BUILDING SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AMONG KEY POLICY CONSTITUENCIES: FINDINGS FROM FRANCE

MARCH 2012
INTRODUCTION

The Building Support for International Development study provides a roadmap for the development community for connecting more meaningfully with key constituencies in donor-country discussions about international development policy issues and priorities. The study, launched by InterMedia in 2011 with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, included qualitative and quantitative research with three key target groups:

INTERESTED CITIZENS
Members of the public who are predisposed to engagement with international development issues, based on their self-reported interest in global health and international development issues, and their previous participation in activities in support of development causes (such as donating, volunteering, writing to public officials, etc.)

INFLUENTIALS
Citizens with the potential to influence decisions by governmental officials on development policies.

GOVERNMENT DECISION-MAKERS
Elected and appointed officials who are engaged in forming and implementing national policies on international development and global health.

The Building Support study covers the four largest bi-lateral aid donors—France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States—as well as China, which is fast becoming a major player in the aid arena.

This country summary report focuses on the findings from France and is drawn from a nationally representative urban survey with French citizens and in-depth interviews with influencers and government decision-makers, conducted between May and September 2011.

ABOUT INTERMEDIA

InterMedia (www.intermedia.org) is a global research and consulting group providing strategic guidance and insight on effective engagement and networking strategies online and offline. A not-for-profit social enterprise, InterMedia equips clients to communicate and connect effectively with communities worldwide.

Based in Nairobi, Kenya; Washington, D.C.; and London, U.K., InterMedia has worked in more than 100 developing countries. InterMedia research experts use innovative techniques to understand how information, communication and media resources can deliver impact.

**TOP CHALLENGES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

The image shows the top challenges for developing countries cited by government decision-makers.*

**TOP MEDIA AND SPECIALISED SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The image shows the top media and specialised sources used by government decision-makers for information on international development.*

**TOP SOCIAL MEDIA SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The image shows the top social media sources used by government decision-makers for information on international development.*

**FAVOURED CHAMPIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL HEALTH**

The image shows the preferred champions for international development and global health cited by government decision-makers.*

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*Please note: Government decision-makers rely heavily on specialised sources and their professional networks to stay informed about international development. They use traditional media for current news and events, but generally not for information on international development.

*Source: Intermedia in-depth interviews with government decision-makers in France (N=10)

**Please note:** French government decision-makers generally do not use Facebook and Twitter for obtaining information on international development.

**Source:** Intermedia in-depth interviews with government decision-makers in France (N=10)

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**Bill Gates**
Co-Chairman of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

**Gordon Brown**
Former Prime Minister of the U.K.

**Jacques Chirac**
Former Prime Minister of France

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**Source:** Intermedia in-depth interviews with government decision-makers in France (N=10)

*The size of a shape indicates the number of times that various responses were mentioned.

**The building support for international development study was funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. However, interviewees and survey respondents were not informed of this. Identification of Bill or Melinda Gates as favoured champions was thus incidental.
INFLUENTIALS

TOP CHALLENGES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The image shows the top challenges for developing countries cited by influentials.*

SOURCE: INTERMEDIA IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH INFLUENTIALS IN FRANCE (N= 17)

TOP MEDIA AND SPECIALISED SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The image shows the top media and specialised sources used by influentials for information on international development.*

SOURCE: INTERMEDIA IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH INFLUENTIALS IN FRANCE (N= 17)

TOP SOCIAL MEDIA SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The image displays the key blogs used by influentials for information on international development.

PLEASE NOTE: Influentials rely heavily on specialised sources such as documents from development organisations and briefings from government departments to stay informed about international development. Traditional media are used as sources of background and contextual information on international development.

SOURCE: INTERMEDIA IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH INFLUENTIALS IN FRANCE (N= 17)

FAVOURED CHAMPIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL HEALTH

The image shows the preferred champions for international development and global health cited by influentials.*

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**THE BUILDING SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STUDY WAS FUNDED BY THE BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION. HOWEVER, INTERVIEWEES AND SURVEY RESPONDENTS WERE NOT INFORMED OF THIS. IDENTIFICATION OF BILL OR MELINDA GATES AS FAVOURED CHAMPIONS WAS THUS INCIDENTAL.**
INTERESTED CITIZENS

TOP CHALLENGES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The image shows the percentage of interested citizens that identified these issues as one of the top three challenges for developing countries.

- **Access to Healthcare**: 53%
- **Poverty**: 45%
- **Food Supply**: 45%
- **Spread of Infectious Diseases**: 27%
- **Corruption**: 26%
- **International Debt**: 16%

**Source**: INTERMEDIA SURVEY OF INTERESTED CITIZENS IN FRANCE (N=600, 16+)

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WHO HAS THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADDRESSING CHALLENGES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Governments of Developing Countries</th>
<th>Governments of Developed Countries</th>
<th>International Organisations</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Supply</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spread of Infectious Diseases</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<td>12%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source**: INTERMEDIA SURVEY OF INTERESTED CITIZENS IN FRANCE (N=600, 16+)

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HOW MUCH IS THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT DOING TO IMPROVE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES?

- **Too Little**: 52%
- **Too Much**: 5%
- **About the Right Amount**: 39%
- **DK/Refused**: 4%

**Source**: INTERMEDIA SURVEY OF INTERESTED CITIZENS IN FRANCE (N=600, 16+)
**KEY PLATFORMS AND SOURCES FOR INFORMATION ON INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- **71%** use TV as one of their main sources of information on international development
- **44%** use newspapers as one of their main sources of information on international development
- **40%** use news websites as one of their main sources of information on international development

**MOST USED TV STATIONS**

- **29%** TF1
- **24%** FRANCE 2
- **22%** BFM TV

**MOST USED NEWSPAPERS**

- **31%** LE MONDE
- **10%** LE FIGARO
- **7%** LE POINT

**MOST USED NEWS WEBSITES**

- **32%** LE MONDE
- **16%** GOOGLE
- **7%** YAHOO

**MOST USED SOCIAL MEDIA SOURCES**

- **2%** Facebook
- **1%** Twitter

**FAVORITED CHAMPIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The image shows the top five champions for international development cited by interested citizens.*

1st

- NICOLAS SARKOZY
  - President of France

2nd

- BARACK OBAMA
  - President of the U.S.

Bernard Kouchner
- Former Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of France

Nicolas Hulot
- Photo-journalist and film producer

Christine Lagarde
- Managing director of the IMF

Please note: French interested citizens use Facebook as a tool to collate information on international development according to their interests, which they then regularly share with friends online. They also use Facebook to receive breaking news on natural disasters such as the 2010 Haiti earthquake.

Source: Intermedia survey of interested citizens in France (n=587 interested citizens who received information about international development in the past year)

**FAVOURITED CHAMPIONS FOR GLOBAL HEALTH**

The image shows the top five champions for global health cited by interested citizens.*

1st

- BERNARD KOUCHNER
  - Former Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of France

2nd

- BARACK OBAMA
  - President of the U.S.

Xavier Bertrand
- Health Minister of France

Nicolas Sarkozy
- President of France

Nicolas Hulot
- Photo-journalist and film producer

*The size of a shape indicates the number of times that various individuals were mentioned.

Source: Intermedia survey of interested citizens in France (n=600, 16+)

Please note: French interested citizens use Facebook as a tool to collate information on international development according to their interests, which they then regularly share with friends online. They also use Facebook to receive breaking news on natural disasters such as the 2010 Haiti earthquake.

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### MOTIVATORS OF ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Interested citizens named the activities that they participated in during the past year to support international development efforts. For each of the activities that they engaged in, they also named the main reasons for their participation. The image below shows the three most quoted reasons for engagement for each of the activities included in the study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I DONATED BECAUSE...</td>
<td>I FELT I COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND CHANGE SOMEONE’S LIFE</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I WANTED TO FEEL I’M NOT POWERLESS IN THE FACE OF NEED</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I HAD A PERSONAL CONNECTION TO THAT PARTICULAR CAUSE</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I VOLUNTEERED BECAUSE...</td>
<td>I FELT I COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND CHANGE SOMEONE’S LIFE</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I WANTED TO FEEL I’M NOT POWERLESS IN THE FACE OF NEED</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I HAD A PERSONAL CONNECTION TO THAT PARTICULAR CAUSE</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I SIGNED A PETITION BECAUSE...</td>
<td>I FELT I COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND CHANGE SOMEONE’S LIFE</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I WANTED TO FEEL I’M NOT POWERLESS IN THE FACE OF NEED</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I HAD A PERSONAL CONNECTION TO THAT PARTICULAR CAUSE</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I WROTE TO THE GOVERNMENT BECAUSE...</td>
<td>I FELT I COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND CHANGE SOMEONE’S LIFE</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I WANTED TO FEEL I’M NOT POWERLESS IN THE FACE OF NEED</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I HAD A PERSONAL CONNECTION TO THAT PARTICULAR CAUSE</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I FUNDRAISED BECAUSE...</td>
<td>I FELT I COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND CHANGE SOMEONE’S LIFE</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I WANTED TO FEEL I’M NOT POWERLESS IN THE FACE OF NEED</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I HAD A PERSONAL CONNECTION TO THAT PARTICULAR CAUSE</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ATTENDED AN EVENT BECAUSE...</td>
<td>I FELT I COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND CHANGE SOMEONE’S LIFE</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I WANTED TO FEEL I’M NOT POWERLESS IN THE FACE OF NEED</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I HAD A PERSONAL CONNECTION TO THAT PARTICULAR CAUSE</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I SHARED INFORMATION ONLINE BECAUSE...</td>
<td>I FELT I COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND CHANGE SOMEONE’S LIFE</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I WANTED TO FEEL I’M NOT POWERLESS IN THE FACE OF NEED</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I HAD A PERSONAL CONNECTION TO THAT PARTICULAR CAUSE</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I SHARED A PERSONAL STORY OR EXPERIENCE ONLINE BECAUSE...</td>
<td>I HAD A PERSONAL CONNECTION TO THAT PARTICULAR CAUSE</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I WANTED TO FEEL I’M NOT POWERLESS IN THE FACE OF NEED</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I FELT I COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND CHANGE SOMEONE’S LIFE</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** INTERMEDIA SURVEY OF INTERESTED CITIZENS IN FRANCE (N=600, 16+)
FINDINGS FROM FRANCE

**KEY CHALLENGES**

**INTERESTED CITIZENS**
- French interested citizens often find the language used by the development community confusing and too vague. This creates a barrier to their understanding of development issues and their willingness to engage in efforts to address challenges faced by developing countries.
- Development organisations may find it challenging to deepen engagement of French interested citizens in activities that require commitments of time and effort, such as volunteering or writing to the government. In comparison with their counterparts in other Western countries included in this study, they are less likely to personally engage in these activities and many assign the primary responsibility for addressing development challenges to the government.
- Many interested citizens in France tend to prioritise development challenges in Francophone Africa, which may hamper efforts to engage them in supporting development efforts in other regions of the world.

**INFLUENTIALS**
- Influentials lack regular and more formal opportunities to engage with government decision-makers and rely primarily on conferences and sporadic meetings hosted by government departments and organisations such as the French development agency AFD.
- Government decision-makers are sceptical of sources they don’t know personally, and primarily turn to their own networks for information on development issues. Breaking into these circles of trusted sources may be challenging and may require time and consistent engagement on specific issues of their interest.
- French decision-makers are generally wary of Twitter as an information source. Only a few French parliamentarians use it as a tool for disseminating information to their constituents and for obtaining their feedback.

**GOVERNMENT DECISION-MAKERS**
- Government decision-makers are sceptical of sources they don’t know personally, and primarily turn to their own networks for information on development issues.
- Media practitioners and bloggers seek broader information that helps them understand impact of development efforts in a broader socioeconomic context.
- Budget-stretched decision-makers require independent, robust research to assist them in policy-making decisions, partially because the budgetary restraints are biting into research budgets.

**INTERESTED INFORMATION NEEDS**

**INTERESTED CITIZENS**
- Interested citizens in France require information that is jargon-free and focuses on the impact of government development efforts abroad. A quarter of French interested citizens believe that their government’s international development efforts over the past ten years made no difference and two-thirds think that most financial aid to developing countries is wasted.
- They require both information and opportunities to become further involved. Although they tend to be relatively well informed about disaster relief efforts, they have very little knowledge of long-term development issues or ways to personally support development efforts other than through financial contributions.

**INFLUENTIALS**
- Their information needs are very specific and also diverse. NGO representatives and academics require robust research data on specific development issues while media practitioners and bloggers seek broader information that helps them understand impact of development efforts in a broader socioeconomic context. Entities wanting to engage with this target group will need to employ multiple communication strategies tailored to each subgroup. Thus there may be a need to prioritise certain subgroups to fit time and budget constraints.

**GoverNMENT DECISION-MAKERS**
- Most government decision-makers suffer from information overload in relation to international development issues and require support in filtering relevant materials.
- Government decision-makers require independent, robust research to assist them in policy-making decisions, partially because the budgetary restraints are biting into research budgets.

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

**INTERESTED CITIZENS**
- Raise awareness and knowledge of development issues by disseminating informational content through most mentioned French mass media, such as Le Monde and TF1. Avoid using general terms such as “international development” or “global health” and instead use language that is precise and easy to understand.
- Address head-on legitimate concerns about corruption and waste of aid, and provide proof of positive impact of international development efforts. People lend credibility to stories of individuals in developing countries and accounts from their friends, peers or independent observers on the ground because these feel more authentic.
- Engaging the hearts and minds of people in development-related issues at an early age is key to fostering a citizenry which prioritises issues related to global welfare. Develop packages aimed specifically for the needs of young people which can engage their interest on every level, including addressing the need for exchange programs and practical activities in order to stimulate long-term interest in development issues. Other communities of interest including workplaces also offer key opportunities to deepen levels of engagement.

**INFLUENTIALS & GOVERNMENT DECISION-MAKERS**
- Facilitate more regular and structured communication and engagement between subject experts and government decision-makers, both offline and online. Consider hosting or sponsoring a program of events focusing on topics that polarise opinion among these two target groups, including framing development in the post-MDG world and the discussion of more collaborative, inclusive models of development.
- Sponsor independent research to provide budget-stretched decision-makers and influentials with evidence-based research, with an emphasis on studies demonstrating impact and efficacy of the development approaches prioritised by these two target groups.
- Help them to filter relevant information by offering a digest of research studies or development news from a range of key sources. Make this research available on websites of traditional media sources which are most often viewed by government decision-makers and influentials, such as Le Monde.