseas aid trusts were established south of London. These trusts raised tens of thousands of pounds and a great deal of local awareness over many years. At the other end of the spectrum, the Live Aid phenomenon was possible only because of television. Whilst it did not manage permanently to lift development issues up the public agenda, as many had hoped, it has left a sustained impression, especially on younger people, and a legacy of activity which continues a decade later.

The media have attempted to convey development ideas to the public through a variety of approaches: not only news, schools programming and documentaries, but drama, music, and such efforts as Comic Relief.

Through such initiatives as One World Media, broadcasters from different countries have worked together in an attempt to promote development ideas beyond their narrow traditional audience. During One World 1992, a series of programmes marking the Earth Summit was seen in 98 countries. In the United Kingdom alone, over a six-week period 40 million people are estimated to have watched some of the dozens of programmes broadcast during the season. With One World 1994 and One World 1995, planned to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, a regular and concentrated media presentation on sustainable development has been established in many OECD countries.

It may have been tempting in the past to blame poor media coverage for inadequate public knowledge of development and negative public attitudes, but in an age of consumer sovereignty, it becomes increasingly difficult to deny that the public gets the media it demands. In the United Kingdom, certainly, even NGOs will admit that broadcasters and journalists in the quality press allocate a considerable amount of time to development — perhaps more than might be expected for what remains the preoccupation of a minority. As things stand, even
if the UK media were to double their coverage of development issues, it is by no means certain that this would have the effect of moving development sustainably up the public agenda.

OECD Governments

Whilst the boundaries of government competence shift somewhat over time, there are several reasons why OECD governments have a critical responsibility vis-à-vis public attitudes towards development co-operation.

First, governments are charged with undertaking certain activities which the citizen cannot discharge alone: the relationship between peoples of rich and poor countries must be conducted largely through the medium of governments. Second, governments are normally seen as having an over-riding duty to ensure the security of their populations. In the emerging world order, many new threats to human security — particularly the conflict which has its roots in poverty and skewed distribution of resources — are, as the December 1991 DAC High-Level Meeting noted, central to the development co-operation agenda. Third, governments are expected to educate, to reflect and lead public opinion, and to account to citizens for the appropriate use of resources.

Before examining the way governments relate to public opinion on development, it is worth noting that “government” is taken sometimes to mean ministers and sometimes to mean departments and the civil servants who run them. Clearly, it is important to distinguish between the two.

Whilst informing the public and explaining government policy are often left to civil servants, the political questions of reflecting and leading public opinion are properly the business of ministers. If, on an occasion such as the Earth Summit, governments are seen to be lacking in vision in their approach to development issues, the criticism should be directed at the politicians, not the bureaucrats. (In fairness to DAC Members, we must bear in mind that they may be struggling to assert a development co-operation approach with prime ministers and finance, trade, and foreign ministers who do not share their perceptions.)

Governments, Public Opinion and Aid

The most visible action of governments on development co-operation is the allocation of aid. This is the issue that DAC Members have most closely linked to public opinion. It is widely taken as axiomatic that there is a close correlation between public opinion and aid levels, but the evidence for this is shaky.

Opinion polls in Norway show that support for aid rose from 77 per cent to 84 per cent between 1990 and 1993; yet over the same period Norwegian aid fell from 1.17 per cent of GNP to 1.01 per cent, removing Norway from the leadership of DAC donors for the first time in a decade.

Polling evidence from the United Kingdom over 30 years has shown a consistent majority in favour of overseas aid, but this has not prevented the decline in UK aid from 0.51 per cent of GNP in 1979 to 0.31 per cent in 1993. UK polls taken in 1988, 1989, 1991 and 1992 do not show much sign of compassion fatigue, as 71 per cent, 72 per cent, 85 per cent and 75 per cent of respondents, respectively, expressed support for aid. Yet by 1996 UK aid will have almost halved as a percentage of GNP in less than two decades.

Japan’s aid budget (discussed in detail below) is rising substantially despite a late 1992 government poll which showed that only 32 per cent of people supported increased aid — a record low, six percentage points down from the previous year.
Evidence from NGOs\(^8\) suggests that faced with budget cuts, unemployment and reduced services at home, the OECD public is more preoccupied with domestic need and less inclined to increase aid. The evidence is patchy, however; polls in some countries show reduced support for aid; in others, there is no evidence of change; and despite recession, polls in some countries show increases in support for aid. These results, added to the experience gained from direct links with the public, lead NGOs to dispute the picture of universal aid fatigue, or compassion fatigue, which many official donors perceive. Certainly NGOs do not detect a decline in public commitment strong enough to justify the 7.8 per cent decline in aid from DAC donors between 1992 and 1993 (just one year after so many had reaffirmed their commitment to 0.7 per cent of GNP at the Earth Summit).

**Governments’ Responsibility to Lead Opinion**

From the perspective of NGOs, there is a real danger that a “talking down” of support for aid may become a self-fulfilling prophesy\(^9\). A key question is, what about governments’ responsibility to lead public opinion?

The case of Japan is illuminating. Already the world’s largest donor, Japan intends to increase its aid by 50 per cent over the five years starting in 1993, even though public support for increasing ODA is at its lowest since polling began in 1977.

Back in Tokyo, we are now facing serious recession, and our people have also suffered a series of natural disasters, including an earthquake in the north and a volcanic eruption in the south, as well as a disastrous rice harvest last year and so forth. Therefore, some people in Japan are expressing opinions critical of ODA. Indeed, what some people call “aid fatigue” has begun to be seen. But we are advocating the necessity of ODA and at the same time emphasizing the importance of recipient countries’ good governance, transparency and accountability, and efficient and effective implementation of our ODA\(^10\).

Japan’s 1990 ODA Charter outlines several steps to promote understanding and support for Japan’s ODA policies. By 1994, international understanding will be on the curriculum of elementary, junior and senior high schools. The ODA public relations budget was increased fivefold in 1992, and a subsidiary of the Foreign Ministry has now opened an “ODA showroom” in central Tokyo.

Three motives behind Japan’s awareness campaign have been identified: to build a cadre of staff capable of managing Japan’s aid programme, to counter what is seen as a distorted image of Japan’s ODA, and to build support for ODA among the public.

The Japanese experience ties in with evidence from Norway which links a favourable public attitude towards aid to long-term information work funded by NORAD.

Evidence for a correlation between public opinion and aid allocations is far from convincing. On the contrary, the available evidence suggests the following. First, the basic humanitarian commitment of the public to alleviating poverty is strong and inelastic. Second, government actions on aid allocations are shaped by a wide range of factors. High on the list are economic and foreign policy considerations. Public opinion is much further down, essentially because development co-operation does not win votes (a May 1991 UK poll showed that a political party’s policy on aid and development would not influence the voting intention of 62 per cent of respondents\(^11\)). Third, whatever aid ministers may think, most governments are not at present prepared to demonstrate the leadership necessary to maintain aid levels, let alone to fulfil their commitments to the UN target.
Human Security and Sustainable Development

If governments have not been prepared to lead opinion on aid levels, what are the prospects on the wider issues of development? The 1993 DAC Chair's Report noted the "unprecedented opportunity to build human security throughout the world." It also underlined the crucial link between public attitudes and progress on development co-operation:

To gain increased public support to meet these new development needs it is essential to demonstrate to donor publics that aid is being used efficiently and effectively. They [the public] also need to know what the new challenges of development are. DAC member aid agencies have a clear responsibility to inform their publics of what has been achieved over the decades following World War II. Doing so is crucial if we are to move through the transition of the 1990s to build human security for all future generations.

Who in the development lobby would disagree? These sentiments, together with many of the DAC orientations agreed at the December 1993 DAC High-Level Meeting, sketch out the challenge and underline the explicit link between public opinion and the need for development co-operation to become "a more central policy concern for governments". To make this happen, however, governments themselves need to change their attitudes towards development co-operation, and then to embark on a sustained campaign of public education.

At present, aid or development policy in many OECD donor countries is split between several ministries, which illustrates the fact that development is generally regarded as subordinate to foreign policy, trade priorities and indeed most areas of government activity. A DAC paper goes some way to acknowledging the peripheral status of aid administration: "it is sometimes in a precarious, sensitive situation vis-à-vis ... the political system". The aid portfolio is a cabinet post in only a quarter of DAC donors. Only in one country is aid policy-making and co-ordination set at the highest level of government.

Unless attitudes towards development co-operation at the highest levels undergo something of a sea change, inserting a persuasive development co-operation perspective into sensitive areas of government policy such as arms exports and lowering import barriers — which is what coherence in development co-operation would entail — looks a forlorn hope.

Nevertheless, there are grounds for optimism that governments may rise to the challenge of leading public opinion on development. In the past, public opinion has been changed on issues such as slavery and the franchise. Today, governments are making significant efforts on AIDS, drugs and the environment. As Al Gore points out:

"Though it has never yet been established on a global scale, the establishment of a single shared goal as the central organizing principle for every institution in society has been realized by free nations several times in modern history."

The Role of the DAC

The DAC has put much effort into considering the new and broader rationale for aid: responding to the needs of countries in transition as well as those in poverty; meeting the global threat to the environment; tackling the challenges of drugs, migration and population growth; and contributing to security in the post-cold war world.
Whilst donors have been fairly quick to devote aid money to these ends, to date most of them have not put sufficient effort into explaining to the public how development co-operation can help to meet the challenges. Donors have placed great emphasis on coherence and participation, but have not made much headway in engaging the OECD public on these issues; yet if serious efforts are to be made to tackle distortions of the global economy caused by such institutions as the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union, then donors will need to win the approval of their publics for difficult decisions in the long-term interest of sustainable development for both rich and poor.

Public Opinion and Aid Quality

The improvements in aid quality for which donors work at the DAC should not be overlooked as a factor contributing to a positive public attitude on development assistance and co-operation. By helping donors to agree to common standards for development assistance — e.g. in the Principles for Effective Aid or through the Helsinki package on mixed credits — the DAC and Development Co-operation Directorate contribute to aid effectiveness and the proper use of scarce aid resources, and thus to public confidence in and support for development assistance.

As has already been noted, public support for official aid in many donor countries is primarily based on humanitarian concern. The question ordinary people ask about aid is: how much of my money gets to the people who need help most? In the 1993 DAC Report this issue of how much aid goes to “human priority concerns” was briefly discussed. There is little doubt that a great deal of confusion and cynicism about aid in the public mind would be allayed if the DAC could overcome the obvious difficulties and make common standards in this area a top priority.

Although many people look to the DAC to maintain the integrity of aid against a variety of pressures, the annual DAC Report has a rather low public profile. Other reports — from the World Bank, UNDP and UNICEF — receive considerably more attention. If donors wish to reassure the public on aid and underline the importance of development co-operation, ensuring a wider circulation for the report would be a useful step.

NGOs

Opinions differ as to the degree of influence which NGOs exercise over public attitudes, but one clear trend in the last decade is a clear intention on the part of many NGOs to place more emphasis on advocacy: the shaping of opinion and the changing of policy.

NGOs have a special status in the mind of the public. Whereas governments are perceived as large, ponderous, resource-hungry and often unable to solve problems, NGOs are associated with volunteerism, idealism and action. Moreover, one can choose whether or not to give them money. It is hardly surprising that the public is more inclined to believe what NGOs say than to believe governments.

NGOs influence public attitudes both directly and, perhaps more significantly, indirectly. Their immediate influence is on supporters. Some of these are likely to be committed to development but passive, except in cash terms; others can be mobilised by NGOs in an attempt to change public opinion through a range of activities, from school visits through letter-writing campaigns to direct lobbying of politicians. People probably underestimate NGO influence when they tell pollsters
who shapes their views on development issues, because they do not realise that the
television programme or newspaper article they saw was very likely initiated by
an NGO.

The Debate Over Aid Quality

Energetic in their defence of aid volumes, NGOs are also among the most
persistent critics of the quality of official aid. Throughout 1994, the British
government’s explicit use of aid to Malaysia to secure jobs and exports was fiercely
and prominently criticised by the NGO community. For years, the aid activities of
the World Bank have come under sustained attack.

What impression is left in the mind of the public when NGOs claim that aid
agencies are misusing aid and impoverishing the very people the public wants to
help? Unfortunately, the answer to this question is unknown. Predictably,
governments argue that NGOs are in danger of undermining the case for aid
altogether. The NGOs counter that it is the use of aid for purposes other than
benefiting the poor which brings aid into disrepute — not the NGOs who blow the
whistle on such activities. Certainly, it is not illogical to argue for more and better
aid, but whether the public, subjected to a barrage of argument and counterclaim,
will remain as supportive of aid is open to question. To be sure, governments
which, under the rubric of good governance, have stressed the role of the non-
government sector, the need for pluralism, participation and democratic debate,
are not in a position to be too resentful of NGO comment. By the same token,
however, as the influence of NGOs on public attitudes and government actions
continues to increase, so does the need for NGOs to make clear their own credentials
in aid delivery as well as their accountability for the views they put forward.

The Dilemma of Which Image to Present

NGOs may have contradictory motives in presenting the developing world
to the OECD public. Many NGOs regard fostering positive public attitudes
towards developing countries as a necessary step in a fundamental shift in
relationships between rich and poor countries. They therefore prefer to present
positive images which avoid the slippery slope of public prejudice. The reluctance
of some NGOs to address issues such as corruption or to show people in the South
as victims, passive or dependent is rooted in this concern, which sometimes reaches
the point where NGOs become unwilling to show that poor people live in poverty.

At the other end of the spectrum, some fund-raisers will use any image,
however degrading, provided that it elicits a response. There is no doubt that the
public responds best to raw need.

Choosing how to balance these two approaches to the public is a constant
dilemma for NGOs that wish to appeal to humanitarian commitment — an
emotion — and at the same time want to avoid paternalism and present development
co-operation as a shared endeavour based on equality and mutual benefit — a
more cerebral appeal. Some NGOs have recognised this conflict and have attempted
to combine a fund-raising appeal with a development co-operation message,
accepting the lower financial returns that such an approach virtually guarantees.

Unfortunately, NGO marketing strategies — which underline real need and
the capacity to do something about it — often lead to simplistic and over-optimistic
presentations and an overstatement of what the NGO can achieve. If NGOs tell the
public that they can transform a family’s life for £10, the public may want to know
why the official aid budget cannot achieve similar results. The implicit contrast
with official aid may be inimical to public support for ODA.
Development Education

In its 1992 report, the DAC commented on research into public spending on development education, advancing the theory that positive public attitudes to overseas aid are fostered by public knowledge and understanding. The best example of this is the Netherlands, where spending on development education is the highest reported, and the quantity and quality of aid are also high. A recent UK study concluded that “people are now better informed about issues affecting the developing world than they were a generation ago. As a result they respond better to appeals, whether for famine relief or for long-term development and conservation work”.

The impact of development awareness exercises is both difficult to quantify and notoriously unquantified, but at least one study produced interesting results: in a targeted awareness-raising campaign on the issue of child survival undertaken by UNICEF in seven US cities during the 1980s, “before and after” surveys demonstrated that the campaign had made a measurable impact on the attitudes of over 300 local opinion formers and policy makers.

In most donor countries, NGOs bear a disproportionate share of responsibility for shaping public attitudes. Despite donors’ concern about public support for aid, some DAC Members (Germany, France, New Zealand) have recently cut their already limited support for development education. Figures for DAC donor spending on development education are incomplete and difficult to compare, but they range from the Netherlands, which spends $1.05 per head on development education (0.62 per cent of ODA), to the United Kingdom, which spends a meagre $0.02 per head (0.04 percent of ODA).

The bulk of formal development education takes place in schools, where the idealism of youth can be fostered and channelled. Some DAC donor departments make an explicit effort to work with government education departments, but development education remains marginal: development is not an explicit component in the curriculum, and little or no provision is made for teacher training, unless NGOs provide it.

Harnessing Consumerism for Development

For decades some NGOs have been trying to build a commitment to development through the mechanism of “fair trade”. The coffee importers of Tampere, Finland, have for the past 25 years imported “fair trade” coffee from a cooperative in Tanzania and sold it locally.

More recently, through the development of Max Havelaar, Café Direct, Traidcraft, Transfair, Rugmark and others, the issue of fair trade has started to move into the mainstream, with fair-trade products available to the general public on supermarket shelves, not just on charity stalls. According to Klaus Piepel of Misierior, Germany, “Consumer- or company-oriented campaigns are one of the most effective means for development education and real influence on the policies of companies. They translate difficult issues to a level that people can understand.”

Through fair-trade work which aims to engage people who are outside the normal development constituency, NGOs have started to understand more about the general public which they seek to influence. They understand, for instance, that it is women who make consumer choices and initiate household or life-style changes. NGOs are also coming to terms with the need to convey the development message differently according to the attitudes of different sectors of the market. For example, purchasers of premium coffee products (roast and ground coffee, coffee beans) are more likely to be supportive of development issues and less worried
about being told that they are doing good by their purchase than are purchasers in the instant coffee market, where quality and price are the two important issues. Consumers like to "discover" that they are doing good and this may influence future purchases and build brand loyalty. The international success of the Bodyshop provides further evidence of the consumer potential of trading which successfully fuses environment and development.

The work of NGOs in fair trade has made very modest inroads into public awareness of the realities of international trade. Giving people a glimpse of interdependence and enabling them to do a little good by paying a fraction more is the easy part. Altogether more difficult is explaining how development cooperation will address the migration of OECD jobs to the developing world.

Who Invests in Shaping and Leading Public Opinion?

A number of actors invest in shaping public attitudes on development. Governments and NGOs invest because of their need to account for how they spend taxpayers' and donors' money, their need to maintain public support and, to a greater or lesser degree, their wish to educate. The media cover development for journalistic reasons — to report, sometimes to witness — and clearly they sometimes wish to use their powerful position for humanitarian reasons (for instance, when journalists consciously use their status to bring a neglected famine to attention). Schools, churches and politicians focus on development because of a duty to inform and often a wish to lead opinion (development is one area where it is difficult even for cynics to accuse politicians of self-interest, because there are few votes to be gained).

One group which is conspicuously missing from this list of actors is oddly enough amongst the main beneficiaries of aid: the corporate sector. The world spends $50 billion a year on aid, and a substantial proportion of this is implemented through the commercial sector. Aid is big business. The corporate sector does invest in maintaining its profile with the big aid spenders: the European Union, the major bilateral donors and some UN agencies. From time to time, corporate groups go public in defence of aid levels (for example, the Export Group for the Constructional Industries in the United Kingdom). Apart from the Business Council for Sustainable Development, however, the corporate sector keeps a very low profile. In the United Kingdom, certainly, it appears to make little effort to engage the public, even to the extent of advertising development success stories.

Southern Influences on OECD Public Attitudes

The information on recipient governments presented to the OECD public is often negative in tone and content: corruption, conflict and inefficiency are the three most common themes. Recipient states individually and collectively do not seem to have tried to inform the OECD public of the successes of development cooperation, perhaps because they do not have the resources to invest in it, perhaps because it is not seen as a priority, perhaps because the OECD media are not receptive.

In contrast, Southern NGOs, often helped by Northern partners, are becoming increasingly effective at reaching opinion formers and policy makers in the North.
The use of Southern advocates in trade policy work has been extremely effective, particularly with politicians. One official who attended a presentation by a farmer from the Sahel on the issue of EU beef dumping said, “If I was an MP I would have been impressed ... He was clearly personally affected; he was 70 plus, in his Sahelian clothes and blind in one eye — much better than the slick PR men.”

The Primacy of the Personal

As the impact of the Sahelian farmer’s testimony illustrates, the importance of putting a human face on development co-operation cannot be overstated. For all their potential drawbacks, child sponsorship agencies have demonstrated most effectively the power of bringing development co-operation down to a one-to-one level. On a community level, the modest but still significant success of the twinning and linking movements tells the same story: people need to identify with other people, to understand problems in human terms. NGOs, even those which disapprove of sponsorship, almost always use case studies extensively in their campaigning and advertising material. The frequent involvement of celebrities in appeals or as “ambassadors”, mechanisms which allow donors to earmark funds for a particular project, the use of an individual to personify the plight of millions in a famine — these are all illustrations of the human factor.

Direct personal experience is a powerful weapon. Some of the big volunteer agencies have developed structures and techniques to put their returned volunteers to use. This approach is now receiving serious attention in organisations such as the United Kingdom’s Voluntary Service Overseas, whose “Second Departure” initiative allows volunteers to build on their work overseas by promoting and explaining development in their home communities.

Taking this idea one stage further, some NGOs are now based simply around an outreach capacity. Comhlamb, a group of returned volunteers in Ireland, sees its role as to take on NGO research and positions and, using its network of returned volunteers, to spread these messages to the wider public.

Another method of engaging and shaping public attitudes is the “interest group” approach, which focusses its appeal on a clearly identified constituency such as farmers, doctors or some other homogeneous group. Harnessing the group’s special knowledge or experience, or appealing to a shared skill or concern, can help to build a powerful sense of solidarity. Thus the French NGO Solagral, which has been working on the issues of surplus production and dumping since the early 1980s, has built links and alliances with farming interests in France. German NGOs working on the issue of chocolate are seeking to build links with all levels of the chocolate industry, in order to minimise opposition to their campaign and to draw in support.

Participation

During the Bosnian crisis, a new phenomenon in the United Kingdom has been the number of local direct-aid initiatives. Local collections of food, clothing, medicine and fuel have been driven straight to the war zone, despite the tut-tutting of larger agencies and aid officials. Although this may not be the most cost-effective way to distribute aid, it underlines the powerful human impulse not only to identify but to do something.
One advantage that NGOs have over official donors is that they enable the public to become an active participant in the development process. NGO supporters do not just contribute passively through tax; they can rattle a tin in the street, hold a fund-raising event, involve their local church or school, write to the press or lobby a member of Parliament. On occasion, NGOs undoubtedly let supporters undertake a particular activity, not because of its particular contribution to fund-raising or awareness raising, but simply because public involvement is critical.

Environmental agencies seem to have learned this lesson well. By recycling bottles or paper, or even by turning off the light, we can all feel part of the environmental movement. Indeed, depending on how much energy and commitment they have, people can make being “green” an important part of everyday life. Development NGOs and agencies, however, have been less successful in showing the public ways of becoming active partners in the development process.

Should Public Attitudes Shape Government Actions or Vice Versa?

When future generations come to ask why absolute poverty was allowed to prevail in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, they may ask whether it was public indifference or a failure of leadership that led to inaction.

The evidence presented above suggests that, in fact, the public is not indifferent. People may find it difficult to sustain a focus on development; they may find it difficult to grasp all the complexities of interdependence; they may not see how they can make a difference to the overall issue; but their capacity to make a generous response to the needs of others and to respond to a shared challenge should not be underestimated.

Political leadership is often an essential catalyst for progressive action by societies, especially when problems must be tackled on an international level. In fact, government responses over the last decade to the twin challenges of environment and development have been an illustration of the tyranny of pragmatism, the triumph of cost over value, of the short term over the long. In the marketplace of ideas, not many politicians have been prepared to offer idealism or moral vision, despite evidence that the public may be hungry for leadership as we approach the year 2000.

Conclusions

The OECD conscience has flickered several times over the last two decades: over Bangladesh in the early 1970s; Ethiopia in 1985; Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia recently. Each time, the public has made a generous and concerned humanitarian response to acute need. Even when it appeared that Live Aid might transform development into the much awaited “idea whose time has come”, the development community and the public could not sustain the focus. Hopes that the Earth Summit might fuse environment and development, and mobilise a critical mass of public opinion that would put poverty reduction and sustainable development at the top of the agenda, have also proved unfounded.

If public attitudes to development co-operation have failed to take a great leap forward, the evidence affords no reason to paint a universal picture of opinion turning against aid and a public wearied by persistent poverty and pervasive conflict. The basic humanitarian impulses of fairness and compassion, which underlie development co-operation, appear to be as strong as ever.
In some OECD countries (particularly those which have become donors relatively recently), development has a very low profile. In others — for instance, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom — though the public still does not put development anywhere near the top of its agenda, significant progress has been made in public awareness of development co-operation issues. Relations with developing countries used to be seen simply as an aid issue, but today, the globalisation of communications, investment and jobs, the blurring of distinctions between developed and developing countries and the emerging idea of human security seem to indicate that, at least amongst policy makers and opinion formers, development co-operation may be given real priority.

The challenge facing all those committed to development is to build on these signs, to channel the sustained humanitarian impulses of the public and to articulate a coherent view of development co-operation, showing the public where it fits into the picture. Many actors can play a part — NGOs, the media, the corporate sector, schools and churches — but given the global scale of the challenge, there can be little doubt of the need for vision and clear political leadership.
1. The scope of this paper is modest and a disproportionate number of the examples are drawn from the United Kingdom, but an effort has been made to ensure that the ideas have a wider application. Several illustrations from other OECD countries are based on the work of colleagues who contribute to *The Reality of Aid*, an annual report on official aid published by ACTIONAID and written by NGO members of ICVA and EUROSTEP from 20 donor countries.

2. Al Gore, "Earth in the Balance", *Earthscan*, 1992. Gore was referring to the environment, but many of his observations apply just as directly to development co-operation.

3. For example, IBT's "Bitter Harvest".

4. Celebrities such as Paul Simon have helped to stimulate interest in contemporary African music. Similarly, musicians such as Sting have attempted to use their position to publicise environmental and development issues facing communities in Latin America.

5. "Aid ministers and heads of agencies expressed their conviction that these global challenges can only be addressed effectively if development co-operation becomes a more central policy concern for governments in the 1990s" [SG/Press (91) 72].

6. The 1993 Chair's Report, for example, explicitly links "waning public and parliamentary support in donor countries" to the scarcity of resources for development.

7. Polls from Marplan, 1988; Harris, 1989 and 1991; Band and Brown, 1992; all commissioned by ACTIONAID.

8. For example, the 20 ICVA and EUROSTEP members contributing to *The Reality of Aid*, May 1994.

9. Of course, NGOs would say this. We address below the whole issue of NGO attacks on aid and the impact they have on public confidence.

10. Hideaki Ueda, Deputy Director-General, Economic Co-operation Bureau, Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 1994; my emphasis.

11. Harris poll for ACTIONAID.

12. In Brussels it is said that the development commissioner's job is close to being the wooden spoon portfolio, even though the European Union and its member states now distribute almost half of world aid.


15. The effectiveness of the campaign was independently scrutinised by Public Agenda.


17. This may in part explain why it is not possible to buy a popular development magazine in the United Kingdom, even though stores that sell newspapers will display a range of magazines on almost every conceivable subject, from football to flower arranging to war, and even though the people who regularly support the major British NGOs tend to be an attractive group to advertisers. One possible explanation for this phenomenon is people have fewer available ways of being active in development, unlike football or flower arranging. Another is that people may care and want to help, but are not really interested enough to want to learn more.

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The Wings of Defeat: Towards a New Development Education Paradigm

Pierre Pradervand

Definitions, like questions and metaphors, are instruments for thinking. Their authority rests entirely on their usefulness, not on their correctness. Definitions are hypotheses and embedded in them is a particular philosophical, sociological or epistemological point of view. The definition of something is usually the start of a dispute, not the settlement.

(Neil Postman, Teaching as a Conserver Activity)

Summary

How do we define development? Although many of us seek to avoid defining it altogether, the predominant model has clearly been “Westernisation”. This model has resulted in major advances in life expectancy, education, health, human rights, democratic forms of governance and more.

Over the past 20 years, however, something has started going seriously askew. Instead of analysing what was wrong, we pushed ahead even faster (although not without a growing revolt among grass-roots peoples’ organisations, supposedly the beneficiaries of development but often its victims).

Today, the world development scene suffers from a fundamental schizophrenia. On the one hand, scientists, international institutions and various governments plead for sustainable development; on the other, governments and multinational corporations are busy promoting unsustainable models of consumption. Our present mode of economic growth is unsustainable, and the world financial system is running out of control.

This type of “development”, based on material accumulation, is bringing with it a wide range of growing social ills, while at the same time eroding the world’s cultural differences. Waste proliferates. The tempo of life accelerates, yet the meaning of life eludes us. Modern society is like a high-speed train rushing in a direction no one can define.

It is therefore not surprising that development education, as traditionally defined, is not working. The crisis in development education is valuable, however, because it enables us to redefine this endeavour. Our defeat can be turned into wings.

Questions we need to ask ourselves include:

How do we define development? Could we see it as a way of travelling rather than as a material goal? Could it be defined simply as empowerment?
How do we redefine development education? Informing people is not enough. Could we not think of it as a transformational and survival skill? Could we not see its aim as striving toward a less competitive world that works for all? Development education of this kind would redefine such words as “wealth”, “poverty”, “efficiency” and “enough”.

Finally, we must rediscover the ethical and spiritual values taught by all the great religions and philosophies, and must begin to live by them ourselves. As development educators we must begin by transforming ourselves.

Emptying Teacups

A Zen story tells of Nan-in, a Japanese master during the Meiji era. Nan-in received a university professor who came to inquire about Zen. Nan-in served tea. He poured his visitor’s cup full, and then kept on pouring. The professor watched the overflow until he could no longer restrain himself. “It is overfull. No more will go in!” “Like this cup”, Nan-in said, “you are full of your own opinions and speculations. How can I show Zen unless you first empty your cup?”

“Our cup”, adds Gary Zukav, who tells this story in The Dancing Wu-Li Masters, “is usually filled to the brim with ‘the obvious’, ‘common sense’ and ‘the self-evident’.”

It has been this writer’s rare privilege for many years to be active in the field of development education in both the South and the North, and to work with grassroots people’s organisations in Africa. This chapter is written from the rather different, and necessarily subjective, viewpoint afforded by this experience. The criticisms of the Western development model expressed here are not made in a spirit of accusation or condemnation. Although one cannot avoid the conclusion that some people are far, far better off than others, this writer does not share the vision of a world of villains and victims, of greedy Northern oppressors and exploited Southern poor. The consciousness of interdependence has reached such a level today that it is difficult to imagine any solution to major world problems outside the “win-win” paradigm of a world that works for all (which implies dialogue in a non-judgemental spirit, however difficult this may be to achieve). In a world of instant communications and almost home-made atomic weapons, if this world does not work for all, it will soon work for no one.

Life is a Process of Definitions

The way we define events, people and things defines our reality. At the Cairo conference on population, for instance, the definition of abortion raised a few interesting discussions, and some rather heated ones. Defining poverty impersonally and statistically by a certain income level and defining it as “what I am not doing to help my neighbour when I have the means to do so” will lead to very different forms of action.

Even facts are not at all self-evident; the statement “Let facts speak for themselves” is probably one of the most meaningless ever made. As the sociologist Gunnar Myrdal once noted:

Facts do not organise themselves into concepts and theories just by being looked at; indeed, except within the framework of concepts and theories, there are no scientific facts, only chaos. There is an inescapable
a priori element in all scientific work. Questions must be asked before answers can be given. The questions are all expressions of our interest in the world. They are at bottom valuations.¹

This observation is valid for any meaningful reflection on any given theme, such as the theme of this meeting. This chapter will therefore ask many questions.

In the early 1980s, the author undertook a one-year study of development education in seven Western countries for the Development Co-operation Division of the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs². In the course of the study, over 200 people in over 100 organisations were asked how they defined development, certainly one of the most elusive words of our culture. The general secretary of a national organisation grouping close to a hundred NGOs active in development said they had banned any discussion of the concept from their meetings because they could never agree on a definition! They were busily spending millions of dollars every year on a thing they could not define, and the situation has certainly not improved in the past 12 years.

Even a poor definition is better than none, because it at least enables a debate. Having no open, stated definition of development means that the implicit definition upon which our whole development effort has been based for 40 years — i.e. the Westernisation of the world — is implemented under the guise of “development”. It might be rather unpleasant for us in the North to admit this, and it might be still less pleasant to admit that we have gone along with this situation because it suited us very well. Speaking of the village of Ronx in northern Senegal, headquarters of an important peasants’ movement, the representative of a large development NGO from the North once told the author, in an elated tone, “When I first visited the place, there was only one TV set. Now there are at least ten. That’s development.” Is it?

Farmers from the Developing World Question Western “Development”

In the late 1980s the author undertook a 14 000 kilometre trip through over 100 villages of five countries in western, eastern and southern Africa to write a book on grass-roots peasants’ organisations. During the course of the trip, 1 300 farmers, many of them women, recounted what they were doing to help themselves, about their struggles, hopes and visions³. It was exciting to discover peasant farmers redefining development in their own terms. The farmers of the Entente de Bamba-Tialne in southern Senegal had collectively decided to ban television from their village because it conveyed only Western values. These creative people wrote what they called their “Development Koran”, a document that set forth their view of development based on their African, Muslim and peasant values. Not a single Western government has attempted to do the same thing. Perhaps the Entente could send a few consultants over to tell us how to do it?

This questioning of the Western development model comes out clearly in the words of Landing Diedhiou, a Sahelian peasant leader:

When one observes what is taking place in Africa today, it is obvious that development equals Westernisation. Most African countries, far from seeking an original path to development, are simply imitating the West. The same kind of industrialisation that pollutes the environment; the same ugly big cities where human relationships are deteriorating; the same absurd imitation of “car ownership for all” (which has become the dream of every African, with all that this implies: accidents, massive importation of gasoline which then drains the country’s limited foreign exchange, asphalt roads to serve the inhabitants of the cities); the same
television, broadcasting the same shows as in the West. Is All of This Really Authentically African? What do parents really want for their children? Do they really want them to become TV watchers and car drivers? Could we not build another kind of society?

A tragi-comic example of this failed development was observed in northern Burkina Faso in 1990, in an area where crop failures had rendered the food situation extremely bleak. Some schools were closed because the children did not have the strength to go to school. At the home of an African friend in a small town, the author saw the US series “Dynasty” on television. The programme was offered free of charge to West African national television companies by a large Swiss food multinational (with a few strings attached, like free ads for the company). Is that what development is supposed to be?

Each reader could certainly give dozens of similar examples from all round the world. One of the best kept secrets in the field of development is the growing revolt of grass-roots people’s organisations against “development”, of which they are ostensibly the beneficiaries but are often the real victims. There are specialised magazines, such as the excellent Quid pro quo, devoted entirely to this theme of a more culturally adapted form of development and the grass-roots revolt against Westernisation, not to mention outstanding books, such as Thierry Verhelst’s Des racines pour vivre. Another carefully kept secret is the growing revolt of Southern people’s organisations against the NGOs, Northern or Southern, that are supposed to be helping them.

The Moribund Paradigm of Economic Growth

The Western development model results from, among other factors, a combination of major scientific advances, their technological application, a philosophy of history oriented towards the future, a sense that human beings are in charge of their destiny and called upon to master their environment. In many areas, this model has resulted in amazing advances: a doubling of life expectancy in a few centuries, generalised primary education for all, major advances in human rights and women’s rights, the elimination of poverty for most and its replacement by affluence for many, instant worldwide communications, major progress in the social and health fields, acceptable systems of justice, more democratic forms of governance and so on. Any doubts one may have about the system — and such doubts would be rather healthy, especially in the context of this OECD meeting — should not deny these fine accomplishments.

Over the past 20 years, however, something started to go seriously askew. For many reasons, too numerous to examine here, our development has generated numerous forms of “misdevelopment”. Instead of pausing to empty a few cups of tea, we applied what the French call la fuite en avant: instead of slowing down, we accelerated, thus compounding the problems. One way of accelerating was to export the model, in part through “development aid”, to the South.

If “development” is Westernisation — with here and there a few cosmetic changes, such as slightly adapting the taste of McDonald’s hamburgers or censoring a scene or two from Schindler’s List so as not to offend local sensitivity — then we need briefly to examine what the practitioners of development education are supposed to promote.

The world development scene suffers from a fundamental schizophrenia. On the one hand, scientific authorities, international institutions and various governments are pleading for sustainable development. On the other, Western governments and, especially, multinational corporations (200 of which control 30 per cent of world industrial output, which gives them a respectable clout) are
busy promoting unsustainable models of consumption. We are literally "advertising ourselves to death". With our lips we promote sustainable development, but with our everyday acts of consumption and the policies of our companies we are doing the contrary. Our present mode of economic growth is totally unsustainable. (This point has been argued so clearly elsewhere that I will take it as an accepted postulate.) For thousands of years, economic growth was hampered by the lack of capital. In the 1970s, for the first time, humanity crossed an ecological Rubicon, and growth is now constrained by the lack of natural resources (e.g. the world’s dwindling resources of fish), whereas capital is overabundant.

To speak of sustainable growth in such a context is a contradiction in terms, as Herman Daly has cogently argued. Daly goes further, stating that “there is evidence that in the US [growth] now makes us poorer by increasing costs faster than it increases benefits”. Research in European countries points to similar conclusions.

If the generalisation of such a model of growth is a certain recipe for ecological catastrophe — not to mention spiritual death — why do we continue to promote it, often under the guise of development?

This type of development has gone financially insane. In a world which lacks funds for many urgent projects, every day $1 300 billion changes hands, mostly for purely speculative reasons. In a series of round table discussions on money in the spring of 1994, Jean-Pierre Ghelfi, a member of the Swiss Federal Banking Committee, stated publicly that the world financial system was totally out of hand, that no one could control it any longer. Thanks to this system, the rich are getting richer and the poor poorer — not only between North and South, but also in the North. This point has been amply demonstrated, and needs no elaboration, but it needs to be remembered, and it behooves us to ask: Is that really what we want? Where will this lead us?

Even if this type of development based on material accumulation were making its inhabitants happier, more fulfilled, more content and whole, it would still be difficult to argue its merits. The evidence, however, seems to point heavily in the other direction: increasing drug consumption and violence, high levels of suicide and increasing levels of divorce, a constant increase of psychosomatic diseases, growing social anomie, not to mention the pathology of unemployment, which Western central banks consider necessary for a "healthy" economy. Although we have added many years to our life expectancy, how much life have we added to our years?

The people's organisations in the South are growingly aware that this "development" we have been so vigorously promoting for 40 years has failed to satisfy us. In the chastening words of peasant leader Jean-Gabriel Séné, one of the pioneers of the peasants' movement in the Sahel:

We in Africa are rich. Our solidarity, for example, represents a great wealth. We are also happier than you in Europe. Materialism does not bring happiness. For me, good development, an African type of development, does not mean imitating Europe, living in a constant race against time. We have to hold on to the different forms of solidarity that have always existed between us ... Our social organisation must be built on the special way we have of relating to each other in Africa. The material sphere should definitely not have the priority.

Séné's comments ring all the truer when one reads them in the context of an article published a couple of years ago in a respected North American medical journal, entitled "A Proposal to Classify Happiness as a Psychiatric Disorder". Considering that happiness is a statistical abnormality in the North, the author
suggests that we create anti-happiness clinics and develop drugs to heal this
dangerous deviation from the unhappy norm. Who is insane? Is it not the system
which enables the academic production and publication of such absurdities?

Western-style development is slowly but surely eroding the cultural differences
and variety that constitute one of the greatest forms of wealth on the planet. For
30 years the word “culture” hardly ever appeared in development literature; only
at the end of the 1980s did it make a timid appearance. Worldwide, more and more
people are wearing the same jeans, eating the same hamburgers or hotdogs,
running to the rhythm of the same Swatches, drinking the same Nescafé or driving
the same Toyotas. The day we are all identical, will we not have lost our identity?

This mode of development has reached a point of insanity, with material
consumption and its concomitant waste on a scale never before approached. Each
reader can find innumerable examples. Do our pet cats and dogs really need
deodorants, perfumes or special foods for slimming? Are dolls more lovable with
mink coats, and are six-year-olds happier with their own fax machines to send their
latest drawings to Dad’s office, because Dad never has a minute for them? Does
music really sound that much better if we change our hi-fi systems every four years,
and does a new car every three years bring us closer to Nirvana? Do the Japanese
who fly to Minneapolis from Tokyo for the weekend on chartered 747s to shop at
the world’s largest shopping mall, which opened a month after the 1992 Rio de
Janeiro conference, really feel so much better and make such fantastic bargains?
The result of this cornucopia is “choice paralysis” (a recently coined expression):
consumers have so many choices that they can no longer choose. How do you make
a free choice among the 100 different brands of whiskey offered at your
supermarket?

The resultant waste (we would define “waste” as any non-rational use of
resources) is such that J.W. Smith, after decades of research, concludes that the
inhabitants of the United States could all work 2.3 days a week with no drop in their
standard of living. In other words, a great deal of what we spend our lives doing
does not need to be done.

We are all running constantly after time, because we have transformed time
into money. The futurist Alvin Toffler describes the world of the future as divided
between those who will be going faster and faster, and those left by the roadside of
“development”. We are all witnesses, if not victims, of this insane rush. We spend
our lives in fast forward, accelerating more and more, while complaining that we
have less and less time. As Jeremy Rifkin writes, “it is ironic that in a culture so
committed to saving time we feel increasingly deprived of the very thing we
value.”

Accompanying these trends is the near total loss of meaning that strikes
anyone working in the social, educational or psychiatric areas of our post-industrial
societies. As Laurence van der Post has remarked, modern human beings move
“among a comfortable rubble of material possessions, alone and unbelonging, sick,
poor, starved of meaning. How different the naked little bushman who could carry
all he possessed in one hand! Whatever his life lacked, I never felt it was meaning.”

Modern society is like a high-speed train rushing in a direction no one can
define, with no other apparent aim than continued material accumulation and/or
sophistication. The most affluent, powerful and knowledgeable society in history
is careering forward at top speed, and no one — no government, no scientific bodies,
no international organisations and least of all those working in development or
development education — can reply to the questions: Where we are going? What
kind of society we are trying to build? The king is naked and yet we continue to
applaud him.
We are all aware of the results of this development in the South. Whether one calls it a failure or limited success depends — very literally — on one's point of view. At the Cairo conference on population, a banner held in front of the world's television networks by a Southern women's NGO gave the viewpoint of the oppressed rather succinctly: "Your aid and your guns both killed our children."

Filling the Teacups: Towards a New Paradigm

In view of the problems described above, it is not surprising that development education has not lived up to our early expectations. Clearly, we are in a major crisis. Having worked in the field of development education for close to 20 years, the author feels immensely relieved that development education — as traditionally defined — is not working. He would be most concerned if it were. This crisis is the best thing that could happen to development education. Our defeat can be turned into wings, to use an image of the British writer Neil Millar.

The Chinese symbol for crisis has two meanings: one signifies danger, the other opportunity. The crisis of development education is a wonderful opportunity which we should seize gratefully and enthusiastically. Here are a few questions that might help us to redefine the field.

1. **Defining development:** What if development, instead of being seen as the end of the road, some material goal expressed in terms of social indicators, material well-being and so on, were defined as a way of travelling? A way of travelling that brings greater freedom and fulfilment, rather than better television sets or faster cars? What if development were defined simply as empowerment, which is the way many people’s organisations in the South are redefining it?

2. **Redefining development education:** Given the state of generalised crisis that the world seems to be in, can we really continue to define development education in terms of informing people better? One reason for our failure in this area is that we live in a world of disinformation through overinformation. People are deluged with information — a recently published book carries the revealing title *Information Anxiety.* More and more people are therefore selective about what they choose to scan, select and remember. The plight of the poor in the South is certainly not high on their agendas, but they are concerned with their own survival. Would it not make sense then to redefine development education as a skill needed to survive on this precious, amazingly generous but ultra-sensitive little spaceship? To survive, will it not be necessary to transform our profligate patterns of consumption and waste, as well as our attitude towards the planet, which we can no longer consider as a pile of matter hurtling through space but as our mother earth, Gaia? Hence, would it make sense to define development education as a transformational and survival skill?

3. **Aims of development education:** In a world where our destinies are increasingly interlocked, where there is no absolute material security for anyone (even CEOs of large multinational corporations are kidnapped, terrorists can drop their bombs anywhere and pesticides pollute the ground water of the rich as well as that of the poor), might not the most reasonable and self-evident aim of development education be to strive towards a world that works for all? How could we reach a world that works for all on the basis of the competitive mode of relationships developed over the past centuries? Competition with nature, with other countries, groups and religions, with other companies for market shares, you name it. What if we tried the new “win-win” paradigm, which seems the best way to reach this new society where all would have their right place, and equal access to resources?
4. **Contents of development education:** Can we really continue to define development education as upholding the efforts of Northern countries, and even Northern NGOs, to “develop” the South — when we are increasingly aware of the failure of development in the North? If life is a process of defining means and goals, will we not have to start redefining terms? Here are a few words which, if redefined, would have a major impact on the way we run the planet. Redefining them is literally a question of survival for all:

— **wealth and poverty:** What if real wealth were redefined, not in terms of things accumulated or money, but in qualities such as compassion, integrity, unconditional love, joy, intelligence and dignity? What if poverty were redefined as the insensitivity of those who accept that others live in unacceptable conditions (i.e. “poverty is what I am not doing to help my neighbour when I have the means of doing it”)?

— **efficiency:** What if we abandoned the cost-benefit definition of efficiency, which has lead to the plundering of the planet and the exploitation of millions, and instead defined efficiency as that approach to the functioning of any given system which makes possible the greatest happiness and freedom for the greatest number — including insects and animals?

— **enough:** Above all, we need to redefine what it means to have enough. According to Manfred Max-Neef, a leading development economist, “All development policies should be oriented according to one fundamental question which should be posed at government level, at firm level, as well as at community and individual levels — which I consider to be the most important question we may probably be capable of asking today: how much is enough?” A small hint from the *Tao-Te-Ching*, the book of Chinese wisdom: “He who knows he has enough is rich.” A natural result of this last redefinition will be a shift in emphasis from quantity to quality.

5. **Schools, the privileged audience:** In the OECD countries, schoolchildren and university students represent a “captive audience” of hundreds of millions. It is essential that a major effort be undertaken to include the new survival paradigm in the curricula of schools (a point that came up many times during the DAC-Development Centre meeting). It is not a question of adding new materials to school programmes which are already suffering from chronic overload in many countries, but teaching all disciplines from the new perspective of “a world that works for all”. At the September 1994 meeting of education ministers in Geneva, Frederico Mayor of UNESCO stated that school curricula worldwide needed to undergo drastic and fundamental changes in view of the immense challenges facing the world. Could one not envision initiatives to bring together those in charge of revising programmes in ministries of education and those in charge of development education, so as to develop pedagogical tools to introduce the new paradigm into school programmes?
Conclusion

Solutions have perhaps the most furtive habits of any creatures; they reveal themselves hesitantly in artificial light and never enter air-conditioned rooms.

(Wendell Berry, The Gift of Good Land)

To conclude this brief overview of the new development education, we shall quote the words of a man who calls the CEOs of multinational corporations by their first names, has himself been extremely successful in business and is what most would call a "hard-nosed realist". Shortly before the Rio Environmental Conference, Maurice Strong spoke of the changes in thinking that are needed if the planet is to survive. We consider his statement as a vital guideline for debates on the new development education paradigm:

I am convinced that, in the last analysis, what counts are our deepest ethical, moral and spiritual motivations. All the great religions and philosophies have taught the simple life, love of one's neighbour, cooperation with others. Today we need to realise these are not just pious and impractical ideas, but concrete necessities for our future. In my opinion, the rediscovery of ethics and traditional spirituality constitutes the indispensable key to our survival. I do not speak of that every day, but that is what I believe.22

It is essential to make a clear distinction here between religion and spirituality. Some religious beliefs are spiritual, some are highly materialistic and even atheistic. Agnostics or atheists can believe deeply in spiritual values such as love, compassion, honesty, beauty and forgiveness. Perhaps we development educators need to shift from the head to the heart.

In this respect, we should remember an important comment made by Andrew Rice at the meeting: a person's level of education has very little effect on his or her opinions concerning development. In the past, there has been a tendency to stuff the public with figures, as if the simple knowledge of a fact made people change their behaviour. That is rarely the case. We need more heart in this new "survival and transformation skill" that development education needs to become. As Laurens van der Post suggests, "Any real change in life could be only by example, by the texture and quality of being brought into it. Hence no one could take others further than he had taken himself."23 Jean Jaurès, who started out as a schoolteacher and became president of France, said, "One does not teach what one knows, one teaches who one is." Should not we development educators start by transforming ourselves?

The issue of consistency and coherence was raised at various moments during the meeting. One participant stressed the immense inconsistency of berating developing nations for their massive armament budgets, while the five permanent members of the UN Security Council are the world's foremost arms exporters. Such ambiguous, not to say hypocritical, stances are certain to have a negative impact on public attitudes towards development aid.

Manfred Max-Neef, a former close collaborator of President Allende of Chile, is one of the most "politically correct" thinkers and greatest activists of the developing world. Yet not long ago he wrote these rather startling words—startling at least to this writer who for much of his life has attempted to change outside structures:

The world is tired of grand solutions. It is tired of people who know exactly what has to be done and who go around with a briefcase full of solutions looking for problems. This world requires something very simple, extremely simple. It simply wants to be. It does not require nannies and nurses, especially not incompetent nannies and nurses!...
But when I say be, I mean be, not be this or that. This is the greatest challenge each of us is faced with: to be brave enough to be... I have come to the conclusion that I do not have the power of changing the world or any significant part of it. I only have the power to change myself. And the fascinating thing is that if I decide to change myself, there is no police force in the world that can impede me from doing so... If I change myself, something may happen as a consequence which may lead to a change in the world. But we are afraid of changing ourselves. It is easier to try to change others.

What if we tried to change ourselves? We might meet quite a few travelling companions, not least among development educators.


4. This magazine is published by Réseau Sud-Nord Cultures et Développement, 172 rue Joseph II, B - 1040 Bruxelles; fax (32) 2231.1413.

5. Thierry Verhelst, *Des racines pour vivre*, Duculot, Bruxelles, 1988. This outstanding book has been translated into six languages.

6. Published reports are, for evident reasons, difficult to come by. One excellent one is the working paper prepared by Bernard Lecomte for the 1993 UNDP *Human Development Report*, entitled simply “NGOs” and available from the team which prepares this yearly report (UNDP, United Nations, New York). Lecomte is the author of one of the best critiques of the malfunctioning of aid at the grass-roots level, *Project Aid: Limitations and Alternatives*, OECD Development Centre, Paris, 1986.


9. Herman Daly, “Sustainable Growth - No Thank You”, *Resurgence*, No. 133, pp. 8-10 (issues of this magazine are not dated).

10. Ibid., p. 9.


16. In the early 1980s, the author organised a roving exhibit on hunger. In the course of research for the exhibit, a head salesman of the Co-op City store in Geneva informed him that the food section of the store had 60-70 tropical products, 240 different kinds of cheese and 100 whiskeys.


Development in the Media

by Colette Braeckman

Development is one of the most difficult subjects for the daily press and television to cover, because it is never news — not, in any case, per se. What, in fact, is development but a slow, almost invisible process, which is linked to long-term historical movements, and unfolds smoothly, without visible conflicts? The phenomenon is all the more difficult to capture in cases of autonomous development, in which communities take themselves in hand and try to reduce their dependence on outside assistance. Real development tends to be hidden from view, and successful cases of it arise from history unexpectedly. It is often to general surprise that certain countries or regions suddenly escape from the group of the so-called least developed countries, climb a few notches or appear in a different column in the statistical tables and are admitted to the club of the so-called transitional countries before being invited to join, in the best cases, that of the industrialised and developed countries. One could almost say that if development is to be autonomous and sustainable, it had best be discreet and hidden from investigation. Successful outcomes are not likely to be talked about, but this does not facilitate the job of the press, particularly that which is closest to the general public and which lives on and for current events.

In reality, development is not high on the agenda for journalists, who are more interested in hot news: political events, major upheavals and disasters. It has often been pointed out that aid budgets have shifted: funds formerly devoted to bilateral or multilateral aid are now allotted to emergency aid and humanitarian assistance, which, though it responds to temporary needs, does not generate development and may even be harmful to it.

Such emergencies absorb not only the budgets of donors, but also the energy of the media: the development message is obscured by the message about aid, especially humanitarian aid. There is nothing surprising in this: the humanitarian message is both linked to current events and has a strong “visual” character; it gives the public the immediate satisfaction of seeing the concrete results of its assistance efforts. It is also very simplistic, as it practically reduces beneficiaries to their biological functions: stomachs to be filled, bodies to be cared for, sheltered or moved to safety. All political considerations are pushed aside. The beneficiaries lose their autonomy and their power of judgement. There are no longer winners and losers among them, no killers or victims: they are all the equal objects of a story that has no visible meaning.
Paradoxically, such a simplified vision of the world is a stimulant rather than an obstacle to aid and to solidarity: it is so much safer to take an interest in people reduced to the condition of anonymous victims than to enter into the complexity of particular people and situations, or to wonder about causes and consequences.

When the press mentions countries in the South, it gives priority, by force of circumstances, to news about emergency relief and about current disasters, and if the issue is international solidarity, it mainly has to do with humanitarian emergency aid. In addition to its spectacular aspects, humanitarian aid has another important advantage for journalists: it can appear “neutral” and furnish subject matter for “objective” reporting, since the victims are “apolitical”. Everyone — humanitarian aid workers and the media — is united under the banner of conscience, which exempts them from analysis and even from self-criticism. As a matter of course, reporters who visit disaster zones do not often make the necessary, considerable material provisions that the trip would require; they generally rely on the humanitarian agencies for logistical support (transport, communications, even lodging) and are inevitably influenced by the viewpoints and opinions of those who provide this assistance. Reporters are sometimes also assisted by the military, and, there too, seem unaware of the extent to which their perception of things can be influenced by those who provide the logistics. These two types of contacts, the humanitarian and the military, put that much more distance between the press and those who are struggling for development and who are never brought to the attention of the public.

**How to “Make the Agenda”**

Since the press, by definition, gives priority to events and spends too much time in emergency situations, those who value development as such also try to “make” the headlines, to win a place on the agenda of the media. Once again, the issue is more about aid — even if it is long-term aid — and about the means of delivering aid, than about development itself. Above all, however, since the goal is to supplant the usual daily news, we are seeing the triumph of “communication”. Aid and co-operation agencies which have the means to do so — especially the large UN agencies — often request the assistance of communication experts, who help them to get messages through. It then becomes a matter of generating news “events”, of being quoted in the newspapers. Once again, complicated information is reduced to simple formulas that are easy to repeat and to memorise, the best-known example being: “It is better to teach a man how to fish...” In penetrating the wall of the media, statistics are often the most effective solution, that which presents the fewest risks: one agency will proclaim that every second or every minute a child dies for lack of vaccinations or food; another constructs a scale of human happiness and misery, a sort of statistical ranking of development based, more or less scientifically, on government data. In emergency situations, they will not hesitate to announce that a conflict is claiming a thousand victims a day, while neglecting to announce the total of this macabre accounting when the conflict comes to an end.

NGOs concerned with the long term, which do not have access to the same statistical apparatus, will make efforts to put development into images. Sometimes this is done simplistically, by showing the emaciated face of a young Somali woman, then the same person, a few months and a certain number of food rations later. Sometimes, however, it is done in a more sophisticated way, by inviting journalists to visit projects and to meet local partners.
Compared to the simplistic vision conveyed by emergency aid, this represents progress.

Nevertheless, the trees of aid — i.e. the numerous and diverse temporary actions — may well hide the complex forest of sustainable development. Indeed, NGOs often give priority to small projects, according to the old dictum "small is beautiful", and rarely emphasise the general framework in which local actions are carried out.

Properly speaking, however, development results from a dynamics involving an entire society, from concerted action by a government, a population and foreign donors. Quite often, only the foreign assistance is presented, without the cultural and political context in which it operates. A trip to Tanzania, in which the author was once invited to participate, provides a caricature of this approach. Our group travelled 48 hours into the heart of the country, less to visit rural communities that had taken responsibility for themselves and had effectively begun a process of autonomous development, than to witness the benefits of a single hygiene and water-treatment project: the construction of latrines in a village.

The link between development in the South and the evolution of the industrialised countries is mentioned even less: to whom would it occur to transmit a message stating that for there to be more justice in the South and a form of development that amounts to more than just economic growth, there has to be a change in the behaviour and consumption patterns of the North? How, indeed, could the media express a concern that goes against the public’s natural egocentricity and is not content with reporting on other, distant, abstract people but also questions a lifestyle? Too often, development appears as an isolated topic and is not presented as one of the elements of global change, the challenge that both North and South are facing at the dawn of the 21st century.

Career Plans

Development questions are often left in the background because they are not given high priority by journalists, because they are not really news. Moreover, in their career plans — when they have any — journalists do not place these questions in the front rank of their professional ambitions. Once again, what matters in news rooms all over the world, is news coverage, putting politics or tragedies on the front page. This is how journalists "make it" in their careers. In other words, there is often high turnover among the journalists who cover development. On the one hand, this presents certain advantages: each new generation discovers the problems and the search for solutions with enthusiasm and reports on them with the energy of neophytes. On the other, this lack of perspective and experience, which saves journalists from scepticism, also prevents them from asking the right questions, from calling into question the agenda proposed by the communication experts in the field of development and from pondering the failure of many projects.

Oddly enough, other subjects, more recently staged by the media, such as environment or AIDS, were immediately given a high position — perhaps because the link between "there" and "here", the interconnection of phenomena, was more apparent. Perhaps, too, because the "new communications industry" was employed, as in the case of Greenpeace’s spectacular operations. In the field of development, there was never such a scope of mobilisation. Only the events organised for the Survival Fund in Italy, France, and more recently in Madrid, have succeeded in finally raising the public’s attention in favour of development.
Another problem for journalists working on the subject is that, like all human endeavours that combine theory and practice, development — or rather “developmentalism” — has its fashions, its successive periods, which often correspond to those of economic thought. There was the period, already long past, of import substitution; there was the period, also past, of large projects, heavy industry and infrastructure, which resulted in much external debt. Then came the time of structural adjustment, debt repayment, reduction of state expenditures and priority for exports in order to obtain hard currency. The end of protectionism was decreed, and the opening of world markets to free trade was presented as the only possible path to economic growth, which was assimilated to development. While the majority of analysts advocated maximal integration into global trade flows, others, generally on the left, proclaimed that “catching up” was not possible, and dreamed of “uncoupling”, of autonomous development or self-development.

This may be utopian thinking in both cases, but in the name of these utopias, economic policies were formulated, credits were or were not granted, jobs were eliminated here, investments were imposed. Confronted with this flow and counter-flow of fashions and tendencies, the press has rarely taken an active and dynamic stance. Most of the time, journalists — because they have not been specialists in this field for long, because they lacked time and perspective — have simply passed on the messages they received and confirmed the dominant trends, without calling them into question, and above all without seriously taking the time and trouble to evaluate the results over a reasonable length of time.

The fact that the press has practically never undertaken serious investigation of the real impact of “development” actions, whether those of international agencies or those of NGOs, is due to lack of time and energy, lack of investigative effort. Another reason is that the field of international assistance to development is one of the last that practically escapes criticism and the simply economic calculation of price-to-quality ratios.

There are many reasons to avoid serious long-term assessments. The first are of a psychological nature: despite the relatively large budgets devoted to development aid, despite the gravity of the issues involved, development aid remains a sort of annex to public charity, a place where the conscience of the world can operate. No one will willingly disturb that conscience: both the media that treat this subject and the organisations that depend on public and private financing are afraid to scare donors away by being too critical, or by denouncing waste, failures and abuses. There is a tacit consensus among them to silence the criticisms, to avoid reinforcing the prejudices and fears of a public that is already sceptical and little inclined to international co-operation. Moreover, the “developmentalist corporation” — which comprises both international aid professionals and journalists — has well-developed reflexes of self-defence. Investigators or writers like Graham Hancock, who in his book Lords of Poverty denounces the deviations of international aid, are immediately accused by almost everybody of being hostile to the basic concept of aid.

Through lack of time, or lack of competence to judge the real impact of aid on development, journalists generally avoid polemics on this subject unless the abuses are flagrant. They feel that, in this way, they are not discouraging the benevolent sentiments of public opinion. In reality, nothing could be more wrong. The lack of reliable and even slightly objective critical information on the subject leaves the field open for rumours and feeds the growing scepticism of public opinion, which wonders what has been the use of so much effort at such cost over such a long time. For example, when an NGO, for the 18th consecutive year, launches a fund-raising campaign for the same agricultural project in a small Sahel country, never explaining why so much time is needed to attain self-sufficiency for its partners (which was the initial goal), how can the public, confronted with unanswered questions which it cannot help asking, not show a growing reticence?
Similarly, news stories (unsupported by specific investigations) that claim, for example, that of four aid dollars for the developing world, three stay in the industrialised countries, in the form of salaries or capital goods, also reinforce public scepticism, or even discouragement.

Fads in the media world itself contribute to making it difficult to inform the public on development. We will not even speak of the audiovisual media, of the importance of images, of the impossibility of conveying, through a televised programme, information concerning a largely invisible or underground phenomenon. It goes without saying that in this case, emergencies get the lion’s share of coverage, by the very constraints of this type of medium, but it is interesting to note that the print media are influenced by the methods of the audiovisual: in their articles, journalists give a privileged place to the “little true fact”, the anecdote, over deep analysis or synthesis. Even in the printed press, the point is to move people, to help them see rather than to help them understand. These human interest stories mask once again the overall view and prevent broad analysis and political reflection. Paradoxically, while the humanitarian side increasingly serves to push aside the political or to conceal its failure, the human-interest stories so prized by newspapers, and which are certainly indispensable, sometimes distract people from that which is essential.

Other Information Channels

In fact, information about development increasingly tends to pass by channels other than the traditional media, which are not easily pulled away from current events. Thanks to new production techniques, the alternative press is becoming less and less costly. Increasingly, development organisations and groups closely concerned by the subject organise themselves to distribute another type of news through other channels than the generalist media, written or audiovisual. We are seeing the proliferation of “samizdats” on development, of periodicals that are important and influential relays of information. To be sure, these publications often reflect the views and defend the projects of the originating organisation, but they often succeed nevertheless in giving valid and detailed information about the countries and regions where the projects are located. They sometimes succeed in letting the principals — i.e. the inhabitants of the countries concerned by development actions — speak directly.

This growing alternative press, which is distributed by subscription or through networks of associations, is becoming more and more important as a source of information. Furthermore, the proliferation of visits and exchange programmes and the democratisation of communications favour grassroots contacts between Northern countries and their Southern partners, and this solidarity is reflected in the parallel press. Finally, it is there that the first phase of the development education of the public unfolds. The education of young people is a second aspect of this raising of public awareness of development, which begins in specialised publications but ends up, once the demand is felt, breaking through into the mainstream press.

We should emphasise that we are talking about the printed press: young people have a growing need for school documentation, materials for research and reflection. Newspapers are the first mediators between the needs of young people and the real world: young people very often turn to the daily newspaper read in their families for help with school documentation. Thus, numerous newspapers, trying to win the loyalty of young readers, try to offer them “dossiers” of information to meet this precise demand. Certain newspapers publish special dossiers on major subjects and see that young people are not alone in buying them in great quantity: the general public also welcomes these more specialised “off-prints”, which
summarise topics of general interest, many of which are linked to development. These dossiers meet with success because they remain attractive, written and presented by journalists and thus accessible to a broad public. Other newspapers assemble in dossiers the principal articles on a given subject, and here also, the great demand stimulates the supply. As their articles linked to development problems are used in dossiers which are distributed separately and sometimes in great quantity, journalists will be encouraged to address this type of subject and their editors will be encouraged to grant them the necessary space.

In this roundabout way, newspapers participate in the development education of university and high school students, and the press hopes that this effort will contribute to the fidelity of its readership. The success of these efforts also belies the pessimism with which information about development is regarded. It is incorrect to state flatly that topics of this type hold little or moderate interest for a public that is supposedly attracted only by the hottest news. In this field, as in others, information is a little bit like food: if it is good, flavourful and well presented, the public becomes used to it and finally likes it and asks for more. Many subjects have won recognition in this way and ended up by creating demand among the public. This is why, for development questions as for others, journalists do not have many methods available. Here as elsewhere, one must favour independent thinking, the search for the truth, clear and attractive formulation and lucid analysis.

Development professionals, however, should be more open to criticism and self-criticism, and should carry out more frequent self-evaluations of their projects, their successes and their failures. It would also be good, where information on development is concerned, to take advantage of volunteer workers who have come back from long stays abroad: their thoughts, their analyses, their account of good or bad experiences, could be of interest to the press. In the long run, they could become opinion references, in as much as they are equipped with the living experience they have acquired. They could also be the ones to make it possible to establish the necessary link between information, “local” interest and more general issues. It is indispensable to show how these are all related: this way, “development” can become a “familiar” subject that is relevant to everyone’s daily life.
Reporting the Reality of Developing Societies

Mort Rosenblum

A distressing lesson for anyone who worries about the world can be drawn from the case of Baby Irma, a little girl from Sarajevo who suddenly propelled the all-but-forgotten Bosnian war back onto front pages. The story followed a typical course, as familiar to foreign correspondents as satellite phone codes and dysentery cures. A reporter with time on his hands found a child at Kosevo Hospital with an immensely complex back disorder. He wrote a small feature story about her, making the point that hard-pressed doctors in Sarajevo — who often work without electrical power because government people steal the fuel for their generators — can treat only the most urgent cases.

A British doctor with a good mind for public relations seized upon Baby Irma. She was flown out with great fanfare, and newspapers followed her progress under large black headlines. Suddenly, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees was swamped with urgent phone calls from the Midwest of the United States, from all over Europe and elsewhere. Legislators and health officials who had ignored constant pleas for help were now pleading — some of them demanding, in menacing tones — to have their own sick child from Sarajevo. This was “news”, humanitarian aid in the public eye.

A variant of this phenomenon also occurred in Sarajevo. Routinely, Bosnians were shot trying to flee through territory held by Serbs. Casualty figures in the war had by then risen to numbing levels, and the siege of Sarajevo was a dull, background hum. Then two young lovers were shot in no man’s land, and they died in each other’s arms. They were called Romeo and Juliet, and neither newspapers nor television could get enough. This was “news”, war with a human face.

With all due respect to the polls, I can tell you what any reporter knows intimately, from hard experience. If a refugee tide, a natural disaster or sudden hostilities can be characterised by specific victims — by individuals whose human stories can stop busy citizens halfway around the world dead in their tracks — public opinion might respond strongly enough to move the officials who write the checks. Without that human face, it is just another story befitting a headline like the spoof immortalised in Fleet Street lore: “Small Earthquake in Chile; Not Many Killed”.

This is only a general rule of thumb, however. Why did Baby Irma or Romeo and Juliet make the headlines, when so many others in equally tragic straits did not? There is no answer, no over-riding logic to explain where, or why, the reporter’s moving gaze will stop. Even less understandable is when, or why, a preoccupied public will pause to take note.

Today, a great many human disasters are demanding attention, in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Under these circumstances, if a country’s crisis is a general development breakdown, with no clearly identifiable and immediate cause, its path to the public eye is tortuous. No single image can tug the
heartstrings hard enough or long enough to sustain interest over the long term. Here the angle must be an articulate explanation of the self-interest of those outsiders who must help. Once, reporters could at least say that a country like Somalia was “strategically located”. Alas, the end of the cold war has drawn the teeth from this implied threat. Journalists who cover the developing world deplore this unhappy state of affairs, but it is reality, and it is more real every day.

What we know as “the media” moves largely in a swarm directed by a mysterious radar none of us can explain. When I wrote Coups and Earthquakes in 1977, we correspondents lamented that editors seemed to stick only to a Top 10 list for foreign subjects; if a story was not on the list, it was buried or spiked. When I began Who Stole the News?, 15 years later, the list of ten had shrunk to three. Today, it is often down to one.

Month after month, I see the same people, as the pack pursues its illogical course. We came home from Rwanda only to rush back again to Goma. When the deteriorating situation in eastern Zaire grew stale for audiences with a limited attention span, we were off to Haiti. Who knows what is next? Stay tuned to CNN.

A definition is in order at this point. There is hardly a more maligned and misunderstood term than “media”, and when one thinks of the dizzying array of people who gather the news in and for 190 countries, from round-the-clock television producers to party hacks who paste up the biweekly propaganda sheet, it is easy to see why. During the Gulf war, US officers used to refer to us as “media personnel”, as though we were some uniformed branch of service. This term encompassed senior correspondents of the New York Times, a reporter from Mirabella magazine who was following fashion, a local TV anchorwoman who had never before left North Carolina and Colonel David Hackworth of Newsweek, who had seen more action as a soldier than any 12 of the military escorts assigned to shepherd the “media personnel”.

In the case of development reporting, we may define the media as that mainstream which is required to bounce the needle among large apathetic publics: CNN, BBC, the agencies, the big papers and magazines. Even with this proviso, we should beware of generality. European editors are less prone to the pack mentality than those in the United States, but when US editors decide to give major attention to a story, they usually do a better job at getting across the basic facts and the setting. Japanese newspapers keep far more correspondents on the road than US or European papers, but their coverage is directed to the home market and seldom available in translation.

In television, the wholesale marketing of news footage has been a unifying and homogenising factor that has drawn most independent media into the mainstream. Even the big US networks seldom send crews to important but secondary stories. Like the smaller broadcasters, they buy footage from Visnews, WTN or APTV. Networks pool and share and trade. This has an important impact on the rest of us.

To begin with, cameramen/camera-people often work without a reporter. They send a “dope sheet” to headquarters so that a writer far from the story can write a script of universal truths. The cameramen/camera-people are not always able to dig out facts and background to explain what they have shot, and it is not unknown for some to exaggerate the importance of their material for their own glory.

When dramatic news footage circulates among major television networks, competition grows intense. The overall significance of the story is not so important. What matters is that if network XYZ has the pictures and network ZYX cannot match them, ratings might be at risk. This is a main impetus behind our new pack mentality.
It is easy enough to blame the trend entirely on television, the ability to show a crisis live as long as there is something dramatic at which to point the camera. Television coverage has, in fact, exacerbated the problem, but it did not cause it. In the end, the media respond to whatever editors and managers believe the public wants. If the public wants something better, not many members of it are saying so. It has long been my contention that viewers and readers and listeners can get better coverage by demanding it. Editors and proprietors are susceptible to feedback. They are not wilfully distorting the news; they are only looking for market share, and guessing about how to get it.

Improving coverage through consumer demand is at best a long-term prospect, however. The development community and the billions who suffer from underdevelopment do not have the time to wait. For the moment, the only option is to understand the flawed international system of newsgathering as it is. With a little thought, one can make allowances for its shortcomings and play to its strengths.

The main problem with covering development issues transcends the media; it is part of the human condition. In 1983, I flew down to a UN Development Programme (UNDP) meeting in Niger with Brad Morse, then the UNDP administrator. “Give me a starving baby”, he said, “and I’ll raise billions. If I talk about development, forget it.” This is basic and evident to anyone in the field: to care, human beings must connect with human beings.

These days, however, not even Brad Morse could get by with a starving baby, unless he happened on a Baby Irma. He would need large numbers of them, babies who were not only starving but also threatened with rare disease or war, and even then nothing is certain. Why Somalia and not Sudan? I cannot explain it.

At that UNDP meeting, Morse asked me to advise his assembled resident representatives on how they might attract better coverage. They saw the UN Children’s Fund getting all the attention and wanted some press of their own. It is simple, I told them: do something interesting. However unfair this may be, it is fact. To the general public, and to most reporters, international organisations are alphabet soup. They are far better off with assured funding from sources that weigh real impact rather than the flash of publicity. Any organisation that needs public support must package its product. Even nuts-and-bolts infrastructure projects must be designed with some imaginative element, or they pass unnoticed. This is not such a problem: if a project intrigues a jaded reporter, it is more likely to spark enthusiasm among people it is intended to help.

Much of the problem lies with the editors who decide where reporters go and what is relayed in print or on the air, and with the managers who determine their budgets and available space. Many factors are at play here. Budgets are tight for everyone, and few editors spend money on impending crises. Generally, they wait until the crisis erupts, when it is too late to do much more than catalogue the carnage.

As we have seen, fierce competition requires editors to be seen to be doing well. This is not the same as simply doing well. Suppose that an editor decides that a never-ending civil war in the inaccessible reaches of southern Sudan is at least as important as a passing plague of mayhem and famine in Somalia. If this editor focusses on Sudan while the swarm is in Somalia, he or she will be considered out of step.

Another part of the problem lies with correspondents. Some of us — certainly not all — fail to sketch in the cultural underbrush and particularities of the societies we cover, perhaps because our own cultural baggage is so cumbersome that we
cannot see over it. Sometimes we simply lack the skills to draw exotic pictures for people who have no framework in which to place them. The result, for readers and viewers, is that one catastrophe tends to look like another, and this induces compassion fatigue at an alarming rate. People far away who would otherwise care about a specific situation simply tune out, in the belief that there is just too much suffering to confront.

When large countries become involved in a crisis, too often journalists focus on the relief actions rather than on the victims, thus reinforcing preconceived ideas instead of calling them into question. A disturbing example of this occurred in Goma. Against almost everyone's advice, the US Air Force attempted an expensive and needless airdrop of food to a refugee camp. The camp could easily be reached by road, and plenty of food was on hand to be trucked there, but airlifts attract a lot of attention. News stories from Washington and Germany all quoted generals who praised their own success in delivering 17 tons of food, but the journalists who went to watch saw a fiasco. Only five tons were actually dropped. They were scattered across a cornfield, terrifying refugees, nearly hitting a school and a UN helicopter. The trucks which waited all afternoon to distribute the food had come up empty, for lack of time to load. They could have carried far more to the camps, at much lower cost, by staying on their regular schedule.

All too often, however, it takes this type of major involvement to get editors interested. The whole tragic episode in Somalia might have been avoided had more attention been paid before things fell apart. After President Siad Barre fled, before the clan factions fought each other, outside help could have averted war. For more than a year, only a few reporters kept coming back to describe a worsening cataclysm. By the time US President George Bush ordered in the troops, the most vulnerable Somalis had already died, and new crops had already begun to supplement feeding programmes. Left on their own, clan armies entrenched themselves deep in the society.

It is easy enough to find such examples of what is wrong, and each example illustrates the larger systemic problems. More important is looking at the strengths of media coverage, so that taxpayers and voluntary donors have a better idea of what they can do to help.

Behind the generalities of the term "media", we find a great deal of sensitive reporting, in newspapers and on television. It is scattered and sporadic, but it is there. Even CNN, often vilified for showing only the obvious, spent substantial resources on a series from Africa which warned of worsening famine. Christiane Amanpour and Richard Blystone dug beneath the surface to explain why sustainable development — although they did not use that term — was an urgent, unavoidable priority.

*Newsday* won a Pulitzer Prize for sending a team to look into the root causes of African hunger. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* and other mid-sized US papers often probe these issues around the developing world. European papers do the same, often in greater detail, with journalists who have spent years on the ground. Reporters from Latin America, Asia and Africa — when not fettered by touchy governments — provide valuable insight from within. Any number of magazines, which have the space for nuance and context, look closely at development and humanitarian issues, one at a time. A close look at the AP wire and Reuters shows no lack of basic coverage.

Nevertheless, important stories are often covered by flukes of fate. No crisis, for example, has received more attention than the 1984 Ethiopian famine. Common wisdom holds that this happened because "television" (in quotation marks, like "media"), decided to pay attention to the warnings of aid workers. In fact, Michael Buerk of BBC found he had some time on his hands after a South African assignment. He suspected he might find a story in Ethiopia so on his way back to
London, he decided to stop there. He was able to get a visa through his stringer, who was also on assignment for Ethiopian tourism officials. His haunting report on a "calamity of Biblical proportions" and the accompanying footage electrified Britain.

In the United States, the Nightly News producer at NBC turned down the BBC report, to which NBC had exclusive rights. Kids are always starving in Africa, he pronounced. All afternoon, his assistant argued that they should use the story, but he held firm. The assistant pushed so hard that in the end he agreed just to keep her quiet. The story was aired after the first commercial break, a dead time slot. NBC switchboard operators had never had such a night. Soon, everyone was singing "We Are the World". Then everyone forgot.

The challenge for the development community is to identify the sources of this good reporting and try to broaden its impact. It does no good to bemoan the general incapacity of the "media" to cover development; media people bemoan it, too, and it is not likely to change any time soon. What we all need — on both sides — is some constructive co-operation to keep reporting fresh and steady.

In the field of development and humanitarian relief, there is a screaming need for some sort of liaison between the people who do the work and those who have to tell the world about it. Without this link, all sorts of imbalances occur. The organisations which get the most attention are those which handle their public relations best. Some of the most effective development professionals are all but unknown outside of development circles because they shun reporters who seem to keep asking the same stupid questions. The whole field of development depends on steady and increasing amounts of official aid, but taxpayers simply do not understand why this is essential to their own lives.

The key link here is obvious, yet is generally given short shrift. Every development agency, whether oriented to the long term or to crises, whether official or voluntary, needs a very good press officer. Most have press officers, but the emphasis here is on "very good". Sometimes, press officers are over-comfortable bureaucrats who crank out impenetrable news releases and wait for the phone to ring. Often, they are enthusiastic warriors for good causes who bustle around trying to sell good news while masking the bad.

A very good press officer knows how to speak to editors and correspondents in their own language, on their own terms, with an understanding of how they operate. Mistakes are admitted, usually with an off-the-record lament. Successes are described thoroughly but without self-praise. Queries are answered quickly and in detail. Access is provided fast, without rigamarole. Mainly, however, a very good press officer steers journalists to news.

Sylvana Foa, the press officer for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, is very good at her job. As a former correspondent and foreign editor for UPI, she knows that news comes in many forms, not all of them obvious. She also knows that editors and reporters are seldom hostile to stories from the developing world; more often, they are baffled by such stories and lack the time to work out a sensible approach. Foa and a staff of other former journalists simply connect the dots.

Before heading to Goma, for example, I called Foa and asked for an on-the-record briefing and advice on where the story was going. I made this request on voice-mail and left the number of my own answering machine. In effect, I was telling her to interview herself. She's that good.

Another very good press officer is Djibril Diallo, now of UNICEF, who was spokesman for the special UN emergency office for Africa. Like Foa, Diallo networks furiously. He makes sure clippings and videotapes get to newsmen/
news-people who are likely to follow up with their own investigations. His forte is getting reporters to the story. He will find the jeep, the interpreter, the tribal chief and the water engineer. If he thinks it worth his while, he will go along himself.

Press officers, however, are only a start, the facilitators who get the process going. The real communication occurs when people in charge, the specialists who map out the strategies and do the work, sit down with reporters and editors who can relay the essence to a wider public. This is a tricky dynamics, as the initiative may come from either direction, but once a relationship is cultivated, it bears fruit, over and over.

Regular seminars and orientation tours are helpful, mainly for the individual contacts that inevitably result. Personal letters or telephone calls elicit interest that mass-produced press releases cannot match.

Perhaps the most useful step would be to establish an inter-agency liaison team, under the aegis of any organisation interested enough to attempt it. For all their monolithic appearance, the "development community" and the "media" are essentially cottage industries driven by identifiable individuals. A liaison team could keep track of good reporting by any media, in any language. It could take note of important new development projects, or breakthroughs, or specialists with something out of the ordinary to say. Through informal exchange, this team could pass along names and ideas to journalists with a demonstrated interest. At the same time, it could help development professionals to cultivate those fruitful relationships with editors, producers and reporters.

There is a final crucial point. A liaison team — or very good press officers, at least — could help the media with logistics. One reason for the neglect of southern Sudan is obvious: how does one get there? Once in a while, UNICEF can help, but not everyone knows that. The idea is not to obtain freebies or junkets. Reporters can and should pay their own way. Often, however, official or NGO flights are the only way in, and their jeeps are the only transport around. A liaison team could help journalists to obtain access to transport, communications and so on, at an additional cost.

The preceding suggestions deal with practical matters. In a broader sense, providing better coverage depends on taking a wide view. All of us must see the issues in their full context and explain them that way. When I began a large-scale reporting project on AIDS in Africa, Asia and Latin America, a UNICEF specialist warned me, "AIDS is not a medical problem. It is a socio-political problem." He was right: one cannot write about an AIDS epidemic without looking at the society around it. The same is true for long-term development or emergency relief. Doing the right thing is one part of the challenge. Enlisting public support — among donors and recipients alike — is often an even bigger part.

The media are not trying to do a bad job; they want to reflect reality. The development community wants wider, more sensitive coverage, and its committed professionals do not mind fair scrutiny from the outside. In the end, only better communication between these two misunderstood "monoliths" can take us forward towards our separate goals.
Questionnaire to DAC Delegations on Public Attitudes Towards International Development
I. Public Attitudes: Evidence and Trends

1. Please indicate major relevant surveys of public opinion and their source (independent, aid agency, non-governmental organisations [NGOs], other) over the past three years, and please enclose a summary report(s), or the full report(s), or a synthesis showing main attitudes towards developing countries and/or aid.

2. Does the government agency fund surveys relating to the image of developing countries in the written press and the media? Are these published?

II. Public Support among Various Socio-professional Groups

3. Have groups been identified which specially favour, or are specially adversarial towards, international co-operation and aid? If so, are there specific programmes addressed to these groups and is there any feedback on impact? Any further information on this subject will be appreciated.

III. Development Education

4. Are you aware of useful analytical studies and/or evaluations (in your country or more generally) of how citizens receive their information and shape their attitudes on development issues? What has been the experience with coverage by the media in these areas over the years, and with particular programmes to assist in improving coverage? (Copies of or references to relevant studies would be most helpful.)

5. If the official sector (aid agency, ministry of education...) has adopted or promotes programmes of development education for schools, please describe their main features (optional or compulsory, number of hours per month, whether it is a subject integrated with others, for example with the teaching of geography or civics, or is it a subject of its own) and indicate which level of education they are addressed to (primary/secondary), and estimated number of pupils/students reached in a recent year. Should any additional information or assessment be available on the impact and quality of such programmes, and on desirable changes, please enclose a recent report or indicate main findings.

6. If the subject of development education is purely optional at primary or secondary levels, have alternative ways of stimulating interest been identified, e.g. additional credits to teachers and/or pupils to reward their efforts in this particular field?

7. Any information readily available on the development education activities of outside organisations (voluntary organisations, research groups, trade associations, etc.) and on the criteria established by the aid agency to provide financial contributions for such purposes. Evaluations, suggestions for contacts which may be helpful to the Secretariat to complete its enquiries (main institutions, resource centres, NGOs most involved) will be welcome.

8. Does the aid agency provide technical support — for example, in the form of databases, documentation, or other — to non-formal development education activities, for example adult study groups?
IV. Information Activities of the Aid Agency

9. Does your government believe that there is a special justification for information activities to "bring home" international development work as compared with other areas of government activity?

10. Please describe briefly the "information regime" relating to your agency's programmes. Do you make publicly available:
   - a general statement of goals and priorities for the programmes (updated how frequently);
   - country (or sectoral) programme and planning documents;
   - synthesis evaluation studies;
   - all evaluation studies (or give criteria for exceptions);
   - contract and procurement information;
   - other key information, including commissioned policy analyses of developing countries and development programmes.

11. If the aid agency produces a magazine, please indicate periodicity, average number of pages, public to which it is mainly addressed (general, specialised, schools), language(s) and number of copies published per issue.

12. Does the agency have its own information office or department? If so, please indicate number of professionals. Or does it contract out the information function?

13. Aside from raising generally the public's interest in aid and development issues, are there messages which the aid agency aims at conveying through its information activities? If so, could you please indicate briefly what they are.

14. Are there activities specially addressed to certain professional categories such as journalists (e.g. study tours, visits to projects funded by the aid agency, etc.)? If so, please provide a brief description of the programme(s) together with any assessment which may have been made recently as to its impact.

15. Please indicate the amounts allocated to information activities (including "development education") in the years 1992 and 1993:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1992</th>
<th>1993</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total (specify currency) of which:</td>
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<td>....</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Direct expenditure by the aid agency</td>
<td>....</td>
<td>....</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Contributions to outside organisations (NGOs, universities, schools, etc.) for purposes of information, development education and analysis</td>
<td>....</td>
<td>....</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Other (please specify)</td>
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NB: If your agency has a defined category for "development education", please provide the definition and the amounts allocated to it.
V. Other

16. Any other information on this subject which the aid agency has found to be of interest (e.g. shifts in the priority given by public opinion to aid as compared with domestic concerns; impact of exchanges with developing-country nationals in various contexts (e.g. schools, twinned municipalities, church and other NGO audiences; impact on public opinion of migration pressures; trade competition) will be gratefully received together with any further relevant comment.
Summaries of DAC Delegations Replies to the Questionnaire on Public Attitudes Towards International Development
### Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surveys of public attitudes</th>
<th>Support among socio-professional categories</th>
<th>Development education</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public opinion surveys</strong></td>
<td>• The 1994 survey found that approval increases with education (strongest in those who had university-level education), decreases with age. Respondents who have donated time or money to an NGO in the last year, and who were aware of AIDAB, also expressed strong approval</td>
<td>• AIDAB used to fund annually approximately 20 small dev.ed. projects run by Australian NGOs, at A$30,000 each, or less, mainly in schools. These have been largely ineffective as they did not form part of the curriculum, and were often just thinly disguised campaigns for the originating NGO</td>
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<tr>
<td>A survey was undertaken early in 1994; its results were not available to the Secretariat at the time of writing</td>
<td>• Presently AIDAB has anecdotal but no systematic feedback on the information programmes which it runs and which are aimed at the general public (press releases, TV, videos, publications, etc.) and at schoolchildren through the formal education system. Subsequent public attitude surveys may give clues as to the impact of various educational programmes</td>
<td>• In FY 1993/94, AIDAB funded a smaller number of larger projects for primary and secondary schools and universities (most of them by matched funding of A$75,000 each, thus a total budget of $150,000 over two years), requiring for each project applications by at least two organisations (not limited to NGOs) one of which at least must have expertise in providing dev.ed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB), now AusAID (Australian Agency for International Development), does not currently fund surveys about the image of Developing countries in the media. It has sponsored the publication of a report on this subject in 1989. (&quot;The Australian Media's Treatment of the Developing World: How does it Rate?&quot;, Annemaree O'Keeffe ed.)</td>
<td>• These projects only started this year, but AIDAB sees them as promising, and expects that the positive integration of environmental studies will provide a precedent for global education as well</td>
<td>• AIDAB has also provided core funding for several Australian development education resource centres</td>
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Australia (continued)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information activities of aid agency</th>
<th>Budget allocated to information activities ($ Australian)</th>
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<tr>
<td>AIDAB tries to convey that the aid programme takes a long-term and strategic approach to development; that is, development assistance involves much more than short-term emergency aid, and it provides many benefits to Australia both directly through commercial returns and indirectly through increased security in the region and so on</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information &quot;regime&quot;</strong></td>
<td>1992/93: 1 300 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>The government makes available to the public:</td>
<td>1993/94: 1 600 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>- a corporate plan for AIDAB updated every two years</td>
<td>of which:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- country strategy papers for specific countries updated periodically following consultations with the countries themselves;</td>
<td>- direct by AIDAB:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- synthesis evaluation studies (&quot;learning by experience&quot;)</td>
<td>1992/93: 500 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- some evaluation studies (with certain caveats: NGOs must approve publication of NGO evaluations, project evaluations may not be published if they would adversely affect an organisation involved)</td>
<td>1993/94: 400 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>- all contracts for goods and services above A$2 000 must be advertised in the Commonwealth Gazette which is publicly available</td>
<td>- to NGOs, schools, universities:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- the tendering process for contracts is commercial-in-confidence</td>
<td>1992/93: 800 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Magazines:</strong></td>
<td>1993/94: 1 200 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDAB produces &quot;Focus&quot; magazine, quarterly, in English, for a general audience: 30 pages, 12 000 copies, distributed to schools, libraries, health centres, readers overseas, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agency's organisational structure for information activities:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDAB's Public Affairs Section has a permanent staff of nine. Some work is contracted out to journalists. Three people work in the dev.ed. subsection of Public Affairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Study tours</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDAB provides funds to journalists to travel to developing countries to cover Australian aid activities or development issues generally</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Surveys of public attitudes

Two AGCD-financed surveys of the Flemish population conducted in 1991 and 1992 revealed that 2.8 per cent of respondents considered that poverty in the Third World must be treated as a priority by Government; and 45 per cent considered that government support to the Third World must remain the same, while 24 per cent thought it should be increased and 30.5 per cent thought it should be reduced.

The place occupied by Third World problematique has not changed between 1982 and 1994 (for details of the 1992 survey, see overleaf).

Support among socio-professional categories

Most in favour of development aid:
People with higher education levels, students, business executives, civil servants

Least in favour of development aid:
Retired people, factory workers and farmers

Development education

Few studies analyse how citizens are informed about the Third World. The image provided by the media is usually biased in favour of the sensational rather than local realities.

Development education is not treated as a separate programme in schools and is non-compulsory. It is usually left to civics or geography teachers to integrate it or not in their respective programme.

Nevertheless, the AGCD finances and trains conference speakers to present pre-selected topics to schools, at their request. Brochures and audiovisual equipment are available at such occasions.

A Royal Decree regulates NGO activities financed by the AGCD. Many of these activities concern development education.

The AGCD also provides technical assistance for non-formal activities such as special exhibitions, publications, videos, etc.
Belgium (Continued 1)

Information activities of aid agency

- The Government's information policy is mostly to present development co-operation activities to as wide a public as possible, and as objectively as possible

Information "regime":
- Special TV and radio programmes for the general public.
- The Annual Report
- Brochures prepared by the ACGD for general information
- Information available at the ACGD library

"In-house" publication for general public:
- AGCD-CONTACT -INCOM (bi-monthly, 4,800 copies per issue), presents general AGCD activities; and DIMENSION 3/DIMENSIE 3 (four issues/year), is addressed to schools and specializes in environment, regional co-operation, foreign debt and food security in developing countries (26,000 copies per issue)

Agency's organizational structure for information activities:
- An information and publication service, which includes 15 permanent staff, 8 of which with a university degree

Activities addressed to professional categories:
- Press conferences (12 in 1993)
- AGCD publications for members of Parliament
- Pedagogic materials, exhibitions and videos for schools

Budget allocated to information activities

| Total: |
| Direct expenditures by agency: |
| 1992: BF47million = US$1.4million |
| 1993: BF59.7million = US$1.7million |

| Contributions to NGOs: |
| 1992: BF70million = US$2.1million |
| 1993: BF90million = US$2.6million |

1US$ = BF32.1 in 1992
1US$ = BF34.5 in 1994

An amount of BF4million has been earmarked for the media specialised in disseminating Third World information
Belgium (continued end)

1992 Survey of Third World Problematique in Flemish Public Opinion

- Environment and violence were the most urgent problems to respondents in 1992. Third World problems come after emigration, unemployment and drug abuse by young people. This ranking has not changed between 1984 and 1992.

  35.1 per cent of respondents considered in 1992 that Third World problems were among the three most urgent problems to tackle, while 17.3 per cent thought that they were among the least urgent; 47.7 per cent thought the above two categories to be irrelevant. These scores were 23.9 per cent, 18.2 per cent and 57.9 per cent respectively in 1984. The comparison evidences a positive evolution regarding interest among the Flemish public opinion in problems encountered by the developing world.

- The survey also provides some insight into people's perception about the nature of problems encountered by developing countries. In 1984, lack of development was explained mostly in terms of international dependency or technological backwardness which could be resolved with development aid. In 1992, Third World problems were associated with deficient public sector management, excessive military expenditures, corruption and regional or ethnic inequalities.

- Aid conditionality with respect to human rights, good public sector management and social equity prevailed over humanitarian aid, technology transfer or traditional development projects.

- Recently, the Rwandan tragedy triggered a surge of feelings of responsibility: 64 per cent of people polled think that aid to Africa should be maintained and 17 per cent of these would like it to increase.

- Finally, 87 per cent of people think that the international community has a role to play in conflict resolution or to protect endangered civilians.
Surveys of public attitudes

- There is a wealth of surveys commissioned in part or entirely by CIDA. Only a minority of Canadians hold very strong views about aid, for or against. The most common reason for supporting aid is humanitarian, the second most popular reason is self-interest (interdependence).

- A major 1993 survey of the change in Canadians' socio-cultural values showed that support for aid had deteriorated somewhat over the previous year with 20 per cent opposed, 51 per cent neutral, and 26 per cent in favour (down from 31 per cent). The survey also revealed that those most opposed to foreign aid became increasingly insecure and intolerant towards multiculturalism, implying that appealing to their emotions might not be sufficient to engage them. Themes that are thought more convincing include the concept of interdependence, the benefit of Canadians and Canadian companies from foreign aid (new markets, jobs at home).

- Another survey carried out in December 1993 also showed growing concern over the number of immigrants allowed into the nation, on both economic and cultural grounds, and resentment of refugees, questioning the validity of many refugee claims and the use of taxpayers' dollars.

- Eight out of ten Canadians approved of emergency aid.

- Image of developing countries: CIDA does not believe that quantitative surveys per se are the appropriate tool. By using a "news" approach, media coverage of developing countries focusses almost exclusively on bad news. Stories are often simplified to the point of caricature. CIDA funds conferences and discussions with the aid community and the media to discuss these issues.

Support among socio-professional categories

- Audience segmentation is not strong enough to produce specific messages to different groups, although there is a marginal tendency for strong supporters to be found among the young, students, professionals, wealthy, those living either in large cities or in rural areas, college educated or higher; and for strong opponents to be older, retired, low-income level, inhabitants of mid-to small-sized towns, those who have only high school education, "blue collar" occupations.

- Special communication efforts are made by CIDA in the direction of:
  - Canadian business sectors involved in aid delivery
  - leading NGOs and non-governmental institutions
  - parliamentarians, especially on aid and its spin-off effects for the Canadian economy
  - Canadian media, especially on the complexity of development and aid (see also activities with the media in the rubric on "Information regime")
Canada (continued)

Development education

• CIDA is currently engaged in a study of the impact of development education ("IMPACT")

• Canadian media tend to cover ODA in a domestic political context, rather than a developmental one, and increasingly pursue a path of independence from any perceived government influence: e.g. journalists will generally not accept free travel. But CIDA’s audio-visual co-production programme has helped ensure a higher level of development-oriented material appearing on TV, especially in Quebec (English-language commercial TV may follow suit).

• CIDA funds programmes/projects of about 100 NGOs and universities for development education for specific population groups.

• For primary and secondary schools, CIDA funds a nation wide Global Education Programme as a grouping of projects administered provincially through the various teachers’ federations of each province. Global ed. is defined as a "perspective" (not a subject), sensitising learners to ecological sustainability, global interdependence, social justice and peace, human rights, and globally beneficial processes of economic, social and cultural development. There are 11 provincial projects. Special training sessions are available to teachers.

• To help "bring home" international development work, the government organises hearings on "foreign policy review" (including development aid policy) and "town-hall" meetings where citizens can discuss with a Special Joint Committee of Parliament.
• CIDA has a policy of providing information in response to requests.

In-house publications for general public:
• CIDA produces two magazines directed at the educational sector (formal and non-formal educators, students):
  1. "Under the same sun" for 12 to 15 year-old, 3 times a year, 24 pages, 69 000 copies in English and 50 000 in French;
  2. "Somewhere today", for 8 to 11 year-old, 3 times a year, 16 pages, 53 000 copies in English and 50 000 in French.

Agency’s organisational structure for information activities:
• Two services are involved: the Communications Branch (which deals with "corporate information" and "development information": the latter working with media, educators and other key groups) and the Public Participation Programme (which forms part of the Canadian Partnership Branch) which funds NGO and university dev. ed. projects, the Global Education Programme and Provincial Councils.

• The Communications Branch consists of 34 civil servants. The messages are often suited to specific groups. They reflect CIDA priorities (basic human needs; women as equal partners; democracy, good governance, human rights and civil society; private sector development; the environment) and stress the effectiveness of ODA and CIDA.

Activities addressed to professional categories:
• CIDA’s Communications Branch operates a Media Co-Production Programme addressed to journalists, including training (intensive training in current issues for journalists from all over Canada at two universities; training sessions for Canadian and developing world journalists on the role of the media in democratisation); travel (notably for Canadian journalists at large to cover freedom of the press, human rights, democratic development in South and Central America; and for Quebec journalists to travel to developing countries and gain first-hand experience); exchanges, conferences and workshops.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information activities of aid agency</th>
<th>Budget allocated to information activities (Can$m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct expenditures by agency:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications Branch:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Communications: $ 5.3m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Information: $ 7.3m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Partic. Progr.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dev. Ed. (NGOs, universities): $11.1m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Education: $ 2.9m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Councils: $1.3m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intern. Dev. Week: $ 0.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Surveys of public attitudes

A recent independent poll indicates that Danish development assistance, including the 1 per cent of GNP earmarked for it, enjoys wide support. 35 per cent of the people surveyed agreed to the level of assistance in 1960; 80 per cent did in 1993. There is no recent DANIDA-funded survey on the image of developing countries in the written press and the media.

Support among socio-professional categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Most in favour of development aid</th>
<th>Least in favour of development aid:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The young and well educated</td>
<td>Unskilled male workers. No specific programme addresses this group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Development education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No analytical study/evaluation of how citizens receive their information and shape their attitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DANIDA finances non-compulsory development education programmes for schools at the primary and secondary levels. Material for the youngest is prepared in relation to the &quot;Children's Third World Calendar&quot; available at Christmas time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DANIDA supports development education activities through NGOs. The agency has funded the publication of a joint catalogue with lists of their relevant materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technical support is provided through databases and documentation available to the general public</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Denmark
### Denmark (Continued end)

#### Information activities of aid agency

- The government supports information activities that "bring home" international development work

**Information "regime":**

- Annual Report and yearly updated summary of all development activities
- Country programmes and planning documents
- Synthesis evaluation studies
- Contract and procurement information
- Sector strategies

**In-house publication for general public:**

- A magazine; "UDVIKLING" (Development), 34 to 65 pages, is produced in 10 issues/year in Danish (6 000 copies per issue). Also special issues. Readers are opinion-makers, journalists, politicians, development workers and university students

**Agency's organisational structure for information activities:**

- Information office with 13 permanent staff (5 journalists and 2 teachers). Also contracts out

**Other messages conveyed through information activities:**

- The information office encourages and finances information activities undertaken by NGOs to invite criticism and create credibility and more genuine understanding of development issues among the society
- Travel grants are offered to journalists, teachers, authors, with no strings attached (DK1.6million in 1993). Journalist participation in major UN conferences is financed from DANIDA's information budget

#### Budget allocated to information activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>DK25million = US$4.1million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>DK26.4million = US$4.1million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Direct expenditures by agency:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>DK8.4million = US$1.4million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>DK8.8million = US$1.3million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Contributions to outside organisations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>DK16.6million = US$2.7million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>DK17.6million = US$2.7million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1US$ = DK6.03 in 1992</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1US$ = DK6.48 in 1993</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More funds are given to information on specific projects implemented by NGOs.
Surveys of public attitudes

- The yearly Eurobarometer indicates that in 1991, 4 out of 5 EC citizens rated helping poor countries in the Third World as "important" or "very important". The less wealthy European countries plus Luxembourg and the Netherlands were more sensitive to Third World poverty than the others.

- In 1993, 74 per cent of Europeans polled considered co-operation with developing countries a policy area for community decision making, while 18 per cent thought it was an area for national subsidy (80 per cent in 1992 versus 14 per cent).

- Unemployment, pollution, terrorism, ensuring energy supply and reducing differences between regions within European countries rated as more important than helping developing countries.

- No survey on image of developing countries.

Support among socio-professional categories

A special (and modest) programme is directed to younger people (see details under development education).

Development education

- No useful analytical study/evaluation of how citizens receive their information and shape their attitudes.

- There are three types of activities financed by EC in development education and information:
  - NGO-sponsored activities (Ecu 14.5 million)
  - Development education for youth organisations involved in campaigning, training and other activities for promoting better understanding of the Third World and the EC (Ecu 350 000)
  - TV documentaries for the general public (Ecu 350 000)

- No technical support is provided other than for the above.
European Community (Continued end)

Information activities of aid agency

- EC policy is to enable public opinion in Europe to be conscious of the interdependence that exists between North and South; and to promote greater understanding of realities in the Third World and the stakes of North/South co-operation among the general public.

- The role of Europe as a global partner is one of the priority topics of the EC's information policy.

Information "regime":
- A description of priorities and objectives upon signature of Lome conventions or the adoption by the European Council of political documents.

- Country programmes and evaluations are internal documents that are not published, but result in publishable material such as brochures.

- Contract and procurement information is published in the biannual “Le Courrier ACP-UE”.

In-house publications for general public:
- Le Courrier ACP-UE (120 pages, in English and French, 80 000 issues) for specialised audiences and general public in Europe and in developing countries.
- Europa Development (monthly, 10 pages in English, French, German, Spanish and Italian) for decision-makers, the media, NGOs, etc.

Agency’s organisational structure for information activities:
- There are 6 information specialists.

Other messages conveyed through information activities:
- The role of the European Union in international co-operation.

Budget allocated to information activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total:</th>
<th>Direct expenditures by agency:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1992: ECU700 000 = US$906 735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1994: ECU400 000 = US$468 933</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contributions to outside organisations (NGOs, Universities, schools, etc.):
- 1994: ECU14.5 million = US$17 million

1 US$ = 0.772 in 1992
1 US$ = 0.853 in 1994
Surveys of public attitudes

- No major relevant survey in recent years
- Two studies, financed by the General Directorate for Development Co-operation (DGDC), examine media coverage of developing countries. Major conclusions are:
  - Information about developing countries concern countries or regions of "high tension", i.e., in open conflict.
  - Minimal space is allotted to in-depth reports or commentaries or interviews concerning those countries
  - The picture presented is almost always biased in favour of institutionalised situations and topics, seldom focussing on social or economic emergencies and opposition to authorities
  - Issues such as foreign debt, starvation or internal conflicts are not covered. Coverage is above all given to policies of co-operation and diplomatic relations between Italy and the developing country

Support among socio-professional groups

- Support has not been identified according to socio-professional categories. However, NGOs and other volunteer organisations are most favourable to development aid
- Since 1992, there is less interest politically and on the part of the public for co-operation activities, following scepticism about the transparency of such activities
- Budgetary restrictions for information activities have considerably limited such activities and, therefore, the possibility to reverse the above trend

Development education

- There are few analytical studies and evaluations performed on development aid and the media. Some research has been conducted at the university level, and a few essays have been published
- The paper "Giornalisti e Informazione" was published as a result of a congress on communications across the Mediterranean (prepared by ARCI in 1992)
- In addition, the project "Image for Africa", co-ordinated by an NGO, was produced. It concerns the 1980s
- Many NGOs are involved in development education. They are co-ordinated by a network, REAS
- No specific school programme seems to deal with development education. But audiovisual equipment has been distributed in recent years to 1 000 schools at the secondary level

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**Italy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surveys of public attitudes</th>
<th>Support among socio-professional groups</th>
<th>Development education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Italy (Continued end)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information activities of aid agency</th>
<th>Budget allocated to information activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Italian Government believes there is justification for information activities in the area of development. This is sanctioned by a special decree. However, the legitimacy of information initiatives financed under the budget for co-operation has been criticised by the Treasury.</td>
<td>(billion Italian liras)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &quot;regime&quot;:</td>
<td>Direct expenditures by agency:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A monthly review, &quot;Dipco&quot;, 4 000 copies is freely distributed to public and private organisations. The business community can subscribe to the review.</td>
<td>1992: 8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;Dipco&quot; publishes official documents made available by the GDDC.</td>
<td>1993: 4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-house publications:</td>
<td>Contributions to outside organisations (NGOs):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The GDDC produces a monthly review, &quot;Cooperazione&quot;, distributed to approximately 2 500 schools and 500 universities. The review, written in Italian, English and French, 21,000 copies are distributed to public groups, NGOs, politicians, journalists, universities, research centers, etc. The publication will be restricted due to budget constraints.</td>
<td>1992: 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency's organisational structure for information activities:</td>
<td>1993: 7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Within the Foreign Affairs Ministry, a division (Ufficio XI) co-ordinates activities and finances information and development education projects.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Within the General Directorate for Development Co-operation, a division (Ufficio XII) deals with training and development education. Also finances development education projects presented by local groups.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Division 1 of the DGCS co-operates with the media service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for information activities related to development co-operation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ministers are frequently accompanied by the media in their missions abroad.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are no other messages conveyed through information activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Surveys of public attitudes

• The government of Japan carries out annual public surveys.
• The 1993 survey found that the question whether "Japan should positively promote economic co-operation" had 33 per cent positive respondents (down for two consecutive years from 41 per cent then 35 per cent), with 46 per cent stating that "the present level is sufficient", 12 per cent that economic co-operation "should be reduced as much as possible", and 2 per cent that it should be terminated.
• The reasons given by supporters of economic co-operation (in a multiple response question) were its contribution to stability and peace (45 per cent), Japan's humanitarian responsibility (36 per cent), Japan's environmental capacity (29 per cent), its international duty to help debt-ridden developing countries given its large trade surplus (22 per cent) the relevance of economic co-operation to the promotion of Japanese foreign policy (21 per cent) and to securing a stable supply of energy resources (16 per cent).
• Regional priorities were Asia (55 per cent), Africa (6 per cent) and the Middle East (4 per cent), with 20 per cent favouring equal attention to all regions.

Support among socio-professional categories

• No information has been made available as to the different attitudes of different groups in favour or against aid.
• An Association for the Promotion of International Co-operation was established in 1975 for promoting international co-operation. The association mainly holds seminars about international co-operation in various cities in Japan. It produces and distributes a series of information materials and it runs the programme "Plaza for International Co-operation".

Development education

• The Japanese authorities are not aware of any particular study on how citizens receive their information and shape their attitudes on development issues. The media's interest in international co-operation remains quite limited although it has somewhat increased, but they sometimes propagate negative impressions by focussing on shortcomings of ODA projects.
• No compulsory or optional programmes have been promoted in schools.
• Some teachers are interested in dev.ed. and they weave these issues into classes of Japanese, English and social studies on a voluntary basis (the number of teachers so engaged is rising).
• At the end of 1982, voluntary organisations have created the non-governemntal "Development Education Council", some of whose research programmes and seminars are financially supported by the government. Presently the Council includes some 40 associations and groups. The Council collects data and materials relating to dev. ed. and development problems and makes this information available to NGOs, schools and socio-educative organisations.
• The "Plaza for International Co-operation", run by the Association for the Promotion of International Co-operation Activities, was created by the government in Tokyo in 1993. Citizens are free to drop into the plaza to get information about ODA. The plaza provides materials and data on ODA, including photographs and videos, to the public, NGOs, scholars, journalists and enterprises. It also produces and makes available materials, databases and documentation to non-formal dev. ed. activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>Surveys of public attitudes</th>
<th>Support among socio-professional categories</th>
<th>Development education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>• No information has been made available as to the different attitudes of different groups in favour or against aid.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Japan (continued end)

Information activities of aid agency

Japan esteems it essential to raise the understanding, support and participation of the people to continue to use taxpayers' money for foreign aid. People's interest in foreign assistance has been growing in recent years and questions are being increasingly asked on how Japan's aid serves the interests of the people in developing countries, how its assistance is being appreciated and whether it is carefully tailored to needs.

Relevant publications:
For the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the annual report on "Japan's ODA"; the findings from certain evaluations ("evaluation results") are regularly published since FY 1982 in the annual "Evaluation Report on Economic Co-operation" (the Ministry evaluates about 140 projects annually in approximately 50 countries); the information on contracts and procurement ("Annual Report on Implementation of Japanese ODA" (annual) and the "Plaza for International Co-operation" (monthly)).
For the Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA): descriptive pamphlets on JICA's aims and activities (updated every two years); country aid studies and sector studies (e.g. on environment, WID, education for development etc.) which are publicly available at the JICA library. However, the "regime" for evaluations is varied: JICA's guidelines on criteria and methods of evaluations are not open to the public, whereas "individual project evaluation survey" are available to the public. Since 1987, the names of enterprises receiving contracts for assistance projects and studies are published in the annual report, subject to the approval of the recipient countries involved.
For the Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund (OECF): an annual report (which, with the consent of the countries involved, publishes the names of principal contractors of OECF-funded projects), as well as an annual report on OECF's approach to environmental issues; a quarterly magazine with the results of OECF's macro-economic; country studies, and an annual "Evaluation Report on Completed Projects" which carries a summary of evaluation studies of individual projects. OECF also issues monthly press releases indicating the amount of commitment, disbursement, repayment, outstanding balance and description of projects committed during that month: these are distributed to foreign embassies in Japan, the press and others.

Magazines
The Ministry for Foreign Affairs: "Plaza for International Co-operation", 40 pages, in Japanese, for the general public, 10,000 copies; JICA: two monthly in Japanese, both for the general public, respectively 17,000 and 30,000 copies; one monthly for Japanese emigrants overseas in Japanese, 3,500 copies; a quarterly for JICA's experts, 40 pages, in Japanese, 4,600 copies; a bimonthly newsletter in English for development officials, 12 pages, 7,750 copies; OECF: a monthly newsletter in Japanese, 6 pages, 1,300 copies, and a quarterly in English, 8 pages, 1,200 copies, both for the general public; a quarterly research magazine in Japanese, 150 pages, 2,000 copies.

Agency's organisational structure for information activities:
Ministry of Foreign Affairs' "Plaza for International Co-operation" has 6 staff members, no other information service on ODA;
JICA's Public Relations Division, in charge of information, has 7 full-time staff;
OECF's Public Relations Division has 4 professionals.

Other activities
Five persons (press and opinion leaders) visit ODA projects each year under Ministry of Foreign Affairs auspices;
JICA organises an essay contest for high school students, with winners visiting projects overseas, and a study tour for high school teachers, to visit projects and also high schools in developing countries; also, visits of journalists to projects overseas;
OECF organises tours of Japanese and partner country journalists to visit projects.

Budget allocated to information activities (Japanese Yen)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Direct expenditure by the aid agency:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>¥1,051M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>¥1,144M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Contributions to other institutions (NGOs, universities, schools, etc.):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>¥146M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>¥185M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The amount allocated to development education primarily in schools is: ¥125M.
### Luxembourg

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surveys of public attitudes</th>
<th>Support among socio-professional categories</th>
<th>Development education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993 opinion poll:</td>
<td>Most in favour of development aid:</td>
<td>No analytical studies or evaluations of how citizens receive their information and shape their attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development aid ranks</td>
<td>People with higher income (above LF140 000/month)</td>
<td>The Foreign Ministry is collaborating with the national broadcasting company to present a television series on development co-operation twice a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th out of 14 selected</td>
<td>High-level executives, students and members of liberal professions</td>
<td>No government-financed development education in schools. NGOs have their own programmes, which may be co-financed by several ministries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sectors, behind health,</td>
<td>Support strongest among the young (15-24)</td>
<td>The Ministry of Foreign Affairs co-finances sensitisation projects on developing countries to be presented by NGOs (about LF4.6 million in 1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environment and social</td>
<td>Least in favour of development aid:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>security</td>
<td>Independent professions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Government is responsible for reminding the public that, despite its lack of a colonial past, Luxembourg must make common cause with developing countries that strive to improve their situation.

**Information "regime":**

- Annual Report published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Bilateral development projects and programmes are executed by Lux-Development Sarl, which also publishes contract and procurement information

**"In-house" publication for general public:**

- Annual Report, which is widely distributed to deputies, diplomatic missions, the media and NGOs. Also available to general public upon request

**Agency's organisational structure for information activities:**

- No information office within the Ministry
- No additional messages conveyed through information activities

### Budget allocated to information activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount (LFL)</th>
<th>Amount (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>3.8 million</td>
<td>118,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>9.9 million</td>
<td>286,956</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Direct expenditures by agency:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount (LFL)</th>
<th>Amount (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>0.3 million</td>
<td>9,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>0.2 million</td>
<td>5,797</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contributions to external organisations:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount (LFL)</th>
<th>Amount (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>1.7 million</td>
<td>54,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>4.6 million</td>
<td>158,937</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 US$ = LFL 32.14 in 1992
1 US$ = LFL 34.5 in 1994

**Other (NGOs' own financing):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount (LFL)</th>
<th>Amount (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>1.8 million</td>
<td>56,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>5.1 million</td>
<td>147,830</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### The Netherlands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Surveys of public attitudes</strong></th>
<th><strong>Support among socio-professional categories</strong></th>
<th><strong>Development education</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>While domestic problems rank higher in the concern of people than they did in the past, and the increasing numbers of asylum-seekers and refugees is an issue in public debate, the interest and support for development co-operation remains stable, indeed there is widespread support for the policy target of 0.8 per cent of GDP.</td>
<td>DGIS has developed a data-base identifying persons, institutions, NGOs, etc. with a keen interest in development co-operation. Information activities are targeted to persons and groups in the data-base, and to the almost 90 000 subscribers of the DGIS monthly review. The Information Department also tries to reach new groups, especially children and adolescents, through videos, CDs and magazines which present complicated problems in an attractive and comprehensible manner.</td>
<td>A 1991 evaluation of a major development education campaign showed that approximately 80 per cent of the population get their information on development issues from TV programmes, with 50 per cent also mentioning newspapers and magazines. Fund-raising programmes by NGOs, while still effective, often emphasize the &quot;negative&quot; image of developing countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A survey commissioned by the government and continued since 1981 indicates a steady support for development co-operation, although politicians and the press tend to speak of weakened support. There is also an interest in public opinion for the way the aid of the Netherlands is distributed and its impact. The image people have of the Third World is somewhat negative (poverty, famine, ethnic problems are often mentioned).</td>
<td>• A May 1994 survey conducted by the non-governmental national commission for development information and public awareness, NCO, shows that most people do not want Dutch aid to be reduced and that there is growing criticism of the use of development funds for non-ODA purposes.</td>
<td>• The Information Department has developed a wide range of attractive and varied supplementary teaching materials related to development issues for primary school classes. The approach aims at integrating development education in existing subjects such as geography or social studies. Almost one-third of the 8,000 primary schools of the country have ordered the multi-media packages produced in co-operation with Dutch educational TV for 6-8 year-olds, on Surinam and Morocco. A video series has been developed by the information service to introduce 8-12 year-olds in a positive manner to the daily lives of children in developing countries. Teaching materials are being prepared for the secondary and pre-university levels on sustainable development. The material is not free of charge (schools are charged approximately $15 for a video). It is prepared in close co-operation with education centres, school counselling services and teacher training colleges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A May 1994 survey conducted by the non-governmental national commission for development information and public awareness, NCO, shows that most people do not want Dutch aid to be reduced and that there is growing criticism of the use of development funds for non-ODA purposes.</td>
<td>• Development education has been introduced in primary and basic secondary education: a) in primary school, special attention has to be paid to daily life in the major developing regions; b) children at secondary level must be able to indicate the nature of the North-South issues with reference to a Third World country, and relate the continuation of underdevelopment to various internal and external factors. These issues are frequently integrated in standard geography textbooks, with teachers free to choose supplementary materials.</td>
<td>• The Ministry of Education has issued guidelines to ensure that teaching material produced by many NGOs is relevant to existing curricula and textbooks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>No special study of the image of developing countries in the media or the press is funded by the government.</td>
<td>• The Centre for Global Education’s documentation centre has over 7,500 teaching aids related to development, the environment and human rights, for all education levels including adult education.</td>
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The Netherlands (Continued end)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information activities of aid agency</th>
<th>Budget allocated to information activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Over the past decade, the role of information has expanded and changed nature, from merely explaining government policy to stimulating the public opinion process and aiming at greater involvement and participation and at maintaining support for the development effort of the country.</td>
<td>Information department disbursements of which approximately US$0.8 million for development education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The information &quot;regime&quot; is traditionally one of great openness</td>
<td>1992: 9.7 m Dfl (US$5.5 m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The Information Department publishes: a monthly magazine for the general public (11 issues, 48 pages, 95 000 copies, free of charge); a magazine for children 9 to 14 (10 issues, 24 pages, 500 000 copies) widely used in primary schools.</td>
<td>1993: 9.1 m Dfl (US$4.9 m)</td>
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<td>• The Director of the Information Department is also the spokesman for the Minister of Development Co-operation, and has a staff of 22 professionals. Apart from video/film production and the children's magazine which is produced by the Royal Tropical Institute, most of the materials are produced in-house.</td>
<td>Additional DGIS grants to NCO (the non-governmental national commission for development information and public awareness, which distributes contributions for development education activities).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Over the long term, the aim is to influence attitudes and behaviour towards development and environmental issues. Every four years, an information policy document is produced with both short and long-term objectives. In 1994, a desk study on the opinion of adolescents on development issues was being prepared in order to improve the impact of activities aimed at this group.</td>
<td>Approx. 17 m Dfl per annum</td>
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<td>• No special activity has been designed with respect to journalists.</td>
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Norway

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Surveys of public attitudes</th>
<th>Support among socio-professional categories</th>
<th>Development education</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A 1993 survey reveals that:</td>
<td><strong>Most in favour of development aid:</strong> The young, senior officials, people with higher revenues, people who live in densely populated areas or have been in developing countries Also people associated with the Socialist Left Party and the Christian Democratic Party</td>
<td>No analytical studies and/or evaluations of how citizens receive their information. Fifty per cent of the people surveyed in 1993 think that mass media give a fairly accurate picture of developing countries Development education is integrated in school programmes, at primary and secondary levels. Quality of development education is uneven NORAD finances yearly study tour to developing countries for teachers and regular field visits for journalists and NGOs; also produces information materials for pupils and teachers NORAD funds both specific NGO information projects and broader programmes: 24 NGOs have &quot;framework agreements&quot; for information activities Technical support is provided by NORAD through its Information and Documentation Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 per cent of the people polled approve of aid, one of the two highest scores since the 1970s. Since 1986, however, there is a steady decline in the proportion of people willing to increase the volume of aid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domestic problems (e.g. unemployment) prevail over development issues, which themselves prevail over defence and problems linked to refugees</td>
<td><strong>Least in favour of development aid:</strong> Pensioners, people associated with the Party of Progress, people with lower education levels</td>
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</table>
Information activities of aid agency

- The government's policy, supported by Parliament, includes information activities on North-South issues and on development co-operation

Information "regime":

- Country programmes, available to the public
- Evaluation studies, contract and procurement information and commissioned public analyses, with exceptions under criteria established by the Public Information Act

In-house publication for general public:

- A magazine (4 issues/year and two special issues) is now discontinued

Agency's organisational structure for information activities:

- Information Division, with 15 permanent staff. Some tasks contracted out, such as the magazine and photographic and film services

Other messages conveyed through information activities:

- The main message to be conveyed to the public is involvement in, and acceptance of, NORAD's development objectives and strategies

Activities addressed to professional categories:

- Activities are aimed mostly at teachers, journalists, NGOs and the business community

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Budget allocated to information activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct expenditures by agency:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992: US$1.7million</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993: US$1.0million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions to NGOs:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992: US$4.5million</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993: US$3.2million</td>
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1US$ = NOK6.21 in 1992
1US$ = NOK7.89 in 1993
Norway (continued end)

Highlights from the 1993 survey

• 85 per cent of the Norwegian population between 16 and 79 years of age viewed aid positively according to this survey, the highest percentage over the years, together with 1986. Since 1986, however, fewer people have favoured an increase in aid, and more a decrease; at the same time, fewer people want it to be terminated entirely.

• Development aid comes 7th in a list of nine priorities, where employment is No. 1. It comes ahead of defence, and of reception of refugees and asylum seekers.

• Emergency aid and long-term assistance are viewed equally favourably, but fewer persons want to reduce emergency aid than long-term assistance.

• Organisations within the UN system contribute most to growth, according to respondents, followed by NORAD and NGOs, with private enterprise given the lowest rank.

• Major deterrents to development are war and conflicts, followed by corruption, violation of human rights and debt, with only a small percentage quoting insufficient international assistance.

• Sixty per cent believe that aid should be untied, and a majority of these (two-thirds) thinks so even if this should be at the expense of Norwegian enterprise. Of the forty per cent that do not, a majority maintains this view even should Norwegian prices be higher than others.

• Two out of five respondents think foreign enterprise has a mainly positive impact on developing countries. Nearly one out of three holds the opposite view. The rest think there are both positive and negative aspects.

• Nearly half of the Norwegian population cannot mention any of the 11 developing countries where Norway is mainly engaged. About 25 per cent of the people know that India and Tanzania are among such countries. Only 3 per cent can mention seven of more countries.
### New Zealand

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<tr>
<th>Surveys of public opinion attitude</th>
<th>Support among socio-professional categories</th>
<th>Development education</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| • No recent survey of public opinion | **Most in favour of development aid:**  
  • NGOs, business community and free marketeers for trade and export credit advantages | • No analytical studies or evaluations of how citizens receive their information and shape their attitude |
| • No survey on image of developing countries in the written press and media | **Least in favour of development aid:**  
  • The underprivileged and socio-professional categories involved with them | • No development education in schools. Budget constraints limit ODA funding for development education |
|                                   |                                            | • Larger NGOs active in publicity/development education are coordinated by the Council for International Development (CID), which receives core government funding |
|                                   |                                            | • Aid agency does not provide technical support to non-formal education activities |
New Zealand (Continued end)

Information activities of aid agency

- No particular justification for information activities. Given resources constraints, government prefers to rely on reputable NGOs to carry out publicity/education activities

Information "regime":
- Yearly "Programme Profiles" booklet
- Country or sector programme and planning documents and evaluations available on request
- Contract and procurement information available on request
- Other relevant information also on request

In-house publications for the general public:
- Two newsletters in English for NGOs, MPs, business community and academia

Agency's organisational structure for information activities:
- One permanent Information Officer

Other messages conveyed through information activities:
- Consultancy openings

No special activities conveyed to specific professional categories

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<tr>
<th>Information activities of aid agency</th>
<th>Budget allocated to information activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1992: NZ$100 000 = US$53 763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1993: NZ$104 000 = US$56 216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct expenditures by agency:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1992: NZ$86 000 = US$46 236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1993: NZ$90 000 = US$46 608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contributions to NGOs:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1992: NZ$14 000 = US$7 567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1993: NZ$14 000 = US$7 526</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1US$ = NZ1.86 in 1992
1US$ = NZ1.85 in 1993
Surveys of public attitudes

SIDA commissions yearly public opinion polls through the Swedish Central Bureau of Statistics. In recent years, problems of the national economy have had an impact on attitudes: with economic hardship at home, support for development co-operation and solidarity with Third World countries declines. However, in 1993 support for development assistance increased

- The latest quantitative information available to the Secretariat to date relates to 1991, when 10 per cent of respondents thought Swedish aid should be increased, 54 per cent that it was about right, 27 per cent that it should be reduced and 7 per cent, terminated
- In addition, in 1992 and 1993 SID commissioned four qualitative opinion surveys concerning views on developing countries and Swedish development assistance as seen by the general public, youths (16-25 yrs), decision-makers in industry with developmental experience, and various categories of development assistance personnel

Basic conclusions drawn from the four surveys taken together include the following:

- All agree that distribution of resources in the world is exceedingly unfair and a majority considers it the duty of richer countries to share with those less fortunate; a majority bases this on purely humanitarian reasons, others think that development assistance may reduce the risk of disasters which cause refugees and immigrants to come to Sweden
- The majority of the people feel quite far removed from the developing countries but new crises, especially ex-Yugoslavia which is felt to be close, have awakened the interest of many young people
- The level of knowledge of the general public and young people concerning Swedish development assistance is generally very low
- The greater the knowledge, the more nuances in judgement: although more extensive knowledge does not lead to less criticism, it does lead to more insightful and multifaceted views. Lack of knowledge leads to a more suspicious attitude, a stronger wish to ascertain who benefits, and to a view of aid as "a sum of money" that is portioned out to different countries and is easily diverted by the recipient bureaucracies. Many wish to think that development assistance does some good but few know if that is in fact the case
- For the general public and young people, views on SIDA are coloured by the perception of government bureaucracy in general: they consider that SIDA should present a clearer image. All four categories assert that SIDA is not sufficiently open to the surrounding world
- As a general rule, the interviewees are more positive to various NGOs than to SIDA, in part because they are more aware of their achievements, and many applaud the small-scale characteristic of NGO projects
- The surveys showed a wish for more information, especially on the positive achievements of development assistance, through a variety of channels. All interviewees consider schools an important information channel as many attitudes are formed during the first years of life
Support among socio-professional categories

- There are no studies on this. However, the annual statistics from surveys show that
  - women are more in favour of development assistance than men
  - younger people more than older
  - well-educated more positive than less-educated people

- Youths are an important target group: for example, SIDA has funded for three years an independent youth magazine (40 000 copies) which deals with subjects like world music, foreign cultures, immigrants, racism

Development education

- SIDA surveys show that the news media are the major source of information on development issues. Other very important sources are
  - people "in the neighbourhood" with personal working experience in developing countries
  - for young people, the school

- Coverage of Third World affairs has never been a priority with the Swedish news media, headlines are made only in case of natural and man-made disasters like in the Horn of Africa and Rwanda.

- SIDA has worked for over two decades to promote better understanding of development issues among Swedish journalists through seminars, study tours, travel grants and the funding of university courses on development for journalists. While this programme has resulted in a great number of articles, TV and radio reports from developing countries, in recent years these journalists, often very devoted to the development cause, have found it more and more difficult to have their stories published and fewer journalists accept to take part in SIDA's press tours to developing countries. In 1993, SIDA allocated SEK 400 000 for travel grants to 41 journalists.

- Development education has been introduced in Swedish schools as part of global education some 15 years ago. A reform as from July 1995 will maintain development education as part of international education in the basic curricula at the compulsory level (grades 1-9) and the optional level (grades 10-12). It will not be treated as a subject but integrated in most subjects.

- SIDA has a tradition of actively co-operating with the school system and this was further strengthened in recent years. A recent development is the appointment of eight Regional Informers for Development Education, RIs, (totally funded by SIDA), covering the whole country, working as teachers half the time, with their task for the other half of their time to help develop teachers' skills in dev.ed. through workshops and in-service training, and assist them with advice and information on study materials, etc. RIs also devote much of their time to teacher training schools, and co-ordinate the dev.ed. activities in schools of various groups in their region. Given the positive results shown by an evaluation after the first three years, their number will be doubled from 8 to 16 starting this fall.
**Sweden (Continued end)**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Information activities of aid agency</th>
<th>Budget allocated to information activities (Swedish Kr. million)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public accessibility to SIDA documents is regulated by the law on public access to official documents: meaning for SIDA that all documents are available to the public, and must be released to anyone who asks for them, with the single exception of documents which might harm relations with another country. Key information like evaluations, macro-economic, socio-economic and other studies, is often published in book form.</td>
<td><strong>SIDA’s Information activities:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agency’s organisational structure for information activities:</strong> Some 25 people are presently employed at the Information Secretariat of SIDA.</td>
<td>1992/93: 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Magazine</strong> SIDA publishes a periodical magazine (SIDARapport) of 40 pages, 8 times a year, in Swedish, mainly read by present or former development workers, teachers, students, and available to libraries and schools.</td>
<td>1993/94: 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Study tours</strong> In addition to the activities for journalists, SIDA also organises study tours to developing countries for groups of teachers, librarians and teacher trainers. The tours often focus on a theme such as environment or human rights and always include visits to Swedish-funded projects.</td>
<td>To NGOs:</td>
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| | |
| | **1992/93:** 60 |
| | **1993/94:** 60 |

(for 1994/95, over SEK 70 m)
Switzerland

Surveys of public attitudes

- The last survey of public opinion was undertaken in 1994, jointly by DDA (Directorate of Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Aid) and some Swiss NGOs, as had been the case in 1984 and 1989.
- The survey shows an awareness of the need for structural change (three-fourths of respondents) and that the most important measures for development are those that should be taken in the North, e.g., relative to commodity prices.
- It also shows, however, a growing feeling of helplessness vis-a-vis development problems, and of pessimism with respect to what respondents perceive is happening in the Third World. (See overleaf for more details).
- DDA does not conduct surveys of the image of developing countries in the media and has not pursued the identification of Swiss population groups particularly favourable or adversarial to foreign aid.

Public opinion survey of 1994

- This was the third survey (previous ones in 1984 and 1989).
- A majority of people think that the most important measures for development have to be taken in the North (this question was asked for the first time). Examples include the price of commodities. Almost three-fourths of respondents think that structural change is the most important factor and that Switzerland should contribute to it.
- It is not clear what image people have of official development assistance. There are more negative opinions now than previously on ODA’s performance with respect to: being economic, efficient, helping the poor, having good financial control.
- The image of NGOs is better: people think that NGOs are less complicated, more effective and closer to the poor. (Many more people know what the Red Cross and Caritas are than the DDA).
- Aid is more effective when it is more direct, indirect channels are the least effective, including the UN and the World Bank.
- Questions on “proposals” showed that three-fourths of respondents agree that toxic waste and weapons should not be exported to developing countries; the exports of these countries should be promoted. There is only moderate support for reductions of Swiss military expenditures (the “peace dividend”); less than half the respondents favour debt reduction; only 16 per cent think that more asylum seekers should be granted asylum.
- A growing percentage feels “helpless”, it feels they cannot do anything about world problems, hunger, etc. (about 50 per cent on average, and about two-thirds in French-speaking regions). Among those who think they can have a small personal influence, some believe that one of the ways would be to have a more modest life-style, using less energy and less tropical wood.
- The image of the Third World is worsening, compared with 1989. It is increasingly identified with poverty, hunger, war and overpopulation. Most people think that the situation of developing countries is worsening and that their governments are corrupt and ineffective.
- A major motive for supporting aid is the environment, as 83 per cent of respondents agree that only development assistance can stop the degradation of natural resources.
- One person in two believes that the volume of aid should remain as it is; 27 per cent that it should be increased (previously only 10 per cent thought so); 13 per cent want to see it cut (8 per cent previously).
- Aid should essentially help the developing countries, but the opinion is growing that there should also be some returns for the Swiss economy.
Support among socio-professional categories

- There is no recent overview or analysis of how Swiss citizens get their information on development issues. But there is a feeling in DDA that they are much better informed than about a decade ago.

- Surveys show that the mass media are the major source of information. One citizen out of two finds that he/she is adequately informed on these issues.

Development education

- Development education is not a compulsory subject in any of the school systems of the 25 Swiss "cantons". However, some "cantons" mention subjects such as "information on development co-operation", "initiation to worldwide issues and tolerance" or "human rights" as part of school programmes. These themes are dealt with in lessons of history, geography or civic education by teachers who are specially interested. About one-tenth of Swiss pupils are estimated to be exposed to development themes at school.

- Several NGOs promote development education in Switzerland, the most important being "Service Ecole-Tiers Monde". DDA funds about 40 per cent of the costs of that Service which offers teaching aids and advises teachers. DDA also funds a forum which convenes most of the people who deal with development education. This Forum (Forum "Ecole pour un seul monde") has undertaken to analyse how development education is organised in the country (results were expected at the end of 1994).
Switzerland (Continued end)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information activities of aid agency</th>
<th>Budget allocated to information activities</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Policy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total:</strong> 3.5 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The information strategy of DDA has the purpose of obtaining the greatest possible support of Swiss women and men to the cause of development assistance and humanitarian aid</td>
<td><strong>direct expenditure:</strong> 2.3 m</td>
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<td>• The messages should show that</td>
<td><strong>contributions to other bodies:</strong> 1.2 m</td>
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<td>- funds are used efficiently, with tangible results, and with the needed control</td>
<td>The above includes</td>
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<td>- the major effort is sustained by the partner country</td>
<td>development education.</td>
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<td>- development is a complex task with many dimensions</td>
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<td>- there are political, economic and ethical reasons for co-operating, as well as reasons of enlightened self-interest</td>
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<td>- partners have their culture, generosity, energy and will to develop: they are human beings and not numbers</td>
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<td><strong>The audience</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• It is important to convince those who are indifferent or adversarial, not only those who already favour aid. Emphasis should be on operational aspects. Information work should be systematic and pro-active</td>
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<td><strong>The actors</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Contacts with the media, journalists, travel for the information of members of parliament and local government. Utilisation of the know-how available in the agency. Encourage a greater number of articles on development projects of DDA by journalists stationed in the Third World</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Information &quot;régime&quot;</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Documents relating to country or sector programmes, planning documents and evaluation reports are generally not made public, but people with a professional interest are generally authorised to consult them</td>
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<td><strong>Magazines:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• A three-monthly publication on forthcoming bilateral activities informs business circles on the potential for contracts/tender</td>
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<td>• Another three-monthly publication, &quot;Entwicklung - Développement&quot;, is mainly destined to interested people in Switzerland including teachers and development professionals. A magazine of 36 pages, with each issue focussed on a theme, 14 000 copies in German and 9 000 in French</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A yearly publication, &quot;Cahiers de la DDA&quot;, is also thematic and is addressed to a well-informed public (about 2 000 copies per language)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Agency's own structure for information work</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• DDA has its own information service, with a staff of eight persons. In addition, the service has recourse to a number of free-lance professionals such as authors, translators, photographers, etc.</td>
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<td>• Priority themes are population, the environment, migrations and women</td>
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<td>• DDA maintains daily contacts with the media. In addition it publishes a press review every two months, whose articles are mainly taken up by the regional and local press</td>
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<td><strong>Study tours</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Twice a year, visits by journalists are organised in developing countries which are priority partners of Swiss aid. Missions by individual journalists can also be supported. TV and radio programmes on development are regularly co-financed</td>
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### United Kingdom

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<tr>
<th>Surveys of public attitudes</th>
<th>Support among socio-professional categories</th>
<th>Development education</th>
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<tr>
<td>ODA has made available a wealth of reports on public opinion surveys, which the Secretariat is summarising. If possible these summaries will be made available during the Informal Expert Meeting, in any event they will be reflected in the foreseen publication after the meeting.</td>
<td>No study is conducted on this point by the aid agency.</td>
<td>When the Education Reform Act was passed and the new National Curriculum was introduced in schools in England and Wales in 1992, teaching about development education topics became compulsory in primary and secondary schools, as part of the geography studies.</td>
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<td>In primary schools (ages 7 to 11), all pupils are required to study a locality in a developing country.</td>
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<td>In secondary schools (11 to 14) all pupils are required to study a developing country, including an evaluation of the extent to which it appears to be developing.</td>
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<td>Other opportunities for studying dev. ed. exist in other subjects in the National Curriculum (notably science, technology, English and history) but these are optional and it is impossible to quantify the extent to which they are taken up.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ODA provides core funding to the Centre for World Development Education — now Worldaware — to which it contracts its own development education programme, as well as providing core funding to a similar centre in Scotland, the linking of schools in the United Kingdom and developing countries (&quot;Education Partners Overseas&quot;). ODA also provides support to Panos Institute and to individual projects on a case-by-case basis such as for a series of television programmes.</td>
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The information department of ODA believes that information activities are justified in the first place on the basis that the public has a right to know how £2.1 billion of taxpayers' money is being spent.

The long-term nature of aid is stressed, to balance the predominance of emergency aid which always gains the headlines.

The agency does not organise/fund study tours to developing countries for journalists or other professionals.

### Information "regime" of the aid agency

Evaluation studies and summaries of evaluation reports are published.

Procurement opportunities are made available through the tendering process of procurement agents; lists of contracts are available through Overseas Contracts Department; lists are published in the World Aid Section of the Department of Trade when tendering through multilateral institutions.

Internal working documents, advice to Ministers and consultants' reports are confidential.

### Magazines

British Overseas Development is published in English every two months, 20 pages including a section for schools. It has a wide readership, including schools, academics, business people, MPs, NGOs and others interested in the aid field. A copy also goes to every library in the country. 25 000 copies of which one-third go to developing countries.

### Agency's organisational structure for information activities:

The information department has 11 professionals in addition to a head of information (a generalist civil servant with responsibility for emergency aid as well as information) and four back-up staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information activities of aid agency</th>
<th>Budget allocated to information activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The information department of ODA believes that information activities are justified in the first place on the basis that the public has a right to know how £2.1 billion of taxpayers' money is being spent.</td>
<td>Information activities in:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The long-term nature of aid is stressed, to balance the predominance of emergency aid which always gains the headlines.</td>
<td>FY 1993/94: £1.2 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The agency does not organise/fund study tours to developing countries for journalists or other professionals.</td>
<td>FY 1994/95: £1.5 m *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation studies and summaries of evaluation reports are published.</strong></td>
<td>Development education:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Procurement opportunities are made available through the tendering process of procurement agents; lists of contracts are available through Overseas Contracts Department; lists are published in the World Aid Section of the Department of Trade when tendering through multilateral institutions.</strong></td>
<td>FY 1993/94 £0.6 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal working documents, advice to Ministers and consultants' reports are confidential.</strong></td>
<td>of which £0.2 m direct grant to Worldaware.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* includes £0.3 m for an ODA road show - taking an exhibition bus around the country.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surveys of public attitudes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID does not fund surveys relating to domestic public opinion. It relies on USIA (United States Information Agency) and others, that come across general media channels (USIA conducts public opinion polls on a variety of issues in numerous countries)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A study was issued in January 1995 by the School of Public Affairs, University of Maryland. It found strong support for maintaining foreign aid at current spending levels or higher. Much of the resistance to foreign aid spending seems to be based on an extreme overestimation of US expenditures on foreign aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americans want to shift the emphasis of foreign aid away from geopolitical allies towards poor countries. Programmes for helping the poor proved to be quite popular (e.g. child survival, the Peace Corps, humanitarian relief, environmental aid, assistance to help poor countries develop and family planning). Most Americans feel that the moral reasons for giving aid are strong enough in themselves and an overwhelming majority rejects the idea that the US should only give aid when it serves the national interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The majority believes there is widespread waste and corruption in foreign aid programmes and a strong majority said it would be willing to pay more in taxes if they believed that more aid would get to the people who really need it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
United States (Continued end)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information activities of aid agency</th>
<th>Budget allocated to information activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information functions are scattered in different services in the Agency. The Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs houses USAID’s divisions of Public Inquiries, Press, Public Liaison and Multimedia Communications. Of special importance is the Centre for Development Information and Evaluation which, among its other activities, also issues evaluation reports for public information. Much of USAID’s information is available electronically on the Internet. USAID issues a monthly newsletter for its own employees (&quot;Frontlines&quot;). In addition, many of its offices put out their own newsletters and information sheets.</td>
<td>See under Development Education ($2.5 million per year).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-- NB --

The reader is also referred to the paper by Andrew E. Rice, “Building a Constituency for Development Co-operation: Some Reflections on the U.S. Experience” which figures elsewhere in this publication.
Highlights From French Study On “L’image Du Tiers Monde Dans Les Medias”

Summary

This study is the first of its kind in France. It is based on the analysis of contents of ten newspapers and journals of the written press, and the 8 p.m. news bulletins on the two major TV stations, over a period of two months (March-May 1992). The first part of the study measures the place given to Third World regions and countries in the French media (through the frequency of quotations), and the kind of information provided (political, economic, societal, cultural, sports).

Some of the trends which emerge from the study may be relative to the period covered and the events which took place at the time: an earthquake, or an important political event may impact on the rating of regions and countries.

Other trends, which are common both to the written press and TV, are more permanent:

— the image of the South is globally negative and filled with stereotypes;

— Third World countries are often taken as constituting a single abstract society which is prone to all kinds of calamities — war, famine, disease, natural disasters — and characterised by “the incompetence of its governments, the misery and submission of its peoples, the assistance needed by its children, the corruption of its administrations”;

— there is virtually never a mention of Third World capabilities: “no reference is made to successful enterprises, competent financial managers, research laboratories, achievements in agriculture”, nor to any action or situation of a developing city, country or region which might give an image of competence or intelligence;

— “aid-and-solidarity” play an important role but focus on dispensers rather than receivers;

— people from the South in general tend to be absent from the information: only 7 per cent of the quotations reviewed refer to statements and words of Third World people;

— not surprisingly, a conclusion of the study, therefore, is that “our way of looking at the South needs to be modified”.

The journalists who treat Third World subjects in the written press are most often specialists on a given country or region, while those on TV are often permanent correspondents (or special correspondents in case of special newsworthy events): it is all the more astonishing, then, that the message should be so stereotyped.
I. Which developing regions/countries do French media talk about and main subjects

In summing up this first part of the study, the report notes that:

- There is an important difference of approach to news between television and the press both on subjects and favourite areas/countries.

- Television focusses on Latin America; its most frequent subjects are societal (corruption, scandals, etc.) and disasters, with culture and politics getting only third place.

- For the written press, Africa comes a close second; culture and politics are the most frequent subjects; the economy and solidarity are important.

- There is much more variety in the news given on the Third World by the written press which covers a greater number of countries and subjects (with the exception of Les Echos which is highly specialised).

- There exist “loud” and “silent” countries, due to the selection of information as a function not only of events but also of links with France, size of the country in question, etc.

II. “Analyse du discours” (contents analysis)

**Image**

This analysis has been conducted on a sample of 50 per cent of the TV material and 10 per cent of the articles of the written press reviewed.

Taking individual developing regions, the three most frequent features are:

- Latin America - suffering/poverty (18 per cent), contextualising [that is, value-neutral description/analysis] (15 per cent), negative ethics (10 per cent);

- Africa - aid/assistance (18 per cent), weaknesses/needs (14 per cent), contextualising (12 per cent); the Indian Ocean (which for this study is limited to Mauritius and Madagascar) countries are featured with approximately the same frequencies as Africa;

- South-East Asia - contextualising (19 per cent), weaknesses/needs (16 per cent), suffering/poverty (12 per cent). The presentation of South-East Asia is less stereotyped, more contextualised than other regions, and it has an image of “strength” (7 per cent frequency) which is absent elsewhere and is due in particular to the Thai army.

- Caribbean - which in the sample only refers to Haiti: suffering/poverty (27 per cent), contextualising (24 per cent), aid (10 per cent).

*The main themes of Television*

A more detailed analysis by source provides the following indications:

Television’s three major themes on the Third World are:
— Politics (26 per cent of comments),
— Society (20 per cent) and
— Disasters (16 per cent).

The economy does not feature at all. Striking events are favoured.

— Politics and Society mainly presented facts and issues related to sensational events: a bomb in Buenos Aires accounted for over 25 per cent of political comments on the Third World; the Noriega trial, and the methods of drug dealers, respectively, for 10 per cent of societal comments.

— Comments on Politics and Society are presented in a negative, often incriminating tone (e.g. the laxness of local authorities etc.).

— Disasters are presented in a dramatic fashion, reinforcing the drama of the images themselves. Semantically, the development of the Disasters theme has two main features: Suffering and Misery (56 per cent of comments) and Denouncing responsibilities (12 per cent).

— Culture has an 8 per cent frequency and deals mainly with cultural events in France where Third World artists participate (dealing almost exclusively with Cinema and Music).

— Solidarity is weak (5 per cent of comments), mainly deals with Africa, and actions are presented in a positive mode. It presents people who bring aid to countries in need. Recipients are absent.

The main themes of the written press

These are Politics (21 per cent of comments) and Solidarity.

Most of the political comments are presented by the three most important national dailies (Le Monde, Libération and Le Figaro).

Most of the comments on Solidarity are presented by Ouest-France, which covers the events of a great number of local associations (in Bretagne), or of local sections of national associations. Three-quarters of these events relate to Africa.

Notes

1 BarOsud - 'L'image du Tiers Monde dans les médias”, Commission Développement/Coopération et Ministère de la Coopération, La Documentation Française, Paris 1992, 203 pp — the study was conducted by the Institut Synthèse and directed by Sylvie Malsan, a distinguished young ethnologist whom we may think of as a consultant, should we wish to analyse / compare more studies of this kind.

The media covered in the study were: for TV, Antenne 2 and TF 1; for the national press dailies: Le Monde, Le Figaro, Libération; for the regional press dailies: Ouest-France; the economic press: Les Echos; weeklies: Le Canard Enchaîné; L'Evénement du Jeudi; Paris-Match; monthlies: Géo; Ca m'intéresse.

The study was conducted on 2 437 documents: 2 270 articles from the press, 106 TV news programmes (Journal télévisé de 20 hours, over a period of 2 months), 61 TV documentary films.
"Public Opinion Surveys in the United Kingdom"
Action Aid Opinion Polls for 1987/91

1. These show continued support for Britain giving aid to poorer countries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in favour</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>against</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indifferent*</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>don't know</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* don't feel strongly one way or the other
** this question was not repeated after 1987

2. Major types of activity people thought government aid should be spent for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>1987</th>
<th>1988</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help with food/famine relief</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach farming methods/Agricultural advice</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency aid</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term assistance with agriculture, schools, water and health</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. How important do you think it is that our children should learn about Third World countries in schools?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1988</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of little importance or not important</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Main causes of poverty in less developed countries (multiple replies)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1991</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too rapid a population growth</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government mismanagement and conflicts</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of education and training</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverse climate and natural disasters</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A world trade that penalises poor countries</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other and don't know</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Aspects thought to threaten the future of our planet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1991</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overuse of energy, waste of resources and pollution in rich countries</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deforestation and overuse of land in poor countries</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid population growth in poor countries</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibility of poor countries adopting a lifestyle like ours</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(overuse of energy, waste of resources, pollution)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other and don't know</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Whether Britain should make its aid conditional on Third World governments (multiple responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1991</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making economic reforms</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting democracy and accountability to their citizens</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting military expenditure</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respecting Human Rights</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid should not be conditional</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
24 October 1994

Co-Chairmen

Jean Bonvin,
President, OECD Development Centre

James Michel,
Chair, OECD Development Assistance Committee

Part I: Introduction

Welcome by the Co-sponsors of the Consultation

The Objectives of the Consultation: The Challenge and Expectations
Bernard Wood, Director, OECD Development Co-operation Directorate

Key Issues
Ian Smillie (Canada), Development Consultant

Part II: The Formation of Public Knowledge through the Media

Communication, Media and Public Knowledge
Armand Mattelart (France), Professeur des sciences de l’information et de la communication, Université de Rennes II.

Transmission by the Media of the Reality of Developing Societies
Mort Rosenblum (United States), Special Correspondent, Associated Press, Paris

Part III: The Formation of Public Attitudes Towards Development Co-operation in Various OECD Countries

Public Attitudes and Public Judgements on Government Policies
Daniel Yankelovich (United States), President, Public Agenda Foundation and Chairman, DYG Inc.

Panel and General Discussion: The Special Challenges of “the Development Issue”
Colette Braeckman (Belgium), Journalist, Le Soir
Pierre Pradervand (Switzerland), Vivre Autrement
Daniel Yankelovich (United States), President, Public Agenda Foundation and Chairman, DYG Inc.
25 October 1994

Part IV: Public Support for Development Co-operation

The Changing Dynamics of Public Support
Andrew Rice (United States), International Development Conference

Part V: Public Leadership and Public Opinion in Support of Development Co-operation

Panels and General Discussion

"Non-governmental" Perspectives
Yasuo Uchida (Japan), Kobe University, Graduate School of International Co-operation Studies
Tony German (United Kingdom), Development Initiatives, co-editor of The Reality of Aid
Leonie van Bladel (The Netherlands), Member of European Parliament, former television and radio journalist on development issues

"Governmental/Parlementarian" Perspectives
Mr George Ingram (United States), Chief of Staff, Foreign Affairs Committee, US House of Representatives
Uwe Holtz (Germany), Chairman of the Committee on Economic Co-operation of the Bundestag/Chairman of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Part VI: Conclusions and Recommendations

Preliminary Assessment of the Consultation’s Findings and Follow-up Possibilities
Bernard Wood

Concluding Remarks
Jean Bonvin and James Michel
Co-Chairmen

Mr Jean BONVIN
President,
OECD Development Centre

Mr James MICHEL
Chair,
Development Assistance Committee

Participants

Mr Paolo ATTANASIO
Development Consultant
ITALY

Mr Frank BIJVOET
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NETHERLANDS

Ms Colette BRAECKMAN
Le Soir
BELGIUM

Mr Tony GERMAN
Development Initiatives
UNITED KINGDOM

Ms Kate GRANT
Congress of the United States
USA

Mr Uwe HOLTZ
Member of the German Parliament
GERMANY

Mr George INGRAM
Congress of the United States
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North-South Centre of the Council of Europe
PORTUGAL

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Barosud
FRANCE

Mr Armand MATTELART
Université de Rennes II
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Mr Pierre PRADERVAND
Vivre Autrement
SWITZERLAND

Mr Andrew RICE
International Development Conference
USA

Ms Maria Stella ROGNONI
Associazioni Studi America Latina
ITALY

Mr Mort ROSENBLUM
Associated Press
FRANCE

Mr Ian SMILLIE
Development Consultant
CANADA
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization/Position</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr Yasuo UCHIDA</td>
<td>Kobe University Graduate School of International Co-operation Studies</td>
<td>JAPAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Leonie VAN BLADEL</td>
<td>Member of European Parliament</td>
<td>NETHERLANDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Ton WAARTS</td>
<td>National Commission for Development Education (NCDO)</td>
<td>NETHERLANDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Thomas G. WEISS</td>
<td>Brown University</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Daniel YANKELOVICH</td>
<td>Public Agenda Foundation</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National Delegations to the OECD

Austria: H.E. Mr Peter JANKOWITSCH, Ambassador
         Mr Heinz GABLER, Chancellery, Vienna

Canada: Ms Barbara MARTIN, Counsellor

European Commission: Mr Mark LEYSEN, Unit for Information, Communication and Development, Brussels

Finland: Mrs Inger WIREN, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Helsinki
         Mrs Kirsti AARNIO, Counsellor Development and Economic Co-operation

Germany: Mr Horst WETZEL, Counsellor Affairs of Co-operation

France: Mr Jean-Pierre DUBREUIL, Vice-President to the DAC
        Mr Denis BOSSARD, Head of Information and Communication Service, Ministry of Co-operation, Paris
        Ms Virginie DELISEE, Caisse française de Développement, Paris
        Mr Daniel le GARGASSON, Directorate of European Co-operation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris
Italy

Mr Claudio SPINEDI
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome

Mr Massimo GHIRELLI
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome

Mr Eugenio d’AURIA
First Counsellor

Japan

Mr Jun SAITO
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo

Mr Mitsuo SAKABA
Counsellor Development

Ms Mane KUMEKAWA
Technical Assistant Development

Korea*

Mr Song-Sun OHM
First Secretary, Embassy of Korea, Paris

Switzerland

Ms Fiammetta DEVECCHI
Directorate of Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Aid, Policy and Research Section, Bern

Turkey

Ms Lale ÜLQUER
First Secretary

United Kingdom

Mr Neil CHRIMES
Counsellor

USA

Mr J.A.Y. BYRNE
Legislative and Public Affairs, Press Relation Division, USAID, Washington, DC

Ms Lee ROUSSEL
Minister-Counsellor

UNDP

Mr Jean FABRE
Information Section, Geneva

The World Bank

Lord Julian GRENFEll
Paris

*Korea is a Member country of the OECD Development Centre.
OECD Secretariat

Development Co-operation Directorate: Mr Bernard WOOD
Director

Mr Carl WAHREN
Head, Aid Management Division

Ms Elena BORGHESE
Principal Administrator,
Aid Management Division

OECD Development Centre

Mr Ulrich HIEMENZ
Director for Co-ordination

Mr Giulio FOSSI
Head of External Co-operation Programme

Mr Colm FOY
Head of Publications and Information Unit

Mr Hartmut SCHNEIDER
Principal Administrator, Research

Mr Henny HELMICH
Administrator, External Co-operation Programme
PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Is public support for international development failing? The question was examined in a number of contexts during a meeting of experts brought together in a joint enterprise by the OECD Development Assistance Committee and the OECD Development Centre. Views ranged widely but the overall consensus was that governments can and must do more to encourage public awareness of assistance activities and international co-operation for development, in order to encourage public support for these initiatives.