

Development Institutions

JACOB GROSHEK and KIRAN SETH

Boston University, USA

Development institutions are organizational bodies whose primary goals are to improve conditions in regions that have historically lacked basic levels of physical services and socio-political rights. Many of these bodies engage communication for development strategies.

At present, there are over 70,000 international organizations with a total budget in the hundreds of billions (US\$) devoted to improving social, economic, political, and health conditions around the world, specifically in less developed countries (Directory of Development Organizations 2011; → International Communication Agencies). The current status of modern international development organizations can be traced back to the end of World War II and the official launch of the United Nations (UN) which helped catalyze international → modernization efforts.

In addition to the UN, the US Agency for International Development remains the primary federal US agency for assisting developing countries. It employs a wide range of communication strategies to support its programs of disaster relief, poverty eradication, and democratic reform (Melkote & Steeves 2001). In Europe, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) offers assistance to more than 70 developing countries, and one of its major programs promotes information and communication technologies in sustainable economic growth and social welfare (→ Telecenters).

Nongovernmental organizations, including trade unions, faith-based organizations, community groups, indigenous peoples' organizations, and foundations under the umbrella title of civil society organizations, have also maintained a wide range of activities in development assistance (Mody 2003; → Transnational Civil Society).

Development organizations operate at the international, regional, national, and community levels (Table 1). Principal missions include developing media organizations and augmenting journalists' rights (Wilson 2004; → Development Journalism), access to Internet and mobile communication networks (Carpentier & Servaes 2006; → United Nations, Communication Policies of), social change in health-care practices and in education, and to reduce poverty (→ Health Communication; Health Campaigns, Communication in). Still others support particular groups, such as women, migrants, or indigenous peoples (→ Development, Gender, and Communication, Migration and Immigration; Activist Media).

Finally, there are a number of international development organizations with goals that encompass all, or a number of, the above-mentioned areas and use a variety of frameworks in their approaches. Private foundations (such as that of Bill and Melinda Gates) are able to change their focus frequently, and many engage sub-programs under

Table 1 International development organizations and communication

<i>Mission</i>	<i>Representative organization</i>
Develop media and establish free press	International Press Institute
Social change in health, education, and poverty	Academy for Educational Development
Social justice for women and oppressed groups	United Nations Population Fund
Send economic aid, enhance free trade	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Several of the above goals	Organization of American States
<i>Type of organization</i>	<i>Representative organization(s)</i>
NGO and civil society	World Congress on Communication for Development
Governmental	United States Agency for International Development
National	Development and Educational Communication Unit (India)
Regional	Caribbean Institute of Mass Communication (Jamaica)
International	International Development Research Center (Canada)
Intergovernmental	United Nations; World Bank
Private foundation	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; Ford Foundation
Academic	International Communication Association
Religious	World Association of Christian Communication
<i>Period of activity</i>	<i>Representative organization</i>
Pre-World War II	International Federation of Journalists (1926; relaunched 1946)
Early (1946–1975)	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (1947)
Middle (1976–1995)	International Programme for the Development of Communication (1981)
Late (1996–present)	International Institute for Communication and Development (1997)

one umbrella to achieve larger goals such as gender equity or access to education (Servaes 1999).

SEE ALSO: Activist Media; Development Communication; Development, Gender, and Communication; Development, Geometry of; Development Journalism; Health Campaigns, Communication in; Health Communication; International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR); International Communication

Agencies; International Communication Association (ICA); Internet; Migration and Immigration; Modernization; Telecenters; Transnational Civil Society; UNESCO; United Nations, Communication Policies of

References and suggested readings

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