

BCO IMPACT STUDY MEETING – 16/17 JUNE 2006 – LONDON MEETING NOTES

AE = Anriette Esterhuysen, APC
DS = David Souter, consulting team
DW = David Woolnough, DFID
FP = Fiona Power, DFID
IICD = Nele and Steyn
Kate = Kate Wild, consulting team
Kitty = Kitty Warnock, Panos
LF = Lauren Fok, BCO administrator
PK = Patrick Kalas, SDC
SB = Steve Buckley, AMARC

Introduction - Lauren Fok

Discussion:

Uncertain about the extent to which some of the partners want to have a final decision on methodologies etc.

Presentations on activities:

AMARC not present (yet)

Panos presentation:

- Confusion between BCO activities and the longer-term PPP agreement
 - never really clarified if BCO is a particular set of activities or support to whole of Panos
- Original BCO agreement:
 - support for Panos Radio
 - PRS
 - HIV/AIDS
 - Information Society
 - and SDC support for Panos South Asia Media Centre
- Radio:
 - regular InterWorld Radio activities
 - news bulletins, features
 - production/editorial/training support
 - specifically in Uganda
 - developing IWR network esp. in Asia
- PRS:
 - programme re transparency, ownership and accountability
 - media capacity-building
 - PSA Jeebika project, Nepal:
 - promoting info and debate through community radio
- HIV/AIDS:
 - researching media coverage
 - national debates
 - studies of cs monitoring etc.
- Information Society
 - journalists to WSIS
 - media capacity-building
 - media-policymaker dialogues - again cites Uganda
 - new projects re telecentres

Panos South Asia
Media Centre
local content production (strengthening, training etc.)
especially conflict

Complex map diagram shown: is it a useful tool?

- asking partners to identify where they are on this map in relation to different stakeholders
- aim is mapping research gaps

Impact work so far:

- not a lot of impact evaluation so far; planning to do a lot more but lots waiting **till next year** (nb)
- *does not appear to be any coherent approach to this*
- what is done so far is very short - e.g. about individual workshop rather than long-term impact
- people are now planning the second phase of Panos work on PRS and are including how to evaluate impact of second phase
- don't have a systematic monitoring process (cf IICD) - hope to get to this through theory of change and common approach to stakeholder analysis

May need to look at projects which finished a year or so ago for the purpose of this impact study. Only parts of Panos had funding from BCO; need for care re this.
Having thought through what are the best bits for impact study to look at.

APC

Objective: accountable grant agreement is similar to Panos PPA in that it has specific outcomes agreed with DFID, which overlap with BCO and with APC overall objectives. So: broader goals.

Specifics:

policy advocacy on ICD
gender and ICD
cs and ICD
BCO-wide demonstrated poverty outcome of ICD

What has APC done?

- integrated into APC overall plan
 - which includes indicators - LogFrame indicators, not stakeholder-based

Focus on three areas:

- ICT policy advocacy
 - national, regional, global
 - overlap with CATIA
 - Bangladesh national advocacy re VoIP, broadband access
 - good media relations
 - national campaign in Uganda: working with WougNET on engendering national policy process (sees national policy process good); focus on RCDF implementation, how has it affected women
 - APC background role to local partner in both cases

- supporting network of national ICT policy resources, many implemented by APC members, aim of building equivalents of KIKTANet
 - BCO role is supporting network building and with tools to analyse policy and change policy
 - WSIS: links of national, regional, global
 - issue discussion papers
 - DS research study
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
 - policy level (national, regional, global)
 - study for WB on rural connectivity for women in Indonesia
 - study for IDRC on issues in Cambodia
 - GEM
 - extension of earlier work for DFID
 - integrated results of testing in 20 locations
 - modification and publication
 - aimed at planning level, indicators etc.
 - BCO grant has extended use of tool and practitioners' network that is using it
- Use of ICD in civil society:
 - integration of BCO resources with OSI and IDRC to implement community wireless networks
 - final workshop in July
 - French, English, Arabic
 - BCO objective for low-cost connectivity
 - trying to combine with other low-cost issues e.g. FOSS
 - connection to iTrain online

Completed extensive evaluation of APC overall

Now working with IICD

and with IDRC - telecentre.org with GEM

Will be using BCO resources to develop more holistic M&E resources for APC.

Evaluation reports are done for the prizes, for regional ICT policy resources (partly BCO); hard to say re specific projects as evaluations cover a number of projects.

GEM is an example of value of long-term donor commitment. Initially, what lessons learnt? Then led to other things; turning lessons into tools. Then DFID money turns it into other orgs as well; now wider again with IDRC. GEM report is about its value, strengths and weaknesses rather than impact.

AMARC

AMARC on parallel track to BCO until January, when it rejoined BCO after two years' absence.

It is doing a global evaluation of own work since November. Kathmandu meeting led to decision to integrate.

"converging parallel tracks"; looking for partnership value

Short term project to be reported in Amman, November: Strengthening Community Radio in the Digital Age; knowledge sharing and evaluation.

DFID not funding this. (Not being funded by BCO to run projects.)

Context of radio growth.

AMARC sees mainstreaming of community radio developing new challenges - how to evidence impact, sustainability and scalability, independence, etc.

Need identified for community radio movement to have systematic global assessment of state of play and impact.

Purpose of project is impact assessment:

- baseline study
 - political declaration at the Amman conference
- community radio impact assessment
 - desk-based
 - looking at how impact is being assessed and at participatory methodologies
 - impact assessment toolkit
- review of AMARC's own effectiveness
 - for strategic plan for AMARC

Activities reflect methodology:

- series of roundtables - 4 continents (Abuja and Brussels meetings in July)
- desk research (includes CATIA work, strategic studies in LA)
- interviews and questionnaire
- electronic consultation conferences - down to station level

Money from SDC, SIDA, OSI, Ford. Support from CSCC, ODI.

52 country studies done. External project evaluations.

Early observations:

- high degree of motivation for the review
- not very conflictual
- classic concerns - right to establish, access to frequencies, sustainability
- new challenges - disaster prevention and response; empowerment agenda - role of community radio in change in Nepal, Bolivia; engaging with development discourse

Theory of social change:

- not just MDGs (livelihoods)
- also equity and social change (recognition, participation, etc.)
- and disaster issues (safety and security)

Need for holistic approach

Next stages:

- mainstreaming new M&E across AMARC
- disseminating M&E
- capacity-building
- dialogue

Computers and Internet are not necessarily high priorities for community radio stations, which need local tools (e.g. for transport)

Little evidence that Internet is substantially accelerating country-level networks of grassroots. Also Internet is not new anymore; has been integrated into practice.

Mobile phone is newer and is changing CR practice more than Internet as now tool of choice for field reporting rather than traditional broadcasting equipment.

Huge difference of methodology of CR and allows more openness and interaction with ordinary people.

SDC

Not substantially involved in past in the Impact Study Group.

SDC has historic relationships with BCO partners.

SDC conceptual understanding here:

- using ICTs to enhance voice of voiceless
- strengthening capacity to influence decision-making
- ICT as enabling tool, therefore

BCO objectives:

- voice
- mainstream / integrate
- demonstrate impact

Need to bridge the paradigm gap. Use BCO to address this.

Sees space opening at WB to use communications re PRS; cites WB/OECD workshop earlier in the year. Hope to influence this. This would be focus for dissemination advocacy.

Link to participatory process and accountability.

Want to use experience to foster increased understanding.

And to use the Impact Study to improve the capacity of the BCO agencies - hence pleased at aim in our proposal to integrate findings into planning and operations of partners. SDC would hope to assist on this.

In BCO ISG, SDC has:

- supported the AMARC study
 - how do you push the boundaries of unfavourable environments
- supporting OWSA in Mission 2007 evaluation (not financially but as part of the international support group for M2007)

DFID (DW)

Context:

BCO recognises three donors invest in mixed bunch; background other donors.

Set up flexible contract arrangements that are different with different partners, but all relatively flexible. Recognises that works is (he means fungible).

Built around three areas - voice, mainstreaming and big amount of money to measure impact and disseminate it to key development audiences; because there is rarely that flexibility to do that sort of thing.

Now half way through DFID engagement with BCO; 18 months left.

This is not like BDO a DFID-led process but DFID investing in BCO partners' own processes (SDC ditto etc.). Therefore views all of the things that agencies do being in BCO.

Need to discuss how SDC and DFID do OPR with BCO. There is extra money to discuss M&E. But discussion about impact is different. Each agency has 250k for this plus 250k for work to be done collectively.

No-one has yet mentioned the development audience yet.

So DFID does not just want impact studies that say "we did good stuff"; need to look at collective impact. Highlighted things to think about together: four common impact questions: one was agree a few common evaluation indicators.

DFID found theory of change useful as the work here is two or three steps away from poverty impact.

Who are the audiences we want to get to?

Variety of target audiences: e.g. governance advisors, donors, etc.

Five implementing partners doing diverse stuff with diverse donors.

In between, questions that partners want to ask and questions the target audiences want to ask. Role is to articulate this middle process. So e.g. what is the real impact of having effective media in PRS processes, and how do we get into that?

Gathering evidence - different ways to address the questions raised by specific target audiences

- evaluation by individual components
- evaluation on a shared basis - joint activities
- only if this doesn't answer things, then do big piece of work on impact.

Role of external help in all of these. Advice, brokerage, articulation of questions and mapping, sub-editing (ha!), challenging input (critiquing), etc.

DFID contracts include reference to poverty impact evaluated and disseminated. Common statements:

- testing etc. by common methodologies and disseminating through other networks
- build local capacity of impact assessment
- help scalable innovative southern-led initiatives

DFID re OPR process: not sure yet about relationship, but would prefer Impact Study to be member of BCO partnership rather than policing. Should spend time in catalytic role rather than OPR.

SDC - agrees re catalytic role; two should be independent; leaves question of how far they should be in communication with one another.

Accountable grants don't have LogFrames. Purpose level of equivalent documents - no-one has any indicators.

Theories of change: Kitty - not really comparable. Were they useful then? Are they useful now? Can they be learnt from further?

AE - parameters: what are the parameters for the study? This is not clear and needs to be agreed. Everything / BCO-objective / BCO-funded / DFID-funded, etc. These could NB be different for different components.

IICD

IICD's MDG and PRS links are with poverty/agriculture, primary education, health, social inclusion.

Feel that main links here with BCO voice topic are re HIV/AIDS and social inclusion.

Funded by DGIS and DFID.

Demonstrating impact - seed funds and capacity development

Support voice - SDC, information networks (including national policies such as regulation)

Mainstreaming - sector and national ICT policies (DFID focus)

Self-learning evaluation system - national and international thematic level

- have impact studies on Bolivia, Tanzania - agriculture/education

Track profile of end-users: shift of end-users to low-income. (Trend issues.)

Different tiers of evaluation to date:

Community level - 8 to 10 voice-related projects. Part of existing M&E process.

Intermediate level - information networks. Introducing in M&E this year. Don't know what comes out of it.

Mainstreaming - include one or two projects on citizen information; sector and national policy: no measures to link these with impact assessment. Aim to do this year.

Impact assessment by using questionnaires on satisfaction, awareness, empowerment and economic impact; nearly 10k questionnaires to date. Backed up by focus groups in 9 countries (where suggested by local M&E partner), involving project partners and end-users.

Cost per country is €30k p.a. May not fund next year and see if continues.

Impact assessments from questionnaires suggest high re awareness and empowerment, slightly less in satisfaction, not much in economic impact.

Indirect impact for government/voice.

Will make explicit analysis for this BCO process.

Lessons:

- Participatory formulation processes build ownership
- Ownership takes time and investment
- Learning requires knowledge-sharing
- Learning requires self-evaluation
- Multistakeholder networks vehicle for influence
- Value of ground-based data (from questionnaires etc.)
- Bottom-up approach valuable alternative to top-down (latter normal ICT policy experience)

This is what needs testing during the coming year.

Has been difficult to translate material from the database. APC and IICD have consultants looking at this and so there is another set of eyes looking at these.

Target group for influence is development partners and policymakers in the South.

Lauren : work to date and ToRs

'Bad cop' email focused attention on what DFID expected; largely what he said before.

Original purpose:

- to explore assumptions on which programmes are based, to increase understanding of relationship between ICD
- to do more effective lobbying and convince sceptics
- to do self-learning about methodologies and work, in order to increase impact
- to share and learn about evaluation methodology, and to do comparison analysis across BCO partners

July 2005

So what questions do we want to ask? - the four questions.

APC's question was "does ICD policy improve people's lives"

Brainstormed about target groups and came up with:

- donors
- mainstream development actors
- ICT4D community
- line ministries
- the 'unconverted'
- international development agencies
- policymakers

Envisaged output as some sort of publication

Chose a working group

WG met: turned four questions into three, deleting the first one (re MDGs and PRS) as big scope and had little evidence, and expanding the others, with the last one being as it is and "does MS participation make any difference"

Another iteration re beneficiaries: if you were beneficiary, what would you expect of the study? We have this text.

Said they wanted to work collaboratively, elaborate workplan with lead agencies and task teams to do impact studies against each question.

End 2005 very fuzzy Yahoo meeting. Merged the questions: what is the development impact that strengthens voice of poor and influence; or; how are voices supported by ICTs.

Kathmandu: asked everyone to submit projects; intended to choose projects against which to develop impact study and then hire consultants. We are now where we were then.

DW proposed three components. Discussed them against the one question. Unresolved about who would commit to what. (Kitty - the three components as laid down in ToRs were not all intended to be on voice; only C3 was, with others being intended for any topic/theme).

All partners did not want to commit to all components, leading to mix and match. Everyone felt that they could do components 1 and 2 but not component 3. [AE - also: misunderstanding about component 1: some partners saw it as collaborative, not individual partners disseminating own studies but pooling and disseminated by commissioned consultant. This was noted in report as meaning everyone would do their own dissemination.] Difference in interpretation. LF thought that everyone would go and do their own publication, and that the group might develop a common publication.

Further stage of misunderstanding re alternative interpretations of components.

Colombo: new iteration of question.

FP: the "how" question is very difficult if you are talking about impact.

SB: the bit at the end is intended to create more specific scope about voice etc.

AE: does the question relate to component 3 only or to components 1 and 2.
Think that the question only relates to component 3.

Kitty: partners never digested proposals from previous stage.
Kitty: the "how" includes the intention of the project.

Kitty: are we trying to do advocacy from the start? Lack of agreement.

FP: spanner in works had been refocusing on advocacy from DW, and that partners did not know how to respond. Actually he wasn't asking for something new and different.

DFID think advocacy component is very important. But if BCO partners say it is less important and harder, then fine.

AE: thought had decided in Kathmandu to combine dissemination of existing work (to meet DFID need for advocacy/conversion); doesn't understand why this fell off.

AE : what are we evaluating? our own projects or ICD more broadly.

DW removes the spanner.

If you judge this, measure by asking top target audiences if they have been influenced; then look at the boxes below that might influence them.

What boxes do we want?

FP: you have £1.5m, huge amount. DW is talking about a strategic communications initiative. You must use the money effectively to influence if you have this much.

Kate: you have done a very luxurious process. Comes across as a caricature of a development process that has gone off track. It's a rare opportunity to do something substantial and needs to be grabbed.

AE: C1 is relatively open but based on existing work; C2 is work people are doing themselves; C3 is where the question applies.

Question should not be seen as cast in stone. Colombo saw need to have someone with evaluation expertise and methodology; BCO partners did not have enough expertise to do this.

DS made presentation of the proposal

IICD does not want to look beyond target beneficiaries.

The question is "how".

AMARC: emphasise the community bit.

AMARC: a lot of good material is in Spanish; need to find way in

SB: "a great effort", especially in terms of structuring the components together.
"Very good starting point"; let's ID questions about themes, indicators, dissemination outputs.

Consultant to make clearer links between components.

FP : impact perspectives diagram is "really useful" in terms of building picture of what whole process might look like; linear process is "really useful" and "quite heartening".

How about methodologies that might be in component 2: can they be the same colour? I said same side of the colour wheel.
SB: may need different tools but increasingly become the same shades - a meta level.

IICD: likes the understanding of impact in the proposal; should look at how components relate to each other. First objective (bullet points in parts 1 and 2) may be for OPR.

Have to use the question as one of the inputs.

Maybe use C2 as an input to C1 as well as an outcome. (Because some work is already underway.)

AE: value diversity as well as commonality - [harmonisation]

AE: using C2 emerging work as input also important factor for C3

SDC: we have helped move from vision to action. Need to flush out details re feasibility/depth; once it's done, what do we do with it?; learning aspect within the partners. Partners shape process of what they get out of it.

Kitty: this has gone "so fast" that it is way beyond anything that Panos can cope with. Panos doesn't have the resources to do this, so either won't be able to contribute or won't appear to have any impact.

Asks if they can step out of the process and just do their own evaluation.

AE: C2 is partners' own impact study work; that is where solution to dilemma lies. Panos participate in C1; make C2 its independent M&E; then can do integration with C3 or not, have luxury to choose. C3 is new and looks at gaps in existing work and proposed work, plus broader sector analysis.

Kitty: won't be stuff waiting for C3 until late.

AE: audience analysis.

IICD: would like to know from development partners what they want to see.

What are their main reasons to be sceptical?

I said that it would be OK to do preliminary audience analysis now, followed by fuller one at the end of C1.

DAY 2

Kate recapped the previous day's discussion.

- We come to this from a lack of information about the BCO environment. It was useful yesterday to elucidate relationship between impact study and other M&E etc. work that is being done
- We had useful discussion about target audiences
- We had useful input about some events that could be used within the dissemination strategy
- Some discussion about stories: how do we move from story level to the bigger level?
- How do we bridge the gap between different audiences?
- Great variety in BCO work and impact study needs to maintain variety but also introduce rigour: create a framework and context without homogenising - one of the main challenges for us.

What are the questions? (DS)

1. Content of components

2. Relationship between components
3. Timetable (including August meeting of whole BCO)
4. Target audiences
5. Dissemination strategies
6. Content of workplan - and liaison

FP: add:

7. Clarification of roles and responsibilities, and expectations of consultants

FP: note Kate's comment about process to date being luxurious. We should agree that process does not have to be perfect: try and be realistic and move on to deliver.

IICD: clear that different BCO partners are at different stages and this needs to be taken into consideration. Distinction between a) what we have and b) new activities

AMARC: appreciated discussion of background; appreciated the structure we put forward. Adds the following question:

8. Indicators

SDC: do we want to add "ICTs" specifically into the question? Also, how do we establish a vertical link between "success stories" and policymakers?

FP: responds to ICT question in terms of target audience: mainstream practitioners are not going to care; issue is framing messages rather than framing question.

AE: in BDO there was an efficient way of doing impact assessment which was to commission Gerster - and partners were not happy about this.

AE: The earlier BCO design did not see components as linear, but conceived them as being in parallel. We proposed a more linear structure, which makes a lot of sense esp. re C1 and C3, but should also take timeframes into account and see if we can't have a linear-related process which also has parallel activities. Can be done at different levels. Even with C3, if more than one study, might start one before another. DFID engagement with BCO comes to end March to December 2007.

AE: roles. How do we want to relate to BCO?

9. Liaison

AE: Kitty's opt-out suggestion. This is an impact study, not M&E, but some partners are trying to build M&E systems. Do we try to integrate? Would like guidance; maybe opens up another area of coordination - perhaps with another group of people.

AE: on the paradigm gap. Don't approach it in an uncritical way. We said that a paradigm gap is about lack of common understanding, lack of common ground. Looking at the audiences is critical. Also use critical thinking within the development world as well as our own practice as ICD actors.

AE: clarification of the rationale for ICD. SDC decided to explore the rationale, which is a question: one of the goals in previous discussions was to use the impact work to develop a rationale.

Discussion: is this a theory of change?

AMARC: there are areas where there is stronger discourse between e.g. media and governance; in other areas it is weak. This is a complex relationship: see it as an issue which is not static or dualistic.

Kitty: original idea was to develop group of case studies and use these as basis for a rationale.

Panos hasn't yet got much M&E done; going thru slow process of trying to get more rigorous impact assessment work etc. It is difficult to measure impact of media work. Panos has new staff in to help it do this. Difficult to ask it to do short-term M&E.

Context of larger-scale international processes. How does Panos get benefit from what is done here? Cites Global Forum for Media Development. Too many processes are going on. Very confusing

DFID has commissioned study on making the case for communication generally. Should this be linked?

FP: DFID is commissioning a lot of work on making the case around this issue. Gamos is data-gathering on outcomes e.g. on MDG outcomes. Panos work. Considering advocacy push on development communications with BBCWST. Not the only actor doing that sort of thing. Would be replicative to get this group to do something similar, but needs to feed in.

FP: if you have lots of ICD people selling ICD to mainstream sectors, then you get confusing and ignored messages. So DFID asks if its voice is the most credible one.

Need to engage with critical voices.

DS referred to quality of analysis and quality of engagement.

SDC: need balance between rigour and audience-targeting.

Component 1:

Kitty: differences of view. Original concept from DW that there were good enough materials at present to do advocacy work; question of single publication or work separately; probably different partners do different work. Agreement that not sensible to do that work without benefiting from the consultants' work; there is a timing issue if we wait until further with component 3.

IICD: In Kathmandu, saw C1 fitting with communication strategy they are developing at present. Are producing booklets: agriculture in few weeks; education later. Cross-cutting analysis, then translated into lessons learnt. Can use some help with using this for advocacy, i.e. engagement strategy. An exercise to address the question about whether they are reaching the target audience?

Nele is producing summaries of evaluation reports, including qualitative data analysis. She puts them on the website but no-one reads them. What can be done to do this more effectively? Like to see if this could be fitted in.

AMARC: Framework on C1 slide is clear: a) existing materials and b) BCO projects. AMARC project is along the same lines. Will be gathering available materials and analysing them, producing own report, looking for other dissemination outlets. "A very straightforward fit", need therefore for coordination.

SDC: Part of effort to engage country offices in dialogue. Gerolf is thinking about a flyer tailored to the needs of particular country offices. Feels that there are enough stories that he thinks they can make the case for this initial engagement. Wants expertise and advice from communications specialists from within SDC: they have tools.

APC: Always felt that it should be as set out in the C1 slide we have produced: not about effectiveness of own communications strategy but pooling of completed evaluation/learning studies of BCO partners. CI has been trying to disseminate evaluation studies: but who really reads them, not matter how good they are? Aim to extract lessons from that and package it as a BCO dissemination product. Also important is audience analysis; and working with someone with expertise. What is disseminated depends on what can be extracted from very diverse studies. Would like to explore the linkages between global, regional, national, local in other agencies too.

IICD: C1 is looking at all existing; C3 is starting from the question.

AE: its extraction from materials which are already pooled in some degree.

Kate:

- work to be done now in determining what needs to be fed into component 1. Your thinking about impact issues etc.
- share experience etc. about learning experiences

DS made points about:

- C1 and C3 are linked
- need to see full documentation
- balance between BCO-wide and individual-agency focus

AE: thought idea was to look at everyone as equal partners, including donors.

AE: not comfortable yet with dissemination: are we reaching our audiences? - something that doesn't necessarily belong here: which is the communications strategy stuff. Not sure it belongs in the impact study process.

FP: what communications approach are we talking about?

Kitty: should they have a learning day on communication/advocacy? Should we do this?

FP: important to have clearly identified target audiences for this work; how will the impact study be used. Can't ID target audiences until you know what your objectives are for communications: are they advocacy or knowledge-sharing? A process needs to happen to define what the products are; risk of having products that don't meet anyone's needs or a set of products which speak to the needs of the wrong group.

SB: we already have a target audience in the proposal presentation; it is both an advocacy component and a learning component. It has duality in its objectives: we may need to define target audience and objectives more precisely.

LF: need to unpack existing work on target audiences further.

I suggested this as part of the component 1 phase of work.

AE: everyone should give consultants the stuff, finite time to look at it, open-ended request to get out of it what people want to get out of it; come together in two stages to make decisions around component 1:

- a. based on existing materials, is there a BCO message or a BCO product?, at which time look at audience analysis (and also perhaps bring in a communications specialist, e.g JD)
- b. deal with materials to inform component 3 in latter part of component 1.

We said that sounded OK. IICD, Panos agree.

SB: prefers a communications-driven approach. Would suggest a framework communications strategy, which is developed alongside the research work. Probably should involve bringing in a communications specialist. Approach needs to be iterative; deal with by strengthening the communications side of the proposal.

FP: describes this as embedding the communications side within the research side. AE agrees, because it is about learning critically from our own work and then communicating that (rather than selling). Don't start from the communications basis.

We said we were comfortable with this and would investigate it as part of our workplan development.

Documentation:

APC:

- the policy independent evaluation
- CATIA theory of change etc.
- WSIS reflection etc.
- GEM work
- member survey
- there is unevaluated work on capacity development etc. - particular events but not overview
- workshop blogs - ?
- book chapter on ICT policymaking
- gender and ICT issues

IICD:

- DGIS evaluation
- impact booklets
- learning country reports and summaries from country evaluation partners
- M&E tool data on capacity development
- project formulation and implementation
- user impact information
- surveys for information network members
- donor reports

OW:

not present at the meeting

AMARC:

- 50 country studies
- 20 multi-country project evaluations
- 10 in depth country studies
- 50 short articles
- 100 short ethnographic case studies
- 10 local ethnographic case studies
- activist stories

need to discuss with AMARC in detail

SDC:

will have to check what is available

- partner activity reports
- material from other partnerships outside BCO - need to get back to us

- poverty reduction materials - e.g. the LA study for UNDP

Panos:

- few completed evaluation reports
- theory of change etc.
- external evaluation of Panos overall will be done in or around October
- other things during the course of the impact study

DFID:

"modest collection"

- four papers and guidance notes for country programmes
- grey literature - Oxford University economic impact of ICTs; voice and accountability across DFID portfolio; review of DFID ICT work by infoDev
- multidonor review of voice and accountability being done:
 - can we see the methodology?

The parameters issue is not going to go away.

Community radio methodologies often developed in industrial country contexts.

Repository - one space to look.

APC suggests space where people can ask questions - common notepad.

Agreed in Colombo; when might it be there?

LF and AE: will discuss directly with us.

We need to discuss what we need, who should have access, etc.

Component 2:

Panos:

Nothing definite as yet. Possible work with AMARC and OWSA might be doing some joint evaluation; maybe something else in India.

Also: CATIA 1d evaluation (radio advocacy).

Individual studies: question of when?

Possible request to us for one-to-one support re this.

APC:

Collaborative: APC-IICD study (see below).

Individual: APC about to start midterm review of strategic planning cycle ahead of meeting with members in Cambodia in November. Want same consultant to set up M&E systems (which are currently very LogFrame).

IDRC and OSI want to do some more wireless networking work: hence evaluation of first two years of project, based on talking to people trained.

Also doing user survey of gender ICT portal.

Would like to learn from other BCO partners re M&E.

AMARC:

as yesterday. Also other pieces of evaluative research: joint work with Panos in CATIA 1d in Africa; joint evaluation in LA with APC. (And there is other AMARC-APC joint work, e.g. re community radio in Peru.) In A/P, work on the Nepal story, perhaps with Panos, on joint mission with IMS etc.

C2 shd provide new material that adds to the evidential mix, and tests out new methodologies. Interesting question about the colour of the dots.

SDC:

supporting AMARC evaluation; also OWSA re Mission 2007 in India; work with Panos re PRS.

Challenge re common methodology; also how to maximise learning.
Within SDC, sharp distinction between review, evaluation and impact. Impact is the most difficult to get at.

DFID:

DW knows better re evaluation issues.

IICD:

C2 is really collaboration with APC. Study on policy participation processes: have cases to look at and capture lessons from three countries and six case studies. Workshop planned. Dissemination strategy weak. Primary audience has been selves, plus policymakers in South.

Ongoing material: all IICD evaluations, participatory surveys etc.

Expectation: growing stack of materials which can add to C1; maximisation of learning; issues around communication. Question that remains: can we reach a common methodology?

Kate: issue of extent to which we can be involved in trapping methodological lessons from C2.

How?: bringing us the consultants into the learning loop

Elements will come back into the C1 evidence base.

AE: consultants have to provide a format about how C2 relates to C1 and C3, and decide if it changes the dots. Could also consider having learning events which bring together a variety of consultants involved in different areas of work - but avoiding risk of this disrupting the impact study itself. A suggestion.

PK: wd be useful to channel harmonisation into ongoing studies.

Kitty: would be useful to have common tool about what is impact, emerging from end of C1 workshop. This is Kitty's preferred conclusion: i.e. a tool which can be used to shape continued evaluation.

IICD:

want to learn from each other, e.g. in August meeting. Responsibility of all to do this, not for consultants to do but they should be included. We are not specifically asked to do anything.

FP: BCO partners should be open to consultant advice e.g. on linkages, synergies, harmonisation.

Kitty: can partners draw on consultants' advice?

DS: this is whether they are buying some of the BCO time or something additional.

AE: need to meet with APC/IICD consultant. Should also contract us separately from the BCO work where appropriate. Also, if we notice striking flaws or methodological problems in C1, flag them as part of the learning: especially useful in advance of decision on what outreach products. What other methodologies might we consider, i.e.

Need to be kept up to date on C2 activities.

Component 3

Kate presented proposal

IICD: what needs to be fed in by partners specifically for C3.

Kate: perhaps some specific areas of activity.

We will look for voice, participation and empowerment in C1; etc. IICD think they can contribute on this straightaway.

The Question:

We said we had explained how we interpreted the question and that it would not be useful to reopen it.

Our proposal:

AE: timeframe, size and scope questions: we're not yet in a position to answer.

AE: need for us to explore with partners the question whether it is a study they do themselves or something that the consultants do. We shd keep this difference of view in mind; some people are less happy with externals doing this.

KP: There should be active involvement of the partners.

SB wants to unpick the studies. Eg a theme might be community-level community communications. There are also country level issues such as policy reform (though audience is not necessarily interested in this as it assumes that our policy prescriptions are right).

What should the themes be?

Studies is not a methodology: we need to know what the methodologies are.

Different methods are appropriate for different themes.

DS: said difficult to get into consideration of themes - didn't have the information available at the time of answering the RFP.

FP: if this was comms led, one wd id themes in consideration of which doors they opened in the policy environment more generally - e.g. in DFID governance is very receptive at present, in health it's a done deal.

PK: implies that donor input would be particularly useful on this.

AE: suggests as like a theme the relational process about the role of intermediaries: community/intermediary/government. Also the relationship between global/national/regional/local.

DS: these could be themes as could conventional subject areas; point is that they should elucidate research questions. Voice, empowerment and participation are research questions.

IICD: regard "voice" as a theme. However, could be sectors.

AMARC can't raise funds to contribute unless they know what it is going to do; so need something like what characteristics of the local communications environment are conducive to intervention of this kind. Need to situate community radio in voice, empowerment, participation in cf its absence and in cf other things.

AMARC therefore needs to know what the research is going to do in more detail than the other partners - community radio in a wider context.

AE: has to resonate with individual work; but also to be bigger than own work. Also need to respond to the audience question. What makes it a macro study is that you look at multiple levels, including intended and unintended.

PK: wants to ingrain the ICT component in the overall.

Discussion: FP says it's an offputting word. DS agreed. APC want to get people to talk about the technologies because they see potential negative as well as

positive impacts being ignored. So AE sees it as about technology-enabled communications.

IICD asked about the impact assessment slide. We need to try to capture these wider dimensions. Kate adds providing lasting tools for partners.

SB suggests specific methodology: quantitative, participatory, discussion with sceptics about their perceptions, etc.

AE: questions how decisionmakers make their assumptions. (GW wanted to weight study towards own learning for this reason.)

Kate: OK if you include partner institutions at the field level in this learning.

Kitty: says this is why she was always against C1 in its original form.

Next steps from partners.

SB would like to bring wider range of development experts around the table to engage with BCO at an early stage.

AE: issue is both processes and products. Eg CATIA used breakfast meetings with decisionmakers.

PK: general agreement with proposal, but C1 needs to shape thinking further. Balance between strengthening learning of organisations plus engagement strategy.

FP: there is tension between wanting to get on and do something useful now and wanting to go back over the past discussion.

Talks about advocacy work being done for DFID by Gamos, CI, BBCWST?

Focus down on needs of partners; and looking at strategic communications plan for the group within context of other people doing advocacy work. Get a communications advisor in tomorrow.

Kitty: cd be doing a hundred things with the information we have.

AE: need to do audience analysis. If we are to target audiences too specifically, we might not end up doing an impact study after all. Need to do impact study which is not so abstract that it can't be used for communications. Be careful about advocacy need, or it stops being an impact study.

See also ODI RAPID study.

AMARC: key issue is not the audience per se, but what behaviours of the audience we want to change.

IICD:

Embedding of the communications stuff in component 1. Then see what next.

AE:

We need to do the audience analysis now, to inform this. By getting a communications consultant in to help to do this.

We go away and do the programme design, including possibly bringing in a communications specialist.

SDC etc can begin to feed in.

Other issues

HIVOS have contribution to make in C1, which they see as within our current conception.

Colombo meeting included suggested evaluation and review of donor policy effectiveness on ICD. An AE idea, for a learning study among BCO donors. (Sounds like it followed a discussion with me.)

LF suggests it should be a component 2 study.

PK - it would be a bilateral activity.

FP - there is a joint donor evaluation of issues (see above).

Gerster study critique

APC: no comment.

Panos: got interesting insights from country studies; not a good advocacy tool.

AMARC: not a very participatory process. Choice of countries difficult and arbitrary. Thematised into four areas which didn't give a holistic view; essentially a report on what a project had done. Methodology straightforward, involving those already engaged in the project. But some of the conclusions perfectly sensible and valid; just didn't get across.

Kitty: wanted participatory process for design, hence different way of doing this.

IICD: it was an outside process.

SDC: before PK's time. Maybe not the best format.

DFID: before her time. Hasn't used it.

SB: says that BCO was not designed as BCO but as an overlay for existing programmes.

AE: there was some consideration of Gerster report in design of BCO.

Next steps

DS suggested liaison arrangements.

World Congress - 24/25 October as possible milestone. Rome. BCO don't have a slot in this. Discussion about whether to try to get a speaking opportunity.

Would prefer to have the C1.1 workshop in end August.

BCO message and what products to capitalise on.

Need clear reporting and initial results ready for Day 2; day 3 is impact learning day.

Lauren as liaison point for BCO.

Kitty and Anriette agreed as contact points for chit-chat (for Lauren).

Kitty to convene Impact Study Group.