

Diverse Voices Reflections

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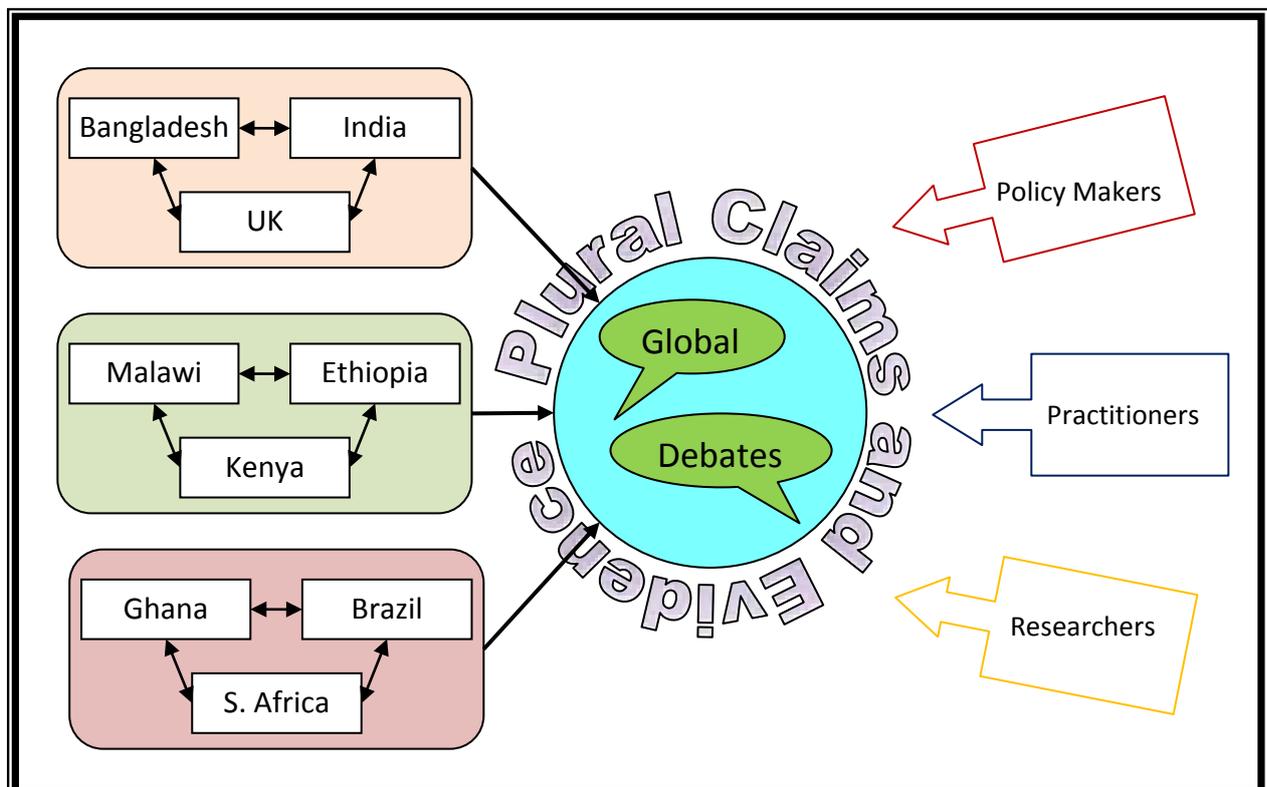
Carl Jackson (Westhill Knowledge Limited)

Introduction

The Institute of Development Studies (www.ids.ac.uk) Diverse Voices initiative hosted global debates on themes suggested by people whose opinions are rarely heard. Diverse Voices aimed to encourage international dialogue on more equal terms by gathering creative ideas and building new relationships that would increase the diversity of evidence and claims found in debates on national and international development policy. This project was part of the Mobilising Knowledge for Development¹ programme at IDS which was funded by a grant from the UK Department for International Development (UKAid).

Each quarter a diverse group of citizens in three different countries who were members or representatives of communities whose voices are rarely heard meet with no prior agenda other than to discuss issues of importance to them. These Stakeholder Group discussions were facilitated by a national convener who captured the issues that were raised and prioritized by the group. From these local discussions themes for a Global Debate emerged. The Debates include established opinion formers together with an even wider network of groups and individuals who have previously been excluded from global conversations.

Figure 1. Structure of National Stakeholder Group Discussions and Global Debates



The concept for Diverse Voices was initially discussed in early 2011 as one strand of knowledge service design at IDS. The overall rationale that emerged was that the project would contribute to the IDS Knowledge Services mission by “sharing information from diverse perspectives” and the IDS

¹ IDS Mobilising Knowledge for Development Programme website: www.ids.ac.uk/knowledge-services

strategic aim to “co-construct knowledge”. In particular it responded to the objective to convene “ten thematic stakeholder groups established regionally to identify emerging issues and key debated topics in local contexts to improve relevance of services for local audiences.” More broadly the initiative emerged within the context of increased efforts to better link research to policy (e.g. the Research for Development programme²), build capacity for research in focus countries (e.g. the Global Development Network³) and democratize opinion formation (e.g. the BBC’s World Have Your Say program⁴).

This Practice Paper outlines the methods used, summarises the process that unfolded, reflects on feedback and limitations, discusses overall findings in light of the original aims and highlights implications based on our learning for similar initiatives.

Methodology

The methodology used by Diverse Voices for each cycle of National Stakeholder Group Meetings and Global Debates was built up by several elements:

- Centralised project management by a knowledge management company (Westhill Knowledge) contracted by IDS and responsible for design, social media implementation, international facilitation, partner capacity building, monitoring and evaluation.
- Peer review and recruitment support by a communication for development adviser contracted by Westhill Knowledge and responsible for design review and identification and selection of candidates for country convener positions in collaboration with IDS
- Contracting by IDS of nine highly networked individuals with local communication / journalism experience to act as Conveners in each country where national stakeholder group meetings would be held and who could share their local networks and knowledge of the political economy for citizen voice
- Development of a set of Diverse Voices principles to guide national and global discussions⁵
- Piloting different clusters of countries to feed into theme setting for each Global Debate (i.e. regional co-location, historic / diaspora ties, economic status)
- Identification and recruitment of a diverse set of people in each country (e.g. by gender, age, livelihood, location, etc) who were members or representatives of vulnerable communities whose voices were rarely heard
- Offering confidentiality and guards against political censorship for participants
- Setting no prior agenda for national stakeholder group meetings other than to discuss ‘what everyone will be talking about over the next three months in your country’
- Using popular and commercial social media platforms with rapidly growing user bases in the countries involved in the project (i.e. Facebook and Twitter) rather than specialised international development websites
- No moderation of comments and posts during the Global Debates
- Supporting discussion during the Global Debates by making related online content from news, advocacy and research content providers available via the Netvibes aggregation platform
- Reporting back to IDS’ team of knowledge intermediaries after each cycle of national and global debates with editorial information to help in increasing the range of research knowledge sourced, the volume of local material used in their Services and to increase understanding of audience needs at the national level and contemporary themes relevant to them.

Process

We sought to make the two spaces created by Diverse Voices inclusive (i.e. National Stakeholder Groups and Global Debates). For the Stakeholder Groups at national level the highly networked

² DFID Research for Development website: www.dfid.gov.uk/r4d

³ Global Development Network website: www.gdnet.org

⁴ BBC World Have Your Say website: www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p002w559

⁵ Diverse Voices Principles: 1. Practicing neutrality in relation to topics/issues raised by Stakeholder Group members; 2. Management of elite power biases / capture of groups and discussions; 3. Empowerment of marginal voices; 4. Inclusion of taboo issues; 5. Alerting project management of political censorship risks for participants

nationals engaged as Country Conveners collaborated with IDS in drawing up diverse long and short lists of people to invite to the groups. IDS provided guidance to the Country Conveners that the long list should include people who are members or representatives of vulnerable communities who together would cut-across sectors and backgrounds. Conveners were asked to present the long list with information on potential participant's gender, age, religion, sexuality, disability, livelihood, marginality, organisational affiliation (if any) and other information on diversity the convener thought important. IDS and the convener then prioritised a short list for invitations that sought to achieve diversity. Representatives of vulnerable communities (e.g. NGO / CBO staff) were kept to less than 50% and selected tactically so they could represent communities who were geographically remote from the urban location of the Stakeholder Group Meetings.

The choice of venue for the meeting was also an important consideration to ensure that accessible venues were chosen for people of all abilities (e.g. wheel chair access and located near to public transport). IDS was also aware of potential censorship risks from participation in some countries and so advised Country Conveners to keep the purpose of meeting vague with the management of the host venues (as some venues can have links to government) and keep venue and timing of meetings confidential. Invitations to participate in Stakeholder Group Meetings also emphasised that the anonymity of participants in the reporting of discussions would be upheld so as to protect people's confidentiality if sensitive topics were raised.

In 2012 the three cycles of Stakeholder Group meetings were held in Malawi, Kenya and Ethiopia (May); Bangladesh, India and UK (August); and Ghana, Brazil and South Africa (December). The meetings brought together 89 individuals from different walks of life. The groups were intended as a forum for those whose opinions do not have an equal chance of reaching lawmakers, practitioners, researchers and journalists. They included students, community leaders, street vendors, social and gender activists, nurses, taxi drivers, recycling collectors, church youth workers, peer educators for sexual minority groups, electricians, plumbers, construction workers, sewerage workers, clerks, pastors, journalists, teachers, mental health workers and shopkeepers.

Voices and realities shared in the meetings were initially synthesised by participants during the stakeholder groups by prioritizing the issues from their initial discussions that they felt were most important to be put forward to be part of the global debate. In a second stage of synthesis, to formulate the theme for the global debate, the Country Conveners and IDS reviewed issues prioritised by stakeholder groups in each cycle using criteria that aimed to promote diverse global debates. Synthesised themes were chosen that would be:

- Representative of the greatest number of issues suggested by the Stakeholder Groups
- Least overlapping with established academic / policy framings of 'development'
- Not duplicating themes already chosen for Global Debates in the last nine months

For the Global Debate after considering a number of other options for the primary online space (e.g. new bespoke website, existing development platform such as Eldis Communities) IDS decided to use Facebook. As a popular and commercial social media platform, Facebook was valuable because of its good interface for mobile phones (the most popular internet device in the South), auto translation capabilities, rapidly growing user base in the south (e.g. individuals and existing development knowledge networks / organisations) and good syndication functionalities (e.g. people and organisations could share, embed and link to content and invite friends to the global debate autonomously of IDS). Facebook was also offered very effective marketing tools that enabled IDS to advertise the global debate to individuals with interests and in locations that overlapped with the themes to be discussed (e.g. over the course of three global debates over fifteen-thousand Facebook users liked the Diverse Voices page with over 95% coming from the South). Facebook was complimented with Twitter to provide brief live updates on the discussion and Netvibes to provide access to aggregated content related to each theme for additional context as the discussions evolved. The platforms were:

- Facebook: www.facebook.com/Diverse.Voices.2012
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/DiverseVoices2012
- Netvibes: www.netvibes.com/diversevoices2012

The Global Debates invited citizens internationally on Facebook and Twitter who felt they had previously been excluded from global conversations to share their experiences and ideas on the

chosen themes and challenge established opinion formers to respond to the debate. Three global debates were held in June and August 2012 and in January 2013. The themes explored were:

- In the Quest for Economic Growth in Africa, Who is Getting Left Behind and Why? (Debate 1 - June 2012)
- How can we ensure that laws safeguarding the weak and poor (wages, health, housing, land, identity) get fully implemented? And how do we remove outdated laws and stop abuses of government powers that permit harassment of minority groups and human rights defenders? How can minority groups access and responsibly use social media (Facebook, Twitter, Mobiles, YouTube) to break taboos and highlight issues that the mainstream press and politics ignores? (Debate 2 - August 2012)
- Do You Think That Public Services Respect The Dignity Of The Most Vulnerable Citizens? (Debate 3 – January 2013)

Voices and realities shared in the Global Debates were synthesised as they took place on Facebook to bring late comers to the debate upto speed. Comments were compiled but weren't rephrased to keep faith with the intention to empower voices without manipulating them. Across all three Global Debates stats from Facebook indicate that 75.4% of the audience following the debate were male and 24.5% female. Age ranges in the audience were forty percent 18-24 year olds, twenty-four percent 13-17 year olds and eight percent 25-34 year olds (i.e. the majority of the audience, some 74%, were under 35 years of age). In terms of overall reach, the Facebook platform received 15,410 likes (with over 10,000 from India). The demographics show the audience was largely based in the countries that held face-to-face debates and that were also marketed to with Facebook Ads (e.g. over 3000 likes, some 20%, came as a result of ads).

The real difference the initiative sought to make was to promote a completely non-predetermined space for discussion where the issues debated emerged from an agenda set by and for marginal voices. To this end the national Stakeholder Groups only had one question to initiate discussion *"What are the key topics and emerging issues that everyone in the country will be discussing over the next three-months?"* In addition in facilitating the groups Country Conveners used the Diverse Voices Principles to create an enabling environment where ideas could to come from the ground up (e.g. using Principle 1 Practicing neutrality in relation to topics/issues raised by Stakeholder Group members, and 2 Management of elite power biases / capture of groups and discussions). This was pretty successful as shown by the way that the issues that emerged stood outside of and or cut at tangents across established academic / policy framings of 'development'.

Debate 1 Comments	Debate 2 Comments	Debate 3 Comments
<p>"It's unbelievable that after years of this story of poverty alleviation, Malawi is still a predominantly importing country. While leaders may talk of allowing citizens to produce and export more, nothing much is being done to support the existing initiatives. It's one challenge Malawi has to overcome, why can't we not even export enough football players, unbelievable still why our tourism industry is still downwards when we have all necessary to make ourselves a giant of tourism in Africa"</p> <p>"If we don't do that (engaging on a pro-poor or inclusive growth) we will continue to generate poverty, frustration and anger among our youth"</p> <p>"We can never wake up one</p>	<p>"They [minority groups] may write on issues, but it should not be obscene or of derogatory content"</p> <p>"What a fantastic use of social media (the harass map)! It will be very effective in drawing attention to young women on danger spots to avoid. But unless offenders are actually being prosecuted in line with anti-harassment law, will they not just move on? Also, if not taken further it would only seem to further propel the belief that it is the woman's responsibility to avoid such encounters. Very positive though!"</p> <p>"This is a great example of how social media can connect minority groups: Pratham books regularly hold Skype reading sessions for children across</p>	<p>"Looking at our transport system, we do not facilities that cater for the disabled in wheel chairs. This makes it difficult for them to board the 'trotro'. They would have to use a taxi, and looking at the rate and multiplying by the number of times they have to go out then they might as well stay home"</p> <p>"Elections should be the end of a democratic experiment but a means to achieving equitable service delivery. Thus the public must be highlighted in order to meet the social welfare needs of citizens"</p> <p>"The mechanisms, rules and regulations put in place to ensure that funds allocated to these social protection programmes end up being bent/subverted by the very</p>

<p>day and realise that here in Uganda we're at the same level of development with countries like Egypt, Ghana, or South Africa. This is because of the diversities in economic policies and people's behaviour towards development. It does not take only the Govt for a country to Realise development but its people and all the partners of that country"</p> <p>"Some governments are convinced that infrastructure development will lead to job creation, which is true. As a result, instead of sending food parcels, they'd rather bring in a more long term solution. The more jobs there are, the larger the economy becomes and people don't have to wait on government to provide for them. Unfortunately, in the process some people suffer, but it shouldn't be for long."</p>	<p>India"</p> <p>"Despite the diversity of ways in which minority groups can access and use social media to 'highlight issues that the mainstream press and politics ignores', a key issue to keep in mind is that the primary motivation for the creation of these technologies is not to technologically empower activists, but rather this is a by-product of (most) technological advancements in ICTs. As such, activists should embrace open-source technologies and learn to adapt open technologies for their purposes should their governments use the commercial interests of the big-brand proprietary platforms and/or ISPs to stifle freedom of expression and jeopardize Net Neutrality"</p>	<p>people who made them"</p> <p>"Public services that respect the dignity of marginalised citizens mean valuing each other's points of views. It means being open to being wrong. It means accepting people as they are"</p> <p>"Health is a basic human need that guarantees the exercise of fundamental human rights of all people. Indeed, "there is no health without mental health" WHO (2001), Which almost seem forgotten. Thanks to the ODI through the Mwananchi-Ghana project and other donors such as UKAID, EU, Comic Relief-UK and STAR-GHANA, BasicNeeds Ghana is championing advocacy for improved mental health delivery in Ghana."</p>
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Synthesis of comments at all stages of the Diverse Voices process tried to avoid disembodiment and decontextualising people's voices and realities. Throughout, IDS kept referring to the Diverse Voices Principles, in particular: No. 3 Empowerment of Marginal Voices; and No. 4 Inclusion of Taboo Issues. However, some homogenisation of opinions did occur in the stage between the Stakeholder Group Meetings and the Global Debate. IDS saw the need to have a limited number of questions for the global debate. Doing this certainly helped make the global debates more accessible to vast majority of Facebook users who had not been part of Stakeholder Groups by offering a focused topic. The best participation was in the first and third Global Debates which only had one theme (and least in the second which had three). Overall feedback from participants in Stakeholder Groups suggested that the themes synthesised were seen to be very or extremely relevant to their preceding discussions. However this fell to moderately relevant for the second debate. It's worth noting that the process leading to the second Global Debate included countries clustered as having historic / diaspora ties (India, Bangladesh and UK), which may not in practice now have enough in common to share common issues / topics that could be effectively synthesised.

Feedback and Limitations

As part of the M&E of the Diverse Voices Initiative, two surveys of Stakeholder Group Participants and Country Conveners were conducted. Eighteen volunteers from among the Country Stakeholder Group participants who offered to provide feedback and nine Country Conveners were sent questionnaire surveys. The response rates were 72% and 66% respectively.

Stakeholder Group Participant Feedback

Participants were asked for their opinions on a rating scale of 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Extremely) on a range of topics relating to the Stakeholder Group Meetings and the Global Debates. The average feedback rating across all topics was positive at level 4 (Very easy/well).

Feedback Topic	Rating
Aim of the Stakeholder Group Meeting	Very Clear
Meeting venue	Extremely accessible and Comfortable
Key topics and emerging issues discussed	Very Interesting
Identification of related national events, processes and actors	Moderately easy

Sharing views in the meeting	Very easy
Prioritising key topics / issues	Very easy
Use of Diverse Voices principles for discussion	Extremely well upheld
Diversity of vulnerable participants	Very representative
Engaging in Global Debate on Facebook / Twitter	Moderately easy
Themes for Global Debates	Very or Extremely Relevant

Participant comments in the survey described how going to the meetings created new connections for them and raised their awareness of the differing priorities people hold. One participant said that it was a great initiative and another that it was a well thought out platform given the diversity of participants. Similar meetings would be welcomed because of the range of issues that could be discussed and future events such as elections. Participants were impressed by the range of people they met and felt this enabled engaging discussions. Conveners' neutrality, support for inclusion of taboo issues and balancing of more and less confident voices was said to have helped everyone to participate in the discussions.

More information could have been provided in advance about the meeting agenda and afterwards about the meetings in other countries / the global debate (e.g. gender disaggregation of participants and debates) and wider context of the Diverse Voices initiative. Barriers that made engaging in the Global Debate only moderately easy included unclear instructions about how and where to participate online, language differences, skills in IT, concerns about repercussions from visibly commenting, and the diverging priorities between people in different countries.

To make Stakeholder Group Meetings more successful participants suggested increasing the number of participants (from eight), increasing the length of the meetings (from half a day), holding a second meeting with the same participants just before the Global Debate, repeating the process to press home action on issues raised, making the meetings more inclusive and having more committed and experienced participants. For greater success in the Global Debates suggestions included increasing their duration, reaching out to a wider audience (including students of global affairs) and emphasising the need to get online to participate.

Country Convener Feedback

Consultants hired by IDS to be Country Conveners for the Stakeholder Group Meetings were similarly asked for their feedback on a rating scale. The average feedback rating across all topics was again positive at level 4 (Very easy/well)

Feedback Topic	Rating
Inception Meeting on expectations, TORs and workplan	Very well clarified
Identification of potential participants	Very easy
Recruitment of potential participants	Very easy
Identification and booking suitable meeting venue and refreshments	Extremely easy
Capacity development support from IDS	Very useful
Communication and logistics for recruited participants	Very easy
Supporting identification of key topics and emerging issues	Very easy
Supporting prioritisation of key topics / issues	Very easy
Supporting identification of related national events, processes and actors	Moderately easy
Recruiting volunteers from the Stakeholder Group to participate in feedback / the Global Debate	Moderately easy
Recording and reporting a summary of Stakeholder Group discussions	Very easy
Process of defining theme(s) for the Global Debate in collaboration with IDS and other conveners	Moderately satisfactory
Collecting grey literature, details of events and processes relevant to the agreed theme(s)	Very easy
Motivating national policy makers, practitioners and researchers to contribute / participate in the Global Debate	Moderately easy
Engaging in Global Debate on Facebook / Twitter to	Moderately easy

Convener comments from the survey reported participants' passion around individual topics and issues and one convener suggested that a whole day's discussion would have been possible. The number of issues / topics raised by participants often meant that an extensive prioritization process was required but conveners reported that the consensus that emerged was impressive. Two conveners commented that they received help from participants or the host venue in recording the discussion (including translation). The conveners reported that they would be extremely likely to collaborate with the Institute of Development Studies on similar initiatives in the future. Other comments from conveners included appreciation of the way the process highlighted similarities and differences between countries, spoke directly to issues affecting vulnerable people, provided a chance to link more directly to national networks and debates, and the way that involvement had increased conveners' awareness of facilitating debates using social media. They also said that the mentoring support from IDS during the project was particularly welcome.

Two conveners found it hard to get recruited participants to fully commit to the process and one felt that the diversity of the group made for an uneven and sometimes shallow discussion. One convener commented that there was insufficient time in a half-day meeting to really operationalise the principle of Empowering Marginal Voices. Another commented that pre-meeting communication with participants with low literacy was a challenge. One convener reflected that defining the themes for the Diverse Voices Global Debates in collaboration with IDS was a tricky exercise and that knowing more about the context from which other country Stakeholder Group Discussions had arisen would have helped (e.g. by reading the full meeting reports at the start of the process rather than just the conclusions).

Constraining factors in motivating national policy makers, practitioners and researchers to participate in the Global Debate reported by conveners included time scheduling conflicts, unfamiliarity with Facebook / Twitter being used for discussions, IT restrictions within offices to access social media, English language as a barrier to comprehension and fatigue with being asked to participate in similar debates. One convener similarly reported the reluctance of a Stakeholder Group participant to volunteer to give feedback or participate in the Global Debate due to fatigue with similar processes.

To improve Conveners' TORs several suggestions were made including earlier inception meetings, having more time budgeted for identifying suitable venues, having a meeting of conveners before the global debate and holding feedback meetings with Country Stakeholder Groups following the Global Debate. For the success of Global Debates, conveners suggested holding them for a longer period of time (more than five days), having a meeting of Stakeholder Groups between setting the Global Debate theme and its start, providing summaries of discussions by email during the debate, and having translations available during the debate.

Limitations

Reading across the feedback from participants and conveners and our own experience, the following significant limitations in the methodology and process can be noted

Very few policy makers or researchers engaged with the Global Debate (although staff from smaller NGOs and CBOs did to some extent). Restrictions to accessing social media within government and university offices (e.g. internet firewall blocks and corporate policies) was not a limiting factor that was considered in the design of Diverse Voices. Providing tips on how to work around such restrictions (i.e. using smartphones or accessing the internet from home) could have been included in our messages encouraging policy makers and researchers to participate. But it may also be the case that the political and academic incentives that normally drive these actors participation in public spaces (e.g. electoral rankings, publication citations, etc) were to remote from the very bottom-up and informal process championed by Diverse Voices. How to make those worlds connect better is a challenge that remains.

The novelty of using Facebook as a platform for threaded debate created a challenge for participants familiar with using it as a space for more informal social interaction. Facebook's functionality can create a sometimes confusing mosaic of posts, links, photos, likes and shares for participants who join half-way into a debate thread. The design of Diverse Voices underestimated how different these uses were. Providing guidance on what to expect and how to interact with the debate on Facebook in

advance of and during the Global Debate (including for participants in the Stakeholder Groups) would have been very useful.

The three individuals working as country conveners for each cycle of the Diverse Voices project felt isolated from each other and the other country's Stakeholder Group processes. Although they had good bilateral communications with IDS, and came together for one group online chat to agree the themes for the Global Debate, this was not enough to enable them to work as a team. The design of diverse voices did not provide enough opportunities for team collaboration and would have benefited from establishing a project collaboration space online that would have helped to bridge time zone scheduling barriers and consolidate process learning during implementation.

Findings

The Diverse Voices initiative succeeded to a significant extent in its aim of encouraging international dialogue on more equal terms. The National Stakeholder Group meetings and Global Debates did gather creative ideas and building new relationships directly among those who actively participated and indirectly for several thousand's that followed the debate on Facebook more passively in the majority of countries focused on. As the comments quoted above indicate the evidence and claims raised in the Global Debates did stand outside of and or cut at tangents across established academic / policy framings of 'development'. For instance the third Global Debate surfaced the issue of contestation over public transport price rises five months before mass protest swept Brazil in June 2013. It was not successful however in getting established opinion formers in policy-making and research circles to engage with that evidence and those claims. As a consequence the linkage back to national events and processes where these claims and evidence could be landed to influence future policy and research priorities was not possible. As such, the hoped for indirect impact on the topics and issues raised by vulnerable citizens and their representatives was not forthcoming.

Looking more narrowly at the rationale for initiating the project, Diverse Voices did contribute to the IDS Knowledge Services mission of "sharing information from diverse perspectives" and the IDS strategic aim to "co-construct knowledge". Information shared by the initiative was prioritised and co-created by vulnerable citizens and representatives who were more diverse in their backgrounds and opinions than many contemporary policy or research agenda lead development communication initiatives. It also adds to the evidence base of complimentary citizen voice initiatives such as CAFOD's 100 Voices⁶ and the current IDS Participate Initiative⁷ which sought to influence the diversity of the post 2015 development agenda debate. The initiative, by feeding back detailed anonymized reports of the National Stakeholder Group meetings did raise awareness amongst IDS' team of knowledge intermediaries of audience needs at the national level and contemporary themes relevant to them that could influence their content sourcing and editorial decisions.

Implications

Reflecting on the whole process Diverse Voices and considering the role of future initiatives that may seek to encourage move diverse dialogue on more equal terms the following implications are highlighted for international development knowledge intermediaries:

- Citizens can co-create their own agenda's for highly relevant debates in international development when knowledge intermediaries thoroughly adopt a convening role
- Commercial social media platforms and their marketing tools can create large and diverse (though gender and age skewed) popular audiences in the south for debates on issues at the cutting edge of international development
- Guidance on what to expect and how to interact with novel uses of commercial social media platforms such as Facebook should be provided in advance of and during the debate processes to prospective participants
- Policy makers and researchers should be provided with tips on how to work around social media access restrictions in the office when recruiting them to participate on platforms such as Facebook
- Reputable national media / advocacy partners are needed as additional collaborators at the outset of initiatives to link global debates back to national events and processes which influence future policy and research priorities so as to increase incentives for policy maker

⁶ CAFOD 100 Voices: <http://www.cafod.org.uk/Media/Files/Resources/Policy/100-Voices>

⁷ IDS Participate Initiative: <http://www.participate2015.org/tag/participate-initiative/>

and researcher participation and increase indirect impact on the topics and issues raised by vulnerable citizens and their representatives

- Remote collaboration with highly networked individuals with national capability in the political economy of citizen voice is effective at spanning the effectiveness gap faced by international knowledge intermediaries seeking to co-create knowledge with members and representatives of vulnerable communities
- Resources for normative guidance and mentoring support for remote collaborators does increase the quality of the discursive space provide to citizen participants (i.e. trust, accessibility, confidentiality, equality)
- Citizen stakeholder group meetings should and can be organised with larger numbers of participants (e.g. 10-14), for longer (e.g. 1 day) and during as well as at the outset of national to global debate processes to enhance the quality of the discursive space for participants without a significant increase in fixed costs of convening smaller, shorter, less frequent meetings
- Highly distributed and remote teams of knowledge intermediaries / conveners require online project collaboration space to bridge time zone scheduling barriers and consolidate process learning during implementation

Credits

Diverse Voices Initiative Team

- Alice Morris (Consultant Country Convener)
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- Nicholas Benequista (Independent Communications for Development Adviser)
- Pilirani Semu-Banda (Consultant Country Convener)
- Ronald Mukanya (Consultant Country Convener)
- Ruth Mwikali (Consultant Country Convener)
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- Tesfalem Waldyes (Consultant Country Convener)
- Yusuf Tai (Consultant Country Convener)