



"NIDOS is a fantastic network and resource"

NIDOS Evaluation Summary of Findings

March 2011



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Executive Summary

The Organisation

NIDOS is a network of international development organisations with a base in Scotland. They work to improve the effectiveness of members and the wider international development sector in Scotland by building strength and capacity, improving communication and networking, representing the views and interests of member organisations and improving understanding of Scotland's international development sector.

Originally formed in 2000, NIDOS was established to build capacity within Scottish International NGOs, to help raise awareness of international development within Scotland, and to develop and represent Scottish voluntary organisations' perspectives on international development. NIDOS was formed partly in response to the creation of a newly devolved Scottish Parliament, but also in recognition of Scotland's separate identity and relative physical isolation from the bulk of the UK's international development sector, which is predominantly based in London and the South East. At the time of this evaluation, NIDOS had 91 member organisations.

Background to the Evaluation

NIDOS commissioned Assist Social Capital and Community Enterprise to carry out an independent evaluation of their services over the preceding 3 years, to look at how they can improve what they do. This evaluation was aimed at both members and stakeholders/partners.

The key evaluation outcomes were:

Outcome 1: To gather feedback from NIDOS members about the impact of use of NIDOS services on strengthening the capacity of their organisations.

Outcome 2: To gather feedback from NIDOS members and other stakeholders in Scotland, primarily about the uptake and impact of NIDOS Networking opportunities (newsletter/e-news, events, working groups and online networking) and how/to what extent these have increased their social capital and collaborative working.

Outcome 3: To gather information from Scottish Stakeholders, about how NIDOS has increased their understanding of Scotland's international development sector: main stakeholders to be contacted: Scottish Government; DFID; Comic Relief; Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland; Scottish Universities.

A total of 43 individuals from 41 member organisations (46% of the membership) completed the survey; 31 individuals responded to the online survey and 12 received a detailed one-to-one interview. 7 stakeholders completed the online survey.

Key Findings

Members

49% of responses were from small members, 31% from medium, 15% from large.

- 100% believe that NIDOS's aims and objectives are right
- 93% agreed that "The sector would be less strong without NIDOS"
- 92% believe that NIDOS actively promotes the value of belonging to the network
- 92% believed NIDOS effectively supports members to network with each other
- 92% are able to receive support from NIDOS easily
- 86% felt that NIDOS staff are friendly and approachable
- 82% agreed or strongly agreed that NIDOS has increased their organisations interest and involvement in effectiveness debates
- 76% feel that other stakeholders in Scotland are more aware of international development NGOs as a result of NIDOS
- 70% felt NIDOS had improved their knowledge of sources of relevant funding
- 70% feel NIDOS has helped build more trust between members
- 68% felt that being involved with NIDOS has helped build the skills and experience of their staff or volunteers
- 67% are able to receive advice and support from members
- 62% feel there are ways to be involved in decision making
- 53% of respondents feel that NIDOS is 'excellent', and 47% feel it is 'good'
- 42% believed that NIDOS services had given them stronger fundraising skills and experience
- The most "crucial" service in general were identified as the Newsletter (54%), Advocacy (50%) and Networking (39%)
- The most "useful" services were identified as Enquiries (59%), website (54%) and working groups (52%)

Stakeholders and Partners

60% of respondents to the stakeholder survey were from a 'capacity building organisation'; 40% were 'international development funders' and 20% were 'government international development policy makers'

- 100% felt they had a deeper understanding of the sector
- 86% felt their organisation's knowledge, understanding of and work with the Scottish international development sector has improved as a direct result of the work of NIDOS in Scotland

- 85% felt they had a better knowledge of NIDOS members work
- 72% appreciated better the contribution this work makes in Scotland
- 71% thought NIDOS were good, 29% thought they were excellent

Conclusions

The results from this independent evaluation of NIDOS's services over the preceding 3 years, suggests that the members value the NIDOS's work and feel the organisation is working very effectively to build trust across the membership, give them a 'louder voice', encourage them to be more effective and help small to medium sized organisations to increase political influence through NIDOS. Members felt that the networking seminars were particularly effective and that the information provided through the newsletter, website and training events encouraged them to "up their game".

Feedback from the stakeholders and partners clearly demonstrated that since Assist Social Capital carried out the [Social Capital Profile](#) in 2005, NIDOS has successfully engaged with the stakeholders to the point that, without exception, they felt they had a deeper understanding of the sector. The majority also felt their understanding of the Scottish international development sector has improved as a direct result of the work of NIDOS.

However, there are still some issues that NIDOS's staff and Committee need to take into consideration if they hope to continue the positive attitude that currently exists within their membership network. For example some organizations felt that training could be better targeted to the needs and knowledge of those attending. It was also felt that while the networking side of NIDOS was effective, there were times where it was not strategically prioritised and more could be done to increase the networking elements such as 'speed networking' during training sessions to facilitate working relationships amongst members who had similar backgrounds and interests. While NIDOS is seen as promoting effectiveness, the effectiveness toolkit needs more time to bed in before being fully assessed.

There was a sense around some of the advocacy work that there was perhaps a tendency for NIDOS to try to please everybody's point of view, which could at times lead to a sense of advocacy responses representing the "lowest common denominator" and that perhaps a more direct route could at times, be more effective. Finally, something that NIDOS is already all too aware of is its dependence on Government Funding. Members were aware of this and would like to see this reducing but did not have an appetite to pay more for membership. They would prefer NIDOS to investigate alternative routes to income generation, such as through large scale one off events, i.e. an annual conference or a Scottish version of 'Red Nose Day'. In addition, there is a suggestion that diaspora members have different needs from organisation members, with different demands on their time and resources from their own membership and from their membership of NIDOS as a result.

More should be done to raise awareness of International Development work amongst the Scottish public. More could be done to promote networking between the member organisations out-with NIDOS events. NIDOS should reach further and see how UK, Europe and International changes might affect the sector, particularly around climate change.

In conclusion, over the last 3 years, NIDOS has successfully supported its members to increase their effectiveness and delivered deeper understanding of the sector to the Scottish Government and other key stakeholders.

1. Background and Core Objectives

Assist Social Capital and Community Enterprise were appointed to undertake an evaluation of the Network of International Development Organisations in Scotland (NIDOS). The evaluation was required to meet three specific outcomes that the organisation has been working to. They are as follows:

Outcome 1: To gather feedback from NIDOS members about the impact of use of NIDOS services on strengthening the capacity of their organisations.

Outcome 2: To gather feedback from NIDOS members and other stakeholders in Scotland, primarily about the uptake and impact of NIDOS Networking opportunities (newsletter/e-news, events, working groups and online networking) and how/to what extent these have increased their social capital and collaborative working.

Outcome 3: To gather information from Scottish Stakeholders, about how NIDOS has increased their understanding of Scotland's international development sector: main stakeholders to be contacted: Scottish Government; DFID; Comic Relief; Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland; Scottish Universities

These outcomes were used as the back-drop of survey construction and telephone interview questions.

2. Approach & Methodology

NIDOS was involved in putting together the survey and agreeing the methodology and this has ensured that the evaluation, though independent and entirely objective, was put together using a collaborative approach to ensure it meets the needs of the organisation.

Pre-start discussions with NIDOS enabled us to review the objectives of the assignment, the approach and methodology, and to ascertain timescales and contact details. Discussion took place regarding whether to undertake a full Social Capital Profile so as to provide comparators to the previous one undertaken in 2007, however it was decided that it was not required at this time.

An on-line survey was prepared and distributed to NIDOS members and stakeholders to gather feedback based on the three outcomes. This had to be encouraged regularly to increase the response rate.

In tandem, a series of one-to-one verbal telephone interviews were undertaken to gather more qualitative feedback and discussion from members and stakeholders. To try and achieve the target of 20 one-to-one interviews, 30 organisations were chosen at random covering each membership type. These organisations were then approached to arrange interviews at a time of their convenience (covering any time or day of the week for maximum opportunity). Unfortunately, it was not possible to reach the desired 20 interviews and following repeated attempts to engage by email and telephone, 12 were achieved. There were a range

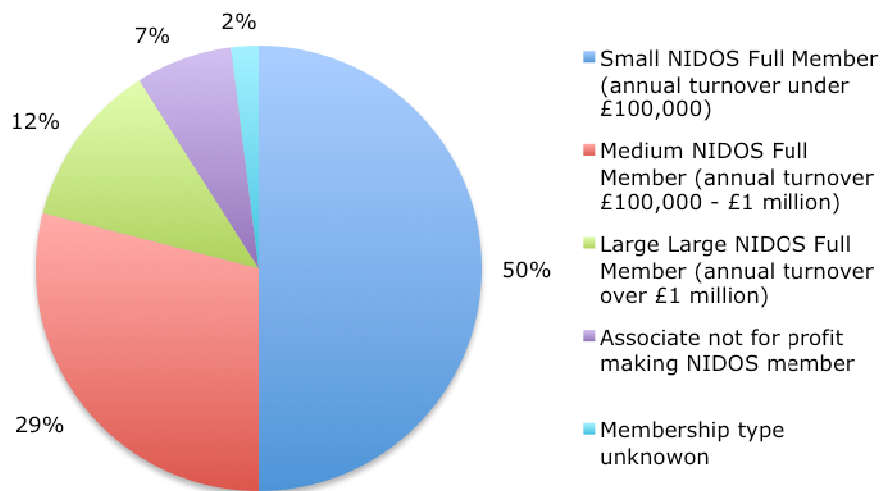
of issues, which seemed to limit organisations ability to engage with this process including holidays, being out of the country, being new to NIDOS or not actually using the main services.

3. On-Line Survey

Feedback from members was sought via an on-line survey. The survey was emailed to all 91 NIDOS members and to 12 stakeholders. 76 individual representatives of organisations started the survey (relating to 64 members and 12 stakeholders). 31 completed responses were received from member organisations and 7 from stakeholders. The respondent organisations can be seen at appendix 1 and 2.

Profile of Respondents

50% of responses were from small members, 29% from medium, 12% from large and 7% were from associate not for profit members. The chart below illustrates this breakdown. [NIDOS membership overall is 56% small members; 18% medium and 19% large, with 8% associate.]



55% of respondents have been members of NIDOS for over 3 years, 36% have been members for 1-3 years, and 8% have been members for less than a year.

General Feedback on Services & Activity

- 53% of respondents feel that NIDOS is 'excellent', and 47% feel it is 'good'.

Respondents were asked to expand and the following are a representative record of comments

With limited resources NIDOS are trying their utmost best to support the network.

Have a disproportionately high profile for a relatively small organisation at government level.

They function as a networking org, the newsletter and events create a forum for shared knowledge.

Good range of relevant information on funding, development issues and networks. Useful briefings and training events.

Brings a sense of togetherness to groups. A potential space to share learning and experiences. However, the networking needs to be consolidated and not merely "bolted" on top of an existing event.

It is useful to have a Scotland-wide network of NGO's. The Christian Engineers in Development (CEID) are also members of BOND, but as it is a UK-wide network, they do not feel they have as strong a voice as they do through NIDOS.

Professional, friendly supportive

An excellent organisation. Especially how NIDOS promotes the sector.

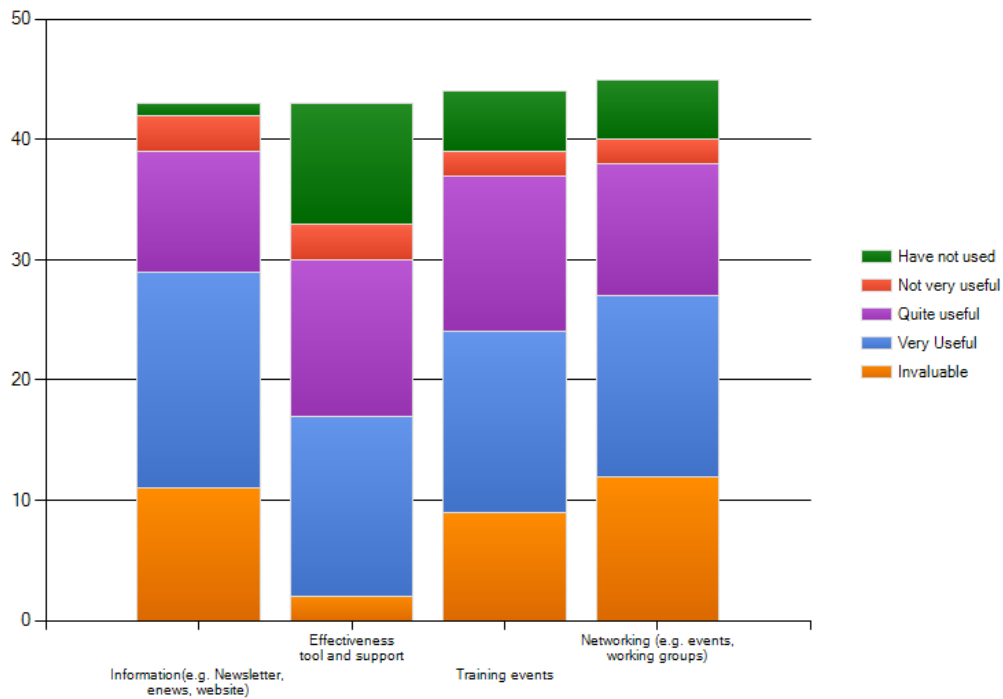
Broad remit and challenging to engage diverse membership

Members Feedback

Feedback on Effectiveness

- 82% agreed or strongly agreed that NIDOS has increased their organisations interest and involvement in effectiveness debates
- 74% of respondents to the survey agree or strongly agree that they have a clearer understanding of effectiveness as a result of NIDOS
- 59% were stimulated to start assessing their own effectiveness
- Information and networking was noted to most help effectiveness and the detailed breakdown is shown in *the Table below*;

Please assess which NIDOS activities and services have most helped your organisation on Effectiveness:



The following are a sample of comments

Raised our awareness of other groups working within the same field

It's still too early to say what the impact will be, as we are still working through the effectiveness tool and any actions to be taken need to be cleared with the Board. However, I do foresee that the changes will have a very positive long-term impact.

Training and networking with other groups involved in African development have increased confidence and skills of individual members. We are really small as an organisation and benefit greatly from these contacts.

The opportunity for members of both networks to meet who work in similar areas. Keeping us up to date with events, opportunities etc through the newsletter etc. Providing relevant training for dev organisations.

As a long established NGO we are really quite up on effectiveness.

This has always been an area of great focus within our organisation. It has been enhanced through networking events facilitated by NIDOS as this has enabled us to meet more partners operating within the same project areas and therefore allowed us to form additional strategic alliances.

Finance workshops, writing applications, newsletter has stories about what others are doing which helps avoid replication and also helps link with others. Not really another way to learn this in Scotland.

Looking at things like this can only challenge an organisation to strive to

achieve the best results possible in all areas.

Small NGO Group is a very useful forum. Good to be in contact with other agencies of similar size.

Would like NIDOS to promote the interests of international development to the Scottish public. NIDOS has quarterly meetings with DFID and Scottish Government and they could get more publicity out of these meetings.

The Effectiveness Tool will be very helpful in assisting us to self-assess our organisation and highlight areas for improvement, which will ultimately improve the impact of our work.

Being a part of NIDOS has brought together key individuals to discuss best practice in the field.

Have just begun using the Effectiveness Tool, so unable to comment on how good it is. However, being a part of NIDOS and learning about the tool has certainly stimulated interest within the organisation to begin to measure their effectiveness.

It has given us access to affordable and relevant training to help us be more effective. The Effectiveness Tool is hopefully going to be used by the wider organisation, later this year.

Having an umbrella organisation to pull us into events with others always generates leads / new contacts / new opportunities to partner with other orgs to deliver more work

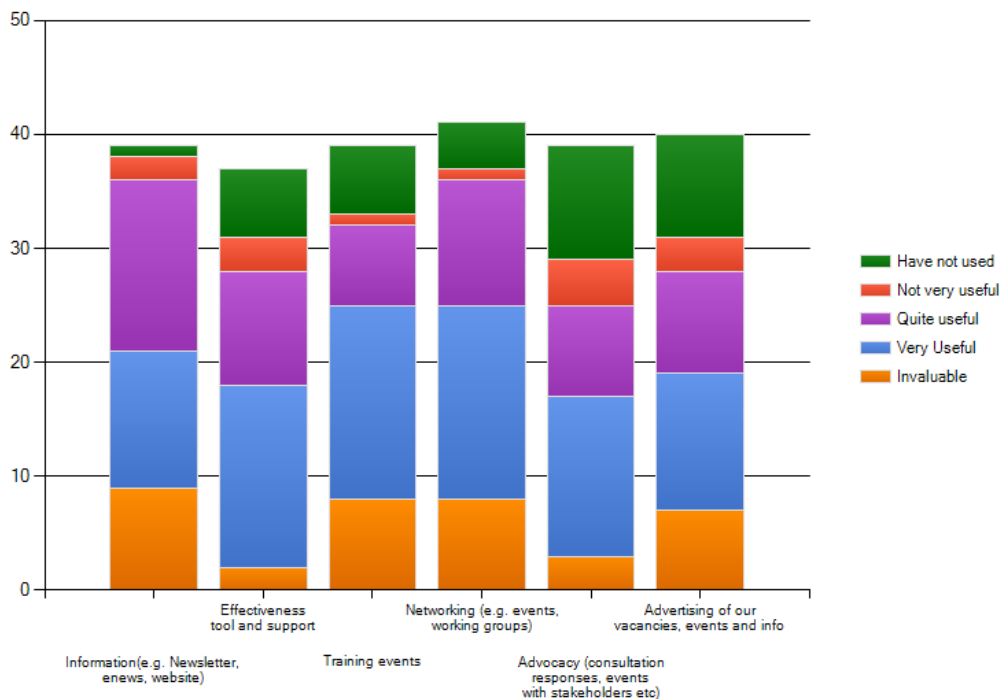
We have not used the effectiveness toolkit due to having own systems.

Feedback on Skills & Experience of People

- 68% felt that being involved with NIDOS has helped build the skills and experience of their staff or volunteers
- 16% felt that the skills of their board members has been strengthened while 59% neither agreed nor disagreed
- Effectiveness, training and networking had the most effect

The table below shows the detailed breakdown in responses in relation to:

Please assess which NIDOS activities and services have most helped build the skills and experience of people in your organisation



The following are a sample of comments

Staff have been supported through various training events and capacity has been built which is directly reflected in the workplace.

Programmes staff benefit from NIDOS. Finance, Operations, HR, Fundraising and Communications staff appear not to be targeted by NIDOS. Perhaps they should be?

Some of the training is a bit baffling. Best practice is good but really depends on staffs personal approach. For example the day in Edinburgh that ended up as drama and skits was felt to a bit embarrassing.

Need to make people aware of the skill base they need by reflecting on

what is available.

Our Board members are located across the UK, but training and networking opportunities have been really useful for staff and volunteers.

NIDOS is a great source of support and regular information on funding and Governmental issues.

The newsletter helps us find fundraising information

NIDOS has also provided useful guidance and advice in the development of our funding proposals. A third party perspective on our strategy was very insightful.

A few of the training sessions were abstract and high-level in discussing monitoring and evaluation. Attending an event like this for a full day is a massive time commitment, and it is crucial that members come away with something that is practical and can be used within their organisation. Eg. coming away with a tool-kit or seeing solid case study examples of different tools being used would be better. The more practical the training is the better.

There is no one event but a constant drip feed effect that comes through all their activities. Training has been helpful and also being part of the group that put the self assessment tool together has had the biggest impact.

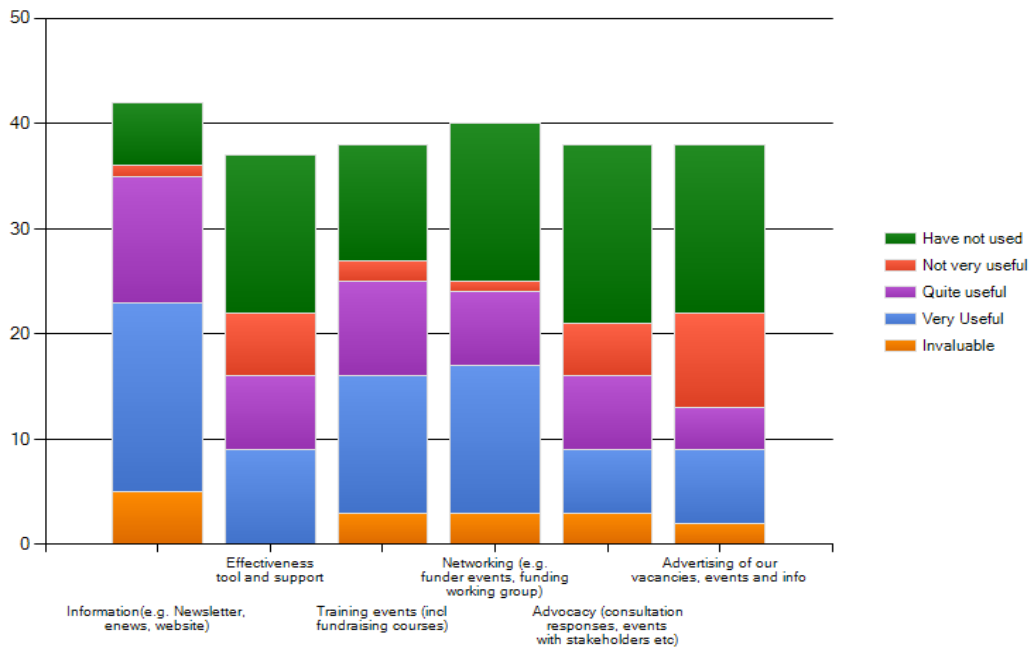
The newsletter and the networking events have probably been the most useful.

Myself and a number of other volunteers have made use of NIDOS training. We have passed on the notes - where possible - for these, to other parts of our organisation, in the hope that these will build the effectiveness of the organisation and encourage others to take up training.

Training and connections through the membership are main sources for impact Actual impact is experience sharing with similar people trying to do similar things from other orgs

Feedback on Ability to Fundraise

- 70% felt NIDOS had improved their knowledge of sources of relevant funding
- 42% believed that NIDOS services had given them stronger fundraising skills and experience
- 34% had improved relationships with funders
- Information and networking had the most effect and how that is broken down can be seen in *the Table below*;



The following are a sample of comments

I need to make more use of the opportunities NIDOS offers in relation to fundraising, but it's really a question of time as all our current activities are carried out voluntarily

One member is enrolled for a training day on fundraising in the near future. Up to now impact has been mainly through advertising and information.

Training helped us look at a framework for funding.

Most important contribution has been awareness raising. Also, NIDOS conducts meaningful research into sources and makes the information readily available to the membership

It would be better if things were streamed ie is it an introduction or is it a masterclass. Having training in different areas should be a future aim as the network grows. Did do this in the past with the best practice in the area which was much appreciated.

Great source of information on funding sources coupled with gathering

comments during consultations run by funders.

Access to information on donors is invaluable. It is a challenge to collate this information ourselves, so this frees us up to get on with the job of exploring funding opportunities and planning proposals.

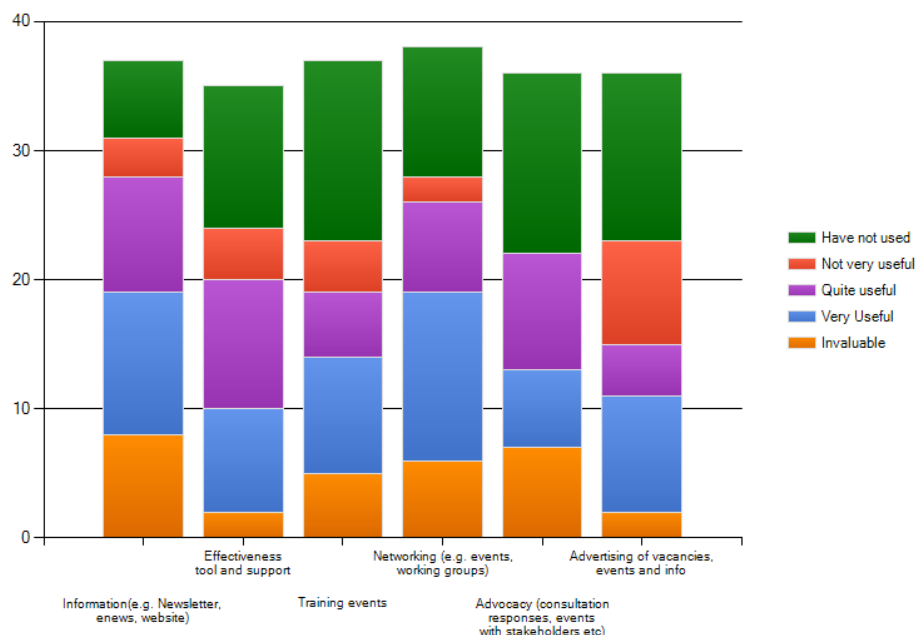
In terms of relationships with other key funders - being a part of NIDOS has particularly improved relationships between INSP and the Scottish Government. The excellent connections between the Scottish Government and NIDOS are evident

Speaking with others in similar situations to share hints / tips / leads and 'how to' is the main value

Feedback on Collective Advocacy and Policy input

- 93% agreed that “The sector would be less strong without NIDOS ”
- 76% feel that other stakeholders in Scotland are more aware of international development NGOs as a result of NIDOS
- 56% NIDOS has enabled us to have more input to Scottish Government international development policy consultations and development
- 45% feel that NIDOS has enabled them to have more input to DFID policy consultations and development
- Networking and Information had the greatest effect as can be seen in *the Table below*

Please assess which NIDOS activities and services have most helped your organisation build its advocacy capacity:



The following are a sample of comments

It is clear that NIDOS provides a stronger voice in advocacy issues than many of the member organisations could achieve on their own.

Cannot claim to have developed advocacy capacity to any significant extent. Members of our organisation are volunteers with limited time.

It has proved essential to have NIDOS serve as a facilitator for consultations etc so that Scottish international development organisations can make meaningful contributions from a considered and uniform voice.

The idea of streaming of levels of input to particular levels of skills would improve the service.

NIDOS could be better at facilitating introductions between like minded organisations.

Again, information, briefing, networking and training events all help to build our capacity to get involved with a wider network and feel more able to influence discussions/thinking on policy.

Our organisation is definitely more connected to the Scottish Government as a result of NIDOS membership - and perhaps more so because the Executive Director is on the board of NIDOS.

NIDOS have helped to make our organisation a bit more aware of other organisations. However, it has been less useful in stimulating networking and communication between organisations outwith the membership.

Would be good if something could be done in a 'remote' sense between the events. Most of NIDOS' work is focussed within the sector, yet it is limited in how it raises the profile of international development outwith the sector.

Feedback on Networking & Communication

- 92% believed NIDOS effectively supports members to network with each other
- 92% believe that NIDOS actively promotes the value of belonging to the network
- 72% felt that being part of NIDOS had increased the number of organisations they network and communicate with.

Feedback on Collective Culture

- 100% believe that NIDOS's aims and objectives are right
- 86% feel that NIDOS's Organisational capacity is good
- 90% believe NIDOS encourages networking with all stakeholders
- 82% neither agree nor disagree that NIDOS resolves conflict if it occurs
- 62% feel there are ways to be involved in decision making

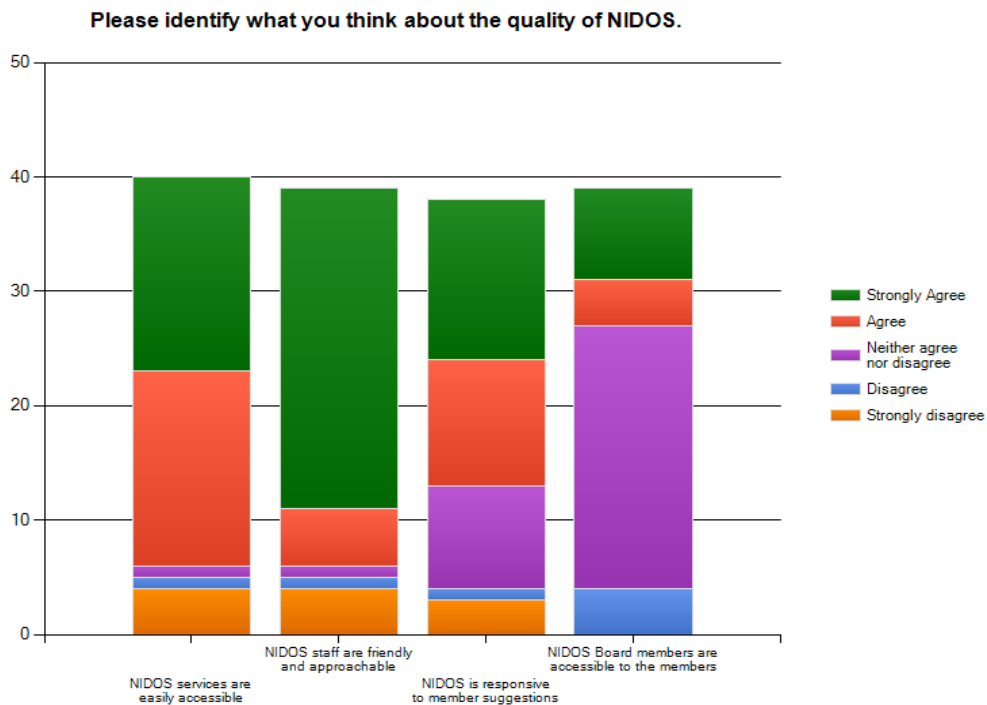
Feedback on Mutual support

- 92% are able to receive support from NIDOS easily
- 70% feel NIDOS has helped build more trust between members
- 67% are able to receive advice and support from members

General Comments

- The most “crucial” service in general were identified as the Newsletter (54%), Advocacy (50%) and Networking (39%)
- The most “useful” services were identified as Enquiries (59%), website (54%) and working groups (52%)
- 86% felt that NIDOS staff are friendly and approachable
- 85% think NIDOS services are easily accessible
- 29% felt the board was accessible

The breakdown of responses to the quality of NIDOS can be seen in *the Table below*



Stakeholders Feedback

Profile of Respondents

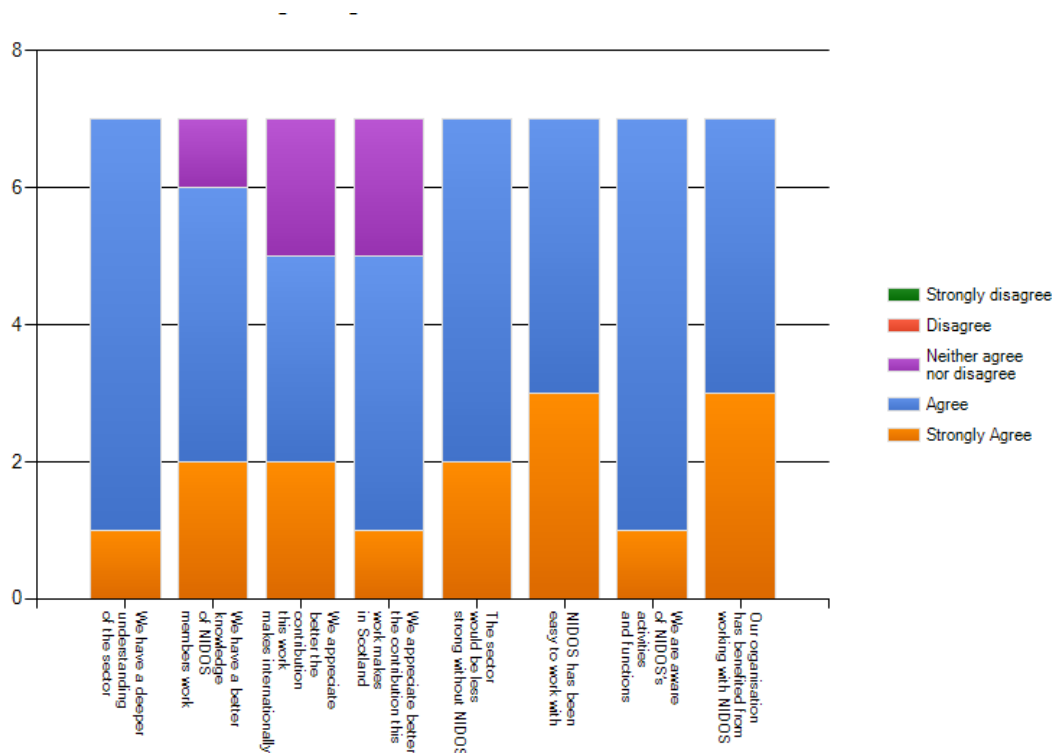
- 60% of respondents to the stakeholder survey were from a 'capacity building organisation'
- 40% were 'international development funders'
- 20% were 'government international development policy makers'

Feedback

- 100% felt they had a deeper understanding of the sector
- 86% felt their organisation's knowledge, understanding of and work with the Scottish international development sector has improved as a direct result of the work of NIDOS in Scotland
- 85% felt they had a better knowledge of NIDOS members work
- 72% appreciated better the contribution this work makes in Scotland
- 71% thought NIDOS were good, 29% thought they were excellent

General Stakeholder Views of NIDOS

The following Table shows a very positive response from stakeholders.



The following are a sample of comments

International development team of the Scottish Government has used NIDOS as first point of contact. NIDOS is also good at news distribution through newsletter.

As a London based organisation our relationship with NIDOS has developed our knowledge, we are aware our knowledge and understanding will be further improved.

NIDOS has facilitated our links with the sector - through events - also their member newsletter profiles are very helpful.

We are more aware of the scope and range of work; membership and issues concerning and impacting on members

FINAL COMMENTS FOR ALL MEMBERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

I think you do a great job, and are an essential organisation in Scotland. NIDOS is a very useful umbrella organisation, before everyone was out there doing their own thing. Come at the right time to increase flow of communication in both ways.

Gillian is exceptionally dedicated and very responsive.

NIDOS is a fantastic network and resource. However, I think it probably tries to do a bit too much and stretch limited resources. You can't please all of the people all of the time, so less but more focussed work could improve impact.

I work very part time from home and appreciate very much being able to email or phone looking for advice on a variety of issues. The staff are excellent and provide a very welcoming, valuable service.

Probably because of how its funding is applied for and granted, NIDOS has become much more focused on relatively narrow objectives in recent years. I know this is the trend in other fields as well (and is probably inevitable to receive essential funding), but it does mean excluding those for whom those narrow objectives aren't relevant. I think the great value of NIDOS in its early days was its bringing together of very varied organisations who hadn't previously known each other, which was of real value in itself as well as giving the sector an awareness of its overall identity and allowing common activity to emerge apparently spontaneously.

A great organisation, doing great work with a huge potential to do more

Having found out how wonderful NIDOS is I'm anxious to see that its funding isn't cut by the Scottish Government. I am recommending that other organisations join. I don't know how I managed to survive so long without knowing about it.

LONG LIVE NIDOS!

4. Qualitative Feedback – One to One Interviews

Positive Comments / Benefits of Membership

- Most organisations see the value in being a member of NIDOS as it gives them a 'louder voice' when attempting to create links with the Scottish Government.
- The most 'popular' services of NIDOS seem to be the training seminars and the networking opportunities. Many organisations cited that they have build up good contacts in the field as a result of attending these types of events.
- Training for governance and funding were the most important training events and they were good because they were not generic training but were specific to the sector
- Effectiveness Tool - all organisations that were interviewed know about this, and some were involved in developing it. However, as it has only recently been launched, none have actually used it yet, and therefore any feedback on the practicalities of this is not yet known. Many did say however that they can see the potential value of it in measuring what they do and how well they do it.
- Many felt that the focus on best practice encouraged members to "up their game"
- There was a lot of positive feedback on the Newsletter – this seems to be popular, and something that members look out for. Whilst none of the organisations that were interviewed would be willing to 'pay extra for it', a number of them thought it was invaluable. Some members stated that this was particularly valuable in keeping them informed of new funding sources.
- Excellent feedback on the staff at NIDOS, and in particular Gillian. A number of organisations said that they have worked closely with Gillian – demonstrating how accessible NIDOS is in comparison to other Network organisations (BOND).
- Most organisations are also members of a range of other networks, including BOND and SCVO.
- Networking was viewed as particularly important for smaller organisations who used it as a route to punch above their weight. There was a feeling that without this they were quite isolated.
- Having access to quality information, especially about policy and funding helps smaller organisations who struggle with the capacity to do this.
- Small and medium sized organisations enjoyed the additional political influence that NIDOS gave them – i.e. access to contribute to election hustings.

Development Issues / Suggestions for Improvement

- With regards to training, some organisations suggested that they could have a more practical focus in the future. For example – rather than discussing monitoring and evaluation in general terms, members might find it more beneficial to study a particular tool, and see some case study examples. There was also an interest in more training / networking events that are related to media.
- The networking events have received positive feedback, however one member suggested that more could be done to promote networking between the member organisations out-with these events. The events are planned throughout the year, but aside from this, there is little opportunity to get to know other organisations and stimulate joint working activity.
- There seems to be a difference in the type of support that practical 'on-the-ground' members need from NIDOS and that of other network organisations (such as the International Network of Street Papers). Commonly, it was found that diaspora type members benefit from the networking events, the newsletter, and light touch support as opposed to attending the training seminars and other activity.
- There was a scarce response to the question around willingness to pay for any of the services in the future. The debate was also raised about who should be responsible for funding NIDOS – should it be publically funded, as opposed to membership payments (many of which are charities). If it was to consider public funding, there is a need to show the value of NIDOS (and BOND) in raising the profile, capacity and impact of international development organisations.
- It was felt that NIDOS had their ear to the ground of Scottish Policy around international development but could reach further and see how UK, Europe and International changes might affect the sector, particularly around climate change.
- There was a noticeable divide between large and small organisations. Smaller ones felt that the larger ones could contribute more to strengthen the sector. It was felt that a culture of mutual support could be improved. Small organisations feel they are fighting against the large organisations for influence.
- One organisation contacted with regards an interview (but that did not participate in the interview or survey) stated that they do not use any of NIDOS' services, and they only use their membership as a 'badge' to get other funding, including support from DFID. Would be good to look at ways to encourage more engagement from the more 'dormant' members.
- There is an opportunity to draw in other organisations who were not members, but were on the fringes of the sector (such as Friends of the Earth), perhaps through a special event.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

- NIDOS was seen as a very high quality organisation, responsive to members and a great asset to the sector.
- The organisation has a disproportionately high profile for a relatively small organisation at government level and is an effective advocate for the sector.
- Information and networking were the key services, with high value placed on quality information helping to increase the capacity of members.
- NIDOS is seen as promoting effectiveness but the effectiveness toolkit needs more time to bed in before being fully assessed.
- There is a significant difference between small and large groups (who are seen to have their own strong voice and ability to network) and there was support to retain initiatives such as the Small Organisations Working Group.
- NIDOS's work increases the skills of staff and volunteers. There is less obvious impact on boards.
- Knowledge about source of funds has increased and confidence about fundraising has increased too but to a lesser extent.
- It is clear that NIDOS provides a stronger voice in advocacy issues than many of the member organisations could achieve on their own.
- Though 56% feel that NIDOS has helped their organisation influence Scottish Government policy, this could be higher. The levels of impact on DfID are lower.
- Networking is a strength of the organisation, though could be improved by developing links outwith formal events.
- Smaller numbers of members felt the NIDOS board was not accessible, though many questioned whether this was a problem.
- There is strong support from stakeholders who believe that NIDOS is making an impact on promoting and strengthening the sector.
- It was felt that NIDOS is well informed with regards to Scottish Policy around international development but could reach further and see how UK, Europe and International changes might affect the sector, particularly around climate change.
- Some of the members are networks themselves and different kinds of support are required for them.

Recommendations

NIDOS should;

- Offer different levels of training aimed at starter, intermediate and advanced (where this is practicable).
- Offer more practical training that teaches skills rather than sessions with abstract outcomes.
- Consolidate networking so as to be not merely "bolted" on top of an existing event.
- Facilitate working relationships amongst members who have similar backgrounds and interests or operate in similar geographical areas
- Retain the Small Organisation Working Group
- Investigate how to better meet the needs of members who are themselves networks.
- Investigate ways to promote networking between the member organisations out-with formal events; this may include on-line systems. While this has been attempted by NIDOS with little success, the option should be available as long as it is not too resource intensive.
- Encourage engagement from the more 'dormant' members.
- Encourage some engagement from 'fringe' organisations, those who are not core international development organisations but have an impact on the sector. This may include Universities with International Development Departments, Churches and political organisations (such as the Fabian Society).
- Increase activity to raise awareness of International Development work amongst the Scottish public
- Consider organising a Red Nose Day style event in Scotland as a way to combine positive promotion and fundraising.
- Retain and consolidate membership of the Cross Party Group for International Development.
- Reach further and see how UK, Europe and International changes might affect the sector, particularly around climate change.
- Work harder to impact on DFID

Appendices

Appendix 1: Member Organisations Completing the Survey

The organisations that completed the survey are detailed below¹.

- *ACTSA Scotland - Action for Southern Africa*
- *Bressay Outreach*
- *Britain Tanzania Society Scottish Branch*
- *British Red Cross*
- *Capstone Projects*
- *Challenges Worldwide*
- *Children of Songea Trust*
- *Christian Engineers in Development*
- *Comas*
- *Community Business Scotland Network*
- *Community Organisation for Social Change C4SC*
- *Concern Worldwide*
- *IDEAS*
- *Imani Development Foundation*
- *ImpACT AIDS*
- *Institute for International Health and Development, Queen Margaret University*
- *International Network of Street Papers,*
- *Link Community Development*
- *Lothian Partnership for African Links*
- *Malawian Initiative for National Development (MIND)*
- *Mamie Martin Fund*
- *Mary's Meals*
- *Oxfam Scotland*
- *ROKPA UK Overseas Projects*
- *RSA*
- *SCIAF*
- *Scotland Malawi Partnership*
- *Scottish Fair Trade Forum*
- *SEAD (Scottish Education and Action for Development)*
- *Sierra Leone Support Association*
- *Signpost International*

¹ Three organisations completed the survey anonymously

- *Solas Educational Trust*
- *The Blackford Trust*
- *The Leprosy Mission Scotland*
- *The Orskov Foundation*
- *UNA Edinburgh*
- *Woodford Foundation Scotland*
- *World Development Movement*

Appendix 2 : Stakeholder responses

- *Comic Relief*
- *DSA Scotland - a study group of the Development Studies Association of the UK and Ireland*
- *Lloyds TSB foundation for Scotland*
- *LTS International Ltd*
- *OSCR*
- *SCAID / University of Stirling*
- *Scottish Government*

Appendix 3: One to One Interviews

| Name of Organisation | Member Type |
|--|--------------------|
| Capstone | Small |
| Christian Engineers in Development | Medium |
| Community Business Scotland Network | Small |
| Imani Development Foundation | Small |
| International Network of Street Papers | Medium |
| Lothian Partnership for African Links | Associate |
| Oxfam Scotland | Large |
| Scotland Malawi Partnership | Small |
| Scottish Fair Trade Forum | Small |
| SEAD | Small |
| Sierra Leone Support Assoc | Small |
| UNA Edinburgh | Small |