

Independent Evaluation of Eldis

Evaluation Report

Submitted by



(October 2007)

Acronyms

ABCE	ABC Electronic is the industry-owned, tri-partite, not-for-profit organisation that works with and for media owners, advertisers and media buyers to help them better understand and gain confidence in the data they use.
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AGORA	A program, set up by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) together with major publishers.
BLDS	British Library for Development Studies
CSRG	Corporate Social Responsibility Guide
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
Eldis	Database and email service of information sources on international development
ESRF	Economic and Social Research Foundation
GDN	Global Development Network
GNet	The electronic voice of GDN
HINARI	Health Inter Network Access to Research Initiative WHO
HTML	Hypertext Markup Language - the predominant markup language for web pages
ICT	Information communications technology
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
id21	Fast-track research reporting service aiming to make policymakers aware of the latest British development research findings
Infomediaries	People or bodies that share information and knowledge
ISSEL	Reseller and distributor for Intranet/Internet web metrics, content management and collaboration solutions
JANET	J oint A cademic NET work
MK4D	Mobilising Knowledge for Development
MOV	Means of Verification
NGO	Non Government Organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OECD	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
OARE	Online Access to Research in the Environment
OPR	Output to Purpose Review
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicator
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
QQT	Quality, Quantity, Time characteristics (of indicators)
SDC	Swiss Development Corporation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Administration
STREAM	Support to Regional Aquatic Resources Management
WHO	World Health Authority
WTO	World Trade Organization

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1. Executive Summary

Purpose

1 Eldis is an internet based information service that filters, structures and presents development information via the web, email and offline products. It receives funding from DFID under MK4D, and from NORAD, SIDA, and SDC. After 10 years, the donors have requested a significant external independent evaluation of the service, the purpose of which is to serve an accountability function for the donors, to link with an MK4D review, and to assist with decision-making about further funding (donors) and operation (IDS). Both evaluations will also feed into IDS's own reflexive learning about its knowledge services.

The Eldis evaluation is guided by the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. It builds on interviews and information collected by IDS and visits to users in Malawi, Tanzania and Bangladesh.

Main Conclusion

2 The overall conclusion for donors is that Eldis is an exceptional resource for development policymakers and practitioners, and that maintaining a public sector funded, cross-sectoral, multi-subject portal mandated to present a diversity of viewpoints that can influence policy is an important development resource.

3 There are other portal-type websites and many players exist in the commercial domain on the internet. However, each are filling different niches, using different approaches and philosophies, and offering a different user environment. It is likely that such a choice of development information suppliers rather than a single powerful player dominant on the internet will benefit the quality and range of information available.

4 Eldis represents the 'free public good' philosophy to information services delivery. There is ample precedent for governments subsidizing communication as well as platforms for the production of pluralistic informed content, (e.g. subsidize telephone connectivity for rural, poor or handicapped people as well as emergency response service and the ability to provide assistance to law enforcement authorities; the licence fee and charter for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is a strong example of subsidised pluralistic content in the UK, whilst within the UN system HINARI and AGORA are subsidized information sharing efforts).

5 It is clearly emphasized in the Berlin Declaration that without strong scientific platforms built on the widest possible access to research information; progress towards the Millennium Development Goals will not be sustained. Especially that content and software tools must be openly accessible and compatible. Eldis is one tool that represents a significant response by the UK, Sweden, Norway and Switzerland to the Berlin Declaration. Indeed, as the quantity, variety and quality of content available on the Internet continues to increase, including through the evolution of Web 2.0 services, the role of aggregators and commentators becomes more important.

Response to the Main Evaluation Questions

Achievements

6 Based on evidence which includes 2,820 questionnaire responses, 19,000 send to a friend messages, 40 in depth interviews, website and email usage statistics, and many

anecdotal responses from service users, Eldis contributes to development practitioners' use and exchange of relevant, evidence-based development knowledge and documentation.

To what extent has Eldis delivered the range and quantity of products and services set out in its Logframe?

7 Eldis is continuing to build and enrich their dataset, improve the coverage of the website, and produce email outputs. These match or exceed the Eldis Logframe targets and include: 293 'Document Summaries' each month (and a searchable collection of 22,000), 4,500 'Organisation Descriptions'; 'weekly features', 'E-mail bulletins' containing summaries and other news to 37,000 unique email subscribers, 'Resource Guides' on 25 topics, 42 short, 'Key issue pages' on emerging research and policy issues, 8 searchable news-focused 'Email newsletter collections', 6 in-depth guides to development debates called 'Dossiers', as well as Blogs and Newsfeeds. The programme uploaded onto the Eldis website an average of 335 content items per month during 2006/7, sent out an average of 35 email reporters each month, produced and distributed 4,400 CDRom discs and organised Cache/CDRom agreements with 565 different organisations, with blanket permissions from 395 organisations and Creative Commons agreements from 67. The Cache now includes over 4,500 documents. Eldis has developed an Oryx content management system for improved performance and stability and developed an Eldis Community Platform to support collaborative work and self-publishing.

How effective are Eldis editorial and production systems in delivering these products and services?

8 The programme employs, on average, seven editors and a similar number of more junior Abstractors to whom much abstracting is efficiently delegated. Most Editors stay in post for several years typically, before moving on. The Eldis team are productive in creating quality content, with useful differentiation of roles being implemented, which augers well for efficiency.

9 To improve Up-time Stability and invest in the future of service delivery, the electronic platform of Eldis is being upgraded to a system referred to as Oryx. The protracted shift to a new Oryx platform for Eldis has temporarily disrupted staff output, user access and the delivery of planned content. There is still some way to go with fully launching the new system.

To what extent is Eldis achieving the targeted levels and patterns of use set out in its Logframe?

10 Eldis is hitting the targets set out in its Logframe regarding website visit rate, email subscription, sourcing of latest documents and synthesis briefings and is helping to fill an important niche in the development information market. OVIs related to increase in visits to Eldis and % of users seeking southern content are less easy to verify due to recent changes in web statistics collection, the process of shifting to an Oryx platform and difficulties in defining southern-based content. 27 % of web-users and 55% of email subscribers are southern-based. Eldis users come from NGOs, 24%; Research/teaching 22%; Individuals, 11%; International organisations 10%; Consultants, 9%; Government, 9%; Commercial business, 3%, Bilateral aid agency, 2%, and Media, 2%.

Relevance

To what extent is Eldis filling a gap in terms of information needs of target users?

11 Evidence from the country studies and a counterfactual survey highlight how Eldis is fulfilling user needs: The country studies reveal that target users need information for: research, training, postgraduate studies, preparing lectures and assisting

students/supervision, consultancies, project proposals, field work, PRA, livelihoods analysis, accessing grey literature, fund raising, advocacy, strategy development and policy making. Information is sought to substantiate reports and provide regional perspectives on issues such as health and education, to enhance cross-sectoral understanding of issues and to help in clarifying concepts, developing indicators and setting standards.

12 Journalists, scientists and individual users report keeping updated on the latest findings and debates for their area of expertise. People in more operational roles based in developing countries report adapting examples of best practice or further developing these. Others source information for evaluating their own field-based projects or for background information for funding proposals. Some users even glean examples of formats for reporting back to donors where funding had been secured. Users in strategic positions reported feeding the information into broader policy processes at organisational or governmental levels. Several user in the counter-factual survey specified job searching.

To what extent is the mix of services provided by Eldis an effective response to the varying needs and preferences of different target users?

13 Eldis specialises in cross-sectoral coverage and multiple-delivery formats and represents a mixture of updating services and synthesis/educational services. Feedback from interviews and surveys suggests Eldis is a popular source of development knowledge complementing other information sources with narrower specialist coverage. The Eldis focus on research, policy and strategic information is well suited for a target audience comprising policy formers, strategists, international organisations and academics. It is one of the longest established web-based development information brands and has a large user base for web and email services.

14 Eldis users interviewed in the ITAD evaluation country studies and many of the Eldis 'Bios' reported valuing: the free, open-access site, not needing to register, access to full text journals, well packaged CDs, consistency of topics, which they can follow-up over time, broad-ranging, not sector/institution-specific information and the provision of links to related sites.

15 The service is constantly evolving around changes in information sharing and associated agendas of people, donors, the Institute of Development Studies, markets and publishing patterns. The evidence suggests that users find the service useful for their needs and that Eldis is reaching a wide range of audiences. In country studies, the Eldis services were considered credible and reliable and Eldis content ranks highly in Google searches using key development search terms.

16 The service is well used in the north and the south, with around one third of web users and 55% of email subscribers from 'the south'. Demand for southern produced content is increasing and the % of southern records produced by the Eldis team has increased. However, the overall % of southern content has decreased due to an interruption in content sharing between GDN and Eldis since early 2006 when GDN was transferred to Cairo and the content moved to a locally-hosted 'interim platform'.

17 Awareness of the service and perceptions about its utility amongst policy makers and shapers, those involved in management of development, related education and research, and NGOs i.e. those who represent the Eldis client group but who are not necessarily users (the counterfactual survey) appears less pronounced and may imply a need for further researching and marketing outside of the current user group.

Impact and sustainability

What does the evidence suggest about how Eldis contributes to the ability of development actors to access, exchange and use evidence-based development information?

18 Evidence from Eldis surveys and interviews from different categories of target users highlight a range of impacts: Policy makers and policy influencers – especially report impacts on government departments and multinational organisations processes, the negotiation processes of civil society organisations, including improving their understanding of the intellectual and strategic interests of those they are trying to influence. Other policy actors were less specific, but identified recurrent value in focused on impacts on particular processes. Researchers – highlight access to new materials, specific documents and the value of additional viewpoints. Through Eldis, NGO staff report more simple access to materials for personal and organisational learning, often fulfilling a need to become familiar with areas of work for which they have had little formal training, with high levels of re-use among this audience. (Specific examples are provided in the report).

19 Sustainability of Eldis requires the capacity to keep pace with changing demands and technology and to ensure sustainable funding. Sustainable development and the fulfilment of the MDGs in this context requires equality of access to scientific progress, support for the formation of a knowledge based culture of inquiry and policy justification, support to changes in the communication and publication practices of poorly-resourced groups to improve their impact, and the promotion of a strong scientific platform built on the widest possible access to research information to sustain support and progress.

Recommendations

20 Numbered recommendations contained within this report are juxtapose with the text to which they relate and are numbered in the order in which they appear. The final section of the report separates these out into recommendations ‘for donors’ and ‘for Eldis’ the latter are further divided into those for the near term and those which could be considered more strategic and might be taken on board by the knowledge service.

2. Introduction

a. Background to Eldis

Eldis is an internet based information service that was first established in 1995. The service it provides is that of filtering, structuring and presenting development information via the web, email and offline products. The service is constantly evolving around changes in information sharing and associated agendas of people, donors, the Institute of Development Studies, markets and publishing patterns.

Eldis emerged from the British Library for Development Services as a response to changing patterns of cataloguing and sharing information associated with the growth in use of the World Wide Web. Its conception and development has been guided throughout by its originator who remains the current Program Manager.

Eldis endeavours to:

- Support the documentation, exchange and use of evidence-based development knowledge.
- Communicate this knowledge effectively through a range of appropriately designed services, using the Internet (web and email) as the main communication medium for delivery.
- Reach audiences of researchers, development practitioners and policy formers at national and international levels.
- Play a role in the processes of evidence-based policy formation.
- Provide this information and services free of charge at point of use.

In order to achieve this Eldis provides:

- Document summaries: the building blocks of Eldis. Producing around 300 of these each month and now with 22,000 in a searchable collection.
- Organisation descriptions: 4,500 descriptions of the various organisations who publish the documents covered by Eldis.
- Features: weekly must-read highlights.
- Resource guides: subject-focused, browsable sections of the website, on 25 topics.
- Email bulletins: which accompany resource guides, providing summaries and other news to c. 34,000 email subscribers.
- Key issue pages: short, contextualising guides on emerging research and policy issues, currently around 42 of these pages on the website.
- Dossiers: In-depth guides to development debates.
- Blogs: areas for commentary and news available since 2006. There are currently 7 blogs within the services.
- Newsfeeds: The provision of content for external websites and personal news-reading software, since 2005.
- Email newsletter collections: 8 searchable and browsable collections of more news-focused publications.

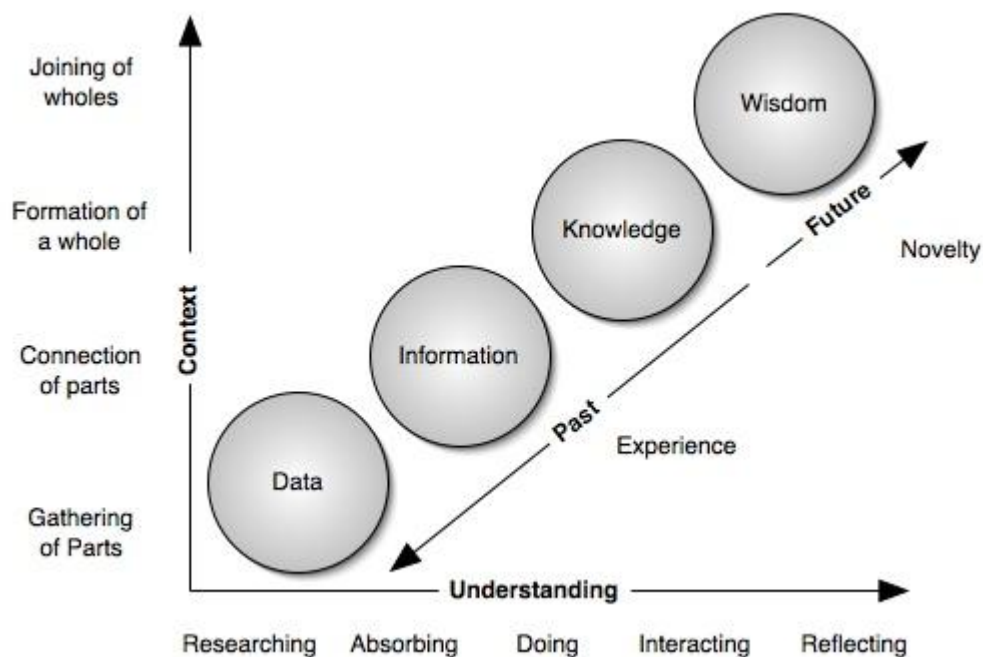
b. Some terminology (knowledge, information, use, etc)

Information and knowledge

Do IDS Knowledge Services, especially Eldis, share 'information' or 'knowledge'? The terminology here is perhaps not irrelevant since the careful use of language can improve our

conceptual clarity about how *what we do* and can give rise to the development impacts we seek to encourage?

Epistemology has been reported for nearly two and a half millennia; from Platonic definitions around 2,400 years ago, to John Locke 300 years ago, to Cleveland 25 years ago, amongst others. Of some relevance to IDS is Cleveland's "Information as Resource" where understanding is a continuum.



Source: *The Futurist*, December 1982 p. 34-39.

Cleveland has some useful things to say about his categories:

- **Data** comes about through research, creation, gathering, and discovery.
- **Information** has context. Data is turned into information by organizing it so that we can easily draw conclusions. Data is also turned into information by "presenting" it, such as making it visual or auditory.
- **Knowledge** has the complexity of experience, which come about by seeing it from different perspectives. This is why training and education is difficult - one cannot count on one person's knowledge transferring to another. Knowledge is built from scratch by the learner through experience. Information is static, but knowledge is dynamic as it lives within us.
- **Wisdom** is the ultimate level of understanding. As with knowledge, wisdom operates within us. We can share our experiences that create the building blocks for wisdom, however, it need to be communicated with even more understanding of the personal contexts of our audience than with knowledge sharing.

The IDS has variously described its web-based efforts as Information Services (circa 2002) and more recently Knowledge Services. Eldis highlights in its purpose '*..use and exchange (of) relevant, evidence-based development knowledge and documentation*'.

[See recommendation (1)]

Use

Eldis in particular details quantitative usage targets. Evidence emerging from various on-line communities is that: 1% of participants create substantive content, 10% respond to or improve this content, and 89% only view it¹. Is on-line viewing classed as 'use' of a service, or only where the knowledge gained from that viewing is being used in a tangible development context or having been put into use is having an impact?

Given the hierarchy of Eldis objectives, 'use' could be considered to be engagement with the knowledge service in ways that better inform pro-poor decision-making. In the same context 'target users' would be development policymakers and practitioners and those who inform and shape their decision making. One can construct a strong intellectual argument that this group is very broad and that policy influence is multi-dimensional – such that any 'use' could be beneficial. However, it is highly likely that more clarity on the processes by which Eldis and other MK4D knowledge services do (and can better) inform pro-poor decision-making could also usefully inform the development and delivery of the service.

c. About the evaluation (rationale)

Eldis is funded by a donor consortium: it receives funding from DFID under MK4D, and from NORAD, SIDA, and SDC². Having been running for 10 years, the donors have requested a significant external independent evaluation of the service. This is the first major independent evaluation of Eldis. It serves an accountability function for the donors, is linked with a MK4D review, and will assist with decision-making about further funding and operation. Both evaluations will also feed into IDS's own reflexive learning about its knowledge services, particularly a planned strategic review being carried out in 2007.

The Eldis evaluation considers Eldis in greater depth than only the OPR. It is guided by the classical OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact.

Table 1: OECD/DAC evaluation criteria

(As laid out in the DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance)

Category	Description	Questions
<i>Relevance</i>	The extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor	<p>To what extent are the objectives of the programme still valid?</p> <p>Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives?</p> <p>Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the intended impacts and effects?</p>

¹ Blair Nonnecke and Jenny Preece (2000) Lurker demographics: counting the silent Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on Human factors in computing systems 2000, The Hague, The Netherlands April 01 - 06, 2000 ISBN:1-58113-216-6

² In telephone interview NORAD confirmed 750,000 Krone and SDC 150,000-200,000 Swiss Francs

<i>Effectiveness</i>	A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives	To what extent were the objectives achieved / are likely to be achieved? What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
<i>Efficiency</i>	Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term which signifies that the aid uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted.	Were activities cost-efficient? Were objectives achieved on time? Was the programme or project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?
<i>Impact</i>	The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators. The examination should be concerned with both intended and unintended results and must also include the positive and negative impact of external factors, such as changes in terms of trade and financial conditions.	What has happened as a result of the programme or project? What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries? How many people have been affected?
<i>Sustainability</i>	Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially sustainable.	To what extent did the benefits of a programme or project continue after donor funding ceased? What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the programme or project?

Sources:

The *DAC Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance*, OECD (1991), Glossary of Terms Used in Evaluation, in 'Methods and Procedures in Aid Evaluation', OECD (1986), and the *Glossary of Evaluation and Results Based Management (RBM) Terms*, OECD (2000).

3. Methodology

The evaluation of Eldis is restricted to 50 person-days total input for the assignment, it was expected to primarily use evidence already collected by IDS and undertake visits to three countries in which there are IDS knowledge service users – Malawi, Tanzania and Bangladesh See TORs in Annex I.

We have used a core team of two evaluators, working with specialists in particular topics, and evaluators from the South. We have used a concurrent approach, whereby MK4D is evaluated, with all five services being dealt with to the same depth, and then re-visiting Eldis in a second, more in-depth, round of enquiry.

The three key instruments for the evaluation are:

- Interviews (face to face, and telephone)
- Document review
- Surveys and studies (questionnaires and case studies)

We have used three complementary approaches to assess use and usefulness of the knowledge services:

- A horizontal sample of users across the services (most resources).
- A vertical approach, identifying Trade as a key contemporary development theme with KS Managers and tracking it vertically through the knowledge services (case study work).
- A counterfactual approach that targets non-users (a survey).

Through the counter-factual approach we have attempted to assess the reputation and relevance aspects of the knowledge services, through a survey of potential users who are not necessarily current actual users. For this we made use of databases of development professionals, other than those held for IDS' knowledge services. These were drawn from a list of development professional available to us that match the split of users of Eldis.

We have also looked into how well all the knowledge services, particularly Eldis, are optimized for search engines, i.e. how 'Google-able' is Eldis. This has been tested in a vertical manner on a number of key themes in different resources areas.

4. Achievements

a. Delivery of products (*quantitative aspects*)

To what extent has Eldis delivered the range and quantity of products and services set out in its Logframe?

Eldis aims to promote the use and exchange of relevant, evidence-based development knowledge and documentation, using ICT-enabled communication channels. It's logframe Purpose is 'Development practitioners use and exchange relevant, evidence-based development knowledge and documentation, using ICT-enabled communication channels'. (see the Logframe is in Annex II] The delivery of Eldis products and services is guided by a communications model with the following service elements:

- To provide a flexible, multi-featured portal structure
- To aspire to be a trusted source of quality material
- To offer wide coverage across the development sector
- To present a diversity of viewpoints
- To summarise, organise and contextualise material

- To communicate with a wide range of audiences
- To help to influence policy setting processes by virtue of the above.

Quantitative evidence of the range and quality of products and services derives from the Means of Verification set out in the Eldis Logframe. These include: 'Bios' of users, a Background Paper on Communication Model, Annual Reviews, 'Send to a friend' messages Web and email surveys of Resource Guides and web and email resources. The Eldis resources on this includes 2,820 questionnaire responses from a range of surveys, 19,000 'send-to-a-friend' messages, 40 in depth interviews, website and email usage statistics, as well as self-evaluation and background papers (some still in draft form) and production statistics.

Substantial efforts have been undertaken to assess use of Eldis *by its users* (detailed user surveys by email and web questionnaires; feedback on Eldis guides, country visits, interviews, Bios (interviews/stories from Eldis drawing on 'most significant change' approaches) and monitoring of send-to-a-friend). All aim to find out more about how people who use Eldis access and disseminate research, in some cases also looking at the role of language.

The review team strongly endorse the proposed formation of advisory groups, constituted as a loose network, and coordinated primarily electronically (possibly using Social Networking software). This could deepen understanding of sample users, seek advice on editorial issues and facilitate direct interaction between members of the group.

[See recommendation (2)]³.

[See recommendation (3)]

The evaluation question here is 'To what extent has Eldis delivered the range and quantity of products and services set out in its Logframe?' Before discussing the use of the Logframe to assess the delivery of the range and quality of Eldis products it is necessary to comment on the current Logframe. The Eldis Logframe was last updated in March 2007, in consultation with CRD with 'Wolverhampton's logframe trainers' (as recommended by DFID). Eldis reported no plans to rewrite it in the near term. However, whilst using the Logframe in this review it is clear that some Outputs read as indicators rather than objectives; some Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVIs) do not have Quality, Quantity and Time (QQT) characteristics, whilst others are actually Means of Verification (MOVs). There are some Purpose level aspirations of the project for which no OVIs are yet formulated, e.g. 'Eldis communicating with a wide range of audiences'. The hierarchy of objectives is not yet written in the completed future tense and a large number of purpose-level OVIs are repeated at Output level.

[See recommendation (4)].

At the time of considering an Eldis Logframe rewrite it will be relevant to consider one suggestion proposed in the MK4D review, the possible move to a single Knowledge Services Logframe, owned by all the projects. Beneath this, services would still need to have a monitorable results framework and business plan, and it would not obviate the need for project level M&E. However, it would promote the integration of the services towards a common goal – which is reduced poverty and injustice through better access to global

³ Eldis target users are those development professionals that Eldis would like to reach. The sub-set of these that are known users are commonly surveyed by Eldis, but the opinions of those targeted but yet to use the service are less well understood.

common goods on development thinking. It would also reduce the number of logframes associated with the Bundle and promote greater ownership within the services of the overarching Logframe.

Quantitative evidence for product delivery is summarized and tabulated in Annex III. The table highlights possible areas for OVI development, and the sub-set of the current Logframe OVIs, most with QQT characteristics, and evidence of the extent that Eldis has delivered the range and quality of products it had anticipated.

The collection of qualitative data has been initiated by Eldis in the form of various feedback mechanisms as well as 'Bios'. A bio tells the 'story' of a particular web user's engagement with Eldis. According to the Eldis briefing about Bios, 'most importantly, (a bio) will reflect processes of change that have occurred as a result of using Eldis, with an emphasis on the 'most significant change or changes''. However, many bios have not yet really highlight 'Most Significant Changes' (MSC), instead they have tended to ask 'How has Eldis contributed to interviewees' work and what changes has Eldis played a part in?' Respondents talk about how they needed information (e.g. for a proposal) and how they found it on Eldis. According to Eldis analysis of some of the collected Bios, two broad types of change are reported: immediate, short-term change as a reaction to particular needs or events and facilitated by access to a particular piece of information; and longer-term change experienced as a shift in the way an organisation or individual works. The areas of changes are reported to fall into four main categories: empowerment, capacity building, developing and funding projects, and monitoring and evaluation.

Qualitative data can provide a richness of information that is more difficult to glean from quantitative evidence alone, and the collection of this data by Eldis is a very positive step towards even better understanding of why and how people use Eldis. Qualitative evidence (e.g. from Bios) will be especially useful to validate or amend emerging 'theories of change'. If some of the qualitative data can be collected using Most Significant Change approaches this could turn up some powerful 'user-defined' criteria in addition to *a priori* Logframe indicators relating to use and value (see further under section on utility of information).

The evidence from Eldis, presented in Annex III, along with bios and other qualitative data suggests that users find the service useful for their needs and that Eldis is reaching a wide range of audiences.

If recommendation 2 is implemented, this will enable Eldis to also assess awareness of the service and perceptions about its utility amongst likely clients who are not current users.

The Eldis dataset is continually growing and Creative Commons Agreements and CD ROM development and distribution is enhancing reach to those with limited web access. Indicators suggest that intelligent use is made of the resource with $\frac{3}{4}$ of users coming to Eldis to seek latest information and nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ of users seeking syntheses. The evidence for demand for greater inclusion of 'southern produced content' is found in Resource Guide Surveys and bios, and would intuitively seem to be relevant and useful content to achieve the purpose.

Web usage targets have been impacted by the protracted shift to the ORYX platform and disruption associated with this. There is some evidence from a counter-factual survey conducted as part of this review that some development professionals that might use Eldis remain unaware of the service or unconvinced of the benefit it holds for them. Of 80 development professionals contacted, 43 responded. Amongst the 17 respondents to the question 'How useful do you find each of the IDS knowledge services? In relation to Eldis 5 said 'Very Useful', 3 said 'Useful', 4 said 'Not very useful' and 5 said 'Not used at all'. Marketing strategies, which may address this issue, are to be taken up after the ORYX platform is fully functional.

[See recommendation (5)]

How effective are Eldis editorial and production systems in delivering these products and services?

Hitting targets

Eldis produces new content in various forms on a wide range of topics including:

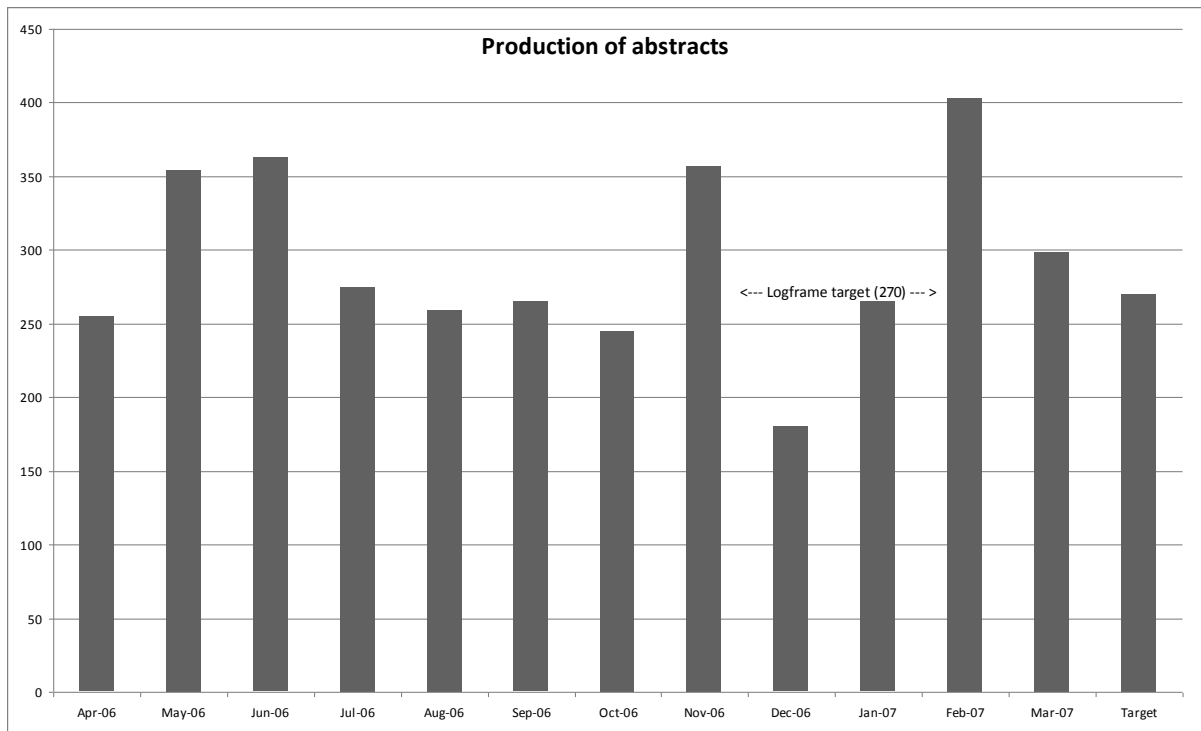
- Resource Guides covering: Ageing, Agriculture, Aid and Debt, Children and Young People, Climate Change, Conflict and Security, CSR, Education, Environment, Finance, Food Security, Gender, Globalisation, Governance, ICTs, Manuals, Migration, Participation, Poverty and Trade as well as HIV/AIDS , Health, Health Systems and Human Resources for Health Resource Guides which are produced through the HDI team but are part of Eldis)
- Dossiers and Key Issue Papers (covering: Gender and Trade, Social Protection, Doha, CSR Tourism, Conflict and Security, Economic Growth and Education, Asian Drivers, Post primary education, Social protection and education, Human resources and education, Non-state providers and education, Governance Education and health)
- Community Applications (see community.Eldis.org) including Blogs (e.g. Eldis News, Conflict, Conflict and Security, ICT, Story telling, IDS 40 conference group).

Eldis sets editorial and commissioning targets of itself, amounting to around 400 new pieces of content each month. Production varies and average production falls close to these targets (See Figures 1 and 3). The Senior Editor highlighted his objective to maintain a balance between reaching targets and allowing the extra time needed to accommodate accessing 'southern content', which is reported to be harder to find and more variable in quality.

[See recommendation (6)]

Increasing efficiency

Effective delivery in terms of value for money is difficult to assess. At the most basic level creating content has an actual cost per abstract written, for example, in terms of person-minutes (for Abstractors, Editors and Copy Editors). The largest emphasis is on abstracting because, according to Eldis, feedback demonstrates a market for abstracts. Abstracts are characterised by the program as 'multi reusable documents' and are highlighted amongst other things as a means to pull out policy issues. The exact number of abstracts produced varies each month. Production throughout a recent 12 month period is shown in Figure 1.

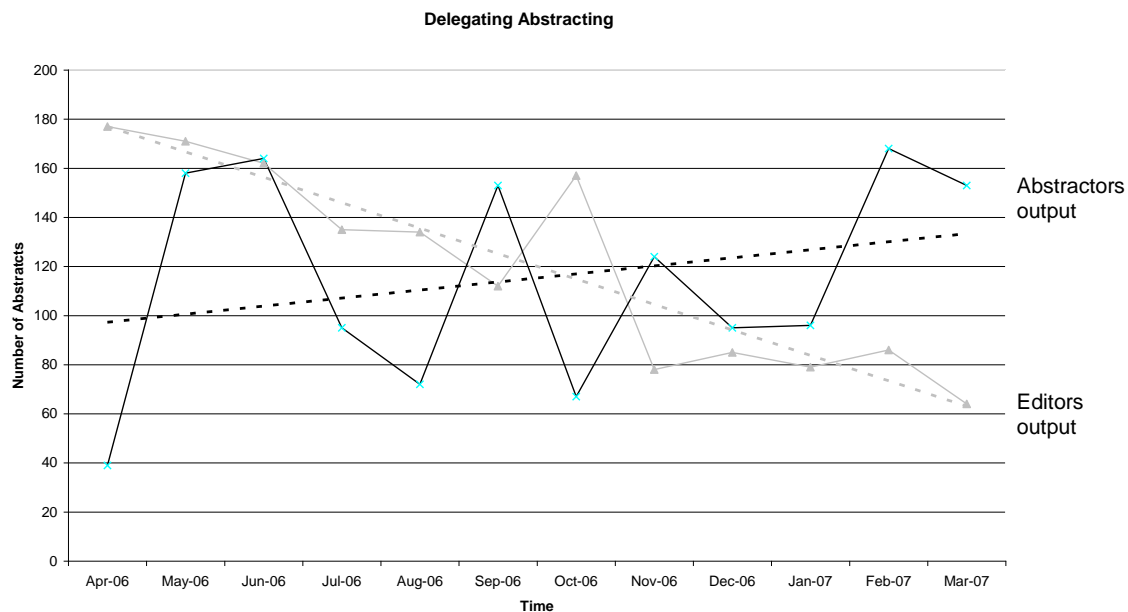


Source: Eldis Content Production Data

Figure 1: Production of abstracts from Eldis

To increase efficiency abstracts could be shorter and thus more content produced for the same amount of staff time, but quality, which is valued by users, would then diminish.

Eldis employs on average seven Editors and a similar number of more junior Abstractors who work under the Editors guidance. To increase (cost-) effectiveness in producing its content and services Eldis aims to delegate as much abstract writing to Abstractors as possible to free up Editors time to engage more in marketing and monitoring. As can be seen from Figure 2 this approach has met with some success.



Broken trend line = average no. of abstracts produced per month

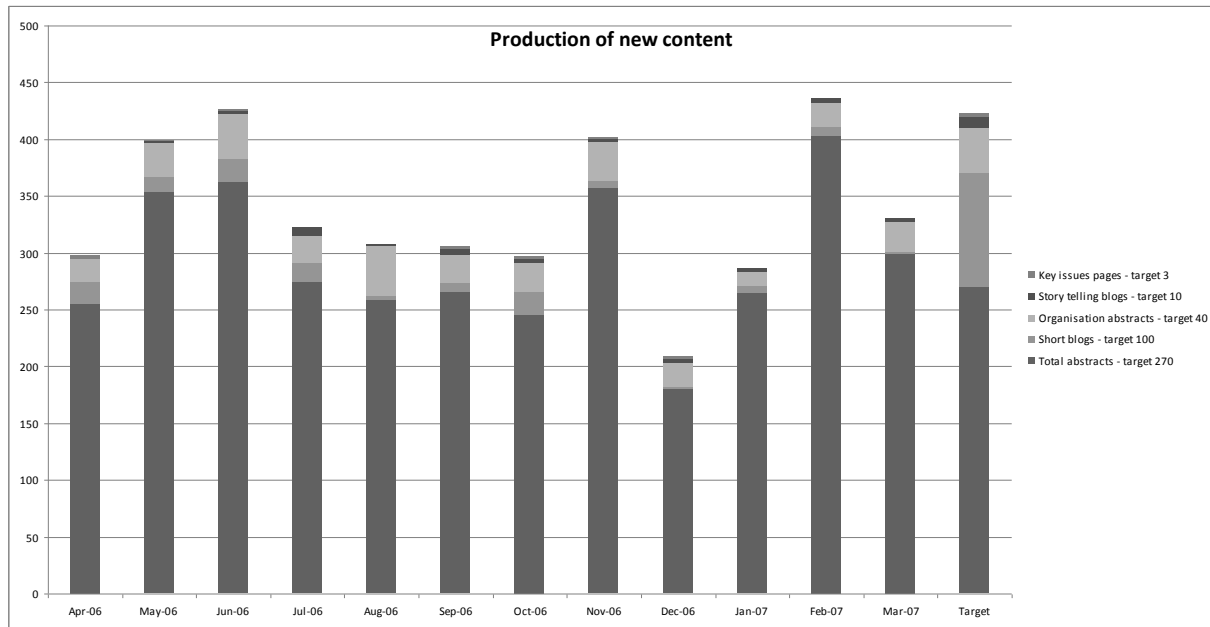
Source: Eldis Content Production Data

Figure 2: The changing role for Editors at Eldis

The differentiation of roles being implemented by Eldis appears to be consistent with efficient practice and evidence suggests that delegation to Abstractors is working in practice. The potential benefits to Editors and Senior Editorial staff are yet to be fully felt as the discursive and planning needs of the new technical platform have absorbed significant staff time.

[See recommendation (7)]

In addition to abstracting a range of other content is developed by Eldis (see Figure 3). Some types of content development is similarly on hold or effectively delayed by the switch to the new ORYX platform (see next section for details) including Blogs and new community applications although technically these are not on Oryx.



Source: Eldis Content Production Data

Figure 3: Production of 'new content' from Eldis

Dead links, electronic response rates and server down time

Perceived performance at the user interface is affected by Up-time Stability (the proportion of a given time period in which the website is accessible and running correctly), which is a function of the technical platform on which Eldis operates, electronic response rates and visible errors and dead links on the site.

Broken links and faulty HTML relate to human management and Eldis operates a coping strategy to try to address changed locations of external documents and can cache copies of remote files to reduce chance of broken links. To cope with heavy user loads, which have impacted on internal and outside response rates over time, to improve up-time stability and in order to invest in the future, a strategic decision was taken to upgrade the electronic platform. The new system is referred to as Oryx.

The transition to Oryx has impacted negatively on efficiency, taking people away from day-to-day tasks, and delaying the opportunity to make changes (to the old system). The substantial delay in the transition to Oryx has increased the duration and severity of these problems in the short term. However, because of the content management system in the new platform, the editorial process and workflow efficiency will increase once the new system is up and running. Oryx published formats are more codified, as the new platform requires everyone to work with page templates. This means that pages will be consistent in structure and style.

Staff satisfaction and retention

There is an annual appraisal process and also an IDS-wide 'Stress Survey'. Although the Stress Survey is anonymous, there is a general perception (not specific to Eldis) that people are over-worked, that there are high expectations of performance and that people often have to manage complex and sometimes conflicting processes (P Ferguson, pers. comm. (1.8.07)). However, no specific details or examples were available.

On the same topic, the Senior Editor (in a telephone interview) later commented that Eldis team-members are more time-pressured and engage in more inherently stressful activities than some parts of academic environments: they need, for example, to constantly (and repeatedly) meet weekly and production goals for content sourcing, production and marketing.

Staff turn over is described as moderate with many Editors staying in post for several years before moving on to other work. Many Abstractors are current or ex-students. With almost a 'time-and-motion' approach to monitoring productivity there is a risk that the 'big picture' view can get lost. In this regard, Eldis is already beginning to evolve new roles. For example, the Senior Editor is engaged in an overview of editorial processes and staff management, not just copy editing. The team are considering other HR questions as their task expands. These include the possibility to engage more specialists, more clerical administration support, and Eldis Community site administration support. This is a new departure and could evolve along a 'community of practice' line with country members producing content and Eldis staff copy editing. Outsourcing selected abstracts to Abstractors as mentioned above (see figure 2) is already on-going.

This could increase access to southern produced content and facilitate greater interactive connections with users as well as direct interaction between members of common interest groups in the emerging Eldis Community. There could be cost implications, including possible savings (some content developed by southern Eldis Community members in place of some content developed by UK based Abstractors and their associated salary costs) but additional management requirements and costs to facilitate community developed content.

Change, such as the long-running switch to Oryx is challenging and has clearly impacted recent efficiency (see above). However, in terms of future efficiencies there are prospects to technically decentralise content management through Oryx.

[See recommendation (8)]

b. Use of Eldis by development professionals

To what extent is Eldis achieving the targeted levels and patterns of use set out in its Logframe?
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Geography of use

Eldis is well used. The main website commonly exceeds its Logframe target of around 80,000 visitors per month (e.g. March 2007 over 100,360 visitors) though this has dipped in the past few months. About 70% are users are from northern based addresses (see Figure 5 and Figure 6).

The percentage of 'southern users' of Eldis has grown to around the 2008 Logframe target of 30%, though this varies with products e.g. email use is higher in the south. The latest version of the website statistics shows a slightly higher southern usage rate: 30.5% for 2006-7 (see table 2).

Table 2: Unique visitors to Eldis by North/South region

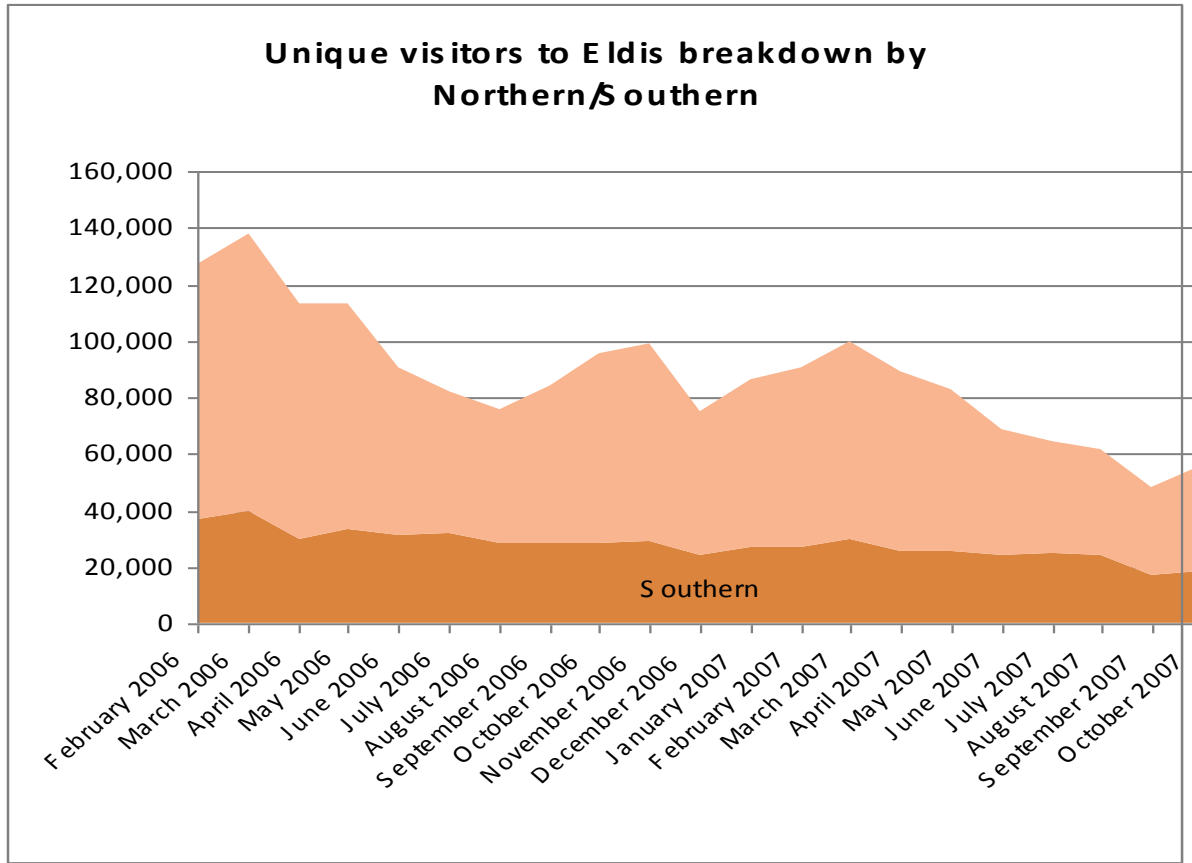
Month and Year	Southern	Northern	% Southern	% Northern
April 2005	29,980	92,255	25	75
February 2006	36,683	90,830	29	71
March 2006	39,645	98,172	29	71
April 2006	29,872	83,239	26	74
May 2006	32,988	80,610	29	71
June 2006	31,000	59,916	34	66
July 2006	31,520	50,859	38	62
August 2006	28,137	47,775	37	63
September 2006	28,272	55,982	34	66
October 2006	28,458	67,165	30	70
November 2006	28,932	70,527	29	71
December 2006	23,745	50,973	32	68
January 2007	26,966	59,596	31	69
February 2007	27,243	63,439	30	70
March 2007	29,690	70,476	30	70
April 2007	25,706	63,563	29	71
May 2007	25,298	57,861	30	70
June 2007	23,934	45,034	35	65
July 2007	24,500	39,944	38	62
August 2007	24,376	37,356	39	61
September 2007	17,139	31,014	36	64
October 2007	18,441	37,290	33	67

Around 35,000 users (equivalent to the Logframe target) subscribe to email bulletins from Eldis with each subscriber registered for an average of 8 bulletins - amounting to the distribution of around 280,000 email messages per mailing cycle. Among email subscribers, approximately 45% are Northern and 55% Southern (2006 figures, 2007 figures are in preparation) (see Figure 6). There may be limitations related to current capacity to accurately define the geographical origin of email subscribers. This exceeds the Logframe 2008 target of 40% and shows the continuing importance of this format for Southern users.

The growth of internet access throughout much of the developing world will be likely to impact on the percentage of southern usage. However, the trend in Figure 4 seems to be going the other way. It is unclear if the switch to the new server has temporarily disadvantaged users in the south more than the north.

In general terms, the ratio of Developed Country access to the internet to Developing Country access is approximately 9:1 where as the average ratio of northern to southern users of Eldis is 3:1. This implies that, although it is harder (and often still more costly) for southern users to access the internet, relatively more are accessing Eldis.

If portals like Eldis are rich veins of information in an information sparse environment, then the incentive to access Eldis and the value to the user will be higher, implying that southern use will continue to grow. However, although developing country users will be likely to be increasingly less constrained by internet access, competition for their attention on the web will also be likely to increase. This may provide a further basis for implementing *recommendation 5* (see page 7).



Source: ISSEL (presented as provided by Peter Ferguson)

Figure 4: Time series breakdown of unique visitors to Eldis website

Website usage data is not available in the current reporting standard (ABCE) for months before April 05, so the percentage growth is assessed in the previous standard for 2004/5 to 2005/6. Data are also unavailable in the current standard for May 05 to Sept 05, so 2005/6 to 2006/7 growth is assessed on a 7 month period. April 2004 to April 2006 growth is based on old standards. Data on the type of information being sought is taken from 2006/7 resource guide surveys.

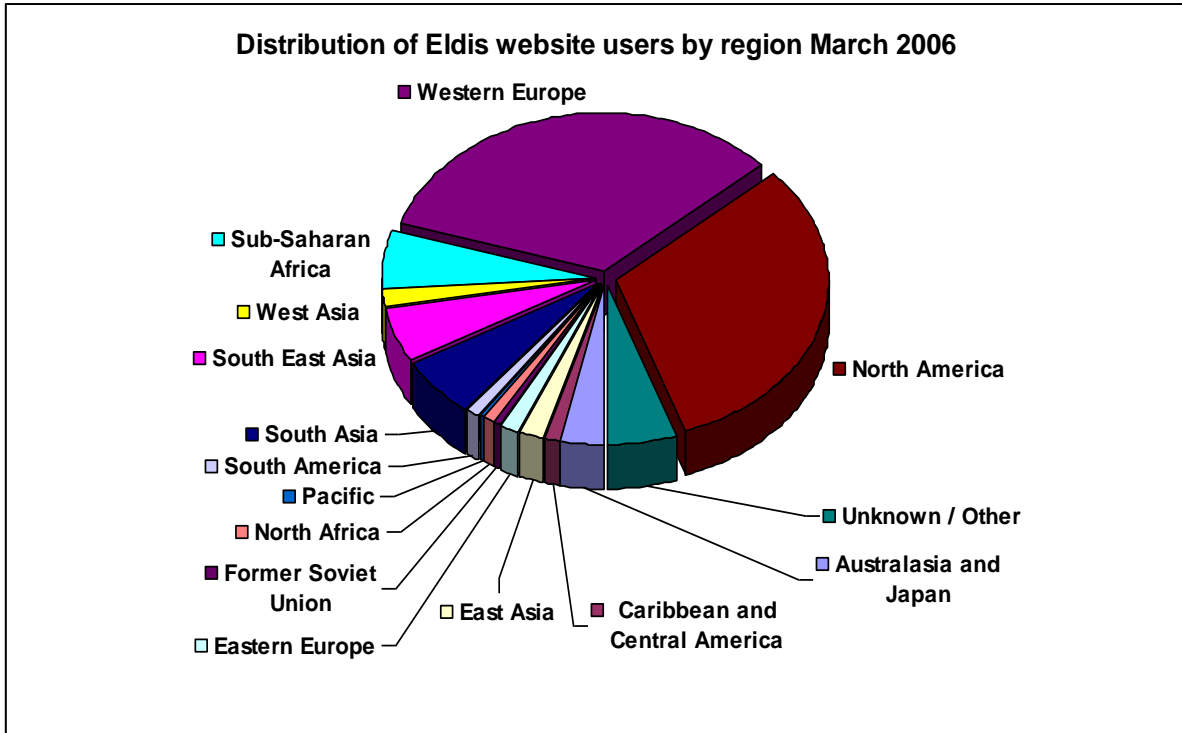


Figure 5: Distribution of Eldis website users by region

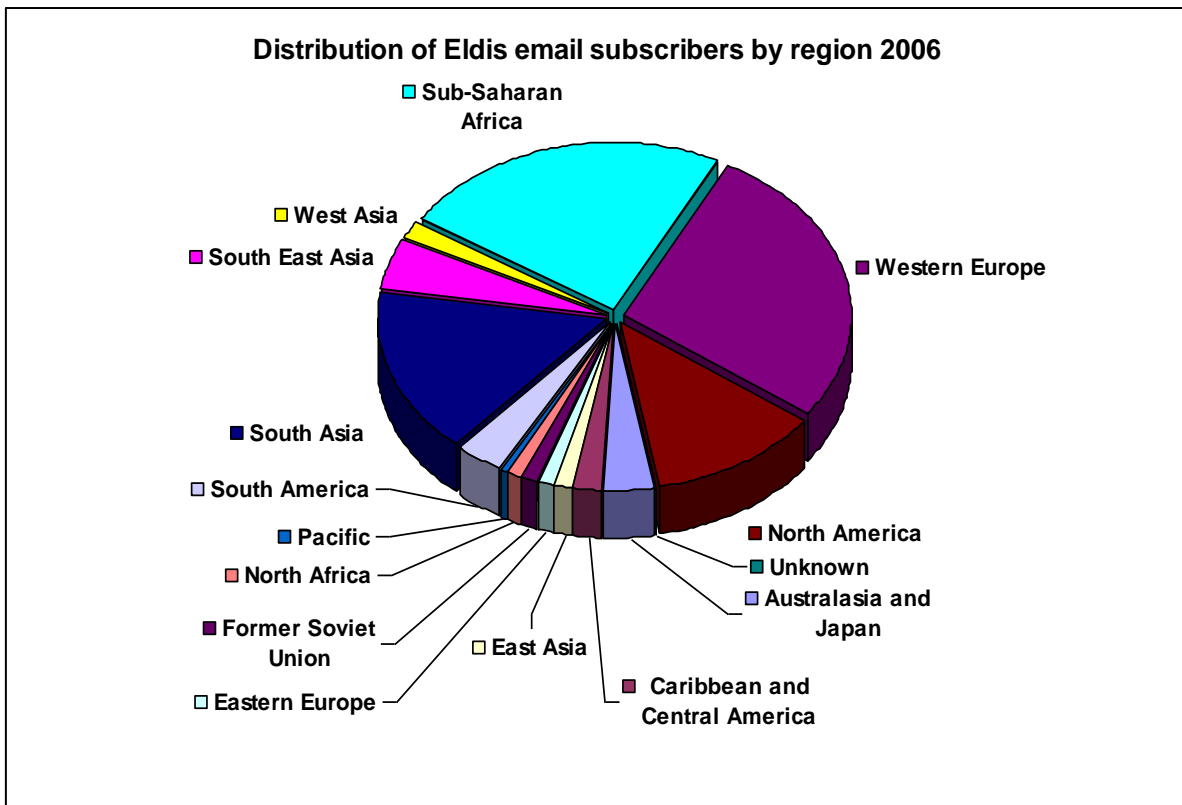


Figure 6: Distribution of Eldis email subscribers by region

Southern-originated material

The sharing of southern-originated research content is an important function for Eldis. There are four general challenges facing southern content that make this so: Journals from the developing world commonly face problems of poor science, poor visibility and poor recognition, whilst good science done in the developing countries is usually published in the high impact foreign journals⁴.

One of Eldis's Logframe targets is to promote the dissemination of southern produced research by increasing the quantity of southern-originated material in its database. This concurs with demand for southern content assembled by other service providers, which is increasing. For example, in the slightly different though related sphere of southern produced research from journals. The number of full-text downloads from ~60 journals accessed through the non-profit Bioline International site⁵ that distributes Open Access publications generated in developing countries, rose to 2.5 million in 2006.

Southern records are defined currently within Eldis by the country of publishing. Although this is a simple definition it lacks rigor as a definition of southern-originated material. Eldis are well aware of the challenges they face in this regard (see for example MK4D self-evaluation) (and no simple solution is obvious to the reviewers). In addition, and as Eldis are also aware, the issue of northern verses southern content is more complex than the origin of an item or its geographical reference in terms of classifying southern 'production'. Whilst the value and relevance of content, and its 'consumption' by southern users will be equally complex, e.g. trade negotiators in the south might chose to learn from accessing northern content.

Southern records make up about 16% of the database for 2005-6, compared to the Logframe target of 32%. Some of the southern records displayed by Eldis come from a close association with another information portal called GDNNet, the online initiative of the Global Development Network. This was set up in 2000, in collaboration with IDS, and was based closely on the Eldis model. It was hosted by IDS using the same technical platform as Eldis, allowing records to be shared between the two websites. In response to the desire by GDN to take over hosting of the GDNNet website, plans for this were incorporated into the design specification for the new Oryx platform. The idea was for both GDN and IDS to use the Oryx system, allowing them to develop their websites independently, but to continue to exchange content easily. An agreement was signed setting down arrangements for ongoing content-sharing between Eldis and GDN. Subsequently, GDN decided to accelerate the process of taking over the hosting of the GDNNet site, so in early 2006 it was transferred to Cairo and the content moved to a locally-hosted 'interim platform'. At this point, content sharing between the two sites was interrupted – which had the knock-on effect of reducing the flow of southern originated material onto Eldis. The plan was that this would be a temporary move, and that in due course both Eldis and GDNNet would adopt Oryx as their platform, allowing content sharing to resume. Because of the delays in the development of Oryx, the interim arrangement has lasted longer than expected. But the intension is to re-establish a content-sharing mechanism as soon as is feasible. This is currently scheduled for early 2008, linking up Oryx with the interim GDNNet platform in Cairo. The question of whether GDNNet will ultimately move to Oryx is being reviewed. For a number of reasons, it may be preferable to develop the interim platform further rather than switching to Oryx.

Three other influences are likely to increase quantum of southern content:

⁴ - Sahu, D.K. (2006) *Open access in the developing world: regaining the lost impact*. In: Workshop on Electronic Publishing and Open Access: Developing Country Perspectives, 2-3 Nov 2006, Bangalore, India.

⁵ Bioline International <http://www.bioline.org.br>

- Personnel and editorial changes in the Eldis team, through which the Senior Editor aspires to more focused sourcing of materials from Southern countries.
- Increased reader engagement through the Eldis Community, and
- The plan to redesign and reprioritise Eldis Country profiles to be implemented after the launch of Oryx.

Utility of information

Eldis contributes to an important niche in the development information market, as shown by the geography of its use (see above) however the anticipated quantitative expansion of the use of its web-based services appears to have been less marked. This may be affected by the protracted change to the Oryx platform (see above e.g. p.12). Whilst Eldis email services subscription is up by 17% this year (compared to the Logframe target of 10% per annum increase) visitors to the Eldis website dropped 28% between 2005/6 and 2006/7. So the average growth between April 2004 and April 2007 was 0.1%.

However, it is also currently unclear if this measured drop is a real or a statistical phenomenon.

- If this is real, it maybe due to the advent and use of more similar products, (R4D, more proficient use of Google, World Bank website, Development Gateway, OneWorld) and less demand (i.e. Eldis contribution to the development information market is diminishing).
- Or, it is a result of the way things are being recorded. This drop coincides with the adoption by Eldis of the then new Google Sitemap technology for registering pages with Google. Before November-December 2006, Google recorded around 400,000 pages of Eldis content, whilst the true number of individual pages in Eldis was around 26,000. The adoption of the site map technology reduced the recorded number of pages from 400,000 to 50,000.

Google Sitemaps should result in a more accurate recording of pages (hence the drop in number recorded), and is recommended as good industry practice. However, in practice a secondary impact of this seems to be on recorded traffic levels, and caution is required when interpreting traffic rankings over time.

The Eldis team and the review team have concerns over the comparability of website usage data across the time period. It is difficult to know exactly how Google is really weighting its searches. Earlier figures of Eldis usage might be inflated if Google practice included search engine maintenance traffic. Eldis is seeking advice on this from consultants experienced in analysis of website statistics.

Other quantitative targets set by Eldis in their Logframe include indicators related to why users come to Eldis. So far, the monitoring required to evaluate these against targets is incomplete. Currently there is no monitored level of users coming to find Southern-produced content (compared to the Logframe target of 10%). Data from 2006/7 resource guide surveys indicate 75% sought latest documents (compared to the Logframe target of 40%), and 29% sought synthesis briefings (compared to the Logframe target of 10%). However, users may come to Eldis for a variety of reasons.

Send-to-a-friend data may hold some useful qualitative information related to these targets. This was discussed by Eldis but these records are not anonymous and are tagged to named individuals and their colleagues and so were not requested by the review team. Bios also aim to be a source of qualitative information based on short (telephone) interviews. There is a tendency in the interview style to ask closed questions and a slight tendency to encourage

positive responses, which complicates the interpretation of responses (Examples include: 'What do you like about Eldis?' 'What is it you particularly like about Eldis?' 'How has Eldis most contributed to your work?' '(We are asking) a few questions about Eldis and how (you) find it useful'). A greater emphasis as proposed in the 'Briefing note on Eldis Bios' on Most Significant Change approaches could be beneficial.

[See recommendation 9]

5. Relevance

a. Meeting information needs of target users

To what extent is Eldis filling a gap in terms of meeting the information needs of target users?

The target users

Eldis target users come from a wide range of backgrounds. The survey data available at the time of writing suggests that the majority of current Eldis users are located broadly in the academic research (28%) and NGO (29%) sectors with a smaller proportion (15%) working in donor organisations and government. Specifically users include teachers & trainers, researchers, NGOs, businesses, policy makers & influencers, and all typically have a range of subject interests, rather than a focus on single topics.

Engagement with a wide range of players within the research-practitioner-policy formation nexus is essential if Eldis is to contribute to the goal of better informed, pro-poor decision-making by development policymakers and practitioners. Eldis audience sectors include:

- **Researchers:** including policy-based researchers in international NGOs, donor organisations, government ministries and think-tanks.
- **Practitioners:** this includes field-worker level practitioners; country desk officers in donor agencies, multilateral agencies and international NGOs; subject desk officers in donor agencies, multilateral agencies and international NGOs; and online community networks around subjects or issues.
- **Policy-makers:** in donor organisations and NGOs.
- **Policy-influencers:** including lobby groups; advisors in donor agencies and government ministries; and donor agencies.
- **Information intermediaries:** those who pass Eldis information on to others. This includes development web-site managers of specialised websites and gateways by subject and by country; and intranets in bilateral and multilateral development organisations, NGOs, and Southern governments. Intermediaries, who themselves are serving our other key audiences, are a key marketing target for Eldis as they can act as "multipliers" in delivering Eldis content to end users.

Following discussion with donors of these target audiences, Eldis plan to concentrate their marketing activities on those people living and working in developing countries focusing on three priority countries identified together with donors – Malawi, Tanzania and Bangladesh.

Studies of current users identify much satisfaction with Eldis in terms of meeting information needs. However, from the counterfactual survey conducted as part of this review and from bio transcripts there is a suggestion that many more potential users are unaware of Eldis

[See recommendation (10)]

The information needs of target users

Country studies were conducted in Malawi, Tanzania and Bangladesh. The list of sites used and interviewees is tabulated in Annex V. The studies revealed the varied ways that users use information depends on their role in the field of development. A core reason for usage by journalists, scientists and individual users is to keep updated on the latest findings and debates for their area of expertise. People in more operational roles based in developing countries have reported adapting examples of best practice or further developing these. Others source information for evaluating their own field-based projects or for sourcing background information for funding proposals. Some users even gleaned examples of formats for reporting back to donors where funding had been secured. Another key group of users are those in strategic positions who fed the information into broader policy processes at organisational or governmental levels. Several user in the counter-factual survey specified job searching.

The country studies revealed that target users need information for: research, training, postgraduate studies, preparing lectures and assisting students/supervision, consultancies, project proposals, field work, PRA, livelihoods analysis, accessing grey literature, fund raising, advocacy, strategy development and policy making. Information is sought to substantiate reports and provide regional perspectives on issues such as health and education, to enhance cross-sectoral understanding of issues and to help in clarifying concepts, developing indicators and setting standards.

A conclusion from the country studies was that information seeking behaviour is not a predetermined rational phenomenon; overall users manage to find information from the net and few are loyal users of a limited number of sources. Therefore, few users exhibit an overt preference for an IDS or a non-IDS source, as can be seen from the next section.

Where target users obtain new knowledge about development issues

Interviews with users in Malawi, Tanzania and Bangladesh conducted by the review team as well as a counter-factual survey of development professionals and Eldis 'Bios' suggest that target users obtain new knowledge about development issues from a range of sources.

Some people reported actually seeking out information; whilst many depended on bulletins and digests sent to them from various sources. The Global Development Network (originally set up by the World Bank but now an independent organisation) was reported to be a popular source among users surveyed in Bangladesh as well as a wide range of established sources for sectors such as health, natural resources, etc.

'Among the non-IDS sources GDN scored highly and people also frequent the websites of the different donor organisations' (Anuradha Mukherjee, Bangladesh Country Study, August 2007).

From country studies and 'Bios' it appears that many users accidentally chanced upon Eldis while searching for information on the net through search engines, most commonly Google and Yahoo. Very few reported visiting IDS sites directly, though some were directed to the IDS sites by their professors when undertaking their master's studies. On the other hand comments indicate that Eldis website is a "good place to start" searching, facilitating searches for particular information and providing an indication of the types of documentation available.

Interviewees with slow download speeds and expensive internet connections reported the value of off-line products including books and periodicals and CDs, including the Eldis CD-Rom. By contrast, few interviewees reported using Eldis Newsfeeds or Newsblogs so far. Most had never submitted documents for inclusion on the site though may not be publishing elsewhere either. This could indicate that more targeted marketing is needed with such recent information capturing tools, but may be due to other reasons such as poor internet access or a lack of familiarity with more interactive web tools.

[See recommendation (11)]

Country studies revealed that rather than relying on a single portal such as Eldis, users regularly access a range of journals, donor, international organisation and other sites, sometimes these are subject specific sites e.g. health. Others use content from sites via Google without deliberately targeting the site

In Bangladesh, donors and International NGOs reported having their own internal knowledge systems where information on partner projects from across the world are compiled and made accessible to their staff with regular updates and alerts. NGOs reported frequently accessing regional knowledge and training sites. Academic researchers access technical material, original dissertations and data from academic journals and peer-reviewed articles and speciality sites. In Tanzania and Malawi, information resources on development issues were accessed by country study interviewees. All these are shown in annex⁶:

What this data shows is that in these three targeted countries, people very commonly search first by using Google but also have their own trusted information sources. This was also a main conclusion from the counter-factual survey responses where almost every response highlighted Google as the top priority search engine preference for development information with respondents each having their preferred web sources. Many of the transcripts of bios also make reference to the use of Google. Eldis has consistently had positive feedback from existing users. However, the information seeking behaviour of development professionals, more generally, makes use of the searching capacity of providers, like Google, to access information right across the web.

[See recommendation (12)]

b. Responsiveness to (target) users

To what extent is the mix of services provided by Eldis an effective response to the varying needs and preferences of different target users (Effectiveness/Relevance)?

How well Eldis fulfils needs

The users and the uses to which they put Eldis information can be drawn from qualitative assessments (e.g. Eldis Qualitative Impact Background Paper, individual statements and interviews, Eldis 'Bios' and the counter-factual survey). NGO staff identified a range of impacts, and often appear to be the group that are 'most hungry' for information, and value the simplicity of access. Policy focused materials (referencing e.g. social protection, cash transfers, WTO issues) are valued, with impacts often related to negotiation of policies, trade agreements and processes. Often there is a need to become familiar with areas of work for

⁶ These are included for the three countries in full as they provide a useful snap shot of where people are going.

which users have had little formal training and Eldis is used for both personal and organisational learning. Similarly, teachers and trainers commonly use Eldis resources for designing training courses, and guides and other materials. Researchers often highlighted the value they attach to access to new materials, specific documents or the value of additional viewpoints. Unsurprisingly, business users emphasise the relevance to the management of their businesses. A major area of interest has been in the area of corporate social responsibility. Policy makers in government departments focused on impacts on particular processes such as National Strategic Plans, marketing strategy development, and evaluating proposed policy plans, whilst associated researchers used materials for briefings for the same. Donors highlighted the profit for their staff, more competent partners, and also greater spread of donor publications; they also highlighted competent dedicated and knowledgeable staff.

Eldis specialises in cross-sectoral coverage and multiple-delivery formats and represents a mixture of updating services and synthesis/educational services. It appears to be a popular source of development knowledge along with those referenced above in the country studies. Its focus on research, policy and strategic information is well suited for a target audience comprising policy formers, strategists, international organisations and academics. It is one of the longest established web-based development information brands and has a large user base for web and email services.

Eldis users interviewed in the ITAD evaluation country studies and many Eldis 'Bios' reported valuing the following features:

- the free, open-access site
- not needing to register
- access to full text journals
- well packaged CDs
- consistency of topics, which they can follow-up over time
- broad-ranging, not sector/institution-specific information
- provision of links to related sites.

The Eldis services scored highly as being credible and reliable in country studies. There was a reported preference for UK-based information sources over US based ones, and the fact that the information is available free of charge is an added advantage.

Some Eldis users believe the service is not well marketed and CD distribution was reported limited. The counter-factual survey conducted as part of this review (see Annex V) implies that more development professional could be made aware of the service, which may be relevant to thinking about how to publicise Eldis and its services. Although 35/43 respondents in the counter-factual survey⁷ found internet searches 'useful' or 'very useful' more than half of them had not previously heard of IDS Knowledge Services, only 13/43 had heard of Eldis and of 17 who answered the question about its usefulness - 5 found it not very useful.

It is likely that brand visibility is diminishing within web browsing environments now that searching software is increasingly fast and sophisticated and users make increasingly intelligent use of the possibilities it offers. Increasingly as reported in bios, in research reports (e.g. Mike Moran and Bill Hunt, 2005) and in surveys (e.g. the counterfactual survey for this review), information seeking behaviour takes advantage of information on the web via search engines and their scope to access and order data rather than searching favourite brands where much small sub-sets of information can be accessed. Of course the Eldis 'brand' may imply reliability of a link from Google.

⁷ i.e not a survey of Eldis users but of Development Professionals of the kind that Eldis targets.

[See recommendation (13)]

One of the gaps in surveys of users is the exclusion of the views and opinions of potential users, especially those relating to the need to overcome their constraints to use SLI are believed to be collecting this kind of data which may prove valuable in considering constraints of potential rather than actual users. In the counterfactual survey a respondent described the Eldis site as heavy on graphics and materials not easily downloadable in slow internet environments.

[See recommendation (14)]

Some users regarded Eldis as a source of general information on a particular development related subject, but for more technical issues, detailed national statistics or other local information other sources are required. A frequent comment in surveys and bios is that Eldis would benefit greatly from increased Southern-sourced content, providing more diverse regional and country perspectives. This would enable users to fulfil their perceived needs, which include drawing on relevant best-practice and making comparisons with different regions, but it would also enable them to keep up with what is happening in their own region, as many report it is sometimes difficult to get access to this information by other means. Some interviewees mentioned that they would like to see more material from the community or grassroots level of development, since this would reflect the realities of project planning and implementation and would provide a counterpoint for broader policy documents.

[See recommendation (15)]

There is little information on likely uptake, but a comment in the country study implied that feedback mechanisms and improved response speeds to users would be welcome.

[See recommendation (16)]

Although Bangladesh and Malawi survey respondents said they didn't think it was worth it for the vast majority of content to be translated, several people mentioned that they would like to see documents in languages other than English on Eldis. Content in major languages included French and Spanish, are being developed by Eldis, whilst other languages, such as Kiswahili, were referenced. In addition, it is likely that many non-English speakers are unable to access Eldis and obviously their views are not picked up in user surveys. When the DFID supported Asia-based STREAM Initiative began translating and uploading development content in languages apart from English (including Bahasa Indonesia, Bengali, Hindi, Ilongo, Khmer, Myanmar, Nepali, Oriya, Sinhala, Urdu and Vietnamese) the download rates of non-English publications rapidly overtook those in English. The issues around 'translation of meaning' are not insignificant, requiring dedicate teams of bilingual specialists. Non-specialist translators and translation software packages offer very limited effective sharing of English content in other languages.

[See recommendation (17)]

Although potentially cost-efficient 'automated' translation options do exist, e.g. Amazon's Mechanical Turk, it is unlikely that technical synthesised content can be well shared in other languages by these means.

c. Eldis in MK4D

The role of Eldis in Mobilising Knowledge for Development (MK4D) is considered in the Output to Purpose review of the bundle of Eldis, id21, BRIDGE, BLDS and Livelihoods Connect.

This review was conducted for DFID on its funding of this suite of five information services. Some of the services, such as BRIDGE and Eldis, also receive funding from other donors, though overall, DFID is the largest funder. DFID had previously partly or entirely funded these services as individual services, but in 2005 combined its funding into the MK4D programme. MK4D aimed to take advantages of synergies from the services working more closely, including sharing content and development of the Oryx software platform, as well as provision of a single central support function – the Strategic Learning Initiative (SLI). The aim of the SLI was to support and coordinate marketing, research, M&E and capacity development across and between the services.

The MK4D review report⁸ focused on the achievement, or otherwise, of the MK4D logframe targets, and hence did not review the individual services, including Eldis, in depth. It found that at an aggregate level the services are achieving their Purpose objectives of use by a wide range of development actors and that there are instances of specific impacts on policy and practice.

However, the review found that while both the marketing and M&E functions in the SLI had demonstrated successes, such as the ISSEL webstats and ‘Good Place to Start’ guide, there are opportunities to increase effectiveness and efficiency in these areas, partly through better coordination across the individual services. The services have been supported by SLI, but it was suggested that a stronger lead by SLI in the next phase would be an improvement, so that, for example M&E results are more uniform across the services and it is easier to assess impact, and so that there is greater critical mass in marketing.

Taking the ideas of closer integration of services forwards, the MK4D review recognised the advantages of maintaining a suite of services with distinct products, media, topics and audiences, but proposed that this could be achieved more efficiently if the services were better integrated. One suggestion was to explore a more ‘Paris Declaration’ approach to the information services’, wherein they all operate under a single logframe, and where funding for the information services is as far as possible put into a basket fund to be fungible by the Information Department across the services.

d. Eldis’ links to other organisations

There are many different ‘players’ in the information marketplace that Eldis interacts with or works alongside, see ‘Where target users obtain new knowledge about development issues’ (above) for examples.

Eldis views its relationship with these to be complementary or symbiotic, rather than competitive. The cross-sectoral, multi-subject Eldis portal structure allows the site to add value and profile to these services and products without detracting from their essential character or uniqueness. With the explosion of available information on the web, portal sites like Eldis perform the important function of re-combining and re-presenting information into new services.

The non-commercial information domain includes the following categories:

⁸ ITAD (2007). *MK4D Output to Purpose Review*

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- Message-oriented Information Suppliers (individual authors, organisations, or projects that need to publicise their existence and draw attention to their outputs),
 - Online Communities (community or topic focused networks), Specialist Subject Websites and Gateways (providing in-depth coverage of particular topics⁹),
 - Other Portals (larger websites covering a wide array of topics, featuring material from many sources, and offering a variety of related services (such as AGORA, Global Development Learning Network, OSISA, Tanzania Online, Global Development Network) and
 - Search Engines (the latest generation of general purpose search tools such as Google or collections of services such as Yahoo).

The Eldis relationship with the first two categories – message oriented suppliers and online communities - is a symbiotic one with Eldis editors and abstractors picking up such content and publicising it, put it in context, and placing it before a wider audience. The Eldis role is particularly important for small producers that do not generate the volume of outputs needed to attract regular visitors.

Despite the differences at the service level, there are clearly overlaps with the other leading portal-type websites (e.g. the World Bank¹⁰ site, the Development Gateway¹¹, and OneWorld¹²), and a degree of duplication. However, each are filling different niches, using different approaches and philosophies, and offering a different user environment. It is likely that such a choice of development information suppliers rather than a single powerful player dominant on the internet will benefit the quality and range of information available.

The rationale for donor (Government) support to a portal like Eldis to some extent relies on how we view the information market place. An Independent Economy Model (such as developed by Adam Smith and later economists) sees competing suppliers in the market place resulting in optimum performance. The role of the government is to ensure the integrity of the suppliers. Keynes (1932)¹³ and his followers specifically recognize the need for government to take over the provision of services that the market will not itself provide (if the provision is in the interests of the nation as a whole).

There are many precedents for the funding of acknowledged public goods - highways, education, law enforcement, fire protection, national defence, *etc.* - are widely thought to be public goods, or to have public-good characteristics

There is also ample precedent for subsidizing communication as well as a platform for the production of pluralistic informed content. On communications - telephone franchisees and taxpayers are often required to subsidize connectivity for rural, poor or handicapped people as well as emergency response service and the ability to provide assistance to law enforcement authorities. On content - the licence fee and charter for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is a strong example of UK governance thinking. Whilst within the UN system HINARI and AGORA are subsidized efforts.

[See recommendation (18)]

⁹ See numerous example in 'Where target users obtain new knowledge about development issues'

¹⁰ www.worldbank.org

¹¹ www.developmentgateway.org

¹² <http://uk.oneworld.net/>

¹³ Keynes, J. M., 1932, The End of Laissez-Faire. In Keynes, J. M., Essays of Persuasion.

Harcourt Bruce and Co.

Many players exist in the commercial domain: online bookshops, online journals suppliers, and data subscription services have all developed substantially in the past few years. This is a fiercely competitive and fast changing market, providing a range of products, at a price, to those who can afford them. For the most part, Eldis is not competing directly with these commercial producers and connections are made to their services when relevant. Eldis mentions some key commercial sources, for example, and includes intelligent links to the BLDS library collection (which includes both commercial and non-commercial print materials).

[See recommendation (19 & 20)]

Some of the Southern material in the Eldis database comes through a long-standing content-sharing arrangement with the Global Development Network (GDN) (see www.gdnet.org). The GDN is a worldwide network of research and policy institutes working to provide a fresh and relevant perspective. The network strongly believe that policy-relevant research, if properly applied, can accelerate the pace of global development; GDN aim to generate this research at the local level in developing and transition countries. IDS has been actively involved with GDN - the electronic voice of GDN and a key element in GDN's capacity building and networking efforts, since its earliest days. It was involved in the initial consultations on what direction GDN should take and hosted a Focus Group workshop in 2001 where broad priorities for GDN were agreed. IDS subsequently played a lead role in developing the GDN website, building on its experience with Eldis and using the same database system to hold the GDN Knowledge Base. This allowed a strong content-sharing partnership to be established whereby relevant Eldis material could be featured on the GDN site, and vice versa. IDS has also made its extensive library, the British Library for Development Studies, available to GDN and offer a free-of-charge document delivery service to eligible organisations. See earlier (p.18) regarding GDN move to Cairo.

6. Impact and Sustainability

What does the evidence suggest about how Eldis contributes to the ability of development actors to access, exchange and use evidence-based development information?

Evidence from Eldis surveys and interviews from different categories of target users highlight a range of impacts: Policy makers and policy influencers – especially report impacts on government departments and multinational organisations processes, the negotiation processes of civil society organisations, including improving their understanding of the intellectual and strategic interests of those they are trying to influence. Other policy actors were less specific, but identified recurrent value in focused on impacts on particular processes.

Some examples of where and how policy focused materials are important, with impacts often related to negotiation processes include:

“I recently came across research on cash transfers and other social protection schemes in Zambia and other developing countries that significantly shaped my approach and contribution to my organization's poverty work in Zimbabwe in relation to promoting Market Access for the Poor.” - (SNV, Zimbabwe)

“As an Agriculture Activist, I need overall understanding about global issues. When we are preparing local news for our local newspaper, we include global news from Eldis guides and also when we are lobbying policy makers we are taking some issues as examples.” - (NGO activist, Sri Lanka Nature Forum)

“We are working on various issues such WTO, globalization etc. the information we received was very useful for our organization.” - (NGO Forum, Cambodia)

Researchers – highlight access to new materials, specific documents and the value of additional viewpoints.

“The information provided by the (Eldis) Guide and Email Reporter would not be accessible - or very difficult to find - here in Mexico. The summaries save a lot of time in my work. The use is both in teaching and in research as well as sharing information with NGOs in the country working on the subject. Material in Spanish would be useful also, perhaps in liaison with a Latin American organisation, or if Eldis had funds for translation.” – (Visiting Researcher, Mexico)

“The report 'The right not to lose hope: children in conflict with the law: a policy analysis and examples of good practice' did help me in my assessment of the child soldiers state of play in the Philippines.” - (Political Officer, Philippines)

“My topic of PhD research is about Tanzania, and the Conflict and Security Resource Guide and Email Reporter has been so resourceful, especially due to the fact that in my university's libraries there is a scarcity of resources on Tanzania, specifically and Africa in general.” - (Tanzanian student, University of Aberdeen)

“Through information on gender and education related to the MDGs, I was able to compile information and improve the quality of our policy paper on education and the MDGs.” - (Researcher, Zambia)

“I have worked in the health sector for almost two decades. Being a familiar user of Eldis resource, research findings reported through Eldis have in no little measure helped providing answers to relevant policy and strategic health sector initiatives being either developed or implemented.” - (Health Sector Worker, Gambia)

Through Eldis, NGO staff report more simple access to materials for personal and organisational learning. Some examples include:

“I would go straight to Eldis. That's my first point of reference because I know that once I go there, I will find the information I'm looking for - it will take me to the right place. Once I have got into Eldis I am quite sure that everything I need is right there...that's where I got most of the information that is very relevant to what Malawi is going through. I have even told the frontline staff, whenever you have access to the internet, this is one of the points that you need to go to. Check Eldis and it will give you the answer.” - (Programme Officer (Gender and AIDS), NASFAM, Malawi)

“If you go to the community where I am working you will see that what we are doing is very different from what everyone else is doing – and the key difference has been my access to information. I am in a better position now to work for the poor...with Eldis you get information that is very applicable to what you want – Eldis has packaged information for rural development workers and whatever document you will be relevant to your situation, so now I don't waste time looking ...I just go straight to Eldis and I know I will get the information that I want.” - (NGO programme manager, World Vision, Malawi)

“For the organisation it is just a click and you have the data for everyone in the organisation, so it's like we are well informed in the organisation and we always have up to date data. Everyone can get it because it's shared among all staff members in the office, so it's really improved our work.” - (Grassroots NGO programme manager, Malawi)

There tends to be high levels of re-use (sharing) among this audience. Some examples include:

“I have shared the information from the Guide with my colleagues, and we have used it to inform our policy work at the national level. We also keep the resources in our resource centre which is used by students at a local university to support their research.” - (Reconcile, NGO, Kenya)

“I write a regular newspaper column for a local newspaper in Accra, and my ideas are sharpened constantly from reading Eldis.” - (Journalist, Ghana)

Eldis users report impacts on expanding breadth of knowledge, especially where there is a need to become familiar with areas of work for which they have had little formal training,

“Several articles were very relevant to work I was doing with specific organizations and which the NGOs I was working with could use internally to learn - the ETI article about measuring for impact, GTZ one on value chains for example as we were looking at social justice in the supply chain of coffee for a buyer.” - Consultant, Costa Rica

Eldis also impacts education. Some examples include:

“It is a rapid way to gain access to information from many providers in only one site. I often incorporated official or NGO documents in my classes. Most of the materials have been useful in training my Economic Development and Economics of Education students from a policy perspective globally perceived.” - (Instituto de Economía y Finanzas, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina)

“In my department we have started two vocational courses, and all materials, I collected from Eldis site only. These two courses are Post-graduate Diploma in Population Education, and Post-graduate Diploma in Women and Child Welfare - besides, in research work also we use Eldis data.” - (University Lecturer, India)

“Information in the conflict and security resource guide has helped me to keep abreast with latest research around the world on conflict which I could refer to in my own research papers. Moreover, I have also used the latest international research output in my lectures on the economic dimensions of civil conflict to postgraduate students of peace studies in Sri Lanka.” - (University lecturer, Sri Lanka)

“We are using (Eldis) for both research and teaching purposes at Addis Ababa University in different academic departments. The topics on conflict and conflict resolutions, education and development have been really relevant for us and our graduate and undergraduate students who are busy writing their theses and have no where to turn to, to find such materials as the ones you sent us.” - (UN University for Peace, Addis Ababa University)

“We are in the process of designing a training course on Resource-based Conflicts, and the materials (from Eldis) have proved very useful in focusing our minds on what is relevant.” – (anon.)

Sustainability

The UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>) emphasize the urgent need to address problems such as poverty eradication, hunger and malnutrition, child mortality, maternal health, environmental sustainability and combating diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. It is very clear that without strong

scientific platforms built on the widest possible access to research information; progress towards these goals will not be sustained. If sustainable development is dependent on a strong international science base, then permanent access to the widest possible range of information from the international knowledge-base is a pre-requisite. Any restrictions in access will inevitably limit reaching independent scientific capability and adversely affect social development and economies; Leading researchers to unnecessary duplication of experiments, adding to research costs and retarding the pace of development. Limiting access to knowledge risks missing critical research findings that may lead to insightful and effective policy development. Furthermore, access barriers deprive researchers and policy makers of the ability to make contacts and form partnerships with others working in the same or complimentary fields or in addressing common policy targets.

As the Berlin Declaration (2003)¹⁴ proclaimed 'in order to realize the vision of a global and accessible representation of knowledge, the future Web has to be sustainable, interactive, and transparent. Content and software tools must be openly accessible and compatible'.

Eldis is one tool that represents a significant response by the UK, Sweden, Norway and Switzerland to the Berlin Declaration.

a. Keeping pace with changing demands and technology

Eldis originated as a response to changing demands in information retrieval and technological changes and continues to invest time, funds, human and technological resources in keeping pace with changing demands.

¹⁴ Concluding Declaration of the Conference on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities 20 - 22 Oct 2003, Berlin see: <http://www.zim.mpg.de/openaccess-berlin/>. See also follow on conferences on open access at Cern, May 2004, Southampton, Feb 2005, Golm, March 2006, Padua 2007.

Supporting information exchange and communities of practice

Should Eldis be going down the social networking route? Will this meet users' needs?
(This question was not part of the original terms of reference)

The planned evolution of Eldis services will benefit from inputs from users. In this sense, Eldis is currently looking at the supply of networking, negotiating and self-publishing tools to its current user base through the development of its community site, modelled on Social Networking principles. This could involve wide-ranging decentralised links with a large number of individuals and organisations.

Eldis has been a provider of information resources and the expansion of the web has enabled greater scope for sharing its collected and synthesised materials. The evolution of Web 2.0 services promise a perceived second generation of web-based communities and hosted services underpinned by the move within the computer industry to the internet as a platform. Two of the Eldis team have been looking at Web 2.0 and its implications in relation to the role of Eldis and the evolution of its Community site. Web 2.0 services include social-networking sites, social tagging, wikis and blogs — which aim to facilitate collaboration and sharing between users. Eldis has developed and is piloting the provision of tools for social networking. This review made use of the Eldis Community site for part of the process of acquiring and sharing information about Eldis.

Eldis quality and reliability in a Web 2.0 environment

Eldis, in its Communication and Business Model (draft) (Last updated 11 Jan 2007), plans to ensure the authority and reputation for reliability of Eldis is maintained, whilst allowing the benefits of Web 2.0 to support networking and decentralised content development.

Web 2.0 creates both opportunities and risks for Eldis. Essentially, it has become easier to publish low quality material, but it has also become easier to share opinions on information quality. Eldis has built its reputation on an ability to identify quality documents, to identify policy issues they raise and to make these more accessible to development practitioners. As the quantity, variety and quality of content available on the Internet increases, the job of aggregators or commentators becomes more difficult

To protect the Eldis brand on reliability and quality grounds, the programme aims to maintain 2 separate websites. The websites will graphically appear to have a family resemblance, but will be clearly distinguishable. Each site has a different editorial policy and different stance on quality

Site	Description	Editorial policy
Eldis	A Web1 website focusing on editorially selected material. With a collection of high quality, editorially reviewed documents. The site will also contain reviewed synthesis documents, providing a review of subject areas. Email newsletters will be regularly written by Eldis editors	Material chosen by Eldis editors and editorial groups.
	The site will be expanded to cover peer-reviewed material from commercial publishers as journal articles become more available to the South, through access arrangements such as Hinari, or through open access arrangements.	A formalised editorial policy is enforced by the Eldis team
	Eldis aims to expand its editorial-advice networks (informal support groups for resource-guide editor), and will make more use of subject-experts on a consultancy basis for	

	<p>advice (the Eldis health guides are currently using this approach)</p> <p>Eldis aims to follow the id21 model of making use of authors to validate summaries (this has already started for new summaries)</p> <p>Eldis will use the Community (Web 2.0) site, to monitor and encourage comment on the value and meaning of research outputs, and to help validate and improve our editors' selection policy, but branding, graphical presentation and the physical separation of the Eldis (Oryx) and Eldis Community (Web 2.) sites will be obvious.</p> <p>This site will be similar to the current Eldis documentation site</p>	
<p>Eldis Community</p>	<p>A Web 2.0 networking site allowing discussion, publishing and exchange for both Editorial Support Groups and general readers.. A mixture of personal websites and groups spaces (some public, some private).</p> <p>Additionally, the Eldis Team provides a range of search tools for automatically aggregated content from blogs, email, feeds and websites. The collections will be used as source material for Eldis editors.</p>	<p>Content is created by site members</p> <p>A looser editorial and management policy is applied. Members play a role in defining and regulating quality</p>

The objective is that the two sites operate different editorial policies, to generate different values, complement each other while maintaining different brand identities and provide a space to create editorial teams, and an editorially controlled outlet for their work.

The potential Eldis relationship with online communities is perceived by Eldis as a symbiotic one. They can enrich Eldis by making available content, while Eldis can assist them by helping to publicise their material, put it in context, and place it before a wider audience. It is not possible to assess how well country-led activities and Eldis functioning can perform as an information exchange hub (as a service that is not necessarily driven by Eldis) because these approaches are still to be rolled out following the delayed launch of Oryx.

[See recommendation (21)]

Connectivity, crowding and competition

It is expected, including by Eldis, that over time the connectivity to the net, especially in the south, will continue to improve and more generally that the internet market and the information marketplace are set to continue to expand (see Links to other organisations above). However, whilst this may be true for universities in capital cities, in reality there is still virtually no connectivity in rural villages of developing nations¹⁵. The multiple dimensions of inadequate levels of access to ICT services by people and organizations, as well as the

¹⁵ The Internet in developing nations: Grand challenges by Larry Press *First Monday*, volume 9, number 4 (April 2004), URL: http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue9_4/press/index.html.

barriers to their productive use is being considered in Latin America and the Caribbean¹⁶ and the challenges of rural connectivity is being considered in India¹⁷ as well as more generally^{18,19}.

Usage of Eldis is reported in section 4. Exact comparator services are hard to identify. However, taking UN efforts to provide access to online journals at reduced cost as an example of information provision to southern partners, we can consider usage of HINARI and AGORA. As of May 2007, HINARI provided access to 3,700 journals from ~ 1,000 publishers and as of January 2007, AGORA provided access to ~ 1,000 journals from 40 publishers. Whilst detailed evidence-based figures for usage of these UN programmes is available only to publisher partners, a recent statement by Maurice Long, Programme Coordinator²⁰, reported that during the one-year period March 2005 - February 2006 there were 3,040,621 PDF downloads of full-text articles by HINARI users and 195,468 PDF downloads by AGORA users. The distribution of downloads was not indicated. Elsevier, a publisher partner in the UN programmes, reported 2.5 million downloads in 2005, and a 50% increase in 2006. This contrasts with the findings on usage from Peru²¹, where the number of users had decreased from 12,144 in April 2005 to 5,655 in April 2007, whilst the usage of other databases had increased in the same period. The likely reasons for this include:

- the need to pay \$1000 per annum for access, which has left many provincial universities in Peru without access to the HINARI journals.
- technical problems relating to authentication (Microsoft has joined the programmes as a technical partner to solve such problems).
- the barrier to downloading more than 15% of the content from a single issue or book.

As increased availability of research publications can help strengthen the research and educational capacity of developing countries, it follows that any limitations on the selection of material available and barriers to access lead to reduced scientific progress and continuing dependence.

Whilst accepting that these services are not comparable directly with the service of Eldis, the extent to which Eldis and these services are used is a possible indication of their potential impact on sustainable development. It appears that if the services are appropriate, easy to use and cost free - then equality of access to essential information will be achieved and benefits will be likely to follow. In the context of Eldis, free at the point of delivery is a key benefit.

¹⁶ H. Galperin; J. Mariscal (2007) Digital poverty: Latin American and Caribbean perspectives. How can ICTs in Latin America be made to benefit the poor? Published by International Development Research Centre

¹⁷ A Garai; B. Shadrach (2006) Taking ICT to every Indian village: Opportunities and challenges Knowledge centres in rural India Open Archive Initiative, OneWorld South Asia,

¹⁸ World Bank, 2005 Engendering ICT toolkit Toolkit looks at how to engender ICT for development World Bank

¹⁹ Panos 2006 Going the last mile: what's stopping a wireless revolution? Why are governments restricting the use of wireless technologies? Panos Institute, London,

²⁰ Long, M., "Making intellectual property work for development", Africa Union, Geneva, 30 May 2006 <http://www.google.co.uk/search?hl=en&q=Maurice+Long+african+Union+2006&meta=>

²¹ Villafuerte-Galvez, J., Curioso, W.H., Gayoso, O., "Biomedical Journals and Global Poverty: Is HINARI a Step Backwards?", PLoS Medicine, 26 June, 2007, Letter to the Editor. <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/articlerender.fcgi?artid=1896213>

Exchange of research findings should ideally be bi-directional since research information generated in emerging countries is crucial to solving global problems and inappropriate programmes based on incomplete knowledge may otherwise be established.

Funding bodies tend to require returns from their investment in terms of visibility and use, (i.e. flying national flags on their investments) and this may contrast with the notion of a global common good, where the needs of society and research for solving global problems and relieving poverty are the priority²².

[See recommendation (22)]

Branding could be important in this crowded context, and the Eldis brand is well respected and remains highly visible. However, given that many information consumers use web-browsing technology rather than repeated site visits based on brand loyalty – ‘Googleability’ becomes a crucial marketing tool. A vertical study conducted by the review team *Googled* 14 descriptor terms in the context of ‘Trade’ (as an example of a *hot topic* agreed amongst IDS Knowledge Service Program Managers) and assessed the frequency and ranking of items from IDS Knowledge Services. Eldis documents were particularly prevalent in Google searches with half of the Google searches throwing up Eldis documents in first position.

Table 2: Hot Topic search - Trade

	Basic Search	Clause Search	Clause & development search
Eldis	Hit on 10/14 topics 50% in position 1 70% with 2–5 results	Hit on 9/14 topics	Hit on 13/14 topics 69% in position 1-5 77% with 2-5 results

This was compared with findings from other IDS sites - See vertical study for details (Annex IV)

b. Future-proofing Eldis

Publishing technologies

It is getting easier and cheaper for organizations and individuals to publish their information and to have some web presence. Publishing technologies (print, sound and video) are accessible and allow publishing on a small or large scale. Arguments for locally relevant material, and southern publishing, are clear (see ‘Southern-originated material’ and ‘How well Eldis fulfils needs’ above), but the web (for example) has been criticized for promoting the “Cult of the amateur”, devaluing peer-review systems and weakening creative institutions. In this context, Eldis is forced to consider quality issues, and is already trying to address the associated editorial burden that this presents (see Hitting targets above).

Facing the future, Eldis are questioning their predilection for print publishing and are considering if audio or video content may have a role in some of their services or are relevant to (or could have impact with) their intended audiences, [c.f. the Overseas Development Institute blogs and audio and video streaming]. There are implications of creating a service around this, including the nature of features or changes in points of intervention. On the one hand this may help to overcome access problems that are caused by problems with literacy

²² Barbara Kirsop, Subbiah Arunachalam and Leslie Chan 2007 "Access to Scientific Knowledge for Sustainable Development: Options for Developing Countries" Ariadne Issue 52
<http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/155u3-52/kirsop-et-al/>

(and related gender implications), on the other hand, how much does this high-tech route contradict with the requirement for low band-width applications.

[See recommendation (23)]

Communications tools

Eldis are currently debating the impacts of the rapidly changing costs and capabilities of communications tools (telephones, email, Voice-over-internet-protocol, real-time texting and messaging, etc) on person-to-person and group communications, on whether peer groups and influence circles are getting smaller or larger.

[See recommendation (24)]

Taking account of social processes

The future-proofing of Eldis benefits from the sophisticated communications concept of its program management. For example, aspects of information uptake, validation and approval are seen by Eldis as social processes not as unidirectional source to recipient flows. This has implications for the appropriate evolution of the Knowledge Service. It would seem increasingly untenable for the Eldis repackaging/aggregating/highlighting role to remain an isolated cell of abstractors and editors in southern England. The launch of Eldis Community and the technological ability to form virtual "communities of practice" will be likely to impact greatly on the kind of work that Eldis can expect to be doing in the near to medium term.

[(25 We *recommend* a full appraisal of issues and options for more decentralized abstracting and content development and further consideration of other language outputs (cf. Recommendation 8 re: decentralized content management, Recommendation 15 re: 'community providers', and Recommendation 16 re: 'communities of practice' and 'discussion groups' and the associated requirement for additional funding for human resources contributions to this effort (The appraisal would be a significant undertaking and would need to be scheduled by Eldis in relation to options to manage and fund the process)].

c. Financial sustainability

Whilst web-based delivery removes many of the delivery costs, if the information is made freely available, who should pay for those production costs that have not been eliminated? And how can an equitable system of pricing and payment be developed that makes information available to individuals that need it — at a price they can afford — while adequately rewarding those engaged in making this information accessible?²³

As with digital open access publishing, two likely scenarios might be considered:

A 'producer pays' model

One solution is to say that the costs of Eldis should be paid by the knowledge service producers (100% donor support) — not shared by the consumers (as with the HINARI model — see p.25-6). In other words, that information delivery costs would be publicly funded, or that

²³ It should be noted that a move to meeting some of Eldis costs by charging producers is very likely to involve moving the IDS Oryx platform away from hosting on the UKERNA JANET network to a commercial network, since such charging would in most cases breach JANET rules. The additional annual costs of commercial hosting and the one-off costs of the move would reduce the financial benefit from charging, because the costs of MK4D services would also increase significantly as a result of a move away from JANET.

they would be considered as part of the costs of the research, and therefore covered by relevant donor grants for research, rather than charged to users.

Care must however be taken to ensure that, in negotiating free access information, Eldis do not take on an excessively narrow focus that threatens consideration of the wider social and intellectual dimensions of the service.

This scenario has the benefit of maintaining free access but depends on negotiating public funds for the knowledge service itself or lobbying for information delivery to be funded from a predetermined proportion of research funding. If information delivery costs were provided to researchers, where they then spend those funds would be determined by the reach and delivery of the services they could chose from.

This is a funding scenario that would impact on Eldis but not one that can be brought about by the knowledge service.

A differential pricing model

A different funding solution could involve charging producers of research for publicising individual papers through Eldis, and charging some of the users for supplementary material that “adds value”, such as reviews and abstracts. A differential pricing strategy, would aim to ensure that price is broadly related to ability to pay.

This could retain revenue from those 'users' of Eldis materials that are in a position to pay, without introducing pricing strategies that discriminate against those, including in the developing world, who are unable to do so.

This scenario has the benefit of maintaining free access to those who are unable to pay for it, whilst removing the need for wholesale public funding of information delivery. However it suffers from the difficulty in differentiating between those who can pay and those who can not (c.f. distinguishing northern and southern users) as well as the issue of breaching JANET rules.

Other income streams

There are also direct service provision objectives with potentially significant revenue generation including consultancy in information management, direct services to policy-related decision makings (e.g. moving from remote information provision to piloting a service that could direct people making policy-related decisions through tailored provision of relevant information, appropriate tools, bench-marking/learning from elsewhere), consensus building service (e.g. piloting a consensus building service, facilitating a common, group-level understanding of the state of knowledge in an area through iterative structured information sharing, conflict mitigation, etc.), capacity building in: digital literacy, facilitating mutual support and self help, provision of suitable platforms and communications tools and management consultancy and market analysis: providing support to the development of other information services.

Accepting that the service providers could look at their capacity to obtain remuneration from consulting services and that the above funding scenarios are not easily mobilised we have suggested in this review that Eldis remain free at the point of delivery and that a service of this kind would benefit from secure funding over a timeframe of a decade, as apposed to a short term project funding scenario.

[See recommendation (26)]

7. Conclusions, Recommendations and Discussion Points

The numbered recommendations contained within this report are juxtapose with the text to which they relate and are numbered in the order in which they appear. Below these are separated out into recommendations 'for Eldis' and 'for donors' and listed in approximate order of priority. Key conclusions and discussion points are included.

For Donors

The overall conclusion for donors is that Eldis is an exceptional resource for development policymakers and practitioners, and that maintaining a public sector funded, cross-sectoral, multi-subject portal mandated to present a diversity of viewpoints that can influence policy is an important development resource.

Donors should continue their support for Eldis in order to:

- Share better understanding of the environment within which policy choices are made.
- Support intelligent response to topical agendas.
- Clearly document and explain policy narratives and the challenges to these through ("Dossiers", "Features") and updating services ("Resource Guides", Email bulletins, Newsfeeds).
- Support the established credibility of an information source with careful selection and editorial policies.
- Adapt the delivery of messages to the context in which they are consumed Provide information which is free at point of use.
- Provide a variety of different delivery mechanisms (website, email, newsfeeds, re-distribution by other services).
- Support clear writing for target audiences
- Offer different service foci: News to your desk Self service on the website Synthesis formats.
- Fund a good example of communication practice.
- Provide blocks of information.
- Deepen the "global pool" of knowledge.
- Impact on knowledge acquisition (Changing information acquisition strategies, habits and work practices).
- Support the formation of knowledge based culture of inquiry and policy justification.
- Support changes in the communication and publication practices of poorly-resourced groups to improve their impact.
- Promote a strong scientific platform built on the widest possible access to research information to sustain progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, in line with the Berlin Declaration.

Recommendation relating to donors

[(18) We would *recommend* that service delivery by a portal such as Eldis should be sustained over long periods of time, maybe a 10 year horizon would be relevant, if it is to influence people's information seeking and information publishing practices and to contribute to the restoration of entitlements to global knowledge in the contemporary context of internet communication].

[(19, 20) We *recommend* that the 'free public good' philosophy of Eldis be defended against cost recovery pressures that could take it in a different direction and that Eldis continue to

provide a service that is free at the point of delivery, focused on what is available free of charge and aiming to reach as broad a global audience as possible – not just those who can afford to pay.]

[(22, 26 In spite of an increasingly crowded marketplace, we would *recommend* maintaining a public sector funded cross-sectoral, multi-subject portal mandated to present a diversity of viewpoints that can influence policy. This implies that Eldis (or the Information Department via a basket funding model) must be tasked over the next 3 years with ensuring a sustainable funding stream for the next 10, plus. This might involve donor/donors (see recommendation 25) or considering how to access larger philanthropic trusts (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, etc.). We *recommend* negotiating a possible multi-donor (- Paris Declaration) funding mechanism, which considers the knowledge service as a global common good and can provide financial sustainability over an extended timeframe. The Information Department might decide if it wants to attract common funding for all the Knowledge Services or multi-donor mechanisms for Eldis separately (see MK4D review report for more detail on possible 'Basket funding')].

For Eldis

To improve conceptual clarity of the development impacts sought, we encourage Eldis to:

- consider 'information' as the entity which it shares, as distinct from 'knowledge' which is related to individual understanding;
- survey 'target users', as distinct from the sub-set of target users who are already 'known users', to better inform the marketing and delivery of the service, and
- continue to review the current use of knowledge (in general) in decision making and policy influence in relation to pro-poor development, to flag up any gaps and to consider how Eldis may effectively address these.

We recommend further skills development in objective and indicator setting and in monitoring. This might include a Logframe rewrite. It would include an objective/independent review of the outcome/impact level objectives, but this ideally, as recommended in the MK4D review, this would not be done in isolation of the wider MK4D and Information Dept objective setting. The aim should be to have revised objectives and targets for the 'MK4D Phase II' submission early in 2008. The Eldis editorial policy target of 15% per annum increase in southern produced content should be incorporated into a revised Logframe/ set of targets.

We recommend that a comparator study looks explicitly at the 'time-and-motion' aspects of similar services to benchmark Eldis against the functional efficiency of others and to see if any lessons emerge for the future planning, and that significant planning and effort be directed towards effectively marketing the service. Eldis could accommodate much greater use without further cost, which could lead to increased impact. It would be beneficial to identify the key audiences across the sectors to which most of its users belong, to accurately identify different needs, and market services to appropriate audiences, including those who are not currently users.

Eldis should continue to develop its services and their delivery in the context of products being picked up from Google searches, as well as from people selectively visiting its site. A coordinated marketing strategy would need to consider the strategic implications of marketing the site and its products (e.g. the balance between efforts in promoting product visibility in web searching verses Eldis website navigability).

We recommend that when Eldis Community web-tools are brought on-line, that their use and utility is closely monitored and evaluated to identify uptake and to help shape the nature of the collaboration and sharing that they facilitate, and to guide the marketing of social

networking functions. Accessing and uploading southern content might be facilitated through providing and building capacity to use the Eldis Community site and tools. Advisory groups, constituted as a loose electronically coordinated network, might also be used for piloting decentralized content management, whilst facilitated 'communities of practice', Self-Help and Discussion Groups could also be assessed as cost-effective feedback mechanisms.

We recommend increased consideration of users with limited bandwidth and unreliable connections in the design of products and services and further consideration of a capacity building role with users, explaining information capturing tools and researching and highlighting mechanisms to optimise information capture in low bandwidth and interrupted connectivity environments, which could include animated help tools. Further analysis of the market and service provision implications of the use of new communications tools for increasing reach into remote communities is warranted to better share elements of the digital global knowledge base. We recommend only low bandwidth audio and video media be considered as a complement to print media and a potential alternative to translation of text, with capacity for reaching further down the chain of poverty alleviation, including Self-Help and the associated capacity to address the (heavily gender related) issue of literacy. Eldis should continue to assess demand for content from non-English readers and if a significant market exists to assess cost-effective foreign language content development.

We recommend that the 'free public good' philosophy of Eldis be defended against cost recovery pressures that could take it in a different direction and that Eldis continue to provide a service that is free at the point of delivery, focused on what is available free of charge and aimed to reach as broad a global audience as possible – not just those who can afford to pay. We recommend negotiating a possible multi-donor (Paris Declaration) funding mechanism, which considers the knowledge service as a global common good and can provide financial sustainability over an extended timeframe. Service delivery by a portal such as Eldis should be sustained over maybe a 10 year horizon, if it is to influence people's information seeking and information publishing practices and to contribute to the restoration of entitlements to global knowledge in the contemporary context of internet communication. In spite of an increasingly crowded marketplace, we would recommend maintaining a public sector funded, cross-sectoral, multi-subject portal mandated to present a diversity of viewpoints that can influence policy.

We recommend a full appraisal of issues and options for more decentralized content development and management, further consideration of other language outputs, the skill set changes associated with all of the above, and the requirement for additional funding for human resources contributions to this effort.

In summary for Eldis (These numbered recommendations are divided into those for the near term and those which could be considered more strategic and might be taken on board by the knowledge service)

Recommendations for the near term:

[(2) From the set of 'target users', we *recommend* that Eldis aim to survey 'potential users' (those targeted but not current users) as well as 'current users' in its M and E activities, to better inform the marketing and delivery of the service]²⁴.

²⁴ Eldis target users are those development professionals that Eldis would like to reach. The sub-set of these that are known users are commonly surveyed by Eldis, but the opinions of those targeted but yet to use the service are less well understood.

[(4) We *recommend* further skills development in objective setting and monitoring, a Logframe rewrite and an objective/independent review of the outcome, with the aim of having a revised logframe for the 'MK4D Phase II' submission early in 2008].

[(6) We *recommend* that the Eldis include in its editorial policy targets including increases in southern produced content into a revised Logframe].

[(8) We especially *recommend* piloting, decentralized content management, monitoring and assessing its feasibility through the proposed formation of advisory groups, constituted as a loose network, and coordinated primarily electronically (possibly using Social Networking software) and adapting/up-scaling as necessary. This could involve outsourcing to southern contributors/editors/abstractors].

[9 It is *recommended* that the process of collection of Most Significant Change stories be revisited and maybe conceived of in a different manner to provide an even more objective and potentially very useful qualitative guidance to information seeking behaviour and benefits.]

[(14) We *recommend* increased consideration of users with limited bandwidth and unreliable connections in the design of products and services].

[(16) We *recommend* assessing cost-effective feedback mechanisms, possibly facilitated 'communities of practice', Self-Help and Discussion Groups]

[(21) We *recommend* that when Eldis Community web-tools are brought on-line, that their use and utility is closely monitored and evaluated to identify uptake and to help shape the nature of the collaboration and sharing that they facilitate, and to guide the marketing of social networking functions. This might need to look specifically at the use of Web 2.0 approaches by southern users who may be less advanced in their web use].

Strategic recommendations to 'take on board':

[(1) We *recommend* a consistent use of the term 'information' as the entity which can be shared as distinct from 'knowledge' which is related to individual understanding]

[(3) We *recommend* that a review be undertaken to elucidate the current use of knowledge (in general) in decision making and policy influence in relation to pro-poor development, to flag up any gaps and to consider how Eldis may effectively address these]. Some ideas relating to this are referenced in draft business and communications models provided by Eldis. It is recognised that this is a substantial piece of work and is of wider relevance to MK4D. This could perhaps form part of a broader piece of Information Department research building on current scoping paper on Theories of Change being prepared by SLI.

[(5) We *recommend* that significant planning and effort be directed towards effectively marketing the service (building on the SLI efforts²⁵ thus far, possibly including surveying non-users needs and thoughts, assessing best communication and advertising options), the service could accommodate much greater use without further cost and could lead to increased impact].

[(7) We *recommend* that a comparator study looks explicitly at the 'time-and-motion' aspects of similar services to benchmark Eldis against the functional efficiency of others and to see if

²⁵ A series of reports commissioned by the Strategic Learning Initiative (SLI), written by Catherine Lowery, and edited by SLI Marketing Coordinator, Cheryl Brown including Summary reports were produced for Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Bangladesh, India, Uganda, Ethiopia, Senegal and South Africa and thematic overviews

any lessons emerge for the future planning (Although it is accepted that it is challenging to find exact comparators for such studies)].

[(10) We especially *recommend* that Eldis identify additional potential users within the researcher-practitioner-policy formation nexus, identify their different needs and market services to those who are not currently users].

[(11) We *recommend* that Eldis consider a capacity building role with users, explaining information capturing tools and smart searching approaches, and possibly in conjunction with MK4D, research and highlight mechanisms to optimise information capture in low bandwidth and interrupted connectivity environments].

[(12) We *recommend* that Eldis continues to develop its services and their delivery in the context of Eldis products being picked up from Google searches as well as from people selectively visiting its site. (Should Eldis experiment with a paid link in Google? Should Eldis load up lots of its material into Wikipedia?)]

[(13) We *recommend* that, in the context of their proposed coordinated marketing strategy, Eldis considers if they want to 'market' their site (maximise exposure of the Eldis web presence) or their products (maximise the ranking of Eldis products in searches) and the implications for their strategy. This might consider 'push services' (email bulletins, where branding is important) and 'pull service' where the website will compete with others]

[(15) We *recommend* Eldis place significant focus on reaching its Logframe targets for accessing and uploading southern content – this might be facilitated through providing and building capacity to use the Eldis Community site and tools, and experimenting with 'community providers', and re-engaging with the Global Development Network (GDN)]

[(17) We *recommend* assessing demand for Eldis content from non-English readers and if a significant market exists to assess cost-effective language content development]

[(23) We *recommend* only low bandwidth audio and video media be considered as a complement to print media and a potential alternative to translation of text, with capacity for reaching further down the chain of poverty alleviation, including Self-Help and the associated capacity to address the (heavily gender related) issue of literacy].

[(24) We *recommend* further analysis and consideration of the market for, and service provision implications of, the use of new communications tools (telephones, email, Voice-over-internet-protocol, real-time texting and messaging, etc) for increasing reach into remote communities of elements of the digital global knowledge base (cf. Recommendation 15 and 17)].

[(25) We *recommend* a full appraisal of issues and options for more decentralized abstracting and content development and further consideration of other language outputs (cf. Recommendation 8 re: decentralized content management, Recommendation 15 re: 'community providers', and Recommendation 16 re: 'communities of practice' and 'discussion groups' and the associated requirement for additional funding for human resources contributions to this effort (The appraisal would be a significant undertaking and would need to be scheduled by Eldis in relation to options to manage and fund the process)].

Discussion points

Drawing on Eldis materials and thinking, and following the preparation of this evaluation, some discussion points are suggested for looking to the future, the Eldis team alone or as part of a bundled Institute of Development Studies service might discuss mid-term

(Logframe) objectives of a ten year planning horizon including around the following key areas:

- Empowering massively expanded content sourcing, including wide-ranging news capture, from the readership;
- Decentralised content management and local editing;
- Senior management shifting from a repackaging/aggregating/highlighting role towards building capacity for virtual "communities of practice" and influencing the strategic direction of Eldis in relation to the comparative advantage that emerges.
- Piloting a service to direct people making policy-related decisions.
- Piloting a consensus building service, facilitating a common, group-level understanding of the state of knowledge in an area (see page 32).
- Piloting capacity building in: digital literacy, facilitating mutual support and self help, provision of suitable platforms and communications tools.
- Management consultancy and market analysis: providing support to the development of other information services.

Annex I. Malawi, Tanzania and Bangladesh country study Terms of Reference

The evaluation will build on the OPR to provide a more in-depth assessment of the sustainability, relevance, impact, effectiveness, and efficiency of Eldis. It will concentrate on the following topics and questions, addressing the OECD/DAC criteria as indicated:

Topic 1: Delivery of products

Questions to be addressed:

- To what extent has Eldis delivered the range and quantity of products and services set out in its logframe – see Appendix 2? (*Effectiveness*)
- How effective and efficient are Eldis editorial and production systems in delivering these products and services? (*Effectiveness/Efficiency*)

Topic 2: Use of Eldis services

Questions to be addressed:

- To what extent is Eldis achieving the targeted levels and patterns of use set out in its logframe? (*Effectiveness*)

Topic 3: Relevance of Eldis services

Questions to be addressed:

- To what extent is Eldis filling a gap in terms of meeting the information needs of target users? (*Relevance*)
- To what extent is the mix of services provided by Eldis an effective response to the varying needs and preferences of different target users (*Effectiveness/Relevance*)

Topic 4: Effects of Eldis on the ability of development actors to access, exchange and use evidence-based development information

Questions to be addressed:

- What does the evidence suggest about how Eldis contributes to the ability of development actors (from policy, practitioner and research/teaching communities including the university sector, aid agencies, civil society, government and the media) to access, exchange and use evidence-based development information? (*Impact*)

Topic 5: Future relevance and sustainability of Eldis

Questions to be addressed:

- How successful has Eldis been in learning from and adapting to changing contexts and user needs? What have been the main drivers for change within Eldis? (*Effectiveness/Sustainability*)
 - How relevant will the evolving Eldis service model be over the next five years, given current trends in internet connectivity, information availability and user behaviour, particularly in developing countries? (*Relevance/Sustainability*)
-

- How appropriate and sustainable is the current funding model for Eldis? (*Sustainability*)

The evaluation team will work primarily from evidence produced by IDS, but will also be expected to produce some new country level evidence to complement this. This will involve conducting interviews with users and stakeholders in three countries in Africa and Asia, provisionally identified as Malawi, Tanzania and Bangladesh.

The selection of individuals to interview within these countries will be made by the evaluation team and should encompass a range of different types of organisations and job roles, within the policy, practitioner and research/teaching communities (including the university sector, aid agencies, civil society, government and the media). Eldis will be able to provide contact details for known users or contributors in each country; the evaluation team will be expected to complement these with contacts of their own. The sample should include both current users, and individuals who are within the Eldis target group but are not current users.

The evaluation team will be able to interview representatives of the four donor agencies, in most cases by email and/or telephone.

Annex II. The Eldis Logical Framework

Note: Updated March 2007, after DFID funding extension

Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Risks/Assumptions
<p>Goal: Better informed, pro-poor decision-making by development policymakers and practitioners</p>			
<p>Purpose: Development practitioners use and exchange relevant, evidence-based development knowledge and documentation, using ICT-enabled communication channels</p>	<p>Eldis has positive impacts on a range of development actors, as shown by positive messages in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% of user survey respondents view services as beneficial to their work and aim • Analysis of web and email surveys of specific resource guides and their associated email bulletins (3 different Resource Guides surveyed per annum) • Analysis of web and email surveys of website and the general email bulletin • Analysis of the 50 bios produced • Analysis of the content of "Send to a friend" messages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bios of users • Background paper on communication model • Annual reviews • Send to a friend messages • Web and email surveys of resource guides • Web and email surveys of website and the general email bulletin in July 2007 	<p>Better informed practitioners will make pro-poor choices</p>
	<p>Development practitioners in target groups are using Eldis services, as shown by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of "Send to a friend" messages • Distribution of users to be at least 30% of website users to be Southern users in September 2008 • Analysis of bios • Analysis of respondent self identification in web and email surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background paper on usage data • Background paper on communication model • Bios of users • Background paper on business model • Annual reviews 	
	<p>Eldis helps to fill an important niche in the development information market, as shown by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% per annum increase in visitors to Eldis website • 10% per annum increase in numbers of subscribers to Eldis email services • 40% of users came to Eldis to as a source of latest documents • 10% of users came to Eldis as a source of synthesis briefings • 10% of users came to Eldis to find Southern-produced content • Average of 80,000 visitors to website per 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background paper on business model • Background paper on communication model • SLI comparator analysis reports • Statistical background paper 	<p>Market is stable and mature enough to identify specific niches</p>

Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Risks/Assumptions
	month <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average of 35,000 email subscribers during year 		
Outputs: 1. A range of ICT-enabled development information services, integrated through a web portal site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build and enrich the Eldis dataset, improve the coverage of the website, and produce a steady flow of email outputs • New approaches developed for distributing Eldis content to users with no (or low levels of) internet connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background paper on production statistics • Background paper on business model • CDRom surveys 	The technical support for new formats is available within budgetary and time constraints
2. Editorial and commissioning policy ensures the inclusion in services of a broad range of information (reflecting a diversity of viewpoints, and covering a wide variety of topical development issues and debates)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% per annum growth in number of "Send to a friend" messages • 40% of users came to Eldis to as a source of latest documents • 10% of users came to Eldis as a source of synthesis briefings • 10% of users came to Eldis to find Southern-produced content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background paper on production statistics • Website survey report • Resource Guide survey reports 	The technical support for new formats is available within budgetary and time constraints
3. Eldis is widely available to development practitioners as one of the places that development actors seek trustworthy information and which they use to distribute their own information products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eldis experiences increased demand for services, as shown by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average of 80,000 visitors to website per month • Average of 35,000 email subscribers during year • 10% per annum increase in visitors to Eldis website • 10% per annum increase in numbers of subscribers to Eldis email services • Eldis being used increasingly by others as a tool for exchanging knowledge • Eldis marketing strategy developed and activities undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background paper on service usage • Background paper on production statistics • Send to a friend messages • Website survey report • Resource Guide survey reports • Eldis marketing strategy document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to internet is possible (and growing easier over time) among target groups • Email spam, viruses, and other potential problems with using the internet do not reach a level where they deter users from making use of the internet • Target audiences able to master basic internet skills needed to take advantage of Eldis • Technical managers in other organisations have the skills and resources to make full use and re-use of Eldis content • Workable definitions of quality can be agreed
4. Services provide improved coverage of southern-produced content and show increased usage from southern countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% increase in number of southern users by September 2008 • Distribution of users to be at least 30% of website users to be Southern users in September 2008 • At least 40% of email service users to be Southern users in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background paper on usage data • Background paper on production statistics • MOUs with target country content sharing partners • Monitoring distribution of content added to database by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migration of GDN system hosting to Cairo successfully achieved, and strong relationship between IDS and GDN continues • Steady increase in volume of relevant research and other material being published and made

Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Risks/Assumptions
	September 2008 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective sharing of southern-produced content in partnership with GDNNet and other partners • Improved coverage of locally-content from target countries • Greater use of services in target countries • Eldis being used increasingly as a way of accessing and exchanging country-specific information • Implementation of country strategies leads to growth in number of in-country content contributors 	geographical location of publication in monthly production reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage data on country profiles service • Progress reports • Country background papers 	available online in Southern countries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M&E and marketing studies identify methodology for undertaking country evaluation surveys
5. Eldis contributes to the development and improvement of other information services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eldis referred to as an effective model, with some of its features being replicated by other information services • Eldis staff playing active role in IDS capacity building initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eldis annual progress reports • Background paper on business model • Background paper on communication model • SLI progress reports • Website and Resource Guide surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eldis is explicitly referenced by other services rather than implicitly referenced
6. M and E system suggests directions for Eldis programme development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eldis phase 4 proposal produced by April 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background paper on communication model • Background paper on business model • Eldis phase 4 proposal 	
Activities:			
1.1 Enrich the Eldis dataset, improve the coverage of the website, and produce a steady flow of website and email outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth of the Eldis dataset by an average of 400 items per month • Maintenance of content sharing with GDNNet • Adoption of industry-recognised business model for type of business that is being operated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly production reports • CMS statistical reports • Lyris logfiles • Annual financial accounts • Background report on business model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oryx phase 1 technical platform operational • New systems are able to keep up with increases in input from external users/editors • Suitable (outsourced) technical platform and technical support for the community platform is available • Fundraising strategy is successful so adequate funds are available to complete full range of activities planned
1.2 Manage the Eldis staff team effectively, ensuring good coordination and teamwork, and appropriate staff development and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feedback from Eldis staff and IDS HR department • Staff retention rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff appraisal reports 	
1.3 Maintenance and ongoing development of Oryx content management systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of Oryx phase 1 technical work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISU progress reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISU and external contactors complete scripting to timetable
1.4 Maintain technical accuracy of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 95% of links in database active at any point in time • Servers operational 95% of time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMS statistical reports • Link checker statistics • Server activity reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oryx phase 1 launched on schedule, with specified functionalities

Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Risks/Assumptions
1.5 Develop communication model and business models for strategic product planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication model paper updated • Business model paper updated • Partnership model developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background paper on communication model • Background paper on business model • Background paper on partnership model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
1.6 Produce services aimed at practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of 10 new dossiers by September 2008 • Production and distribution of annual manuals CDRoms • Regular distribution of jobs and events email reporters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background paper on production statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
1.7 Produce services aimed at influencing policy processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of 50 additional key issue pages by September 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background paper on production statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
1.8 Produce email reporters to update target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular production of email reporters • 6-monthly review of reporter subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background paper on production statistics • Progress reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
1.9 Investigate options for including more content from non-English language sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language strategy paper produced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language strategy background paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
1.10 Support the formation of online communities among Eldis users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify possible strategic roles for Eldis • Usage of community applications to rise between 2005 and 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community strategy background paper • Website registration statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate external host for software can be identified
1.11 Identify opportunities for Web 2.0 tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce research paper on web 2.0 opportunities (regularly updated) • Test and implement RSS aggregation tool • Test and implement collaborative search tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web 2.0 research paper • Progress reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
1.12 Develop collection of electronic newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of email newsletters from 100 participating providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOUs with providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate external host for software can be identified
1.13 Produce and distribute selected Eldis content on CDRom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and distribution of range of CDRom products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of CDRom users and CDRom content suppliers • Distribution records for CDRoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners found to support decentralisation process and distribution processes
2.1 Increase the volume and diversity of inputs from users and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% increase per annum in numbers of documents submitted to Eldis by users • Increase in rate of repeat document submissions by individual members of public • 50 agreements between Eldis and practitioners for the collaborative creation of original content for placement in Eldis services to be developed by September 2008 • 50 formal content distribution agreements established with other organisations by September 2008 (to support the distribution of the products of the other organisation within Eldis services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOUs with content distributors • MOUs with producers of original content for Eldis services • MOUs with remote advisors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oryx launched on schedule, with specified functionalities

Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Risks/Assumptions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20% increase by September 2008 in the number of authors' permissions to keep a copy of their documents in permanent Eldis storage 		
2.2 Investigate new archiving and decentralised distribution options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and distribution of range of CDROM products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey of CDROM users and CDROM content suppliers Distribution records for CDROMs 	Partners found to support decentralisation process and distribution processes
2.3 Add more context to the subject coverage of Eldis by increasing editorial input to key sections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment and use of 100 remote advisors on the quality of Eldis content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOUs 	
3.1 Maintain or increase rate of Eldis usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eldis experiences increased demand for services, as shown by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average of 80,000 visitors to website per month Average of 35,000 email subscribers during year 10% per annum increase in visitors to Eldis website 10% per annum increase in numbers of subscribers to Eldis email services By September 2008, links to Eldis appear on 30% of the intranets and/or public websites of multilateral and bilateral development agencies, international NGOs and research centres which are listed in the Eldis website directory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background report on usage statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oryx launched on schedule, with specified functionalities
3.2 Develop Phase 3 marketing strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eldis marketing strategy paper produced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eldis Marketing Strategy paper 	
3.3 Implement marketing strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities outlined in strategy paper are undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual report Progress report 	Oryx launched on schedule, with specified functionalities
4.1 Produce country-focused service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in range of partner services linked to with Country Profiles service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website pages MOUs 	Oryx launched on schedule, with specified functionalities
4.2 Increase usage of country-focused services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20% increase per annum in usage of country-focused services 20% increase in number of external services linked to through Eldis country-focused services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background report on usage statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country focused content and services can be statistically distinguished from other content Oryx launched on schedule, with specified functionalities
4.3 Produce target country M&E strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection of target countries made Country strategy papers produced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress reports Country strategy papers MOUs Bios 	
5.1 Participate in SLI capacity building programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of activities undertaken Develop closer integration between Eldis and other IDS knowledge services, and provide active input to planned cross-cutting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLI report Information Unit report 	SLI identify role for Eldis in IDS capacity development work

Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Risks/Assumptions
	initiatives		
6.1 Produce M&E strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme logframe developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M&E strategy paper Logframe document 	
6.2 M&E strategy implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data identified in M&E strategy collected Synthesis analysis reports on data are produced by Eldis Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey reports Bios Statistics on number of email bulletins opened by users Quarterly project activity reports Bios illustrating how information is used Website and content management system statistics Website and management statistics from community platform Website statistics and service registrations External evaluation report 	
6.3 Web and email survey of general website users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey report 	
6.4 Monitoring of usage of email bulletins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rates of change in email subscriptions and un-subscription show retention of readers Click through rates on email bulletins shows use of contents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background paper on usage statistics 	Click through rates can be measured
6.5 Monitoring of web site usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measurement of distribution of actual users across target groups as measured by data from: email service registration; community service registration; contribution registration; user surveys) Analysis of website linkages in data held by major internet search engines (including Google) Monitoring volume of "Send to a Friend" messages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background paper on usage statistics 	Website monitoring software can accurately identify usage and usage patterns
6.6 Monitoring of newsfeed usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of newsfeed usage from website log files Analysis of number and location of users registering to use newsfeeds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background paper on usage statistics 	Production of newsfeeds is possible in Oryx Continuity in hosting of external parsing service
6.7 Annual web and email survey of users of specific subject focused resource guides undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey reports 	
6.8 Interviews with sample of users of Eldis services undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 bios produced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual reports 	

Annex III. Quantitative evidence for product delivery

Table AIII - 1: Quantitative evidence for product delivery

Objective	OVI	Evidence
Purpose: Development practitioners use and exchange relevant, evidence-based development knowledge and documentation, using ICT-enabled communication channels	75% of user survey respondents view services as beneficial to their work and aim (OVI Needs T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % survey respondents who found resources useful or very useful (Agriculture 91; Conflict 88; CSRG 86.6; Education 96.6; Trade 87)
	Eldis communicating with a wide range of audiences (Not an OVI but an aspiration from comms. model Needs QQT OVI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment profile of Eldis users: 24%NGOs ; 22% Research/ teaching; 11% Individuals; 10% International organisations; 9% Consultants; 9% Government ; 3% Commercial business; 2% Bilateral aid agency; 2% Media
Output 1: A range of ICT-enabled development information services, integrated through a web portal site	Continue to build and enrich the Eldis dataset, improve the coverage of the website, and produce a steady flow of email outputs (Needs QQT OVI)	Editorially, content is produced in a range of formats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document Summaries: the building blocks of Eldis. 293 produced/month and some 22,000 in searchable collection Organisation Descriptions: 4,500 descriptions of the various organisations who publish documents covered by Eldis Features: weekly must-read highlights Resource Guides: subject-focused, browsable sections of website, currently on 25 topics Email Bulletins: accompanying each resource guide, these deliver summaries and other news to 37,000 unique email subscribers. As each subscriber is registered for an average of 8 bulletins, this equates to 296,000 email subscriptions Key Issue Pages: short, contextualising guides on emerging research and policy issues, Currently 42 of these pages on the website Dossiers: 6 in-depth guides to development debates Blogs: from 2006, areas for commentary and news Newsfeeds: from 2005, provision of content for external websites and personal news-reading software Email Newsletter Collections: 8 searchable and browsable collections of more news-focused publications Average of 335 content items per month added 06/07 Average of 35 email reporters sent out each month Development of Oryx content management system for improved performance and stability Development of Eldis Community Platform to support collaborative work and self-publishing
	New approaches developed for distributing Eldis content to users with no (or low levels of) internet connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CDRom disc produced and 4,400 discs currently distributed Cache/CDRom agreements with 565 different organisations, blanket permissions from 395 organisations Creative Commons Agreements from 67 organisations. Cache now includes over 4500 documents
Output 2: Editorial and commissioning policy ensures the inclusion of a broad range of information (reflecting a	40% of users came to Eldis to source latest documents (OVI Needs T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% sought latest documents
	10% of users came to Eldis as a source of synthesis briefings (OVI Needs T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 29% sought synthesis
	10% of users came to Eldis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CDRom and resource guide surveys and interviews

Objective	OVI	Evidence
diversity of viewpoints, covering wide variety of topical development issues and debates)	to find Southern-produced content (OVI Needs T)	highlight users' desire for more southern content. Eldis plan to further explored and addressed this in 2007 and 2008
Output 3: Eldis is widely available to development practitioners as one of the places that development actors seek trustworthy information and which they use to distribute their own information products	Average of 80,000 visitors to website per month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average of 110,300 website users per month in 2006-7
	10% per annum increase in visitors to Eldis website (OVI Needs T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17% growth in website visitors between 2004/5 and 2005/6; 28% drop between 2005/6 and 2006/7. Growth between April 2004 and April 2007 is 0.1%
	At least 30% of website users to be Southern users in September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 27% of website users are Southern in March 07
	Average of 35,000 email subscribers during year (OVI Needs T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 37,000 unique email subscribers (based on 'What's New reporter'). Complete figures for 2007 in preparation
	10% per annum increase in numbers of subscribers to Eldis email services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email subscription increase: 17% in 2006/7 (based on what's new bulletin).
	Eldis being used increasingly by others as a tool for exchanging knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eldis content being used as newsfeeds on at least 100 other websites. Increase in public submissions of content. Agreements with 565 publishers for exchange of documents on CDRom format
	Eldis marketing strategy developed and activities undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eldis marketing strategy developed. Main marketing push postponed until Oryx launch
Output 4: Services provide improved coverage of southern-produced content and show increased usage from southern countries	20% increase in number of southern users by September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14% Southern growth in website use between 05 and 06; 2007 statistics in preparation but expected to show similar drop in usage as general website
	30% of website users to be Southern users in September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 27% of website users are Southern in March 07
	At least 40% of email service users to be Southern users in September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 54% of email service users were Southern users in March 2006; 2007 figures in preparation but expected to be similar
Output 4: Services provide improved coverage of southern-produced content and show increased usage from southern countries (continued)	Effective sharing of southern-produced content in partnership with GNet and other partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GNet date exchange on hold since Feb 06. Eldis will recommence once Oryx in place in IDS and Cairo
	Improved coverage of locally-produced content from target countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiations in progress to recruit partners in target countries to help with identification of locally produced content and marketing of services to local users
	Greater use of services in target countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web statistics figures in preparation by ISSEL for growth in use of services in target countries
	Eldis being used increasingly as a way of accessing and exchanging country-specific information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth in Eldis country profile services show same variation as general website figures above. Growth targets not met.
	Implementation of country strategies leads to growth in number of in-country content contributors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country strategy papers in preparation for post-Oryx implementation
Output 5: Eldis contributes to the development	Eldis referred to as an effective model, with some of its features being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 100 websites display Eldis content on their website through our newsfeeds. Our content is distributed throughout the GNet system through our data sharing

Objective	OVI	Evidence
and improvement of other information services	replicated by other information services	agreement. Copies of our CDRoms are re-distributed by local organisations.
	Eldis staff playing active role in IDS capacity building initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eldis staff participated in IDS intermediaries workshop and in support programme with ESRF Tanzania
Output 6: M and E system suggests directions for Eldis programme development	Eldis phase 4 proposal produced by April 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal production process in place

Annex IV. Vertical study in search of TRADE

Web Search Results for Hot Topic 'Trade'

Selection of Topics

12 sub topics were selected from the trade list on the Eldis website.

* In two instances two searches were carried out, one with the topic alone and one including a higher level category which the topic fell under on the trade list. This brought the list to a total of 14.

- Common Agricultural Policy
- Competition policy
- Fair trade
- Intellectual property rights
- Liberalisation and textiles
- Non-trade standards
- Trade & gender/ Gender-sensitive trade policy*
- Gender-sensitive trade policy
- Trade & gender/ Impact of trade liberalisation*
- Impact of Trade liberalisation
- Trade in services
- Trade liberalisation
- Trade policy
- WTO and agriculture

Search method

Each topic was searched on Google in three ways;

1. **Basic Search** where the words alone are entered,
2. **Clause Search** where the words are entered in speech marks ("...") and;
3. **Search with 'development'** included together with the topic.

The first 50 results produced by Google were looked through.

Recording Findings

The first time any of the four websites appeared in the first 50 results was recorded will be recorded in the respective column.

The number of times a website appeared in the first 50 results was also noted.

The appearance of any of the websites in the list of results on Google is termed as a hit.

Results

To illustrate the findings, percentages were calculated based on the potential number of hits and the actual number of hits. For instance, Eldis came up positive for 10 of the potential 14 topics producing a result of 63%.

Most of the hits were on Eldis

Basic Search	Clause Search	& development search
63%	64%	46%

Including the word 'development' in the search almost doubles the results

Basic Search	Clause Search	& development search
16 out of 70 23%	14 out of 70 20%	28 out of 70 40%

In most cases the first hits appeared in the first 10 results.

Basic Search	Clause Search	& development search
69%	50%	43%

No websites produced more than 5 results for any of the topics.

Basic Search	Clause Search	& development search
63% had between 2 – 5 results	64% had just one result	Just under half had 1 result (46%) and just over half had 2-5 results (54%)

There were no hits for Livelihoods Connect on any of the topics

There were no hits for fair trade.

Results for each of the websites

	Basic Search	Clause Search	& dev search
ID21	No results	Hits on 1/14 topics	Hits on 6/14 topics
BLDS	Hits on 2/14 topics	Hits on 3/14 topics	Hits on 3/14 topics
BRIDGE	Hits of 4/14 topics	Hits on 1/14 topics	Hits on 6/14 topics
Eldis	Hits on 10/14 topics 50% in position 1 70% with 2 –5 results	Hits on 9/14 topics	Hits on 13/14 topics 69% in position 1-5 77% with 2-5 results

Annex V: List of sites used and persons interviewed in ITAD country studies and list of persons interviewed counterfactual survey

N.B.

In country studies a list of possible Eldis user interviewees were provide by Eldis – all those who were available from that list were interviewed.

In the counterfactual survey, a population of development professionals matching the Eldis user groups (as identified by Eldis – i.e. NGOs; Research/teaching; Individuals; International organisations; Consultants; Government; Commercial business, Bilateral aid agency, and Media), but for whom it was unknown whether they were Eldis users or not, were selected and asked to respond to an online survey.

Bangladesh 4-12.8.07

Sites used

Health related sites

- **Hinari** (a WHO collection of full-text 3,500 online journals),
- **Lancet** (UK medical journal, online version allows only limited access to articles unless you subscribe),
- **PubMed** (a service of the US National Library of Medicine that includes over 16 million citations from MEDLINE and other life science journals),
- the **British Medical Journal**,

Regional knowledge and training sites

- **Global Development Network** (GDN)
- **OARE** (an international public-private consortium coordinated by the United Nations Environment Programme),
- **Tokyo Development Learning Centre** (a joint initiative of the World Bank and the Japanese Government serving as a knowledge and training center for the region),
- the **Global Development Learning Network** - an initiative to enable knowledge sharing and collaboration free from geographical constraints launched by the World Bank comprising more than 60 centers around the world, with state-of-the-art Information and Communications Technology),
- **J Store** (a not-for-profit organization with a dual mission to create and maintain a trusted archive of important scholarly journals)

The websites of the different donor and international organisations

- **ADB**
- **DFID**

Other subject related sites

- **COMPAS** (The Centre on Migration Policy and Society, University of Oxford) and

Persons interviewed

Name of Interviewee	Organisation
Ruhul Chowdhury	Researcher, BRAC University

Aniruddha Hom Roy	Project Management Specialist, USAID
Mahbubul Islam Bhuiyan	Research Associate, ICDDR,B
Dilruba Mahbuba	Librarian, ICDDR,B
Dr. Sujit Kumar Bala	Associate Professor, Institute of Water and Flood Management, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology
Afsana Wahab	Executive Director, Centre for Woman & Child Development
Mokhlesur Rehman	Executive Director, CNRS
Md. Mehrul Islam	CARE Bangladesh
Andrea Rodricks	Assistant Country Director, CARE Bangladesh
Rakibul Amin	Director, IUCN Bangladesh
Dr. Mizan	Director, School of Environmental studies, North South University
Dr. Riaz Khan	Visiting Professor, North South University
Manjurul Hannan Khan	Bangladesh Administrative Services (on leave for PhD studies at the University of Manitoba)
Najir Ahmed Khan	Deputy Programme Manager, DFID
Dr. Khaled Shamsul Islam	Sr. Assistant Chief, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Sarwat Masud Reza	Librarian, British Council
Md. Abdul Hamid, PhD	Managing Director, Tropical Development Associates
Afsan Chowdhury	Director, Advocacy & Human Rights, BRAC
Sabina Faiz Rashid	Lecturer, BRAC University
K.M. Enamul Hoque	Programme Manager, Campaign for Popular Education
Zaki Hasan	Programme Officer, Save the Children
Khandaker Reaz Hossain	Logistics Support Officer, John Snow Inc. & Advisor, Resource Integration Centre
Abu Nayeem	Chief Programme Coordinator, Resource Integration Centre

Prof. Simeen Mahmud	Senior Fellow, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
Aminul Islam Rokon	Training Specialist, Training and Technology Transfer Bangladesh

Tanzania 6-9.8.07

Sites visited

Regional knowledge and training sites

- **AGORA** (The Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture program, set up by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN together with major publishers, enables developing countries to gain access to an outstanding digital library collection in the fields of food, agriculture, environmental science and related social sciences. AGORA provides a collection of 1132 journals to institutions in 107 countries);
 - **PERI**,
 - **Tanzania Online** (a gateway to information on development issues in Tanzania. It is a UNDP/UN, Government of Tanzania and Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF) initiative to address problems faced by Government officials, policy makers, private sector, civil society, donor community, researchers and academicians accessing information on development issues in Tanzania);
 - **World Bank portal** (Full-text of World Bank project reports, including evaluation reports, working papers, and project appraisals);
- The websites of the different donor and international organisations
- **Institute of Rural Development Planning**, Dodoma (Tanzania Government Institute to accelerate and enable project expertise and experience to serve the basic requirements of regional and rural development planning);
 - **Economic and Social Research Foundation** library resources (a library which prepares and disseminates a monthly list of current articles on Tanzania and newly acquired documents and also provide information services to users depending on their needs);
 - **Research & Poverty Alleviation** (a not-for-profit Tanzanian NGO that undertakes and facilitates research, conducts and coordinates training, and promotes dialogue and development of policy for pro-poor growth and poverty reduction)
 - Resource centres e.g. **PACT** (Pact Tanzania is one of the 24 field offices of Pact in Africa, an international non-governmental organization building capacity and providing specialized training, mentoring and technical assistance);

Other subject related sites

- **Sokoine University of Agriculture** (because it has authentic national information on Agriculture).

Persons interviewed

Name	Name of the organization
1. Venance Mutayoba (Mr)	The Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy
2. Mathias Mponda (Mr)	Ministry of Agriculture
3. Tiberio Mdendemi (Mr)	Institute of Rural Development Planning
4. Isaria Mwendu	Ministry of Agr. Food Security and Cooperative
5. Godfrey Tweve	PACT Tanzania
6. Abdallah Hassan (Mr)	ESRF
7. Alawy Bakar (Mr)	The Pemba Island Relief Organisation (PIRO)
8. Walter Mbaula	African Institute for Capacity Development
9. Fikiri Malembeka	Musoma District Council
10. Yuster Kibona (Ms)	Environmental Protection and Management Services
11. Farida Issa	S.I.S.I- Strategic Initiatives for Social Improvement
12. Pantaleon Shoki	Agency for Cooperation and Research in Dev.
13. Federica	CUAMM
14. Albert Jimwaga	Pastoral Network of Tanzania
15. Mathew N.H Tambukwa	World Vision
16. Edmund Michael	Kiwira Prisons College
17. Dr Maggie Ngaiza and Prof Mlama	IDS, Univ of Dar es Salaan

Malawi 13-17.8.07

In Malawi, a key source of development information is general internet browsing, mostly using the Google search engine.

Web based sources include:

Regional knowledge and training sites

- **EIFL** (a not-for-profit organisation that supports and advocates for the wide availability of electronic resources by library users in transitional and developing countries),
- **PERI** (Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information, which supports capacity building in the research sector in developing and transitional and developing countries),
- **INASP** (International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications),
- **TEAL** (The Teal Trust which aims to encourage Christian leadership, primarily through online resources),
- **IIED PLA resource centre** (International Institute for Environment and Development *Participatory Learning and Action* teamed up with IngentaConnect, a leading international online publisher),
- **OSISA** (The Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa collaborating with other organizations on issues surrounding the rule of law, democracy building, human rights, economic development, education, the media, and access to technology and information. The Initiative's varied activities share a common goal of reducing poverty, HIV/AIDS, and political instability),
- **Development Gateway** (Development Gateway Foundation's online resources portal for development information and knowledge-sharing worldwide), websites run by what were described as professional bodies;

The websites of the different donor and international organisations

- An assortment of websites of multilateral agencies (including the UN, the World Bank, the IMF, and the WTO),
- **FAO** for agricultural marketing topics and
- **World Bank** for macroeconomic policy issues.

Other subject related sites

- Websites run by specialist NGOs (e.g. those specialising in human rights issues),
- **FEWSNET** (A Famine Early Warning Systems Network to strengthen the abilities of African countries and regional organizations to manage the risk of food insecurity through the provision of timely and analytical early warning and vulnerability information).
- **FANTA** (The Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project supports integrated food security and nutrition programming to improve the health and well being of women and children. The ten-year project is managed by the Academy for Educational Development and funded by the US Agency for International Development),
- **UNAIDS** for HIV and AIDS,

Other sources highlighted included face-to-face exchange of information in the form of meetings and special regional and international forums (e.g., UN conventions and other donor and civil society platforms).

Persons interviewed

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Noel Jambo	Bunda college
Catherine Chibwana	Bunda College
V.A.L Mkandawire	JICA
Dr. Adunga gebede	CRS
Mercy Mbamba	NASFAM
Hilda Kabuli	Chitedze research Station
Amon Kabuli	I - Life Programme
Andrew Namakhoma	NASFAM
Kondwani Hara	Bunda College
Margeret Ngwira	College of Nursing (LL)
George Kayange	CRIDOC

Counterfactual survey**Persons interviewed**

Your name	What is your Job Title?
George I. Abalu	Managing Consultant
Weijie Deng	Consultant for Conservation & Development proejcts (Independent)
Nick Innes-Taylor	Coordinator, AIT Aqua Outreach Program
Anna Lawrence	Senior Research Fellow
Munhamo Chisvo	Managing Director
Alan Brooks	Regional Director
Smita Shweta	Programme Assistant
Arvind Kumar	Senior consultant
Reshmee Guha	Consultant
Prasanna	Independent Consultant
Graeme Macfadyen	director, Poseidon
Tom Franks	Professor
William Savage	Organizational and Community Development Facilitator
Paul Bulcock	Research Associate
Rachel Percy	Consultant in Collaborative Rural Development
Jan Peter Johnson	Coordinator, FAO Livelihoods Support Programme
Matthew Briggs	Asian Technical Director
VIRINDER SHARMA	ENVIRONMENT AND LIVELIHOODS ADVISER
Stephen Tembo	Director of Projects
Keri Keelan	Head of Year 4
Sudin K	Technical Support Expert
Maria Paalman	Independent consultant

Patricia Norrish	Consultant
Bhawani Sankar Panda	Programme Assistant, Fishery Science
MBE TAWE Alex Nicanor	Student
Muhammad Junaid wattoo	Project Design and Monitoring Officer
Cecile Brugere	Fishery Planning Analyst
Buenafe Abdon	PhD Student
M.I.Zuberi	Professor
Ashish Kumar	Deputy Director of Fisheries
M. Moazzam Khan	Director (Planning and Statistics)
Stuart Bunting	Senior Scientific Officer
Georgina Cairns	Media Science Communications Consultant
Elga Salvador	Community Mobilizer
Hema Pillai	Office Manager
Venkatesh Salagrama	Director
Cathy Hair	Senior Fisheries Biologist
Victor Parlicov	Free-lance consultant
Kath Copley	Consultant
James Dalton	Integrated Water Resource Management Adviser
Nguyen Song Ha	Communications Hub Manager
Terri Sarch	Livelihoods Adviser
Muhammad J. Chiroma	Research Officer