CHANGE THE RECORD

Exploring new ways to engage the UK public in tackling global poverty

10 November 2014
The Messenger Matters
The problem

- “Promote visibility of a range of actors” (Change the Record)
- “If the message came from people like me” (Attitudes to Aid tracker)
- “Spiralling foreign-aid charity CEO pay” (Telegraph)
- “Millennials…” (Every other public attitudes report)
Voices for Development response

**Aim:** increase pro-poor action through UK volunteers amplifying southern voices and leveraging their experience of development.

**Intended Outcome:** people reached by volunteer actions change their perception of international development and take pro-poor action

**Theory of Change:** Supporting volunteers to take actions increases the taking of tailored actions reaching on-line and offline networks and decision makers those reached change their perceptions of development and take pro-poor action
Why Volunteers? Why young people?

• Local-global relevance
• The legitimacy of not being paid to say this: ‘I never thought about it before, but then I saw it with my own eyes’
• Unvarnished content
• Untarnished by previous experience
• First-time voters and constituents
Programme learning

- **Message framing** – the programme successfully supported volunteers to use certain messages and content with the potential to change public perception. Testing also shows volunteers have a tendency to use these messages anyway.

- **Personal support to volunteers** - support provided to volunteers successfully impacted on the content and messaging of media. Media contained both ‘southern voice’ and ‘social justice’ frames.

- **Audience targeting** – the programme learnt the importance of targeted messaging towards specific audiences with a propensity to change their views on international development

- **Diverse media strategy** - target audience engage with particular media. The programme has reached both traditional and non-mainstream media both off and online.

- **Monitoring and evaluation** - testing the quality and messaging of media
Hitting the streets
Hitting the streets
Potential future work

• **Messaging** – there is potential to use the Narrative Project research (and others) to inform the 'framing' of all messages with volunteers being an effective channel for these messages.

• **Targeting** - a greater focus on key audiences including:
  1) *Inactive Youth Supporters* e.g. students
  2) *Inactive, Politically Minded* e.g. public sector workers
  3) *Sympathetic but overwhelmed*

• **Monitoring and evaluation** – Triangulation of media quality data with evidence on the degree to which specific media outputs shift public perceptions on aid and concern for people in poor countries with ‘**Media Impact Assessment**’
News in a ‘hostile’ environment

Richard Darlington

BOND AGM, Nov 2014
Mr Pooley, from Suffolk, has just returned from a life-saving mission to the U.S. where he gave blood to try and help a victim of the virus, a friend he worked with in Sierra Leone helping victims.

The 29-year-old’s emotional plea came as 34 NGOs joined forces to warn the international community they have just four weeks to stop the Ebola crisis 'spiralling completely out of control'.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC), speaking at the summit, on behalf of the six-point plan to combat 'infection rates that are growing exponentially'.

The number of cases is 'doubling roughly every three weeks', the organisations warned, as the World Health Organisation this week revealed the death toll has surpassed 3,000 in West Africa.
What elements does that story have?
Essentials & desirables

A problem:
• Timeliness / immediacy / impact / broad appeal
(cases doubling each week)

A solution:
(6 point plan to combat infection)

• Prominence / a link to UK / human interest
(Will Pooley, nurse from Suffolk)

• NGOs working together
(34 of them)
Participants differentiated between international development and aid

- **Development seen positively**
  - Linked to improving education, infrastructure and governance
  - Spontaneous comments on richer countries contributing to under-development

- **Aid seen more negatively**
  - Questions asked about impact with strong sense of little substantive change over last two decades
  - Concerns about waste and inefficiency

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“... you want people building schools, building toilets, putting wells in, education etc so I’m quite interested in what’s developed from that, what’s been learned and what can be built upon” – Edinburgh

“Capitalism isn’t very good at sharing things out so some people are extremely wealthy whereas other people don’t have the basics and it’s not very fair” – London

“I was around when Live Aid shocked everybody and still the problem hasn’t been sorted, we’re giving to charities, doing our stuff and it’s still happening” – Evesham
Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he will eat for a lifetime. Teach a man to create an artificial shortage of fish and he will eat steak.

(Jay Leno)

giveafish.com

Give a man a fish, he eats for day. Teach a man to fish

and the cats will make him their slave

picturesquotes.com

Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day.

Teach him how to fish, and he will sit in his boat and drink beer all day.

picturesquotes.com

Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day.

DON'T TEACH A MAN TO FISH, AND YOU FEED YOURSELF.

HE'S A GROWN MAN. FISHING'S NOT THAT HARD.

Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day.

Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.

Create a good tutorial and he can teach himself how to fish.

www.fishfacts.org

Give a man a fish and he eats for 1 day

Teach a man to fish and he eats for the rest of his life,

Promise to give him a fish and he might vote for you...

picturesquotes.com

Give a fish a man and he eat for weeks
But some public messages may erode long term support

- **Scepticism towards aid reinforced by campaign / fundraising tactics** of large charities and campaign organisations
- **Defensiveness and distancing** in the way that people talk about aid
- **Images of poverty and hardship reinforce simplistic understandings**
- **Calls for richer picture of people’s lives in developing countries**

“I think the exploitation even starts by these photos, they use the photos to exploit us to give the money for things that may not even really exist” – London

“If you keep on seeing the same pictures, you're just going to keep on seeing the same image over and over, you're just going to turn away, some people turn away and don't want to see it again and again because if they just keep on seeing the same adverts on the telly with no improvement, you will be thinking ‘where has all this money gone?’” – Edinburgh
What makes news?

• Impact
• Audience identification
• Pragmatics
Impact

1. **Threshold**: The bigger impact the story has, the more people it affects, the more extreme the effect or the more money or resources it involves, the better its chances of hitting the news stands.

2. **Frequency**: Events, such as motorway pile-ups, murders and plane crashes, which occur suddenly and fit well with the newspaper or news broadcast's schedule are more readily reported than those which occur gradually or at inconvenient times of day or night.

3. **Negativity**: Bad news stories are more likely to be reported than good news because they are more likely to score high on other news values, such as threshold, unexpectedness, unambiguity and meaningfulness.

4. **Unexpectedness**: "If a dog bites a man, that's not news. But if a man bites a dog, that is news!"

5. **Clarity / lack of ambiguity**: Events which are easy to grasp make for better copy than those which are open to more than one interpretation, or where understanding of the implications depends on first understanding the complex background to the event.
Audience identification

1. **Personalisation:** People are interested in people. News stories that centre on a particular person, particularly if they involve a well-known person, are stronger.

2. **Meaningfulness:** This relates to cultural proximity and the extent to which the audience identifies with the topic. Stories about people who speak the same language, look the same and share the same preoccupations as the audience receive more coverage than those involving people who do not.

3. **Reference to elite nations:** Stories concerned with global powers receive more attention than those dealing with less influential nations. This also relates to cultural proximity. Those nations which are culturally closest to our own will receive most of the coverage.

4. **Reference to elite persons:** The media pay attention to the rich, powerful, famous, infamous and celebrities.
1. **Consonance:** Stories which match the media's expectations receive more coverage than those which contradict them. At first sight, this appears to contradict the notion of unexpectedness. However, consonance refers to the media's readiness to report an item, which they are more likely to do if they are prepared for it. Indeed, journalists often have a preconceived idea of the angle they want to report an event from, even before they get there.

2. **Continuity:** A story which is already in the news gathers momentum – the running story. This is partly because news teams are already in place to report the story, and partly because previous reportage may have made the story more accessible to the public.

3. **Composition:** Stories must compete with one another for space in the media. For instance, editors may seek to provide a balance of different types of coverage. If there is an excess of foreign news, for instance, the least important foreign story may have to make way for an inconsequential item of domestic news. In this way the prominence given to a story depends not only on its own news value but also on those of competing stories.
## The Grid

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### External news
- **Weds 5:** Autumn Statement + Cameron EU speech
- **11:** Census data & Ed M immigration speech (Sarah)
- **12:** Unemployment (inc nationality breakdown)
- **13-14:** EU Council (Fiscal compact)
- **19:** Energy Bill
- **21-7 Recess**
- **Fri 28:** Clegg: Women and the Banks

### ippr stories
- **Wealth taxes story (Kayte)**
- **Fiscal targets story (Tony)**
- **Social Exclusion under New Labour (Clare) - Randeep Ramesh / Progress & C&YPN**
- **SBT (Social Business) (Marc/Imogen) PAPER**
- **Sun 9: Housing – Observer, Lucy Rock**
- **Mon 10: unemployment story**
- **Mon 10: Housing & Young People Waites (Jenny/Dalia)**
- **PAPER – Spectator blog / ES / BBC London**
- **Juncture: Heather Boushey - Staggers**
- **Juncture: Jon Curtice: Europe – ConHome**
- **Mon 17: Fuel Poverty (Reg)**
- **PAPER**
- **17: Juncture: Mike Kenny - Staggers**
- **Thurs 20: Juncture: Jackson - LabourList**
- **Updated Spending Review slides (Kayte)**
- **Sat 22: Banker bonus (Kayte/Graeme) OUT**
- **Sun 23: WAAGs story (Dalia) OUT**
- **Thurs 27 Juncture: Reich Kamark**
- **Fri 28: Living Wage story (Kayte)**
- **Sun 30: Migration 2013 (Sarah) – Spectator blog OUT**

### ippr events
- **5 YP unemp**
- **6 Food Security WI (Glenn) York**
- **Mon 10: Dromey/Prisk**
- **Tues 11: Families Symposium (Dalia)**
- **Tues 11: Fuel Poverty**

### ippr North
- **Thurs 6: #IPPRHE – Willetts & Siobanha (Rick)**

@RDarlo #WonkComms
Hot zones

- Last 2 weeks of December (not Xmas day)
- Boxing Day to New Years Day
- First week of January
- February half-term
- Before & after Easter Weekend
- May Bank Holiday (both of them)
- Last 2 weeks of July + August + Bank Holiday
- November half-term
Topical pegs

• **Currency or flavour of the month:** events and situations that are currently in the news and being talked about.

• **Seasonal stories:** going on holiday, exam results, giving at Christmas time, Black Monday, Blue Monday, dry January.

• **Everyday problems or interests:** food, health, housing, schools, work, money problems.
How to get media coverage

1) Consume the product

2) It’s not what you know it’s who you know

3) Timing is crucial

4) YOU ARE NOT THE STORY

@RDarlo #WonkComms
RECENT POLLING SHOWS THAT UK PUBLIC CONCERN FOR GLOBAL POVERTY HAS HALVED
RESEARCH APPROACH

- Media
  - 2,000 articles
  - 2 year period: 2011-13
  - 30 UK national and regional newspapers

- Audience Research
  - Participants recorded every touch-point with global poverty and shared reflections with each other

- Member Workshops
WHO IS REPORTING ON INTERNATIONAL POVERTY?

% OF ARTICLES BY MEDIA CATEGORY

- Broadsheet
- Regional
- Popular
- Mid-market

DISTRIBUTION OF BROADSHEET COVERAGE (%)

- i - Independent
- Sunday Telegraph
- The Observer
- The Independent
- Daily Telegraph
- The Guardian
WHAT ISSUES ARE COVERED?

- General development
- Livelihoods
- Government aid
- Governance, accountability and corruption
- Food, hunger and nutrition
- Children's rights
- Conflict and security
- Trade, tax and economic justice
- Gender and women's rights
- General health (not HIV or maternal)
- Education
- Environment and climate change
- Human rights and discrimination
- Maternal and child health
- Social protection (welfare and cash)
- Agriculture and land rights
- HIV and AIDS
- Disasters and emergencies
- Population
- Microfinance
- Disability rights

Percentage of all coverage
THEME I: PUBLIC CONFUSION

“All of our actions collectively amount to a crowded set of pinpricks, unconnected with no framework and that leads to a disempowerment of the public.”

*Bond workshop participant*
What our audience participants said…

DIVERSE POSITIVE “SOLUTIONS”

- Tackle corruption
- Overthrow regimes
- Withdraw aid from those involved in conflicts
- Reduce birth rate
- Women’s rights
- Lessen inequality
- Withdraw aid from those who squander it
- Solve conflict
- Financial reforms
- Debt cancellation

Give aid to the right people
Better infrastructure
Solve conflict
Increase trade
Education
International intervention

CLEAR NEGATIVE “EXPLA NATIONS”

- All aid goes into the pockets of corrupt officials
- Development projects are largely ineffective

All aid goes into the pockets of corrupt officials
Development projects are largely ineffective
THEME II: DOMINANCE OF THE CORRUPTION NARRATIVE

“Until we get rid of corruption, we’re not going to see poverty lifted out of the slums.”

Audience research Participant
THEME II: DOMINANCE OF THE CORRUPTION NARRATIVE

We have largely been silent in the face of the public’s focus on corruption.

Transparency  vs.  All aid goes into the pockets of corrupt officials

...  

Governance
THEME II: DOMINANCE OF THE CORRUPTION NARRATIVE

PRIMARY ACTOR LINKED TO TACKLING POVERTY IN LOW-INCOME DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

- Domestic government: 14%
- Other: 86%

PRIMARY ACTOR LINKED TO TACKLING POVERTY IN MIDDLE-INCOME DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

- Domestic government: 54%
- Other: 46%
THEME III: QUESTIONING AID TO THE “UNDESERVING POOR” – MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRIES

“...I’m aware of the dreadful poverty that exists in India and wonder why their government squanders money on missile systems while their people starve.”

Audience research participant
THEME III: QUESTIONING AID TO THE “UNDESERVING POOR” - MICs

PERCENTAGE OF ARTICLES ABOUT AID THAT SPECIFICALLY MENTION INDIA

- India 20%
- 31 Other countries

AVERAGE FAVOURABILITY OF REPORTING ON AID

- 0 = neutral reporting
- -1 = somewhat unfavourable

All reporting on aid
Reporting on aid to India
INGOs were reported as the ‘primary actors’ tackling poverty.

Stories about humanitarian issues were reported more favorably than all other aid and development stories.

Positive reporting of UK public action, even by aid sceptics.

Private sector role positively reported, but not very prominent.

Regional papers tended to report aid and development more positively.
www.bond.org.uk/change-the-record