

Changing the development story

The changes in global communication are dazzling, with new technology increasingly handing communication power to the masses. The online campaign that helped Barack Obama reach the Oval Office, and the mobile phone videos and Twitters that highlight street protests worldwide, are just two examples of the current shift in who is communicating, and how.

And the ODI Communications team is changing the way ODI communicates. This means a further shift from quantity, such as the number of media hits, to quality: where and how ODI is cited. A new Twitter account, for example, offers updates on ODI's online activities, with Twitter users re-posting links to ODI event streams, blogs and media hits. Facebook is lowering the barriers to interaction, so a wider audience can comment on our work, while a new flickr.com photo gallery shares images worldwide.

Always well-attended by development practitioners in London, live web streaming of ODI events has taken them worldwide, with viewers logging in from Uruguay to Sri Lanka.

The careful 'packaging' of materials is crucial. Our *Development Charter for the G-20* in March 2009 combined the best thinking from across ODI, arguing for a better deal for poor people in developing countries. It has been welcomed by policy-makers and development practitioners around the world. During President Obama's first week in office, ODI experts blogged on their hopes for the US development agenda, receiving extensive media coverage. And, as shown on page 8, our work on the global financial crisis included a ground-breaking study on how the crisis would affect developing countries, as well as a web page, blogs, Opinion papers and many other resources. This work was cited by major media, including *The Financial Times*, *The Economist*, *New Statesman*, *The Observer* and *The Guardian*, with interviews on BBC World, Al Jazeera, CNN, CNBC and more.

A staff newsletter – ODEye – and 'Week in Focus' events improve staff understanding of each other's work. And the Communications team shares its expertise with researchers worldwide. In 2009, for example, team members will be in Cairo, Colombo and Nairobi for research communication workshops. Its global communication outreach means that ODI is in good shape to mark its 50th anniversary in 2010.

ODI journals: making an impact

ODI's peer-reviewed journals *Development Policy Review* and *Disasters* have achieved excellent impact ratings in 2009. They are ranked respectively 8th and 14th out of 43 journals in the Planning and Development category of Thomson Reuters' ISI citations index. Both draw on the best available research in their fields.

'It's not just the quality of ODI materials, it's the range and accessibility that really helps my work'

Alex O'Donoghue, Research Coordinator, Africa All Party Parliamentary Group

Getting the message across means using the right channel for the right audience.

