POLICY BRIEF No. 35

Building Public Awareness of Development: Communicators, Educators and Evaluation

by

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Acronyms

BMZ	German Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DevCom	Informal Network of DAC Development Communicators
DEEEP	Development Education Exchange in Europe Project
EU	European Union
GENE	Global Education Network Europe
FOIs	Freedom of information acts
G8	Group of Eight
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WTO	World Trade Organisation

Introduction

Using evaluation to improve performance has become a priority for OECD policy makers and practitioners in the field of public information/communication and education about development. They want to increase the effectiveness of public awareness and learning activities about development because much-needed political will for an ambitious agenda for reform requires informed public support. However, if citizens in OECD countries are increasingly conscious of global interdependence they do not understand much about the causes and implications. Furthermore, official donors are increasing resources to inform and educate citizens about global development in a policy environment that is focused on demonstrating results. The learning obtained, and results identified, through evaluation puts it at the heart of this agenda. There is, however, some inertia in turning the principle of evaluation into practice

How can this consensus about the importance of evaluation be transformed into action? It seems that the key actors in this sector — both government and non-governmental — must first address a variety of evaluation challenges ranging from the asymmetric power relationship between the institutions that fund, and implement, these activities and evaluations; to the diverse nature and understanding of communication and education about development; to limited financial resources for evaluations.

Achieving a shared understanding about evaluation was the aim of the Informal OECD Experts' Workshop on "Development Communication, Advocacy and Education: Tips and Tools for Improving Evaluation", which was hosted by the German Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ), and took place in Bonn on 19 and 20 March 2007. Evaluation experts from the education, communication, advocacy and development co-operation communities came together with policy makers and practitioners who deal with public awareness raising and learning about development. The workshop provided a space to learn about different views and expectations from evaluation and the lessons learnt on how to overcome some of the challenges.

This Policy Brief is an introduction to evaluation, with proposals on how official donors and civil society organisations can overcome some key evaluation challenges. The concrete experiences and lessons learnt at the Bonn workshop are presented in the context of why it matters for OECD countries to improve their performance in informing and educating citizens about global development issues. Three approaches to awareness raising and learning — information/communication, advocacy and education — are included, because, as a first step, it is useful to demonstrate the interlinkages and complementarities between them. The Policy

Brief should serve as a useful reference and guide for official donors using evaluation to leverage institutional support and increased financial resources for this work. It should also enable greater collaboration between donors and practitioners whose work is financed by official development assistance (ODA) thanks to improved understanding of their respective perspectives and evaluation objectives. This Policy Brief is an introduction to evaluation. It does not delve into the complexities and specificities of what constitutes best practice in information/communication, advocacy and development education. Nor does it provide guidelines for evaluation. This could be addressed in future work.

Public Awareness Raising: Definitions

A diversity of activities is undertaken in the name of public awareness raising and learning about development in OECD countries. While there is a general understanding of what constitutes an informational or educational activity, evaluation requires precise definitions. The three main categories of awareness-raising activities about development and global issues in donor countries are: *i)* development information/communication; *ii)* advocacy and campaigning; and *iii)* development and global education. This section outlines their specificities and similarities because they should be factored in to decisions about evaluation.

Development Information/Communication

This is communication about aid and development challenges, policies, programmes, and results to different audiences in donor countries. Official donors and NGOs implement information/communication strategies to exist, to be transparent and accountable, and to raise aid funds. Also called public affairs such strategies have existed since the early years of 'institutionalised' development co-operation policy in the 1960s[1]. In addition to raising "corporate awareness" these strategies often try to address misperceptions about realities in developing countries and to build and sustain public and political support for donors' development policies and aid budgets.

Transparency and accountability obligations in OECD democracies underpin development information/communication. As the right of access to information — most notably through freedom of information acts (FOIs) — has increased in OECD countries, so has the need for more active and transparent communication with taxpayers. Diminished public trust in public policy making is an added incentive for governments to open up and engage with citizens. Greater understanding about development policies and associated challenges help to raise public support and confront institutional resistance to tough reforms[2].

National and international NGOs also contribute to increased public pressure on governments to be more transparent about aid policy, flows and results in developing countries[3]. Governments are thus required to respond and pre-empt demand for this information and present the results achieved with ODA.

Over the past decade, the nature of public communication in development co-operation has evolved from being unidirectional in the form of glossy annual reports and press releases to a more interactive approach using technologically sophisticated and participatory processes. Internet-based and face-to-face consultations between development professionals and members are increasingly popular. Nevertheless, progress remains uneven across OECD countries.

Advocacy and Campaigning

Advocacy (the act of arguing on behalf of a particular issue, idea or person) and campaigning (an organised effort towards specific political goals) occupy more space in international affairs than ever before. Advocacy and campaigning have grown in frequency and numbers since the late 1980s when international development NGOs and other social movements stoked public debate about World Bank lending policies (most notably against structural adjustment policies). This was followed by large mobilisations against the World Trade Organisation in the late 1990s (Seattle, Turin, etc.), the Jubilee Campaign for debt relief leading up to 2000, and G8 Summits in the new millennium[4].

Box 1. **Advocacy for Development**

Tibbett (2007) defines advocacy as the following:

- Advocacy is about change. It is strategic. It is planned. It should have clear objectives.
- Often in contemporary advocacy, organisations and campaigners facilitate people to speak for themselves: 'agency of the poor'.
- Campaigning is a subset of advocacy.
- Advocacy is an emerging discipline in development. It is still finding its feet. It is more an art than a science.
- While communications may be about the status quo or preserving something. Advocacy is about change.
- Communications can support advocacy objectives.

Source: see Steve Tibbett's presentation at the Informal Experts' Workshop on "Development Communication, Advocacy and Education: Tips and Tools for Improving Evaluation" www.oecd.org/dataoecd/43/31/38406274.pps

Indeed, advocacy has become a core activity for NGOs — North and South — as evidenced by the Global Call to Action against Poverty and other international networks such as the Reality of Aid. Moreover, advocacy is no longer the brain-child of non-governmental actors as demonstrated by the historic creation of the United Nations Millennium Campaign in 2001. This campaign is mandated by the

United Nations to advocate and campaign for the achievement of the MDGs[5]. National governments also play an important catalytic role for advocacy about development issues: it was Prime Minister Tony Blair's invitation to British civil society organisations (CSOs) to build a campaign for the United Kingdom's G8 Presidency in 2005 that led to the Make Poverty History Campaign[6]. In many DAC countries ODA finances civil society campaigns on development issues. Trends suggest that both government and NGO campaigns for development will continue to take more space in contemporary development co-operation.

Development/Global Education

Development and global education prepares humans to respond to the challenges of an interconnected world, to take responsibility for, and to advocate, global solidarity and social justice (Bourn, 2007; Asbrand/Scheunpflug, 2006). Citizens, it is argued, have the "right" to development/global education because:

1) It equips them with tools for understanding an interdependent world with "global public bads" such as poverty, global warming, wars and conflicts. Through greater understanding they may promote public goods such as wealth, peace and participation (UNDP, 1999).

2) It enables them to come to terms with the uncertainty brought about by the acceleration of social change and by the fragmentation and the hybridisation of cultures and lifestyles (Appadurai,1990).

3) It helps them to empathise with strangers and to see the world from the perspectives of, for example, minorities, rural populations, and the underprivileged and economically excluded.

4) Governments committed to it as part of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development[7].

Box 2. **Definition of Development Education by European NGOs**

Development education is an active learning process, founded on values of solidarity, equality, inclusion and co-operation. It enables people to move from basic awareness of international development priorities and sustainable human development, through understanding of the causes and effects of global issues, to personal involvement and informed action.

Development education fosters the full participation of all citizens in world-wide poverty eradication, and the fight against exclusion. It seeks to influence more just and sustainable economic, social, environmental, and human rights based national and international policies.

Source: European Development Education Forum, www.deeep.org/english/what_is_de/definitions/.

OECD governments promote development/global education by providing a policy framework and financial support for it through their ministries/agencies for development co-operation. In most countries, donors outsource development education to NGOs and other CSOs. Indeed, development education policies and budgets often exist because of lobbying and demand from civil society. At present, Ministries of Education are glaringly absent from this scene although efforts are under way in some countries, including Finland, Ireland, Sweden and the United Kingdom, to institutionalise teaching about global issues in the school curriculum[8]. Nevertheless, a high proportion of development education takes place in schools thanks to the personal motivation of teachers interested in global issues.

Complementary but Different Approaches

In practice, the three approaches — information/communication, advocacy and development education — are interlinked and overlapping: they all influence society towards greater social justice and they all deal with learning. Still, the theories and methods underpinning the approaches differ. Occasionally, this contributes to disagreement and tension between actors as they tend to promote and defend their preferred approach.

For example, the fundamental philosophy of education, including development/ global education, is that free individuals must decide for themselves. Public education should offer controversy and multiple perspectives in a neutral, non-ideological manner to enable the individual make his/her own judgement. Yet, campaigning and communication are not bound by this philosophy: campaigning aims to arouse people's enthusiasm for a specific perspective and policy change; development communication aims to inform and raise awareness.

Table 1**. Information/Communication, Advocacy and Development/Global Education: Where They Differ**

	Information/Communication	Advocacy	Development/Global Education
Rationale	Fill knowledge gaps	Policy change	Change individuals; answer learning needs in an interdependent world
Objective	• Transparency • Accountability • Gain support for reform • Corporate communication/public affairs: image, reputation, credibility • Contribute to behaviour change	• Advocacy and campaigning to change policies • Mobilise citizens to support change and social justice	• Enable people to live in an interdependent world society and to understand social justice
Key focus for the public	To inform	To engage in campaigning and action	To learn

Who funds development education often drives the objectives of the activities undertaken and thus determines "indicators" of success. Typical indicators are increased public support for aid or debt cancellation. But this can cause conflict with educationalists who, for example, consider that successful learning does not necessarily result in more public support or public mobilisation. Success may be a learner who becomes more critical of the aid budget. Similar conflicts also occur in evaluation, which is regularly a donor condition and contributes to the perception that it is used for control rather than lesson learning or a combination of both.

Evaluation of Public Awareness Raising and Learning about Development, Why Now?

Two major forces are behind the unprecedented gains in prominence of communication, and the education of OECD citizens, about global development since 2000. Firstly, the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and, in 2005, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness have established results oriented deadlines that require a major change in donor behaviour with simultaneous pressure to achieve development results for poor people in a relatively short period of time. Political will for this reform agenda needs to be sustained and OECD leaders held accountable to their commitments. More mobilised and supportive citizens are key determinants. Moreover, OECD governments must ensure that citizens have access to education that is relevant to the interdependent world they live in. Evaluation has come to the fore as communicators and educators need to learn from experience and show their added value in the face of more demand for public information and education about global issues.

The MDGs, the Paris Declaration and Political Will

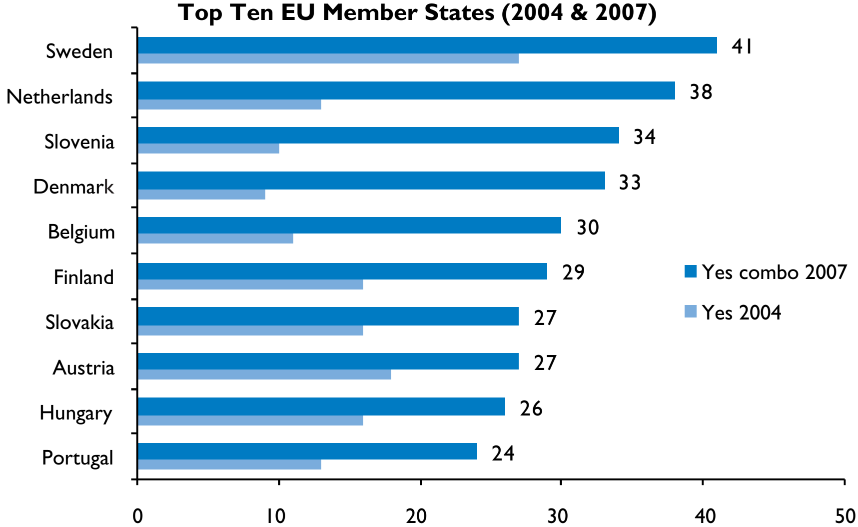
An engaged and supportive citizenry could be the impetus for the successful reform of development co-operation in OECD countries. OECD governments need political will and support from decision makers to translate the ambitious commitments they endorsed at the UN Millennium Summit (MDGs) and the Paris High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness into concrete policy changes and increased resources for development. Politicians, who are accountable to the voting public, can win public support for certain policies and reforms, but their actions are also responsive to public opinion. Caution is necessary when "following" public opinion because it is badly informed about aid and development co-operation. In order to win public support and to follow informed public opinion about aid and development both government and non-governmental actors need to better educate citizens about the reform agenda.

Effective development co-operation requires a complex mix of policy instruments where official development assistance (ODA) is but one pillar. However, opinion surveys from a variety of DAC countries find that only a minority of citizens make links between a donor country's non-aid policies and development. Furthermore, promoting more policy coherence for development in national and international decision-making circles is politically sensitive as it addresses issues that have competing vested interests. The complexity of this agenda also makes the content of public campaigns and education more complex.

When endorsing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness signatories reaffirmed their commitment to accelerate progress in implementing aid effectiveness commitments, "especially in enhancing donors' and partner countries' respective accountability to their citizens and parliaments for their development policies, strategies and performance"[9]. This commitment provides an additional mandate to donors to communicate and educate OECD taxpayers about development. It also puts the spotlight on the quality, performance and results of all aid activities — including development communication and education.

There is evidence that governments are responding to increased pressure to engage OECD citizens in development. By 2007, the UN Millennium Campaign was supporting MDG campaigns in partnership with official donors and CSOs in 17 member states of the European Union (EU), Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United States[10], with a positive impact on public awareness as Figure 1 shows.

Figure 1. **Awareness of the MDGs**
Top Ten EU Member States (2004 & 2007)



Source: OECD Development Centre based on Special Eurobarometer 280 (2007) and 222 (2005), European Commission, Brussels.

Between 2004 and 2006, the amount of ODA allocated to communication and education increased by approximately €60 million[11]. Furthermore, there has been wide media coverage of image-conscious celebrities who alone, and in partnership with international campaigns by NGOs, are calling for policy change by donors and/or for more aid for Africa. This puts the spotlight on political leaders and their administrations and challenges them to be more effective in their own communications. The prioritisation of evaluation is also evident where certain large public campaigns were evaluated, most notably the Swedish MDG Campaign and the Make Poverty History Campaign. Still, evaluation has not become mainstream practice.

Global Interdependence and Citizenship

All world citizens are affected — sometimes positively — by globalisation and interdependence which are driven principally by economics and technology[12]. Public debate in OECD countries shows that citizens are concerned about shifts in the global balance of power as countries in transition such as China and India gain in economic (and political) prominence, and about challenges to global human security and well-being from international terrorism, climate change, marginalisation, discrimination and corruption, and not least, from the extreme poverty in which 20 per cent of the world's population lives[13].

OECD governments recognise the need to help citizens understand the world they live in and the challenges that come with it. Indeed, education for global citizenship is being institutionalised for this reason within a number of formal education initiatives, most notably in the United Kingdom as shown by recent revisions of the school curriculum. As the stakes are raised for public education about global and development issues, there will also be more pressure for greater professionalisation of development/global education among NGO practitioners. Evaluation helps identify best practice and contributes to more rigorous monitoring of results, capacity and lesson learning.

Now that the context for increased public awareness and learning for development and the incentives for using evaluation to strengthen performance have been established, we can focus on the bottlenecks that obstruct more evaluation of public information/communication, advocacy and development education.

Putting Evaluation Principles into Practice

The introduction to our Policy Brief stated that transforming the consensus about the priority and need for evaluation into practice is not straightforward due to a number of specific challenges that policy makers and practitioners are having a hard time resolving. Many of them are not new as demonstrated by earlier reports on these issues[14]. In this section the easier elements of putting evaluation into practice will be addressed before delving into some specific — tough — challenges raised at the workshop.

Defining Evaluation

The DAC Evaluation Network defines evaluation as the systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results[15]. The aim is to determine relevance, fulfilment of objectives, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of the practitioner and the donor.

In the field of information/communication, advocacy and education, evaluation is a tool that serves a number of purposes including accountability to donors and target groups as well as the people who are represented in these activities — usually poor people from developing countries. While warranted, accountability to funders often overshadows other valid purposes of evaluation such as learning and improving practice. For practitioners, therefore, an evaluation should:

- be systematic;
- be an evidence-based reflection on practice;
- formulate clear consequences for practice in the future;
- enable continuous learning, improvement and evolution in the practitioners' own work[16].

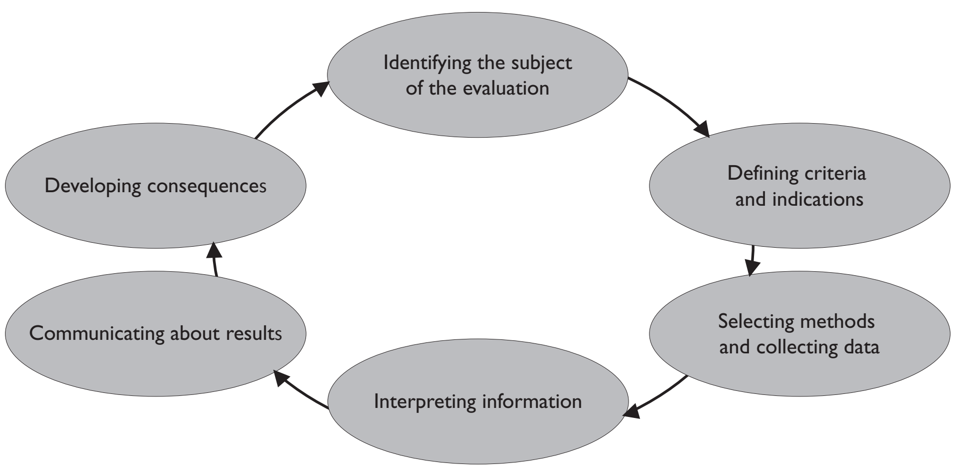
In development education, for example, Bourn (2007) states that: "evaluating and measuring success of the impact of global and development education programmes can only be located within the learning processes and learning. We can and should not lose sight of the relationship between the 'development' agenda and the 'learning agenda'"[17].

Moreover, advocacy and development education have evolved from practice rather than theory. A feature of this type of evolution is the absence of robust research and evidence on best practice. Evaluation can contribute to filling this gap but it must not lose sight of immediate needs such as identifying results and lessons learnt for practitioners.

Getting the Basics Right

The basic rules of evaluation are relatively straightforward and should not be a major stumbling block to evaluation newcomers. The most rudimentary point is that an evaluation, whether external or internal (self), should be systematic. For this reason it may be helpful to follow the different steps or stages of an evaluation as shown in the evaluation cycle (Figure 2). It may also be useful to refer to material and guidelines produced by evaluation associations and networks, which exist in most OECD countries and internationally. Box 3 gives an overview of evaluation associations that produce such material and guidelines.

Figure 2. **The Evaluation Cycle**



Sources: Adapted from Rolff (1998); Stufflebeam/Shinkfield (2007).

Box 3. **Standards for Evaluation**

International standards outline transparent rules and expectations from evaluations. It may be helpful to use these for evaluations of development communication, advocacy and education, even if they had not been conceptualised for this purpose. National ministries and national evaluation associations also provide helpful standards on evaluation.

DAC Standards: DAC Evaluation Quality Standards
www.oecd.org/document/29/0,2340,en_2649_34435_16557149_1_1_1_1,00.html
These standards are in a test phase of application. The DAC Evaluation Quality Standards identify the key pillars needed for a quality evaluation process and product. They are available in both English and French. These standards focus on the effectiveness of international development programmes and may provide useful perspectives for development communication, advocacy and education. They describe the rationale, purpose and objectives of an evaluation, evaluation scope, context, methodology, information sources, independence, evaluation ethics, quality assurance, relevance of the evaluation results, and completeness.

Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation
www.wmich.edu/evalctr/jc/
The Joint Committee has set out standards on evaluation, especially for educational purposes. They differentiate between utility, feasibility, propriety and accuracy standards. The publication *The Program Evaluation Standards* is very helpful because it gives examples for every standard and a helpful reference. It is especially useful for beginners in this area.
See: James R. Sanders, Chair (ed.) (2003): *The Program Evaluation Standards*, 2nd edition, Sage Publication, Thousand Oaks, USA.

Standards for Evaluation in the UN System (2005)
http://www.uneval.org/index.cfm?module=Library&page=Document&DocumentID=5662
Very concise, the UNEG Standards focus on the institutional framework and management of the evaluation function, on competencies and ethics, on conducting evaluations and on evaluation reports.
This brochure is available in English, Spanish, French, Russian, Chinese and Arabic.

Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank Group
www.worldbank.org/ieg/ecd/tools/
Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E): Some Tools, Methods and Approaches
An overview of a sample of M&E tools, methods, and approaches including their purpose and use; advantages and disadvantages; costs, skills, and time required; and key references.
Available in English, French, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Arabic.

Lightweight Challenges

The more lightweight challenges relate to the evaluation process. In general, they can be overcome relatively easily. They are: *i)* getting started and consultation with key stakeholders to determine the evaluation question; *ii)* identifying criteria and indicators; *iii)* choosing the methodology; and *iv)* reporting and communicating the results of the evaluation.

i) Immense effort is often required to start an evaluation. It is tempting to want to evaluate everything but experts warn against this because it is often too ambitious and impossible to achieve[18]. In a resource-scarce sector, the evaluation must be relevant to daily work. The context of the whole work can be considered in the evaluation but it should nevertheless focus on a specific question. Once the decision has been made to evaluate an activity, there should be consultation with key stakeholders who are responsible for the activity and transparency throughout the process. Together, decisions should be taken on what will be evaluated and how to articulate the evaluation question(s).

ii) Criteria and indicators should then be identified and the evaluation should stick to measuring them. Criteria (the characteristics/answers to the evaluation question being asked) and indicators (measures that demonstrate whether the criteria have been met or not) of the evaluation are the framework for the whole evaluation. Indicators are often figures, but this is not always necessary. For example, the criteria for an evaluation investigating the quality of messages on poverty could be that the multidimensional nature of poverty is communicated. Indicators could be the number of times different dimensions of poverty are referred to in messages, articles and speeches[19].

iii) When choosing the methodology that will enable the evaluator to investigate the evaluation question and collect data, look for efficient and appropriate methods of data collection and remember that even if the data seems limited it may be sufficient to answer the evaluation question. Evaluation professionals regularly comment that it is not necessary to collect new data. There is a tendency to forget about data at hand such as emails, internal communications, newsletters and registrations for meetings. Therefore, it is not always necessary to commission expensive representative questionnaires. It is useful to integrate data collection for the evaluation into daily, long-term work so that when evaluation is underway the extra work generated is diminished. Once the data are collected the findings should be interpreted with the help of the evaluation criteria. It is important to restrain subjective judgements about the quality of the work. Basing judgements on criteria and indicators will be more objective.

iv) Reporting, communication and discussion of the results constitute the most neglected part of the evaluation process. Yet it is probably the most crucial stage. Discussion of the results and conclusions of the evaluation — with all relevant actors — is the occasion to identify lessons that can be applied to future activities. In practice, open discussions with all actors about evaluation results can be tense, especially where there is weak mutual trust. Tensions and fears about negative results are commonplace when future funding depends on the success of the activity. This can be alleviated if the evaluator, the practitioner and the donor agree on the purpose of the evaluation, the criteria and indicators, from the very start.

From Lightweight to Heavyweight Challenges

Tackling the heavyweight challenges is a more difficult task because they are about expectations, power and relationships, trust and legitimacy. Typical tensions underlying evaluations, as identified by the Belgian training centre for development, ITECO, include[20]:

— Is it objective or subjective?
— Should it be external and/or internal?
— Is it about results and/or process?
— Is it for control and/or learning?
— Can it contribute to individual and/or collective change?

Furthermore, official donors are preoccupied with two types of challenges: *i)* using evaluation to measure attribution (causality between the action and an observed change in attitude or behaviour) and long-term effects; and *ii)* how to develop the most coherent and appropriate evaluation policy for short-term awareness raising and learning activities outsourced to NGOs and grass-roots organisations.

Finally, participants to the Bonn workshop tabled questions about evaluation such as:

— Can one evaluation serve accountability and lesson learning?
— What is a good evaluation? Can it answer all questions?
— Who should finance the evaluation? Who should do it? When should it be done?

As there is some overlap between these challenges we present five categories of challenges and make suggestions on how to deal with them.

Challenge 1: Can results identified by the evaluation be attributed to specific activities?

The bottom line is that evaluation will not always solve the attribution challenge. In all three approaches to public awareness raising and learning, it is particularly difficult to determine a clear causality between concrete activities and the expected outcome in public opinion, policy change and learning. The drivers of attitudinal and behaviour change can be opaque. But we heard from one participant to the workshop that while attribution is definitely difficult to determine from evaluation, this is not an acceptable excuse for senior policy makers. It was suggested that one way of determining causality is to conduct baseline research on attitudes and behaviour patterns of target groups before the project starts.

In some cases scientific research is better able to measure the causality between learning and attitudinal change. While the learning environment may have an identifiable influence on the learner we also know that people may learn very quickly, easily or slowly, and this depends on the quality of education, their learning capacities, their peers as well as public debate (see Box 4).

The disadvantages of using baseline and scientific research to solve the attribution challenge are cost and the time-intensive nature of scientific research.

Box 4. **The Complexity of Learning**

Contemporary cognitive psychology and neuro-science conclude that learning is a complex self-led and self-constructive process which is caused not only by the input but by internal self-related structures for dealing with knowledge and impressions (National Research Council, 2000; OECD, 2002). In some situations very little detail may have a tremendous effect, leading to a self-related learning cascade; in other cases there is no resonance with the learner. The non-formal learning situation and the complex learning tasks that are set by development communicators, campaigners and educators, such as developing critical thinking about development, makes clear attributions between their efforts and the learning outcome particularly challenging.

Challenge 2: What should an evaluation measure?

Evaluations should measure process and results. Unlike attribution, which should be handed over to researchers, evaluation is effective in measuring *i)* the resonance of an activity with recipients; *ii)* the quality of concepts and processes; and *iii)* the efficiency of the resources spent.

— Resonance can be measured by data from an activity such as the number of people reached, public opinion about the topic addressed, newspaper articles, feedback from participants in an event, perspectives from stakeholders etc.

— The quality of the process may be assessed by evaluating concepts used in comparison to the national or international discourse about the concepts and evaluating how the activity was implemented, how people were involved, the methods and strategy used.
— An efficiency analysis focuses on the resources spent in relationship to the nature of the activity and resources used for similar activities.

The same evaluation questions can be shared across the three public awareness raising approaches for process evaluations and when evaluating the results achieved. The question should be different when evaluating an activity's overall objective and the longer-term outcomes. Core objectives of a communication strategy, such as improved image, will be evaluated differently to the advocacy objective of policy change and the development education objective of motivating people to learn about development.

Challenge 3: What are the conditions for a good evaluation?

Standard benchmarks and money are two conditions for a good evaluation. Both are scarce in the public awareness and learning sector.

Weak theoretical concepts, and the lack of an empirical base in the form of agreed-upon good practice, make it difficult to define criteria on quality. A practical way of overcoming the lack of standardised quality guidelines when setting criteria and indicators is to take obvious structural elements of these activities into account. For example, quality criteria for activities done by a voluntary network will be different to those used to evaluate activities by trained and paid professionals. The same applies to the environment (e.g. formal or non-formal education) in which the work is done and the type of target groups (e.g. school children or adult learners).

There is inadequate funding for evaluation and thus less investment in all stages of the evaluation cycle. This is due to the lack of, and the nature of, funding for public awareness work in general. A frequent question in discussions about evaluation is how much should be reserved for evaluation. Should it be, for example, a fixed percentage of the project cost? There is no established rule for this. However, DFID (2005) provides useful orientation: "Opinions vary as to what percentage of your budget should be dedicated to evaluation. A rough rule of thumb would be between 5-10 per cent. For small projects and those with short time-frames, evaluation might take up a larger part of the budget. This might also be the case with pilot projects, which try to determine how successful a programme will be if it is rolled out at a later date. In cases like this, evaluation costs might take up 30 per cent and more of the total budget."

The nature of funding — government is the major donor — is a particular concern of campaigners and development educators because there is often a mismatch between the donor's objective for an evaluation and the practitioner's[21]. The evaluation is often perceived by practitioners as a tool to cut funding rather than an incentive to learn from evaluation to increase quality. Consequently, practitioners have few incentives to develop a culture of evaluation in their work. To overcome this challenge, donors should request and finance evaluations that meet the practitioners' learning needs as well as the donor's accountability needs. Practitioners, on the other hand, must be willing to learn from mistakes.

Challenge 4: When is self-evaluation acceptable?

Self-evaluation is organised by those responsible for and implementing the project. Conscious of the tension between objectivity and subjectivity in evaluation, cash-strapped communicators and educators ask when, and what type of, self-evaluation is acceptable and justifiable. The crude answer to this question is that it depends on the organisation, the activity and the purpose of the evaluation. It is also important to consider the advantages and disadvantages of self-evaluation versus external evaluations.

The decision between self-evaluation and external evaluation should be taken by balancing the advantages and disadvantages. Make the most of self-evaluation by being systematic and being explicitly bound to an evaluation cycle. This means treating the identification of criteria, indicators, and reporting and planning as carefully as in external evaluations. For first-time self-evaluators it may be helpful and worthwhile to seek advice or supervision by an expert evaluator.

Table 2. **The Advantages and Disadvantages of Self-evaluation Versus External Evaluations**

Type of Evaluation	Advantages	Disadvantages
Self-evaluation	• The objectives of the evaluation and the evaluation process are decided by and usually well-known by the core actors and it should fit well with their work mode. • Self-evaluation enables deeper identification with the work and easier implementation of the recommendations. • A good self-evaluation gives new impetus to a project.	• Self-evaluators risk being biased and subjective. • In understaffed organisations, it negatively affects capacity to implement the project. • Training to enable greater objectivity and distance from the work may be required. • If personnel are new to self-evaluation, it may cost as much as an external evaluation. • Decisions are often driven by the cost factor but this is not the most advantageous aspect of self-evaluation.
External evaluation	• An independent expert evaluator conducts it and is more likely to have a distant view and provide objective feed-back. • Outside perspectives may help to find new perspectives and ideas for the work. • Experienced evaluators may find it easier to focus on the most important questions and stay independent.	• The evaluator might not be an expert in awareness-raising approaches and may not be familiar with evaluation methods for that particular approach. • Criticism – even by a critical friend – may be stressful. • It can take a lot of time and energy to provide information to the evaluators. • Follow-up may not be easy once the evaluator has moved on.

Challenge 5: Is evaluation always the right tool?

Expectations from evaluation tend to be too high. Better use of evaluation can improve the quality, and demonstrate the immediate results, of public awareness-raising work. However, demands from evaluation often exceed its capacity, especially in terms of attributing the impact of awareness-raising strategies to specific activities, and more long-term changes in attitudes and behaviour. Expectations from evaluation must, therefore, be better managed.

Public awareness policy makers and practitioners must effectively manage expectations about impact within their own organisations because it is difficult and costly to decipher impact through evaluation. An approach to take is to stress the potential, and the limits, of evaluation in this sector. Clearly, evaluation improves the quality of activities by investigating the validity of concepts, the efficiency of processes and the immediate results. By effectively applying the results and lessons from such evaluations the gains in quality will pave the way for achieving the long term "impact" of public awareness-raising activities.

Good Practice: Evaluation of Information/Communication, Advocacy and Development Education

This section presents examples of good practice in evaluation for the three approaches to public awareness and learning. One evaluation tool that addresses the issue of how to evaluate the results of a comprehensive strategy, over the long term, is also provided.

Evaluation of communication: the Millennium Development Goals

The adoption of the MDGs in 2000 provided official aid agencies, NGOs and other development actors with a new framework for building public awareness about development challenges. It represented no less than a tectonic shift in the way donors communicate about development: away from inputs to messages about "real" results. Many official aid agencies seized the promise made by world leaders to halve world poverty by 2015 to communicate in a different way to taxpayers. Through greater awareness about the goals, citizens may start holding their governments to account for their commitments to poor people.

Good Practice 1: Swedish MDG Campaign "The Chance of a Life-time"

Sweden was one of the first DAC members to build and implement an MDG communication strategy. With a long-term key message: "It's possible to halve poverty by 2015", different MDG themes were communicated each year from 2003 to 2005. An evaluation was commissioned in 2005 with two objectives:

1) to provide input to the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs on how to proceed with future communication about the MDGs;

2) to evaluate how the project group had succeeded in their mission. Were the objectives of the campaign reached?

The tools used were both qualitative and quantitative: in-depth interviews with people involved in the campaign and partners, and telephone questionnaires with 289 politicians and opinion leaders. The second part of the evaluation was desk research looking at goals, activities and outcomes, weighing them up with the objective on how the project group would work together.

The most challenging part of the evaluation was the latter part due to difficulties in grasping all the work and activities of the project group over three years.

The evaluation was communicated to and discussed with all partners involved as well as the Minister and State Secretary. It was also translated into English and shared with the UN Millennium Campaign.

While the objectives of the campaign were ambitious it was possible to evaluate the campaign because its objectives were clear, and there was learning and follow-up throughout the campaign period itself.

Source: Presentation by Ann Lundqvist at the Experts' Workshop, "Development Communication, Advocacy and Education: Tips and Tools for Improving Evaluation", Bonn, 19-20 March 2007, available at: www.oecd.org/dataoecd/43/60/38405938.pps.

Evaluation of communication: the case of the 2004 Asian Tsunami

The 2004 Asian Tsunami put official donors and NGOs into the public spotlight as never before, not least because of the timing (day after Christmas) and the extraordinary reach and destruction of the catastrophe. Given the unprecedented public attention, donors were acutely aware that failure to deliver on public expectations could damage the credibility of the "aid community" and dramatically increase scepticism about development co-operation in general. They knew that their performance in dealing with the disaster would be judged upon their promptness to: *i)* express compassion; *ii)* send representatives in the region; and *iii)* offer aid. The sense of urgency also required donors to make special efforts to communicate about the differences between *i)* emergency relief; *ii)* bilateral humanitarian aid delivered through NGOs; *iii)* longer-term assistance to reconstruction. The media contributed to this demand from public opinion as the Tsunami and issues about aid effectiveness stayed in the headlines over the long term with only a slow gradual disappearance from the news.

Good Practice 2: AusAID's Communication about the Tsunami (2005 and 2006)

AusAID commissioned an external evaluator to undertake an ex-post evaluation of how its Public Affairs Group (PAG) reacted to the Tsunami disaster with a view to integrating lessons learnt into future "preparedness" for these kinds of disasters.

The purpose of the evaluation was to examine how the PAG dealt with the communication challenge and not the effectiveness of the communication itself. The main tools used were a survey and a facilitated discussion with staff including management.

An open-ended survey was emailed before the facilitation to enable members of PAG to confidentially express opinions on:

- what went right?
- what went wrong?
- what needed improving?

The twelve specific recommendations that were made for future strategies evolved from the survey and discussion. They include: having a crisis management plan for public affairs; a staffing plan; overseas deployment arrangements; the public affairs groups should actively participate in the Agency's strategic meetings when managing such crises; consider better branding in the field; develop a media strategy and benchmarking with other agencies.

The overriding best practices emerging from the evaluation for AusAID are recognition that good communication is as important as the provision of aid during emergencies like the Tsunami crisis; management should present their expectations on how Public Affairs should communicate in the event of a disaster; and technology capability and support in the field are very important.

Source: AusAID (2005), Public Affairs Group response to Tsunami, by Clarity Communications Australia Pty Ltd, unpublished.

Evaluation of advocacy and campaigning: the case of the Make Poverty History campaign

The Make Poverty History campaign (2005) was initiated by a coalition of UK NGOs to coincide with the UK Presidencies of the EU and G8, the UN Summit five years after the Millennium Goals and WTO negotiations. Inspired by lessons learnt from the Jubilee 2000 Campaign, Make Poverty History was composed of a broad coalition of British NGOs which grew to 540 members representing most sections of UK civil society. The objectives of the campaign included: achieving policy change in 2005 in the areas of aid, debt relief and trade justice; creating unstoppable momentum for change in 2005; and leaving the public committed to further change beyond 2005. Public mobilisation was considered to be the greatest achievement of the campaign.

Good Practice 3: The Make Poverty History Campaign, United Kingdom

The Make Poverty History 2005 Campaign Evaluation was commissioned to answer three questions:

1) What progress did the coalition make against its objectives during 2005?

2) What were the strengths and weaknesses of the coalition's approach and set-up?

3) What lessons can be learned for the future?

The method and tools for the evaluation were to interview over 70 different stakeholders, review various documentation made available by the staff, questionnaires, incorporating other evaluation work under way and quantitative and qualitative work done on public perceptions of poverty.

The evaluation gives a lot of emphasis to process-related matters of the campaign.

Limitations of the evaluation: in their report the evaluators emphasised the difficulty of getting a representative sample due to time and budget constraints, and the scale and diversity of such a large-scale campaign. It was also felt that more detailed evaluation of public awareness was necessary to access the long-term impact, if any, of the campaign in changing attitudes to poverty. Even if the long-term impact of the campaign was neither its objective nor that of the evaluation, there is always pressure to demonstrate an impact in terms of what the public learnt. But very often this is not the main part of an evaluation and the dilemma of demonstrating impact on public opinion and knowledge is not solved.

Source: Martin *et al.*, 2005: www.firetail.co.uk/MPH_2005_Evaluation.pdf..

Evaluation of development and global education: the case of NGO work in German schools

Evaluations of development and global education deal with the difficulty of identifying the impact of the project on learning by focusing on concrete results — as the number of tool kits printed, lessons held in school, the number of students reached, and the self-perception of the people involved — instead of the learning outcome in terms of changed behaviour or conceptions.

There are many ways to deliver development education through the educational system, either formally in schools at all levels, less formally through adult education, further vocational training, or in informal learning situations such as fair trade shops. Evaluation in development education may focus on the activities themselves or on the system (Höck, 2004). The European Peer Review Process by GENE is an important example of a system level evaluation in this field[22].

Good Practice 4: Education about Children's Rights, "Terre des hommes" Germany

From June 2004 to May 2006 the German NGO "Terre des hommes" trained about 90 university students in development education, taking examples from its own work and focusing on children's rights. These students then offered lessons in school to sensitise 9 to 15-year-old students in public schools and motivate them to get involved in development co-operation. About 2 100 students in classes were reached. The NGO asked for an ex-post evaluation focusing on the impact of this facilitator programme concerning:

1) the facilitators;

2) the teachers involved;

3) the participating classes.

The main tools used were questionnaires and group discussions. The questionnaires focused on the facilitators' training and their work in schools, e.g. the intensity of preparation and post-processing of their school visits and the results of the activities in class. The teachers were asked to rate their satisfaction with the facilitators' engagement and their long term impact. The group discussions, conducted with the facilitators, showed their perceptions and concepts of development co-operation as well as their identification with the work of the NGO and their working conditions.

The evaluation concluded that there had been an important impact by training facilitators. The effectiveness and impact of the NGO in development education improved significantly. The learning process made an important difference to the facilitator themselves. However, the evaluation also showed that activities like these, even when reaching many students in two or three hours of lessons and activities in schools, do not lead to measurable learning outcomes. The evaluation thus helped to balance expectations.

The multi-level approach of this evaluation is particularly interesting. It linked three different "customers": the trained facilitators, the teacher, and the students themselves. This multi-level approach resulted in greater understanding about the different factors that contribute to quality development education. For example, the necessity of training the facilitators not only about the work of the NGO and children's rights but also about the learning needs and the competences of the students.

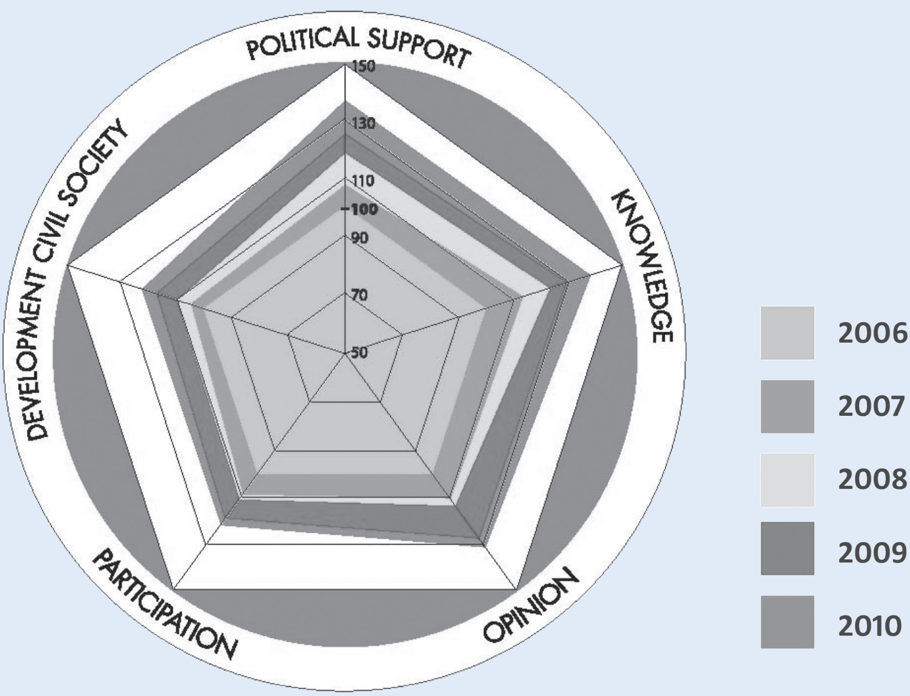
Source: Bergmüller, C and S. Höck (2006), Evaluationsbericht des Multiplikatorenprogramm Nordrhein-Westfalen von Terre des hommes, Nürnberg

Opinion polling: using it to measure aggregate performance

A lesson learnt from evaluations is their limited potential for assessing the impact of an activity on public awareness and learning. Public opinion polls may provide indicators about awareness, which can be tested for correlations with awareness raising and learning strategies (Fransman *et al.,* 2004). However, they are not always the magic solution to measuring impact because surveys are rarely conducted both before and after the activity due to expense, time and, sometimes, poor planning. In addition, surveys are often embroiled in a political agenda looking for endorsement of policies. They do not always contribute to, or serve as an evaluation tool for, a communication strategy. Furthermore, cost is often an obstacle to conducting comprehensive and longitudinal opinion surveys.

Good Practice 5: Public Support Pentagram from NCDO

The objective of the communication strategy of the Dutch National Committee for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development (NCDO) is to strengthen public support for international co-operation, defined as "the total of the commitment to, and the support within the Netherlands for, the goals of international co-operation". In order to measure this, monitoring and evaluation are integrated in the communication strategy. The public support pentagram is the tool developed by NCDO for measuring performance over time.



Good Practice 5 (contd.)

The indicators of growing support are people's knowledge, attitudes and behaviour with respect to the goals of international co-operation. The indicators for behaviour are participation in and the development of civil society in the Netherlands.

These indicators are measured under five categories: politics, knowledge, opinion, participation and development civil society. Each category has three indicators. For the participation category the indicators are:

1) The number of people involved in small-scale private activities.

2) The number of television programmes in the field of international co-operation;

3) The market share of products from the fair trade sector.

Surveys conducted in 2006 served as the baseline measurement. From this baseline measurement realistic projections were made for the years 2007 to 2010. These expectations will be taken as the reference for public opinion polls in 2007 to 2010 to evaluate the impact of the communication strategy in the following years.

Source: Bergmans *et al.,* 2007, available at: www.ncdo.nl

Conclusion

The international agenda to inform and educate citizens in OECD countries about global poverty and development has reached unprecedented heights since the beginning of the millennium. This brings new opportunities and challenges to the communicators and educators who have been promoting this work for decades. Evaluation is at the heart of these challenges.

Solutions and proposals on how to approach evaluation challenges were discussed at an Experts' Workshop on Evaluation by evaluators, donors and NGO practitioners. Process-related challenges on the nuts and bolts of how to do an evaluation are much easier to overcome than the policy challenges. They are well documented and tools such as the evaluation cycle help keep the evaluator on track and systematic. Consultation and transparency between the evaluator, practitioners and the funder — when it is external — throughout the evaluation are keys to a smooth process. Principles of transparency are also crucial for the "heavyweight" policy challenges such as working in partnership. Designing evaluations that fulfil both accountability and lesson learning requirements are fundamental to establishing a positive culture of evaluation on public awareness and learning about development.

This Policy Brief has touched upon many of the stumbling-blocks that help explain the reticence and inertia that can be found when it comes to mainstreaming evaluation in public awareness raising and learning about global development. The case study examples demonstrate both the methodologies for and the benefits from evaluating information, advocacy and development education activities. Still, the Policy Brief only begins to scratch the surface in terms of identifying what constitutes best practice in evaluating communication, advocacy and development education.

In taking their work on evaluation forward, an intermediary next step for DAC members participating in the Informal Network of DAC Development Communicators along with their partners could include: creating a space (e.g. website) to share perspectives, experiences and results from evaluation; pooling resources for scientific research on the long-term impact of public awareness-raising activities; building a stronger knowledge base on what works and what doesn't work in this sector; and finally, working together to develop minimum standards for evaluation of communication, advocacy and education about global development.

Notes

1. See Riddell, 2007.

2. See OECD Governance Directorate for recommendations on Citizens as Partners, Increasing Public Trust in Government and Inclusive Policy Making.

3. Press releases CONCORD (www.concordeurope.org/Files/media/internetdocumentsENG/Aid%20watch/EUCouncilPR-jun07.doc), Oxfam Germany (www.oxfam.de/download/welt_kann_nicht_warten.pdf), ActionAid International (www.actionaid.org/assets/pdf/English%20mm.pdf), and InterAction (www.interaction.org/development/2007_G8.html) ahead of the 2007 G8 Summit, 6-8 June, Heiligendam, Germany.

4. McDonnell, I. and H.B. Solignac Lecomte (2002), "Civil Society" in *Development Is Back,* OECD, Paris.

5. See UN Millennium Campaign Website www.millenniumcampaign.org/site/pp.asp?c=grKVL2NLE&b=138312; McDonnell (2004).

6. Interview with Make Poverty History team member at BOND, 2004.

7. UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014: portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=23279&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

8. McDonnell *et al.,* 2003; GENE Peer Reviews portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=23279&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html; Development Education Association, *Developing the Global Dimension in the School Curriculum,* www.dea.org.uk/uploads/4453d22a64a184b4f76a113996448fcf/s_dev_global_dim.pdf.

9. See Paris Declaration text at: www.oecd.org/dataoecd/11/41/34428351.pdf.

10. See UN Millennium Campaign website at www.millenniumcampaign.org/site/pp.asp?c=grKVL2NLE&b=173889.

11. DAC Creditor Reporting System and submissions from members of DevCom network.

12. See Robertson, 1995.

13. See preface to Reisen *et al.,* 2005, *Macroeconomic Policies: New Issues of Interdependence*, OECD Development Centre, *Working Paper* No. 241. www.oecd.org/dataoecd/15/14/34322482.pdf.

14. See earlier work by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, Global Education Network Europe (GENE), CCIC in Canada and members of the Development Education Forum of the European NGO platform CONCORD, and Development Centre survey on evaluation policy and practice in donor countries (2005).

15. Consult DAC glossary and key terms for evaluation: www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf.

16. Scheunpflug *et al.*, 2002.

17. Development Education Association (2001), *Measuring Effectiveness in Development Education*, DEA, London. See Introduction.

18. Stufflebeam and Shinkfield, 2007, pp. 326-346.

19. In advocacy and campaigning there is a debate about what indicators could best describe the quality of a campaign. Should it be the political reaction? Or newspaper coverage? The number of participants in demonstrations? The number of members of parliament signing the motion of the campaign? In many cases all of these indicators are used.

20. ITECO presentation at Experts' Workshop on "Development Communication, Advocacy and Education: Tips and Tools for Improving Evaluation", Bonn, 19-20 March 2007, www.oecd.org/dataoecd/43/57/38405984.pps#6_.

21. CCIC consultation on evaluation, ITECO on tensions, DEEEP reports www.deeep.org/english/about_deeep/training/index.php.

22. See North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, 2005 ff; O'Loughlin, 2004.

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