III. In-Depth Analysis

III.a Interested citizens

Who are they?

They are members of the general public aged 16+ who:

- are interested in national and international current affairs;
- are interested in either international development or global health issues, or both;
- have participated in social or political engagement through one of the following in the past six months: donated to a cause, volunteered, shared information about social and/or political issues, signed a petition, wrote to the government or other public body, or attended a rally/protest. This study focused on urban locations in the five countries.4

This research shows that interested citizens are, by and large:

- better educated than the urban population as a whole (except in China, where their education profile is similar to that of the urban population in general);
- evenly balanced between males and females;
- slightly older than the general population;
  Young people, between 16 and 25, are under-represented. However, those younger people often tend to be more intensely interested in development issues than older interested citizens.

Research approach: Focus groups and surveys

Interested citizens were identified through a series of screening questions. Then a combination of focus groups and quantitative surveys was employed to explore and understand:

- which development issues they care about and why they care about these issues;
- how informed they are about each of these issues and which media and communication channels they use to obtain information on them;
- how and why they engage in international development;
- their views on the international development efforts of their governments;
- who they perceive as the current or potential champions of international development and global health.

Overall, InterMedia conducted 20 two-hour focus group discussions with 160 citizens aged 16 and older, and completed five surveys with 3,824 interested citizens (16+) across the five countries.

For further details on the methodology and selection procedures, please see Appendix 1.
The quantitative surveys across the five countries revealed that between 31% and 50% of the urban population can be considered interested citizens. In light of different cultural contexts and variations in the understanding of the terms “international development” and “developing countries,” particularly in China, these proportions need to be viewed with caution, as they may not be directly comparable between the countries.5

Figure 1: Share of urban population identified as interested citizens

![Bar chart showing the share of urban population identified as interested citizens across different countries.]

Figure 2: Interested citizens by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>16-25</th>
<th>26-35</th>
<th>36-45</th>
<th>46+</th>
<th>DK/Refused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China urban population</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interested citizens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France urban population</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interested citizens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany urban population</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interested citizens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K. urban population</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interested citizens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. urban population</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interested citizens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: InterMedia survey of interested citizens in China (n=2,223 screened respondents), France (n=1,794 screened respondents), Germany (n=1,446 screened respondents), U.K. (n=1,204 screened respondents), and the U.S. (n=3,060 screened respondents).
Priority development issues

Poverty, health issues and lack of access to education considered the top challenges for developing countries

Interested citizens who took part in the urban surveys were asked to name the three most-urgent development challenges facing developing countries. Survey respondents across all five countries gave broadly similar answers, reflecting a common view that satisfying basic needs takes precedence in successful development efforts.

Poverty is clearly a widespread concern, as are health issues, although Figure 4 below shows that prioritization of various health issues differs by respondents’ country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 3: Top three challenges facing developing countries</th>
<th>Percentage of interested citizens who identified these issues as one of the top three challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of access to health care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spread of infectious diseases</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of access to education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpredictable supplies of food</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: InterMedia survey of interested citizens in China (n=1,019), France (n=600); Germany (n=604); U.K. (n=600), U.S. (n=1,001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4: Most urgent health-related issues facing developing countries</th>
<th>Percentage of interested citizens who identified these issues as one of the top three health challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High cost of health care</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor access to healthcare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malnutrition</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of clean drinking water</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: InterMedia survey of interested citizens in China (n=1,019), France (n=600); Germany (n=604); U.K. (n=600), U.S. (n=1,001)

Food supply and food security were also identified as important issues in all focus group discussions. These were of particular interest and concern to participants in China, who highlighted the importance of ensuring that food supplies are not contaminated.
China: A Case Apart

In general, divergent opinions between Western-country and Chinese respondents can reflect different understandings of the term “developing countries.” Notably, the qualitative research suggests that Chinese interested citizens still consider China a developing, rather than a developed, country, which affects how Chinese participants responded to questions concerning their views or attitudes towards developing countries. In other words, when answering the question about key challenges facing developing countries, Chinese respondents were thinking of and citing the challenges at home, as well as in other developing countries, while respondents in Western countries were not thinking about their own countries.

It is also noteworthy that some U.S. focus group participants considered U.S. military interventions in other countries to be part of U.S. international development activities. This view also needs to be taken into account when interpreting the survey results.

The qualitative research helped to explain some of the reasons behind respondents’ choices of basic-needs items as the most urgent challenges. Participants in focus groups in the U.K. and the U.S. commented:

- There is always going to be health and water just to keep people alive. And I think once you go beyond that then you can move onto other things like education; but unless you have got a person standing there with good health and food in their stomach and a roof over their head, you can’t seem to go beyond that. (U.K. interested citizen)

- You’ve got to be healthy to be able to work to make money. It’s a trickle-down effect. (U.S. interested citizen)

Figure 5: Share of interested citizens who actively seek information on international development

![Bar chart showing the share of interested citizens who actively seek information on international development by country.]

Source: InterMedia survey of interested citizens in China (n=1,019), France (n=600); Germany (n=604); U.K. (n=600), U.S. (n=1,001)

Where information about development issues is sourced

Little evidence of active information seeking

The majority of interested citizens across the five countries do not actively seek out information on international development. Rather, they rely primarily on traditional media such as television to bring relevant topics to their attention. Most information is received passively—if information happens to be in the news headlines or prominent on a news website, it may well attract attention, but it is not specifically sought out.
Overall, the results of the surveys suggest that interested citizens in China are the most likely to be active seekers of this type of information. This may again reflect a different understanding of the terms “international development” and “developing countries,” as discussed above, as well as a higher level of media censorship, which may encourage greater efforts in information-seeking compared to elsewhere.

The few respondents in the study who actively seek out development information are often those who said they have a passionate interest in a particular subject, such as the environment or politics.

Focus group findings across all five countries also indicate that active sourcing of information generally needs a specific trigger, such as a world event or natural disaster, or a personal connection with a country or an event in question (e.g. a friend visiting the country who might send photos, write an email or blog, or share a link via social media).

**Television is the most common source of development information across all countries; word-of-mouth is essential in China**

Television channels were quoted as one of the main sources of information on international development by the largest proportion of interested citizens across all five countries. CCTV and provincial TV stations were mentioned most often as key sources by respondents in China, while Western interested citizens pointed to channels such as CNN, Fox News, NBC, ABC (U.S.), BBC, Sky News and ITV (U.K.), ARD, ZDF, RTL (Germany), TF1, France 2 and BFM (France).

Beyond TV, German interested citizens appear to rely heavily on nationally prominent print titles such as *Focus* and *Der Spiegel*.

| Figure 6: Top three sources of information on international development | Percentage of interested citizens who mentioned this as one of their main sources of development information |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **China** | **France** | **Germany** | **U.K.** | **U.S.** |
| Newspapers | 58% | 44% | 51% | 44% | 25% |
| News Websites | | 40% | 38% | | 22% |
| TV | 82% | 71% | 74% | 70% | 41% |
| Radio | | | 22% | | |
| Friends and Family | 50% | | | | |

Source: InterMedia survey of interested citizens in China (n=1,019), France (n=600); Germany (n=604); U.K. (n=600), U.S. (n=1,001)

Word-of-mouth is essential for obtaining development information in China—half of all interested citizens there said friends and family represent one of their main sources. Friends and family are also perceived as the most trustworthy source (considerably more so than traditional “passive” media, such as TV and print, which many see as biased). This is particularly true if the friends or family have travelled abroad and are able to share first-hand information when they return.

Online news sources play prominent roles in France and the U.K.—about four in 10 respondents in these two countries cited news websites as one of the main sources of information on international development. Although the use of news websites among interested citizens in the U.S. is somewhat lower, still one in 10 U.S. respondents also report using the internet to obtain information about development issues.

Social media are not prominent sources of information on development in Western countries, but were cited often by Chinese respondents. While fewer than 10% of interested citizens in each of the four Western countries said they use any type of social media for this purpose, 8% of all respondents in China said they use blogs (such as Tianya social net), and 15% cited other social networks such as Baidu, Weibo, Tencent and RenRen to obtain information on development issues.
The role of social media was explored in more depth in the focus groups, which confirmed that interested citizens in the Western countries don’t tend to use them to seek out information on development issues. However, some use social media to share links to campaigns or petitions sent to them with their online social network. Social media such as Facebook or Twitter thus may be useful tools for disseminating information and raising awareness of specific issues or campaigns within online communities.

**Engagement—moving beyond concern**

Although there is a clear connection between an individual’s interest in a topic and how he or she becomes engaged with it, the journey from being interested to being engaged is not necessarily straightforward. Neither does the process take place only at the conscious level. Both the focus groups and the surveys sought to identify the key activities people engaged in to support international development as well as the main motivators of and barriers to such engagement.

**Foundations for engagement**

The qualitative research revealed that, overall, a combination of upbringing, beliefs and personal experience or exposure informs the degree to which people care about issues concerning other people. These factors help to shape the values that underpin a person’s propensity to engage with international development issues:

- **People’s upbringing and background are crucial in determining how they respond to societal and global issues.**

  For example, many participants of the focus groups reported they had been brought up to be concerned about world affairs, which encouraged their engagement in international development later in life. Where this interest is fostered among young people, it appears to retain its place in people’s value landscape. In this respect, institutions play a crucial role in forming values and attitudes. Schools, colleges, and churches were highlighted most often in this respect in the focus groups conducted in Germany and the U.S.
• Participants with strong beliefs, often shaped by a religious faith, prioritize helping others in a way that goes beyond just operating from a “guilty conscience.” Participants in the focus groups (particularly in France and Germany) with a non-specific religious affiliation often shared a strong sense of humanitarianism and social justice that promotes awareness of issues at home and overseas. Another common theme was that we are all “global citizens” with the responsibility to help each other.

• Personal experiences are critical in shaping values. Many participants in the focus groups cited travel to other countries and witnessing poverty (often side by side with wealth) as a wake-up call. Others (particularly from the three European countries) have spent time volunteering and working in developing countries where they had experiences that left a lasting impression and motivated greater engagement. Many also reported that knowing people who have either travelled to developing countries or have been affected by a development issue prompted them to become more engaged.

Triggers to engagement
The results of the research suggest the following key groups of triggers:

• Self-efficacy
  Giving people a sense of empowerment is an important psychological motivator. Most respondents across the five countries who took part in development activities over the past year describe their reasons for doing so with statements such as, “I wanted to feel that I have the power to help,” and, “I thought I could make a difference and change someone’s life.”

• Emotional response
  Respondents often also said that they felt “emotionally moved by something they saw or heard.” This was often mentioned in relation to signing petitions (in France and the U.S.), sharing information on development issues (in China and the U.K.) and donating money (in France and the U.K.).

• Evidence of positive impact of international development
  Respondents mentioned seeing evidence of positive outcomes (both anecdotally and through data) as one of the top reasons to engage. The evidence factor was also a top reason for sharing information about development issues online and through other channels.

Barriers to engagement
The survey respondents were asked why they did not participate in various development-related activities. The results were notable in their uniformity and revealed “lack of convenience” as the most significant barrier to engagement, particularly for activities requiring a time commitment:

• NotVolunteering: Lack of time was the top reason cited in every country.

• Not Donating: Lack of financial means was the primary reason given.

• Other Engagement Activities: Lack of time and/or a suitable cause were widely cited.

Chinese interested citizens are also more restricted by their national political environment. Some development-related behaviors, such as signing petitions and writing to government officials, are avoided for political reasons.
Types of engagement—from donation to participation

Interested citizens across all five countries take part in a wide range of activities in support of international development issues, from more passive activities (primarily financial contributions) to more active and time-intensive activities, such as volunteering.

The survey findings, like the focus group findings, indicate that interested citizens are most likely to donate money above all other activities, ostensibly because donating is the least burdensome in terms of time and effort.

Figure 8: In the past year I have done the following
Percentage of interested citizens who said they performed this action in the past year

Source: InterMedia survey of interested citizens in China (n=1,019), France (n=600); Germany (n=604); U.K. (n=600), U.S. (n=1,001)
Culture and Engagement: The Chinese Case

Development-related behaviors are often influenced by norms and cultures in individual countries. In China, for example, people rarely sign petitions or write to government officials, perhaps reflecting a lack of belief among people that they can be effective agents in the political process. Even in the survey implementation process, some mention of more-activist behaviors such as attending a protest had to be removed or revised in the China survey. Even when these survey adaptations were made, very few Chinese respondents said that they participate in development-related activities that could in any way be construed as antagonistic or critical of the government or its policies.

Participants in the Chinese focus groups also generally engaged in group activities, i.e. those that may be carried out individually or with others, but are generally initiated within an organization such as a school, church or workplace. Group activities were also frequently mentioned by the focus group participants in the U.S., which may reflect the predominance of U.S. community organizations in fundraising events—particularly in response to domestic issues and to disasters abroad (e.g. collecting clothes for tsunami and Haiti earthquake victims).

Perceptions of aid waste not a barrier to engagement

The research showed widespread belief across the five countries that most financial aid to developing countries is wasted and many participants felt frustrated that multiple problems remain despite many years of increasing bilateral investment in development. This perception was strongest in France, where about two-thirds of interested citizens expressed this view, and weakest in China, where a third agrees with this statement.

However, the survey data show that these perceptions of aid ineffectiveness do not have a significant impact on people’s willingness to donate to development causes, which suggests that the decision to take a particular action is often disconnected from one’s beliefs about the effectiveness of aid generally.

Figure 9: Most financial aid to developing countries is wasted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Neither agree/disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>DK/Refused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: InterMedia survey of interested citizens in China (n=1,019), France (n=600); Germany (n=604); U.K. (n=600), U.S. (n=1,001)
**Government’s role**

**Perceptions of where responsibility lies for addressing development issues**

Interested citizens in China, Germany, the U.K. and the U.S. generally agree that the main responsibility for addressing development challenges rests at the door of developing countries’ own governments.

**Figure 10: Assigning responsibility for addressing development challenges**

Percentage of interested citizens who think this entity is primarily responsible

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governments in Developing countries</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governments in Developed countries</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International organizations</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, the largest share of the French interested citizens believe that the governments of developed countries are primarily responsible for addressing social and economic challenges in developing countries. This seems to reflect a perception that the governments of developed countries are in a stronger position to affect more lasting changes than financially weaker and less-stable governments of developing countries.

Interestingly, international organizations are generally not considered to have primary responsibility for addressing challenges in developing countries. Only about a fifth of interested citizens in China and only about one in 10 interested citizens in the four Western countries agreed that international organizations hold such a role.

Members of interested citizens in all five countries also cited an array of individuals, businesses, NGOs and other types of organizations that they believe have the main responsibility for solving these issues.

**Perceptions of their governments’ engagement in international development**

Support for government engagement in international development is strong across all countries, despite a lack of faith in aid impact.

Interested citizens across all of the surveyed countries are generally supportive of the principle that their own governments should contribute to international development, even though they are not convinced that these efforts have made a big difference over the past decade. Interested citizens in France and Germany seem to be the most supportive of their governments’ greater engagement in international development, with about half of the interested citizens interviewed in each country saying that their governments are currently doing too little to support international development efforts.
Nevertheless, interested citizens are skeptical about the impact of international development efforts of their governments: More than two-thirds of interested citizens in France, Germany, the U.K. and the U.S. believe that their own governments’ international development efforts have made either a small difference or no difference in the past 10 years.

Evident feelings of responsibility for international development, combined with a frustration about real impact, suggest that many interested citizens would be receptive to suggestions of how to influence government development policy and/or become personally engaged in development issues.

Notably, 51% of China’s interested citizens agreed that their government’s efforts to improve social and economic conditions in developing countries in the past 10 years have made a big difference, which may again reflect their perceptions of China as a developing country. Chinese respondents may have concluded that successes in reducing domestic Chinese poverty, improving access to healthcare, increasing access to education, etc. in the past decade were evidence of development policy effectiveness.

Figure 11: How much is your government doing to improve economic and social conditions in developing countries?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>About the right amount</th>
<th>Too much</th>
<th>Too little</th>
<th>DK/Refused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: InterMedia survey of interested citizens in China (n=1,019), France (n=600); Germany (n=604); U.K. (n=600), U.S. (n=1,001)

Figure 12: How much difference have your government’s development efforts made in the past 10 years?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Big difference</th>
<th>Small difference</th>
<th>No difference</th>
<th>DK/Refused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: InterMedia survey of interested citizens in China (n=1,019), France (n=600); Germany (n=604); U.K. (n=600), U.S. (n=1,001)
Who are identified as champions for international development?

Interested citizens in all five countries mentioned politicians most frequently as favored champions for international development and global health. National politicians dominated the list in each of the five countries, with respondents most often mentioning their own country’s top leaders. U.S. President Barack Obama was the one of the few politicians who had international appeal, making the top-three lists in all five countries.

French respondents most often mentioned French President Nicolas Sarkozy, followed by Bernard Kouchner (former Health Minister and co-founder of Médecins Sans Frontières and Médecins du Monde) and Xavier Bertrand, Minister of Labour, Employment and Health.

German interested citizens most frequently mentioned German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle, Health Minister Daniel Bahr and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

In the U.K., Prime Minister David Cameron received the most mentions; however, the U.K. was also the only country where interested citizens frequently cited other popular figures in the public eye, such as Prince William and musician/aid activist Bob Geldof.

Chinese President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao were the most cited advocates for international development in the eyes of the Chinese interested citizens, followed by U.S. President Barack Obama.

In the U.S., Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and former President Bill Clinton were the second- and third-most mentioned advocates after President Barack Obama.

A list of other cited champions is found in Appendix 5.

IIIb Influentials

Who are they?

Influentials are individuals who are in a position and have the potential to influence government policy and decision-making on international development strategies, budgets and programs. Influentials were subdivided into two categories:

• Established influentials who, by virtue of their positions, can serve as information hubs in their communities and help shape what government decision-makers are thinking and talking about, as well as how they behave. They include journalists and other media practitioners, representatives of academia and think tanks as well as NGOs, and faith-based organizations.

• New generation influentials who, by virtue of their status in social media platforms, influence what other (generally younger) online users know, think and prioritize. They include institutional bloggers—individuals working for recognized development organizations such as Oxfam or the Centre for Global Development—as well as independent bloggers who discuss development issues online but do not have development-related careers outside of the blogosphere.
**Identifying key subgroups of influentials**

The research with established and new-generation influentials revealed that each of these two clusters have distinct sub-categories with distinct information needs and habits. Before delving into the analysis of the target group as a whole, it is worth highlighting the key differences between these groups:

**Established influentials**

- **Journalists and media practitioners**
  They can reach large audiences and influence public opinion as well as government decision-makers. They are mostly interested in development issues in the context of their impact on broader social and economic issues such as terrorism or population growth.

- **Representatives of academia and think tanks**
  They supply peer-reviewed data and analysis that informs behavior and attitudes of government decision-makers, as well as actions of other influentials. They are primarily interested in new “hard data” and concrete feedback from the field. They avoid initiatives that lack substance or entities that they view as having hidden agendas. Along with representatives of influential NGOs, they generally enjoy a high degree of trust and access to decision-makers and are thus likely to be one of the more influential subgroups.

- **Representatives of non-governmental organizations**
  They serve as links between the donor and policy-making communities on the one hand, and citizens and implementers on the other. Along with journalists, they keep closest track of policy developments and are also most likely to have metrics to track progress, which appeals to decision-makers.

- **Representatives of faith-based organizations**
  They often have very close links with aid recipients. Several U.S. respondents considered them go-to sources for timely information about developments on the ground in developing countries because of their practical and typically non-political views. Similar to the influentials from academia and think-tanks, they are often interested in new hard data from their areas of interest.

**New generation influentials**

- **Institutional bloggers**
  These are bloggers who have established professional careers in development and draw their influence online from their credibility in the offline space. They developed their credentials through years of working in academia, NGOs, think tanks or other formal institutions and now blog either part time or full time. Some of them are also active on Twitter.

- **Independent bloggers**
  They either do not have established careers in the development sector outside of the blogosphere, or have had long careers but are not attracting the attention of decision-makers. Those without established careers maintain large networks of contacts and aspire to have their writings widely disseminated. Those with established careers have expertise valued by the government decision-makers and are looking to expand their influence.
Research approach: In-depth interviews

Between June and early September 2011, InterMedia conducted 88 in-depth interviews with influentials in China, France, Germany, the U.K. and the U.S. Sixty-three established influentials were interviewed, along with 25 new generation influentials.

Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes, during which the interviewees were asked:

- what they consider to be the most urgent challenges facing the developing world;
- which communication and media channels they use to obtain information about development issues;
- their views on the development efforts of their governments;
- whom they consider effective current and potential champions for international development.

Appendix 2 of this report lists the organizations from which the interviewees were recruited.

Priority development issues

Health and climate change top many influentials’ priority lists

Development priorities quoted by influentials were diverse and largely related to respondents’ roles in development. However, some issues stood out, as illustrated in the word cloud below. The predominant issues are in larger text.

- Health
  Health was one of the most frequently cited challenges facing developing countries by influentials across the five countries. If people are sick, they reason, other areas of development cannot proceed. The influentials in France, the U.K., and the U.S. also said non-communicable diseases such as heart disease and diabetes should receive more attention because they are increasingly affecting people in the developing world.

  Health-related organizational and infrastructural deficiencies were another concern for several of the established influentials in France, the U.K., and the U.S. One of the U.K. respondents, for example, pointed to the lack of financial and human resources and infrastructure—such as clinics—as major impediments to improving access to health care. A U.S. influential also stressed that development projects focused on health care are sometimes counterproductive because those in the developing world who receive medical training often leave their countries for better-paying positions overseas.

- Climate change
  Climate change came up frequently, mainly because of its impact on a broad range of social, economic and development issues.
• Governance and other structural challenges
These covered such items as donor-country budgetary pressures and governance problems in developing countries. For example, several established influentials in the U.K. and the U.S. were concerned that fiscal and political pressures were forcing governments in developed countries to cut spending on foreign aid.

Poor governance was cited as an impediment by several established influentials across China, France and Germany, who believed that the priority for development is to remedy corruption, democratic deficits and income inequalities that have marred many developing countries in the past several decades. French influentials stressed the democratic deficit:

The first priority would be democracy and everything that goes with it. I mean redistribution of wealth, tax collection, the vox populi and the fact that leaders are accountable to the people. It is where development starts. The three pillars that I would prioritize are democracy, education and health. All three are linked. (France, institutional blogger)

New generation influentials from Germany, the U.K. and the U.S. also criticized developed countries for pursuing policies driven more by geopolitical or economic interests than the interests of those in need.

• Poverty
Poverty was highlighted as a key challenge, particularly by the respondents in China, where several established influentials stressed that local governments should focus primarily on poverty alleviation and social stability.

There are two major challenges faced by developing countries. One is poverty and the other is how to keep social stability. These two problems are the roots of all the problems. (China, established influential)

• Education
Education is perceived as a priority for developing countries by several new generation influentials across the five countries, in part because education can give the disenfranchised a bigger say in their future. Some influentials also stressed that once income disparities and educational deficiencies are addressed, more specific challenges would be easily resolved. New generation influentials additionally pointed out that new media technologies can facilitate certain improvements in the development sector:

I would say the priority is how the voices of people can be heard. With new digital technologies we can [do this]. (Germany, institutional blogger)

Where they source information about development issues

Specialized publications dominate influentials’ reading lists, but personal networks are vital for information vetting

Established influentials across countries and practice areas rely heavily on specialized sources covering topics of their interest, such as peer-reviewed journals and documents supplied by various development organizations. As might be expected, individual sources often vary by country, suggesting perspectives on development are being formed in a variety of different ways.

In the image below, the influentials are represented by different colored nodes (China – pink, France – purple, Germany – green, the U.K. – red and the U.S. – orange). The clusters represent the information sources on international development that were most frequently mentioned by the influentials across the five countries.
Chinese respondents appeared particularly insular in their communication; many primarily rely on informational materials and sources from inside established organizations.

**Personal networks and sources also emerged as vital.** Influentials across countries and disciplines often cited them as the most trustworthy sources of “insider” information, channels for sharing information on development issues, and key aids for vetting information and materials obtained through other sources.

Many interviewees said there was a large amount of unreliable information related to development, and they vetted sources through trusted peers to avoid potentially biased information or hidden agendas. Although most influentials rely most on development information provided by people they know, new generation influentials appear much more open to accepting information from individuals whom they do not know personally than do the established influentials.

**Internet central to information gathering, but social media not considered the most trustworthy source**

All respondents view the internet as an essential tool to collect data and information on development and to maintain personal networks.

*The internet is crucial. Very often Google is our portal to information, with also risks attached, but that’s another debate. The internet is very important; [it allows] easy access to newspapers, blogs, and information. (France, established influential)*
Among established influentialis, the U.S. interviewees appeared to be the heaviest users of the internet for networking, while the Chinese seemed to be the lightest users—established influentials in China, for example, use the web primarily to collect information and stay in touch with a handful of trusted peers.

Websites of international organizations, such as the UN and the World Bank, are some of the key online sources of information on development for both groups of influentialis.

Influentials tend to be heavier users of social media than government decision-makers, but most consider outlets such as blogs complementary, rather than primary, information sources. Overall, influentials consider information received via social media platforms less trustworthy than materials received through other more established channels.

Of course I use the internet, the new media, although I am not very interested in the so-called social media. I know of their impact, but I'm busy. Without the internet, you cannot participate in current affairs. (Germany, established influential)

Blogs tend to be the most frequently-used form of social media by influentialis across the five countries.

Blogs are particularly popular as sources of information among the new generation influentialis, who also view them as important watchdogs, given that they tend to publish information withheld by governments and elites.
Established influentials, on the other hand, like to read blogs because they often aggregate information on development from multiple sources and provide real-time updates from individuals working on development in the field or in crisis situations.

A few established influentials in the U.S. and several new generation influentials in France, Germany, the U.K., and the U.S. are Twitter users, but many complained that Twitter sources are difficult to verify and the information conveyed is too brief.

Others (notably among established influentials in France, Germany, and the U.K.) were reluctant to use Twitter, fearing it would unnecessarily crowd their email and text inboxes. However, many new generation influentials are Twitter fans because it helps them manage the inflow of daily information; French respondents favor two Twitter feeds—those of the papers *Le Monde* and *Liberation*. Weibo, China’s micro-blogging site, was popular with both established and new generation influentials in China; however, the interviewees generally did not specify actual sources they follow through this channel.

Facebook is generally not used for work-related tasks or development information gathering. However, some interviewees said they use it for personal communication.

**Traditional media sources: Mainstream print titles are the most influential**

Traditional media outlets are widely valued as sources of information on development issues, particularly by journalists, NGO representatives and new generation influentials who value content that puts development issues in broader economic, social and security contexts.

Mainstream print titles such as *The Economist* and the *Financial Times* were quoted most frequently across the five countries; television and radio brands featured less often as sources. Many interviewees tend to access the content of these traditional media sources online, rather than read a printed copy, watch TV or listen to the radio.

Many Chinese interviewees are reluctant to trust information conveyed by traditional media sources and generally do not rely on them for detailed insights:

> The World Bank website publishes information similar to news. We also use the websites of UN organizations, such as WHO, UNDP and UNICEF, and conduct baseline surveys on our project sites. We do research, analysis and assessment. I do not use media much for information on development because the credibility of the media is limited.

*(China, established influential)*

**Information needs and messages that stick**

The messages likely to attract the attention of influentials largely depend on the recipient’s role and area of specialization in the development sector, rather than their country of residence. Although all interviewees agreed that information presented should be objective and trustworthy, their information needs varied, as shown below in Figure 15.

A number of established influentials argued that attracting public support for international development is essential, in particular, in Western countries where the public could play a role in convincing governments that investing in international development is worthwhile.

However, some respondents did not think that the overall vision being communicated to the public was compelling or unified. A respondent in the U.K. also highlighted the challenge of attracting attention at a time when audiences are suffering from crisis fatigue and economic...
downturn. Despite the difficulties, several influential thought that compelling human dramas on television or other visuals that told stories related to international development could help spread this type of information among the general population. One U.K. representative of a faith-based organization said:

Very poignant pictures of a tiny black hand in [former Archbishop of Westminster] Cardinal Hume's hand...that sort of image is very powerful. [When] Live Aid...and all those pop stars came together, I think it prompted a lot of younger people to say, 'Gosh, if they believe in it then there must be something in it.' (U.K., established influential)

**Figure 15: Influentials’ key information needs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journalists</th>
<th>Broader information on development, presented in a wider socio-economic context.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Timing is key: Messages are likely to be most effective if they coincide with broader issues they are focusing on at the moment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academia, Think Tanks</td>
<td>Detailed analysis from peer-reviewed journals and hard data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Representatives</td>
<td>Hard information on development issues as well as input on strategies that will help them promote their programs among their corporate patrons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Generation Influentials</td>
<td>Very diverse information needs Information technologies, international aid, global security and health, economic development, children’s rights, youth participation and government policies are some issues of interest.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Communicating with government decision-makers**

Established influential in France, Germany, the U.K. and the U.S. communicate with government decision-makers through a number of different channels and settings, both formal and informal. For many, this communication intensifies around the time of major events, such as G8 and G20 summits, or campaigns around specific development issues.

We communicate with them mainly through direct contact. We also use other channels, such as the NGO platform in France called ‘Coordination Sud’ and ‘Voice’ in Brussels, to learn policy-makers’ positions and feed them our observations. (France, established influential)

Email, phone calls, meetings, events. It’s usually in person....Washington is a very relationship-focused town, so we tend to prefer those modes of communication that help strengthen relationships. (U.S., established influential)

Chinese established influential communicate with government decision-makers somewhat less frequently than their Western colleagues; only two interviewees in China said they often exchange information with their contacts in the government (mainly individuals working in government bureaucracies rather than political leaders).

Among new generation influential, institutional bloggers appear to have much stronger links to government decision-makers than independent bloggers. Most of the former group gained the trust of government decision-makers before becoming bloggers and often talk to them in person, on the phone, or by email. On the other hand, independent bloggers are hoping their blogs will attract decision-makers’ attention or enable the bloggers to get their foot in the door of policy debates. These individuals say they depend on personal networks and other bloggers to disseminate their messages to the people formulating development policies.
**Government’s role**

**Perceptions of where responsibility lies for addressing development issues**

Unlike government decision-makers, most influentials interviewed for this study believe that governments in developing countries are the main drivers of development, albeit with support from the donor countries.

A number of Chinese and French established influentials and religious leaders in the U.K. and the U.S. place the responsibility of these governments within a moral framework, saying that leaders of developing countries are responsible for providing their populations with democracy and equal access to resources and basic life needs. Religious leaders, in particular, highlight the responsibility of local governments to reduce income inequalities and provide dignity to their populations.

There were, however, some respondents among French and German established influentials who thought that the responsibility should be shared:

> I am not sure whether there is a primary responsibility. I’d say that, of course the international community has an important responsibility in helping the poorest countries. On the other hand, we can’t overlook these countries’ responsibility. Therefore, it seems to me that the responsibility is shared. I think that the international community and international institutions must set the context. They are the ones who can organize important facilities. They can avoid bilateral pressure on development. (France, established influential)

**Perceptions of their governments’ engagement in international development.**

**Broad Praise for Donor Countries’ Approaches to Aid—Except in France**

Most influentials in China, Germany, the U.K. and the U.S. praised the commitments their countries’ governments have made to development. The majority was also pleased with the progress achieved so far.

For example, U.S. established influentials praised the commitment and contribution of former President George W. Bush, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and President Barack Obama. In the U.K., both established and new generation influentials commended their government’s pledge to dedicate 0.7% of gross national product to official development assistance, honoring a target set by the UN.

Established influentials in Germany, the U.K. and the U.S. also praise their governments for putting more emphasis on evaluating the effectiveness of their policies and assessing value for money.

Chinese respondents praised their government, in particular, for its progress on infrastructure projects in African countries:

> The Chinese government’s aid to Africa has been relatively successful in the areas of infrastructure, improvement of the local life, sanitation, and health. (China, established influential)

French influentials, on the other hand, were more critical and viewed their government’s financial commitment to development as too small. Some also thought the government should primarily be addressing development challenges bilaterally rather than through multilateral organizations.
Broader systemic challenges to effective development

Although influentials were generally pleased with their governments’ overall approach to international development, many also highlighted systemic challenges which, in their view, represent important obstacles for more effective development, namely:

- **Insufficient leadership and poor organization**
  Established influentials and new generation influentials in all countries except for China say the development sector is poorly organized and led, with a mass of competing bureaucracies seriously undermining development progress. For example, one institutional blogger in the U.K. thought the development bureaucracy has grown too large, making it difficult to control and manage aid. One French established influential also complained that budgets for development vary significantly from year to year and are decided at the last minute, making it difficult to sustain longer-term efforts.

- **Lack of prioritization**
  Lack of prioritization and focus undermines the effectiveness of development efforts and funds in the long term and is perceived as an important challenge by respondents across the five countries. Several U.K. and U.S. influentials thought prioritization was particularly crucial now, as governments across the Western world face fiscal and political pressures to trim development spending. One U.S. influential, for example, pointed out that the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act contains 14 different goals and 400 different directives, making effective organization almost impossible.

- **Politicization of aid**
  There seems to be a strong sense among the new generation influentials in China and Germany that wealthy countries are undermining development because they do not see it as a real priority, but rather as a geopolitical tool by which to achieve broader political or economic aims. The just distribution of aid is particularly important for the new generation influentials, many of whom are strong supporters of democracy, free speech, and the rights of the individual.

- **Lack of coordination and poor governance at the local level**
  Respondents consider corruption among local governments, local conflicts and the lack of coordination between donors on the ground as major stumbling blocks for development. One German and one U.K. established influential illustrated this point with examples.

  There are still incredibly many ‘givers’ with many different singular projects in many different countries—it would be better to bundle or concentrate resources. And with these funds, systems could be better coordinated and dealt with in a more coherent way, so that systems are better supported. (Germany, established influential)

  There’s a study in Tanzania that showed the Ministry of Health had something like 1,000 meetings with donors—the reason being every donor wanted to have their own meeting with the Tanzanian Ministry of Health to tell them about their priorities. And that’s not very helpful if you’re the Ministry of Health trying to run a health system in your own country. (U.K., established influential)
Whom they consider to be champions for international development

Influentials named a mix of high-profile politicians, religious leaders, development experts and celebrities as either current or potential champions for international development and global health. Views on celebrities were quite mixed—some respondents stressed that celebrities tend to emotionalize issues, but do not affect real change; others see value in the attention that celebrities easily generate.

Many influentials noted that different advocates appeal to different target groups, and very few individuals can mobilize support from all—the general public, the business sector and the policy community. Philanthropists Bill and Melinda Gates were mentioned by some influentials as people who have both the star power to attract the public and the expertise to appeal to the experts. The word cloud below illustrates the relative amount of mentions of various development champions.

IIIc Government decision-makers

Who are they?

Government decision-makers are elected and appointed officials in national government cabinets, presidential offices, government ministries and prominent parliamentary committees who are involved in formulating and overseeing national policies about international development and global health.

Research approach: In-depth interviews

Between June and September 2011, InterMedia conducted 40 in-depth interviews with senior government decision-makers in France, Germany, the U.K. and the U.S. The interviews aimed to understand:

• what they consider to be the most urgent challenges facing the developing world;
• how they obtain information that informs their policy-making related to international development;
• what role public opinion plays in their decision-making about development issues;
• who they view as the current and potential champions for international development.

The list of organizations from which the interviewees were recruited is in Appendix 2 of this report. For further details on the methodology, consult Appendix 1.
Priorities for development

Despite lack of broad consensus on priorities, governance concerns are widespread. There was no consensus, either across countries or within countries, on which issues should dominate the development agenda. This partly reflects the diversity of the decision-makers’ backgrounds and the wide variety of their subject/practice areas. Nevertheless, some challenges stood out in terms of how often they were mentioned:

• Governance
A number of interviewees across the four countries cited lack of good governance (or no governance at all, as in failed states), and corrupt practices that flow from governance problems, as serious challenges. This was highlighted most frequently by interviewees in Germany and the U.K., who perceive poor governance as a key hindrance to growth and the success of development policies.

One German respondent said that poor governance also undermines those with the initiative and intelligence who aim to make needed changes in the country.

A U.S. interviewee stressed that poor governance and the lack of solid governmental structures encumbered countries’ ability to attract outside investors who could help improve social and physical infrastructure:

> When I travel through [developing] countries, almost all of them have an endemic problem with corruption and my experience is that if you get this somehow under control...this is an essential presupposition for economic development. (Germany, government decision-maker)

> A society that has a weak judicial system or weak law enforcement so that intellectual property rights can’t be protected, is going to find it hard to attract outside investors to deliver the capital they may need to develop. (U.S., government decision-maker)

• Health
Several interviewees across the four countries mentioned health as one of the serious challenges facing developing countries, although many thought health-related challenges should not be seen in isolation but rather as part of broader systemic deficiencies. The spread of communicable diseases was an important concern given the increased migration of people and goods across borders and between continents.

U.S. government decision-makers tend to focus on the need to eradicate specific diseases such as malaria and AIDS; French and German respondents pointed to the lack of access to affordable medications. Other health-related challenges highlighted by the interviewees included immunization of children, malaria prevention and control, child nutrition and family health.

• Unfair trade practices
German and U.K. government decision-makers stressed the alleviation of unfair trade practices in the West. Some interviewees said developing countries could not improve their growth without better access to the markets of developed-countries.

• Education
Several French and U.K. respondents were concerned about the negative impact of poor educational opportunities on the sustainability of development policies and projects in general. Most interviewees also agreed that strengthening these institutions and structures takes time and that development efforts in this area should therefore be seen as long-term efforts rather than a series of short-term projects:

> You know, unfortunately, the environment that [children] live in has a great impact on the education of children. When there is no money to send kids to school, there is no good
schooling or education, and so no good preparation of future citizens. The education system has to prepare future citizens, both on an intellectual level and on an economic one. (France, government decision-maker)

- Climate change
Climate change was highlighted as an important challenge for developing countries, in particular by French government decision-makers. One German interviewee said climate change is a priority because, if left unaddressed, it could wipe out past development gains.

Gathering information for policy-making purposes

Specialized Sources Key for Policy-Making
Government decision-makers in France, Germany, the U.K. and the U.S. tend to be highly selective in their sources of policy-related information. They prefer expert interlocutors who are considered straightforward, well-informed, objective and providers of information targeted to their specific interests. They rely heavily on highly specialized and mostly formal sources, such as peer-reviewed journals and materials prepared by international organizations, faith-based organizations and NGOs.

Internal government contacts—including colleagues in the field—are important sources and often seen as providers of the most accurate and up-to-date information. Government decision-makers also rely on professional networks of experts in their fields, with whom they sit on a variety of working groups. For example, a French decision-maker, noted that he had networks of experts at l’Institut des Sciences Politiques in Paris and the French Development Agency (AFD).

Although NGOs are also an important part of this information network, government decision-makers are most open to those NGOs with which they have long-established relationships.

Government decision-makers do not appear to rely heavily on input from the private sector. In fact, of the 40 interviewees, only one French respondent mentioned a private source he uses to obtain information on development issues.

Social media are not seen as important tools for gathering policy information
Government decision-makers rely heavily on the internet, as well as on junior staff members to gather web-based information on their behalf (the latter practice was particularly prevalent among U.K. respondents). The internet is also important for maintaining contact with peers and informants, primarily via email.

Social media such as blogs, Facebook or Twitter are not used often. Exceptions were parliamentarians from France and the U.K. who use them to disseminate information or receive comments from constituents.

German respondents did not mention any specific blogs that they followed; the French, U.K. and U.S. respondents provided only short lists, shown in Figure 16.
Traditional media mainly used for news and current affairs, not policy information

Government decision-makers rely on traditional media sources for current news and events, but not as key sources of information for policy purposes. Many decision-makers feel skeptical about the trustworthiness of information provided by traditional media sources, in part because they are perceived to lack the level of detail on specific development issues that are of interest to government decision-makers. The Financial Times and the section of The Guardian focused on global development are exceptions to this rule and are considered highly reliable.

U.K. and U.S. government decision-makers tend to use a similar cluster of information sources; German decision-makers form a distinct cluster focused on national German-language sources such as Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and Süddeutsche Zeitung.

Many respondents in all five countries access news media online rather than in print format. The World Bank and the IMF are also key sources of information for decision-makers, as discussed in a previous section of this report.

Government decision-makers also use media as key sources for gauging public opinion on international development issues. French and U.S. respondents, for example, said they need to keep the pulse of public opinion because it has the potential to affect development budgets and mobilize support for development programs.

Media outlets have a huge impact on my opinion formation. However, it depends on the people who have voiced it. If they are competent, whether I know them and so on. It can cause a major change in my opinion. (Germany, government decision-maker)

Public opinion is very important in the United States because it can very much influence the level of funding you receive. We’re always struggling with how to communicate with the very stakeholders that have an influence on how we get funding. That includes Congress and it includes the public opinion at large, because Congress is influenced by them. So it’s very, very important. (U.S., government decision-maker)

In the U.K., several respondents said listening to public opinion was an important part of their role as public servants (although they did not believe most of their constituents were interested in the development issue); but others in the U.K. said public opinion does not have a direct influence on their policy-making.

Government decision-makers also track public sentiment through emails, messages from activists and public opinion surveys. One U.K. decision-maker noted that his polling budget has been cut to zero, so he is forced to rely on polling information supplied by NGOs.

In the image below, government decision-makers are represented by different colored nodes (France – purple, Germany – green, the U.K. – red and the U.S. – orange). The clusters represent the information sources on international development that were mentioned most frequently by the government decision-makers in France, Germany, the U.K. and the U.S.
Responsibility for addressing challenges in developing countries

Government decision-makers are much more likely than the other target groups studied here to view responsibility for development as a shared one between national governments of developing countries and governments and institutions in the developed world.

>I’ve been working on Iraq—we’ve put how many billions of dollars into Iraq, but it’s ultimately up to the Iraqis to solve their energy, electricity, food issues. It won’t work if the country is not behind it. (U.S., government decision-maker)

Most respondents in France, Germany, and the U.K. framed the role of developed countries in development in the context of the need for global solidarity, and as a moral responsibility.

The majority of government decision-makers also looked to heavy donor involvement as an essential tool for guiding and monitoring progress in developing countries. Two U.K. government decision-makers thought such involvement is needed to control the use of aid funds.

As may be expected, most decision-makers willing to share their opinions about their own governments’ development policies expressed a favorable view. The French and U.K. decision-makers were particularly positive:

>I think we are in a country with an extremely strong strategy in international development. Both the President and the Prime Minister are personally involved in this matter globally as well as in addressing health issues as part of the G20. (France, government decision-maker)
Well, I think the good thing about [our government] is that they haven’t gone about unhinging the policies that we put in last—by the last Labour government. They’ve actually embraced them, in some respects. There’s now a consensus around some of these issues that wasn’t there 10, 15 years ago. And that’s obviously a very positive thing. (U.K., government decision-maker)

Negative comments were rare and typically cited the following issues: low levels of official development assistance; using international development as a cover for achieving broader economic interests; the lack of focus on key priority development issues; and in the case of the U.S., constraints that legislative (Congressional) earmarks place on development funding.

Although most agreed that governments should take the lead in addressing challenges faced by developing countries, a substantial number also said that non-governmental organizations and the public in developing countries also must play a role in implementing some of the programs, as well as helping to ensure sustainability of development gains.

On the other hand, most government decision-makers did not seem to expect international institutions, such as the UN, to lead development efforts.

Champions for international development

Subject experts favored as promoters of development

Government decision-makers in all four countries said subject experts are the most appropriate and credible ambassadors and advocates for international development and global health. Some experts mentioned most frequently include:

After experts, high-profile government decision-makers also were cited. Frequently mentioned champions in this category include U.K. Prime Minister David Cameron, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Interestingly, celebrities were not mentioned very often. In fact, several respondents in Germany and the U.K. discounted celebrities for a perceived lack of substance. Decision-makers were also notably suspicious of those who appeared to be “selling” development to them and wanted interlocutors who had both the style and the substance to advocate for priorities that made sense:

I really believe Tony Blair and Gordon Brown made more difference at Gleneagles® to... double aid to Africa than [did] the Make Poverty History NGO coalition or Bob Geldof turning up and saying we demand something happens. Without the political leadership from the top, it wouldn’t have happened. (U.K., government decision-maker)