



Good Practice in Communicating Development Results - Call for Think Pieces -

DevCom invites all development communication practitioners and researchers to contribute with short Think Pieces illustrating successful approaches and strategies in communicating results of development.

DevCom – a good practice clearinghouse

Created in 1988, the Informal Network of DAC Development Communicators (DevCom) is a global network of directors of public affairs and communication of foreign/development ministries and official agencies, multilateral institutions and regional development banks. Over more than two decades of analysing strategies for informing and influencing public awareness and support for development cooperation, DevCom has built a strong capacity to generate, harvest and disseminate good practice in development communication globally. During DevCom annual meetings and specialised seminars, Network members have demonstrated what works most effectively in development communication in their specific frameworks and collectively analysed how they could apply this knowledge in different contexts (e.g. economic crisis; sceptical public; deadline of the MDGs; domestic accountability). In recent years, DevCom members have put **development effectiveness and results** at the heart of the communication agenda.

With its strong capacity to “open up” space for constructive multi-stakeholder dialogue and its convening power, DevCom will capitalise on the extensive knowledge from the Network of communication experts – from both established and emerging donor institutions – and collect viable lessons and resources to learn from. With the OECD Development Centre’s independent position in the policy field, DevCom aims to combine members’ expertise into a **collection of good practice in communicating development results**.

Think Pieces – your opportunity to weigh into the global discussion

Your contribution is essential to make development effectiveness a key growth area in the global debate. Think Pieces provide an opportunity for authors to share their thoughts about how their respective institutions are coping with the challenge of results communication. The purpose is to produce a concise piece of writing to add to the wider dialogue on issues facing development communicators.

Collected Think Pieces will constitute background documents for debates during the **IDB/DevCom Seminar on “Communicating Development Results”**, taking place on 23-24 April in Washington, and will also be compiled into a DevCom publication “Good Practice in Communicating Development Results”. General and specific insights and trends will be drawn from the think pieces and used as building blocks. We hope a particularly rich and diverse body of knowledge on results communication will emerge from the submissions.

Why should you consider submitting a think piece? Because it is...

- A unique opportunity to contribute to a wide collection of good practice and empower development communication practitioners and researchers globally in building their communication strategies and campaigns with a “results” component;
- An opportunity to share your perspective and give feedback on what you and/or your institution are doing in this area;
- An excellent opportunity to get your work published through a DevCom/OECD Development Centre publication and engage in dialogue with top-level policy makers and practitioners around the world.

We encourage Think-Piece submissions from both DevCom members and non-members alike.

We know you are working on something that fits this seminar’s theme and that others would be very interested to hear about!

Content

Please focus your Think Piece on the overarching issue that is being addressed and on what is most innovative, unusual or controversial about your subject.



Think pieces could cover one of the following topics:

- Concrete examples of recent **strategies, campaigns, tools, etc.**, used to communicate results;
- Results measurement for **accountability** in the implementation of international commitments;
- How do donors organise their **results frameworks** and how can communicators explore them to get evidence for demonstrating progress and **impact** of development cooperation?
- **What results** for which **purposes** (e.g. results for justifying aid to taxpayers; results for improving aid impact; results for better management of aid agencies and better “value for money”)?
- What results to which **audiences**: how do donors organise their results frameworks for data to be communicated to various audiences?
- Making the case for **multilateralism**: what is the specific added value that can be communicated to the general public, legislators, civil societies, etc.?
- How can multilateral institutions support bilaterals in communicating on **multilateral aid** to their domestic constituencies?
- **Communicating failure** and **celebrating successes**: learning values in both approaches (publicly recognising failure as a driver for creativity, calculated risk-taking and improving development effectiveness; highlighting strengths, things that work and considerable improvements achieved, in areas such as health, education, enhanced well-being, etc.);
- **Beyond the numbers – storytelling**: turning statistics of progress into powerful human stories as evidence of development;
- **Voices from partner countries** – incorporating the world’s poorest citizens’ perspectives on development and realities of stakeholders on the ground;
- **Social media** is here to stay so let us make the most of it: embracing new tools for development communication;
- Improving collaboration between **evaluators** and **communicators**: translating technical issues of development into an understandable, yet not simplistic, narrative for the public;
- Illustrating **empowering, partnership-based** development critical to building a sustainable future: capturing the intelligence, the resilience, the capabilities of developing countries’ citizens;
- Development cooperation means **partnerships**: forging alliances with partners (bilaterals, multilaterals, partner countries, NGOs, media, foundations, corporate sector) for results’ communication;
- Navigating **complexity** of development: communicating about broader context of development efforts in an interconnected world (policy coherence for sustainable development; global public goods & bads; etc.);
- Showing short-term versus **long-term results**: communication on easy-to-measure, immediate results (good story to tell to taxpayers) versus communication on longer term investments with more sustainable improvements and impact (sustained quality of development aid’s results);
- Engaging **young audiences** in development: involving future change-makers and building long-term supporter base;
- Implications of recent **aid reviews** for communication, transparency and accountability.

Think Pieces to be included in the publication **are not limited** to the topics listed.



Authors could also contribute with Think Pieces in the form of **case stories** – brief descriptions of members’ experiences of communicating results within a framework of a **concrete project** or **campaign**. Some questions to consider could be: *In which way does it address the current challenges and demands of communicating results? What was the context? What worked/did not work well and why? What are the components that have proven successful in particular circumstances (political commitment, knowledge, tools, partners, messaging, targeting the audience, etc.)? What were the lessons learnt? Which practices have specific and/or wider applicability?* Be sure to mention any planned follow-up (resolutions, recommendations, etc.). You can also tell one individual’s compelling personal story, use a provocative quote, summarise a new trend, give a “real life” example of an abstract theory, or put a theme into historical context.

How to submit?

Please send Think Pieces to the DevCom Secretariat: dev.com@oecd.org. **The deadline for submission is 13 April.** Before submitting a think piece, you can also send main points to be covered to DevCom to get our feedback. Think pieces should be sent as an MS Word document. DevCom Secretariat will edit for conciseness and style.

Style: Think Pieces are limited to **2 pages** (approx. 1600 words in MS Word) and should be written in a clear and accessible style. Authors should strive to capture the most interesting, relevant and current aspects of their story. Think pieces will run with bylines: author’s and co-authors’s name and organisational affiliation should be included with the submission. Please include contact information or a web site URL so readers can get involved or find out more about it. We encourage authors to submit **photographs** or other illustrations to go with their story. Illustrations need to be of high resolution (300 dpi minimum and at least 3” x 5” size).

Next steps

The DevCom Secretariat will refine Think Pieces and share them as background documents for the IDB/DevCom seminar in Washington. Subsequently, we will expand the Think Pieces with knowledge shared during the Washington conference and refine the good practice for publication by the end of 2012.

For additional information, please contact the Secretariat: dev.com@oecd.org.

Your contacts:

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