The changing state of public debate on development?

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2016 Annual Meeting of the OECD Development Communication Network (DevCom)
Paris, 9-10 November 2016
1. AAT
   - Data & design
   - Key findings

2. SDGs
   - Awareness
   - Attainability & importance
   - Can we move people?

3. Refugee crisis
   - What do people say, think & feel
   - Opportunity or risk?

4. Key insights
   - 6 things we know about building public support for development
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18 actions analysées par l'Aid Attitudes Tracker entre 2013–2016

- regardé les actualités
- discuté avec des amis
- partagé un article
- interagi avec une communauté
- rédigé un blog
- utilisé votre voix
- utilisé des outils en ligne
- donné de l'argent
- récolté de l'argent
- bénévole en France
- bénévole à l'étranger
- acheté ou boycotté des produits
- voté
- organisé une communauté
- mettre en place une organisation
- contacté un parlementaire
- contacté un parlementaire en ligne
- participé à une marche

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Knowledge of the SDGs / Global Goals

Know them very well  Know them fairly well  Know them a little  Know their name only  Don't know them at all

Data from Nov-Dec 2015. Questions being re-run this Nov and Dec
HUNGER & POVERTY GOALS ARE SEEN TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT, BUT NOT ATTAINABLE BY 2030

*Vertical gridline is the average importance of the SDG; horizontal gridline is the average perceived likelihood that an SDG will be achieved by 2030

QSDG3. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to cover a broad range of issues. Which do you think are most important for improving the quality of life for people around the world? QSDG4-20. Do you think each of the following will or will not be achieved by 2030?
“Understand and listen to your audiences”

• People are inherently sceptical (c.40%); not necessarily opposed (30%)
• We need to start from where people are at, i.e. what they believe to be important and attainable
• But we don’t need to limit ourselves to that – there is a role for preference-shaping as well as preference-taking comms
• Good comms and good programming are not necessarily aligned – so we should be careful about not undermining programming with unrealistic representations of development
• There is space for some more ‘grown-up conversations’ about development with the public
Can we move people?

The Sustainable Development Goals are targets to be met by 2030 that will address the world’s most important challenges, including ending poverty and hunger, improving health and education and combating climate change.

In practice, do you think the Sustainable Development Goals generally will or will not be achieved?

- Will be achieved by 2030
- Will be achieved but later than 2030
- Will not be achieved
- Don’t know

• Sample split into 5 groups, 1 control group that received the above statement and 4 others that were told about MDG success or failure and what was achieved or how far is still to go
Can we move people?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Progress</th>
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<tr>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>Negative 🙁</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success</td>
<td>Negative 😞</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 🙁: Negative emotion
- 😊: Positive emotion
- ☹️: Sad face
- 😊: Happy face
- ✔️: Success symbol
- ✗: Failure symbol
1. Yes, we can move people
   - We can reduce their belief that the SDGs are unattainable
   - But this doesn’t change people’s minds about whether the SDGs are a good or bad idea

2. Some information – even when bad – doesn’t appear to damage public perceptions

3. It is proof of success that significantly reduces people’s belief that the SDGs cannot be achieved
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Thinking about refugees coming to [country], what do you personally think should be done to stop refugees from coming here, if anything?
So what do people say?
So what do people say?

Proportion of topics

- Topic 1: Development
- Topic 2: Accept refugees
- Topic 3: Tougher domestic laws
- Topic 4: Remove incentives to migrate
- Topic 5: Stronger borders
- Topic 6: Tackle war
- Topic 7: EU solution
Proportion of topics by country
People who talk about development also talk about the importance of stronger borders

People who argue we should accept refugees, tend not to talk about development (it’s negatively correlated with development)

When thinking about refugees and immigration it is apparent that development is framed in a negative or defensive way, i.e. about keeping people there

Comms insights:
• We should be very cautious about linking development and migration
• There is a real risk of activating exclusionary frames
The four countries have a different set of concerns

FR – unemployment is the most important problem, followed by terrorism/ISIS

DE – the Syrian refugee crisis in Europe, terrorism and ISIS are Germans’ top issues

UK – membership in the EU and immigration dominate

US – a more diverse set of concerns, but the economy, inequality and ISIS are key issues

Comms insights:
- the ‘space’ to communicate is tight
- need to acknowledge wider, serious & emotional concerns
Attitudes towards refugees

• For the past two waves we’ve been tracking public attitudes towards the refugee crisis
• Across the four countries, and wave on wave, there is remarkable consistency in attitudes
• A majority see refugees as overwhelming public services (73% DE); entering the country posing as terrorists (78% DE); and threaten culture and traditions (53% GB)
• Few see refugees as strengthening the economy (21% DE) or improving the country’s standing in the world (26% DE)
• Most support is seen for statement that there is a ‘moral obligation to let refugees come and live in country’ (32% DE)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>GE</th>
<th>FR</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overwhelm public services</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen economy</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threat to culture</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve country standing</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral obligation</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugees as terrorists</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid reduces immigration</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:**
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know
Which, if any, of the following words describe your feelings about the number of immigrants coming to [country]?
Which, if any, of the following words describe your feelings about the number of immigrants coming to [country]?
Is there space to talk about aid/poverty and migration/security – and do we want to?

• A contradiction we don’t yet understand...

• People are concerned about migration and security and they appear to be advocating solutions to issues that keep migrants/issues ‘over there’ rather than ‘over here’

• However, to date, we’ve seen little evidence that national interest arguments resonate with the public as a justification for giving aid
  • British YouGov survey (Aug 2016) found that a majority support (60%) giving aid based on need rather than trade deals

• We find more evidence for giving aid based on moral sentiments or ‘kindness’

• Is lack of evidence for aid in the national interest because we haven’t communicated it properly – and – if we do, can we effectively manage the risks?
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6 key insights for communications

1. Positive drivers of (behavioural engagement) with global poverty
   • Social norms
   • Can make a difference as an individual
   • Political efficacy
   • Political interest
   As people become politically interested & motivated they become more engaged

2. Knowledge isn’t the answer – increasing knowledge levels doesn't increase support for aid
   • Stay away from big numbers (millions and billions is a lot to anyone)
   • Don’t message on aid volumes – tell stories of impact, effectiveness, returns
Key insights (cont.)

3. Don’t avoid the elephant in the room – corruption
   • Talking about anti-corruption efforts reverses the negative impact of mentioning corruption in the first place, especially for sceptics
   • Key message: ‘Aid works despite corruption’

4. Messengers
   • Frontline workers (doctors/nurses) and volunteers work well for all audiences
   • Businesspeople don’t work at all (even for centre-right audiences); inspirational messengers (i.e. Malala) and philanthropists only work for engaged audiences
   • Caring for others and relatability are the two most important traits for messengers to have
Key insights (cont.)

5. Charity begins at home...
   • Even with greater returns on spending overseas, people still prefer money to be spent at home
   • But, if you tell people money is already being spent overseas, they are much less likely to want to spend it at home

6. Support is shallow and may be lower than previously thought
   • Concern has not been – and is not – as high as we have thought
   • Online methods – as used in AAT – show 20% fewer say they are concerned (vs. face-to-face format)
Following AAT research & insights

Regular AAT Pulse newsletter 6 times a year

AAT website in development

If you want access to either newsletter or website please email Will Tucker will@willtuckerconsulting.com

Jennifer.hudson@ucl.ac.uk
d.hudson@ucl.ac.uk

The Aid Attitudes Tracker Pulse

In this Pulse we focus upon attitudes towards refugees and share some ideas for how organisations‘ can engage the public with refugee and migration issues.

SUMMARY

There is widespread concern among the British public about the negative impact that refugees may have on their lives or to Britain more generally. Only a small percentage of the population recognise the positive contributions which refugees can make to the UK. The message that ‘lands’ best with audiences is that we have a moral obligation to let refugees in. But this is still a minority view. Concern about the impact that refugees could have is not a fringe issue, nor is it exclusively held by those on the political right or opponents of aid. We must communicate with supporters and potential supporters by acknowledging these concerns. The group that do most consistently hold more favourable views towards the impact of refugees on the UK are young people (18–24s).

In Wave 5, we probed respondents on seven key questions. There is a widely shared belief that refugees from countries like Syria, Iraq and Libya into Britain will have a negative impact on the UK:

- 71% believe that allowing large numbers of refugees to come to Britain threatens to overwhelm public services.
- 56% believe that allowing large numbers of refugees to come to Britain threatens British culture.
- 72% believe that there is a real danger that terrorists will enter Britain posing as refugees.

Fewer people agree that allowing refugees from countries like Syria, Iraq and Libya into Britain will benefit the country:

- 18% believe that allowing refugees in will help strengthen the economy.
- 17% believe that allowing refugees in will improve the UK’s standing in the world.
- 25% believe that overseas aid for humanitarian emergencies helps to reduce immigration to Britain.

Photo: DFID Flickr, Rachel Unkovic, International Rescue Committee
Appendix
Aid Attitudes Tracker – Methodology

• The Aid Attitudes Tracker (2013-2018) is a nationally-representative survey conducted online, twice-annually in the US, UK, France and Germany funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

• Fieldwork is provided by YouGov. Final data are then statistically weighted to the national profile of all adults aged 18+ (including people without internet access), age, gender, social class, region, level of education, how respondents voted at the previous election and level of political interest

• Sample sizes across the waves average about 6,000-8,000 which enables us to drill down in more detail into certain demographics without losing too much to margin of error

• The survey is designed by academics at University College London and University of Texas, Dallas. The data here are analyzed by UCL
UK Aid Attitude Tracker 2013–2016
18 Actions

Wave

% of people reporting having done the action in the past 12 months

- Read article
- Discussed article
- Shared article
- Interacted community
- Written blog
- Used voice
- Shared opinions
- Donated money
- Fundraised money
- Volunteered domestic
- Volunteered abroad
- Purchased boycotted
- Voted
- Setup community
- Setup organisation
- Contacted MP offline
- Contacted MP online
- Participated march
Refugee battery – Question wording

Allowing large numbers of refugees to come to Britain threatens to overwhelm our public services.

Allowing refugees to come to Britain is a good way to strengthen the British economy. Allowing a large number of refugees from countries like Syria, Iraq and Libya to live in Britain threatens British culture and traditions.

Allowing refugees from countries like Syria, Iraq and Libya to come and live in Britain will improve Britain's standing in the world.

Britain has a moral obligation to let refugees from countries like Syria, Iraq and Libya come and live here.

There is a real danger that terrorists from countries like Syria, Iraq and Libya will enter Britain posing as refugees.

Overseas aid for humanitarian emergencies in countries in the Middle East and Africa helps to reduce attempts to immigrate to the UK.
## Information, progress, and valence

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<td>the MDG target on reducing maternal mortality has not been met. Even so, because of these efforts, the number of maternal deaths has been cut in half</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>even though the MDG target to halve extreme poverty has successfully been met, 1 billion people still live in extreme poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the MDG target to halve extreme poverty has successfully been met. The proportion of people living in extreme poverty has fallen from around 50% to 14%</td>
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