

Readers' Panel: ED-Magazine is on the right track

We asked 40 people of different nationalities and professions to critically review ED-Magazine no 1, and they will do the same for numbers 2 & 3. We received constructive feedback from 13 readers, which included some valuable suggestions for further improving the magazine. The general response is clear though: the new magazine is an improvement on its predecessor.

General opinion

The new ED-Magazine had a warm reception. About 77% of the panel are very positive about the new magazine. In the words of one: *'The magazine looks very attractive. I enjoyed reading it. The articles were all relevant but not heavy'*. Of course we were also happy to receive suggestions for further improvement: a clearer explanation of endogenous development; a focus on gender/HIV-Aids; and involving more people and organisations outside the COMPAS network and their (different) critical views.

Asked for the biggest improvement, panel members stress the accessibility of the new magazine: good photographs and illustrations, and short, readable articles. A number mention that they now can share the information more easily with other people, some of whom cannot read themselves.

The biggest improvement: good photos and short readable articles

Most panel members are convinced that the magazine will appeal to development practitioners in endogenous development. One suggestion is to create a specific section on endogenous development practices, to make the magazine more practical. The motion, everyone agrees, is a good start to link the magazine and the website, but articles could also be linked to the website for extra information.

Content

Most panel members favour the decision to work with three themes in the magazine. Some mention additional themes such as rural development or socio-economic developments. The division between articles that focus on themes and the various section pages (with IN) is

highly appreciated. As one member writes: *'I really liked reading these sections. The information is practical and it brings in some human interest'*.

Lay out

The square format is popular with most panel members. Quite a few stress that they would like more pages. The use of bigger and better visuals scored 100% approval.

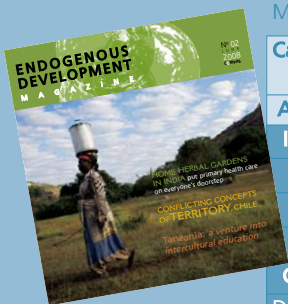
Main results of questionnaire on Endogenous Development Magazine, No 1 (EDM1)

Category	Excellent / yes		Reasonable / to some extent		Unpleasant / no	
	abs.	rel.	abs.	rel.	abs.	rel.
Absolute and relative response (%) N=13 respondents (=100%)						
In general						
General appreciation of EDM1	10	77%	3	23%	-	-
Will EDM appeal to development professionals?	8	62%	5	38%	-	-
Is the link between magazine and website sufficiently clear in EDM?	6	46%	5/7*	38-54%	2	17%
Content						
Does EDM clearly explain what endogenous development is?	8	62%	5	38%	-	-
Do the articles critically analyze the ED approach?	10	77%	3	23%	-	17%
Do you agree with the focus on three themes? (NRM, Health, Education)	8*	67%	2*	17%	2*	-
Does a motion for debate make EDM more dynamic and interactive?	7	54%	6	46%	-	-
Lay out						
Opinion on size (format & number of pages)	8	62%	5	38%	-	-
Opinion about more and better photos and illustrations	13	100%	-	-	-	-
Do the 'interacting worldviews' boxes clarify endogenous development	10*	84%	1*	8%	1*	8%

*1 person didn't answer

A more detailed report can be downloaded from our website: www.compasnet.org.

If you would like to participate in the Readers' Panel group for 2009, please contact us at compas@etcnl.nl





Majority of readers agree: Millennium Development Goals give poor people false hope

Many people participated in the discussion on the Millennium Development Goals. Their main criticism is that the MDGs are too top-down and most governments too 'donor orientated'. Here is a selection of the responses to the motion. Your views are of course still welcome!

The MDG agenda in Africa is a farce because it is another attempt at enriching the ever corrupt leadership with a pseudo-global economic agenda. At the end of the day, the poor who were the target of this programme continue to wallow in abject poverty with a shortened lifespan. What is needed is direct intervention in the endogenous lifestyle of the masses, not another government spendthrift in the name of the millennium slogan.

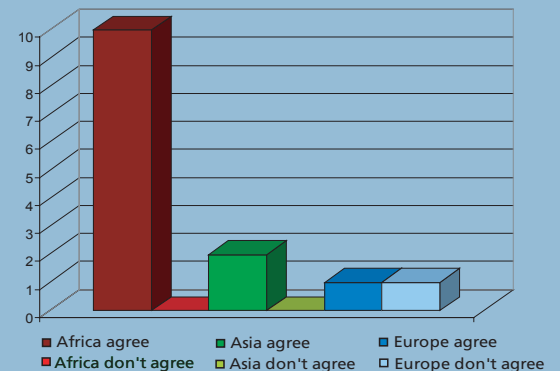
Adetoro Rasheed, Nigeria

cultural definitions of development. That will happen when national/international policies recognise and build on local perceptions of poverty and development. This means building on their indigenous institutions, natural assets, knowledge base, aspirations and cosmovision.

Bern Guri, Ghana

While the MDGs are strategic for governments, they are top-down in approach. Most of the poor people do not even know what MDGs are about, let alone hinging their hopes on them.

H. K. Ayuba, Nigeria



The Millennium Development Goals agenda in Africa is a farce

In general governments especially in the South have accepted the MDGs as their development framework just to satisfy the funding requirements from the North. There is not sufficient commitment from the 'rich' countries to support programmes in the South.

CIKOD, Ghana

I believe that the MDGs would give hope to the poor especially in the South only if the current globalisation process opens windows for other

This was a mere political gimmick, unlikely to be achieved by 2015 as scheduled.

Michael A.N. Odula, Kenya

I don't agree with the motion. Halving hunger by 2015 is possible if there is global commitment (as proclaimed by the UN through the MDGs) and if politicians make achieving MDGs their political choice. Food security improvement must start at the local level, but macro-economic circumstances play a critical role in success or

failure. If there is commitment to improving smallholder agriculture and if we make markets work for the poor, that's the quickest way to food security and to achieve MDG1.

Hans Eenhoorn, the Netherlands

All reactions are available on the COMPAS website: www.compasnet.org