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

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 government 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 China and is drawn from a nationally representative urban survey with Chinese citizens as well as in-depth interviews with influential 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.


For more information about the Building Support for International Development study, or to arrange a customized Building Support workshop, contact:

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This report is based on research funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The findings and conclusions contained within are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect positions or policies of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. © 2012 Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. All Rights Reserved. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is a registered trademark in the United States and other countries.
TOP CHALLENGES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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

- Goverance
- Health
- Agriculture
- Social Stability
- Political Rights
- Human Rights
- Corruption
- Environment Protection
- Sustainable Development
- Gender Inequality
- Access to Water
- Fair Trade
- Income Inequality
- Education
- Agriculture
- Children's Rights
- Food Security
- Economic Development
- Access to Food
- Access to Water

SOURCE: INTERMEDIA IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH INFLUENTIALS IN CHINA (N= 25)

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.*

- United Nations
- World Bank
- The Economist
- The Financial Times
- The New York Times
- The Wall Street Journal
- The Washington Post
- CNN
- SINA
- BBC
- Sina
- China Daily
- Google
- Weibo
- Chinese Government
- China Development Brief
- Reuters

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 CHINA (N= 25)

* THE SIZE OF A SHAPE INDICATES THE NUMBER OF TIMES THAT VARIOUS RESPONSES WERE MENTIONED
**FINDINGS FROM CHINA**

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

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

- **Yan Chang Hai’s Blog** (Social commentator)
- **Wu Zuolai’s Blog** (Cultural scholar/writer)
- **Global Voices Blog**
- **Far and Wide Journal**

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

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

- **Bill Gates**
  - Co-Chairman of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- **Yao Ming**
  - Former basketball player
- **Margaret Chan**
  - Director-General of the WHO
- **Bill Clinton**
  - Former President of the U.S.
- **Wen Jiabao**
  - Premier of China
- **Pu Cunxin**
  - Chinese actor

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* The size of a shape indicates the relative 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 favored 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>corruption</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poverty</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spread of infectious diseases</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>natural disasters</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>access to education</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>access to health</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>climate change</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: INTERMEDIATE SURVEY OF INTERESTED CITIZENS IN CHINA (N=1,019, 16+)

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Responsibility</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governments of developing</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governments of developed</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International organisations</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: INTERMEDIATE SURVEY OF INTERESTED CITIZENS IN CHINA (N=1,019, 16+)

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>About the right amount</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too little</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/Refused</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PLEASE NOTE: Chinese interested citizens consider China to be a developing rather than a developed country, which influences their responses to questions regarding their views and attitudes towards developing countries and their government’s performance on international development.

SOURCE: INTERMEDIATE SURVEY OF INTERESTED CITIZENS IN CHINA (N=1,019, 16+)
KEY PLATFORMS AND SOURCES FOR INFORMATION ON INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

82% use TV as one of their main sources of information on international development
58% use newspapers as one of their main sources of information on international development
50% quote their friends and family as one of their main sources of information on international development

MOST USED TV STATIONS

64% CCTV
15% PROVINCIAL TV STATIONS
4% LOCAL/CITY TV STATIONS

MOST USED NEWSPAPERS

53% LOCAL/CITY NEWSPAPERS
5% SOUTH DAILY

MOST USED SOCIAL MEDIA SOURCES

OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA SOURCES 15%
blogs 8%

FAVOURED CHAMPIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

1st HU JINTAO President of China
2nd WEN JIABAO Premier of China
5th XI JINPING Vice-President of China

FAVOURED CHAMPIONS FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

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

1st HU JINTAO President of China
2nd WEN JIABAO Premier of China
3rd BARACK OBAMA President of the U.S.
4th YAO MING Former basketball player
5th CHEN ZHU Minister of Health of China

* THE SIZE OF A SHAPE INDICATES THE NUMBER OF TIMES THAT VARIOUS RESPONSES WERE MENTIONED

PLEASE NOTE: Interested citizens in China use social media to share links to stories about major events such as the earthquake and tsunami in Japan in 2011 and to verify information obtained from mass media.

SOURCE: INTERMEDIA SURVEY OF INTERESTED CITIZENS IN CHINA (N=1,019 INTERESTED CITIZENS WHO RECEIVED INFORMATION ABOUT INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE PAST YEAR)
FINDINGS FROM CHINA

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.

I DONATED BECAUSE...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to feel I'm not powerless in the face of need</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt I could make a difference and change someone's life</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt fortunate and wanted to give back to others</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I VOLUNTEERED BECAUSE...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt fortunate and wanted to give back to others</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt I could make a difference and change someone's life</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to feel I'm not powerless in the face of need</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I SHARED INFORMATION ONLINE BECAUSE...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt emotionally moved by something I had seen or heard</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I saw a story showing data or evidence demonstrating the positive impact of international development</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to feel I'm not powerless in the face of need</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I FUNDRAISED BECAUSE...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to feel I'm not powerless in the face of need</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt fortunate and wanted to give back to others</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt emotionally moved by something I had seen or heard</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I SHARED A PERSONAL STORY OR EXPERIENCE ONLINE BECAUSE...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt emotionally moved by something I had seen or heard</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I saw a story about the positive impact of international development</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to feel I'm not powerless in the face of need</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note: In China, less than 4% (n < 40) of all interested citizens have attended an event in support for international development, signed a petition, or wrote to the government in the past year. These activities have thus been excluded from this report.

Source: Intermedia Survey of Interested Citizens in China (N=1,019, 16+)

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KEY CHALLENGES

INTERESTED CITIZENS
- Misunderstanding of the term international development may hinder efforts to engage effectively with Chinese interested citizens. Many of them believe that international development includes addressing social and economic challenges in other parts of China rather than abroad.
- Connecting with interested citizens may be further hampered by restrictions on foreign organisations’ activities in China, and heavy monitoring and censorship of online platforms.
- Interested citizens prefer to take part in activities that do not require much time or effort, such as donating, which will affect efforts to deepen interested citizens’ engagement in development issues. For example, 63% said they donated money to support development causes in the past year, while 21% volunteered and only 4% fundraised. More active engagement is further obstructed by the political environment in China; interested citizens generally avoid activities that they believe may antagonise the government, such as signing a petition or writing to the government.

INFLUENTIALS
- Influentials in China rarely consult government decision-makers on development issues and report limited influence on the development policies formulated by the Chinese government.
- They appear to be particularly insular in their communication, with many relying primarily on informational materials and sources from inside established organisations in China or government sources. They also do not report using the internet extensively for networking and may thus be more difficult to reach.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to political sensitivities and time constraints, no interviews were conducted with government decision-makers in China.

KEY INFORMATION NEEDS

INTERESTED CITIZENS
- Communication with interested citizens in China should focus on providing clear and specific information on the issues viewed as key priorities (such as poverty alleviation and spread of infectious diseases), in a language that is easy to understand and is couched along the lines of the economic prosperity and social stability.
- They also prefer information that is not politically sensitive or critical of their government’s policies.

INFLUENTIALS
- Influentials require robust data and up-to-date information on international development from specialised and reliable international sources such as World Bank or United Nations research papers and reports.
- They also look for new and regular opportunities to engage with international subject experts in their area of work, to share knowledge, expertise and views on developments in the field.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

INTERESTED CITIZENS
- Consider using social media platforms such as WeiBo and Renren to share informational content with interested citizens in China. Many use these to verify information from other sources, and place more trust in online networks than in traditional Chinese media.
- Promote international exchange opportunities for students and engage with Chinese expat communities to encourage sharing of information and experiences through word of mouth. Fifty percent of Chinese interested citizens count their friends and family as one of the main sources of information and opinion on international development issues.

INFLUENTIALS & GOVERNMENT DECISION-MAKERS
- Provide them with a regular and up-to-date digest of recent studies from China and the region, best practices and robust data on international development issues. The digest can be provided via one central, neutral online portal.
- Promote and facilitate regular and more structured engagement of subject experts in China with influentials from other countries, particularly on governance issues and poverty alleviation.

JOINING THE DISCUSSION: THE BUILDING SUPPORT PORTAL

You can share reactions to the Building Support study as well as exchange ideas with interested parties and stakeholders in the global development policy community on InterMedia’s Building Support Portal at www.audiencescapes.org/buildsupport and on Twitter at #supportfordev.

The Building Support Community site includes the following:
- Electronic version of the Building Support for International Development main report
- Country summary reports for the donor countries covered in this project – China, France, Germany, the U.K. and the U.S.
- Comments from Facebook users