

fome symposium 2024 - documentation

# Input: The Impact of Media Interventions through 20 Years of Evaluations

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## Media Assistance: Mind the Gap!

A critical review of common practices and strategies

30th September – 1st October 2024, Erich-Brost-Institute for International Journalism, Dortmund, Germany

Hosted and organised by:



# THE IMPACT OF MEDIA INTERVENTIONS THROUGH 20 YEARS OF EVALUATIONS

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Forum Media and Development



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# WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

- > MEDIA
- > MEDIA INTERVENTION
- > IMPACT(S)
- > EVALUATION(S)
- > 20 YEARS: 1999-2019



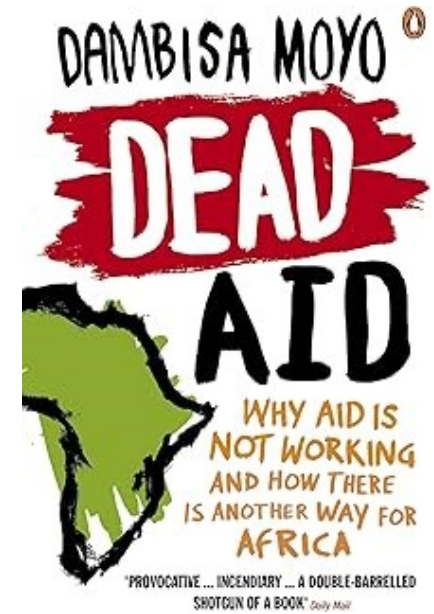
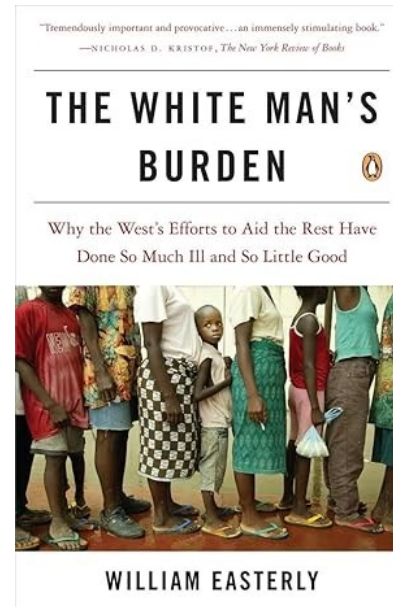
# IMPACTS

“The higher-level effects of an intervention’s outcomes. The ultimate effects or longer-term changes resulting from the intervention. Such impacts can include **intended and unintended, positive or negative higher-level effects.**”

*OECD Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management  
for Sustainable Development, 2023*



2009



2007

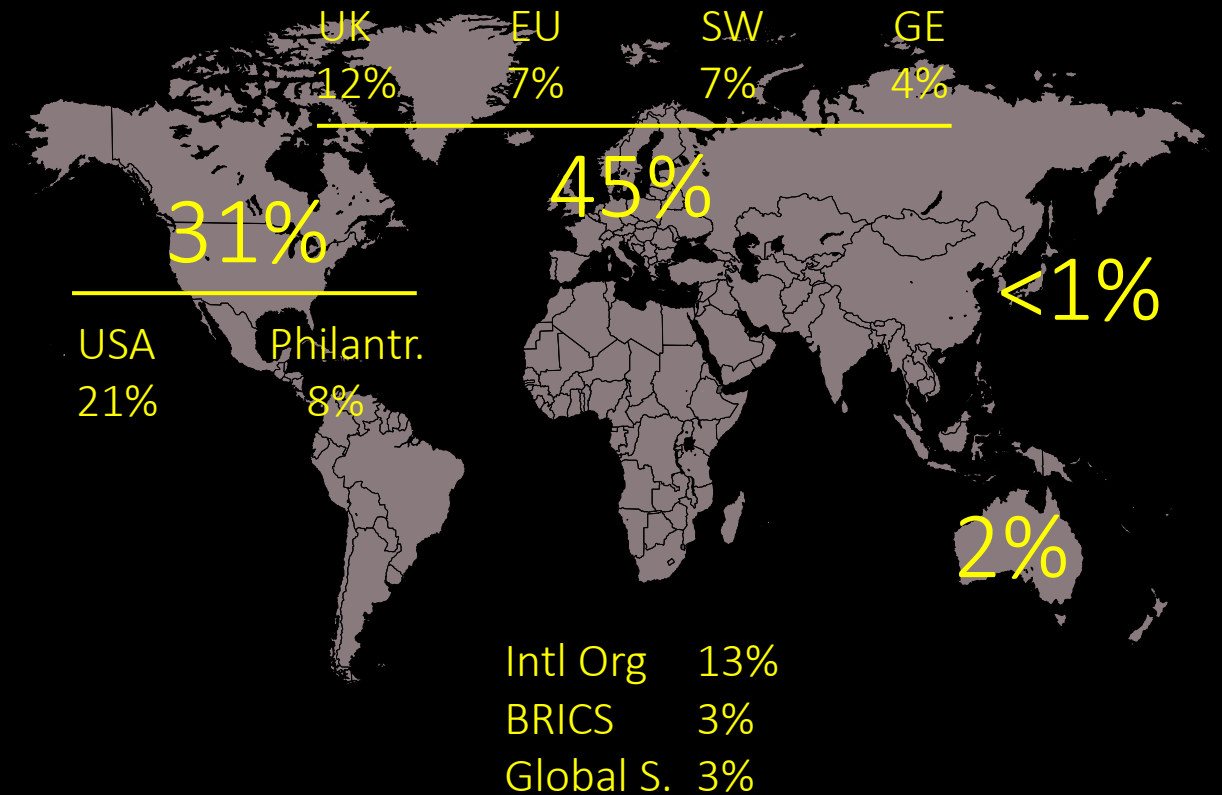


2022



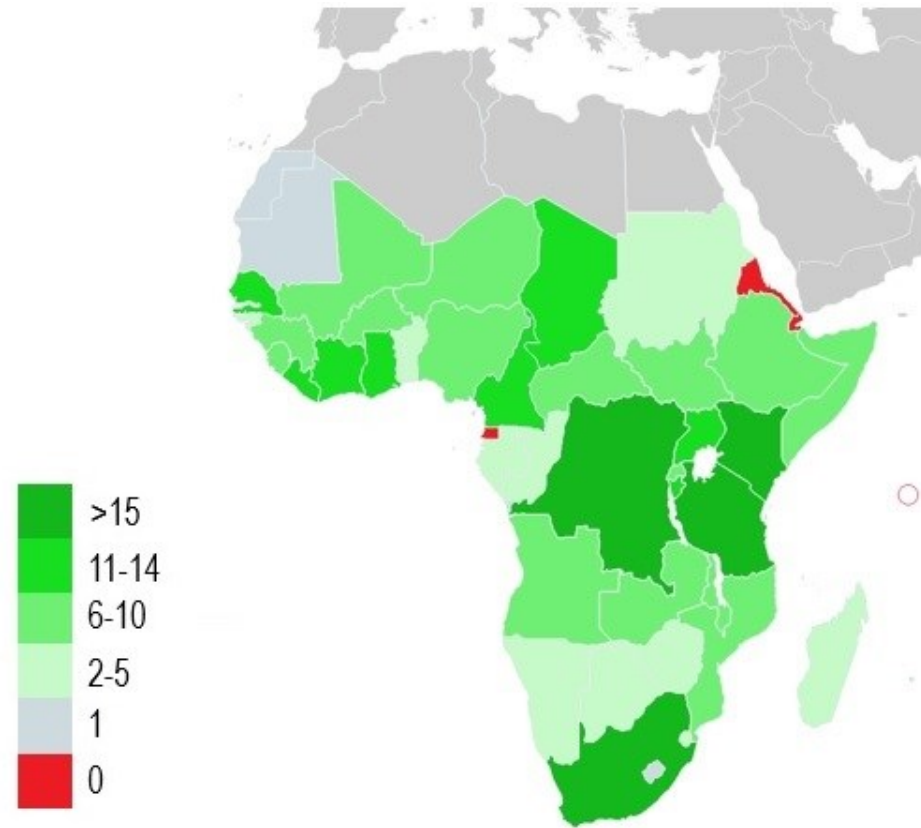
# THE SAMPLE

289 EVALUATIONS  
OF PROJECTS WORTH  
\$2.7B-\$10.3B  
ODA FOR MEDIADEV  
DURING THE SAME PERIOD  
\$7.5B

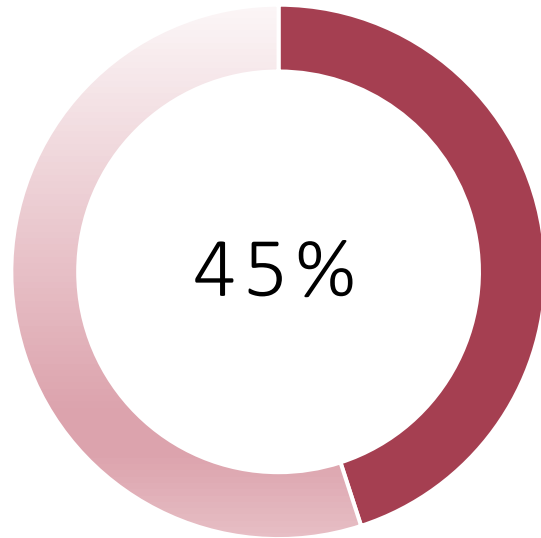


# THE FINDINGS

MEDIADEV PROJECTS ARE FOCUSED ON A SMALL NUMBER OF AREAS

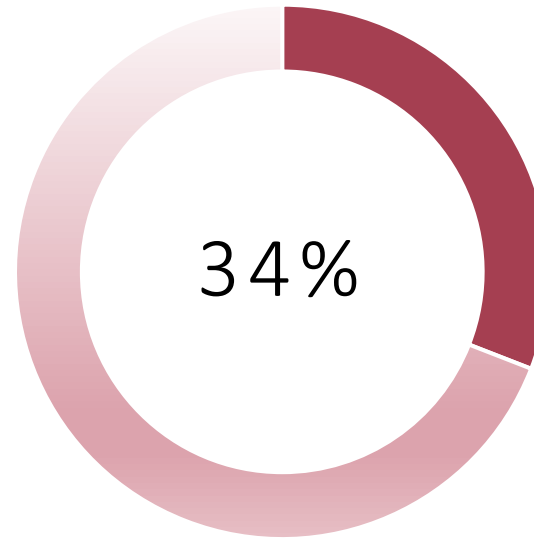


USAID, 2013



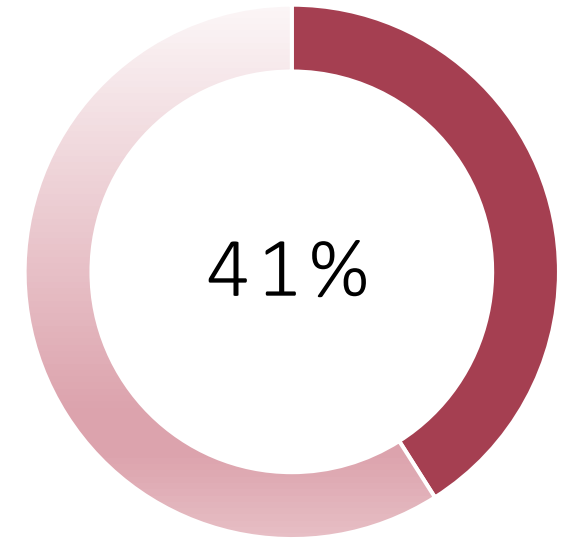
CANNOT PROVIDE AN OPINION  
ON THE LASTING NET BENEFITS  
OF THE INTERVENTION

USAID, 2013



HAVE IMPRECISE  
FINDINGS

AfDB, 2023



HAVE SHORTCOMINGS  
IN STRENGTHENING  
OF CAPACITIES

# THE LASTING IMPACT IS MOSTLY UNKNOWN

## A number of **scientific biases**:

- Confusion between quantitative and qualitative data
- Methodological bias: “quick and dirty” evaluation
- A concern to reassure the commissioner

## Unaddressed **blind spots**:

- Corruption as an impact killer
- A lack of real *ex-post* evaluations
- Media interventions as a market distortion

WHY IT MATTERS





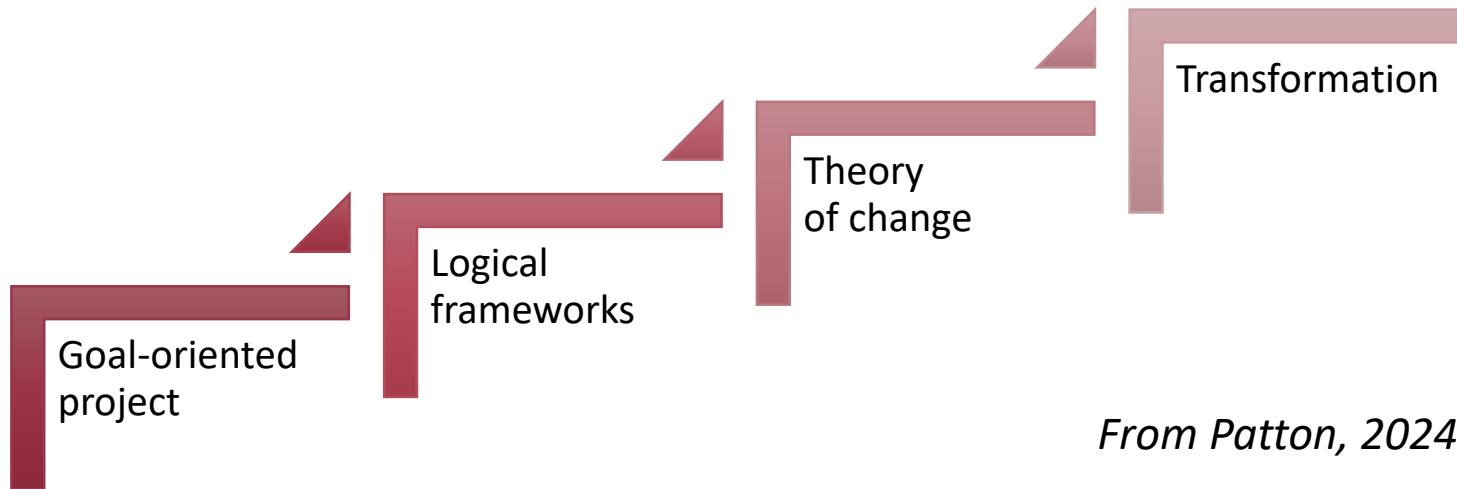
# IT QUESTIONS OUR ASSUMPTIONS

- The lack of reception studies makes it hard to document the real influence of media interventions
- The growing populism finds fertile ground for the development of narratives that call aid into question
- Critical evaluations (Balkans, Ukraine, etc.) are those with the greatest influence.

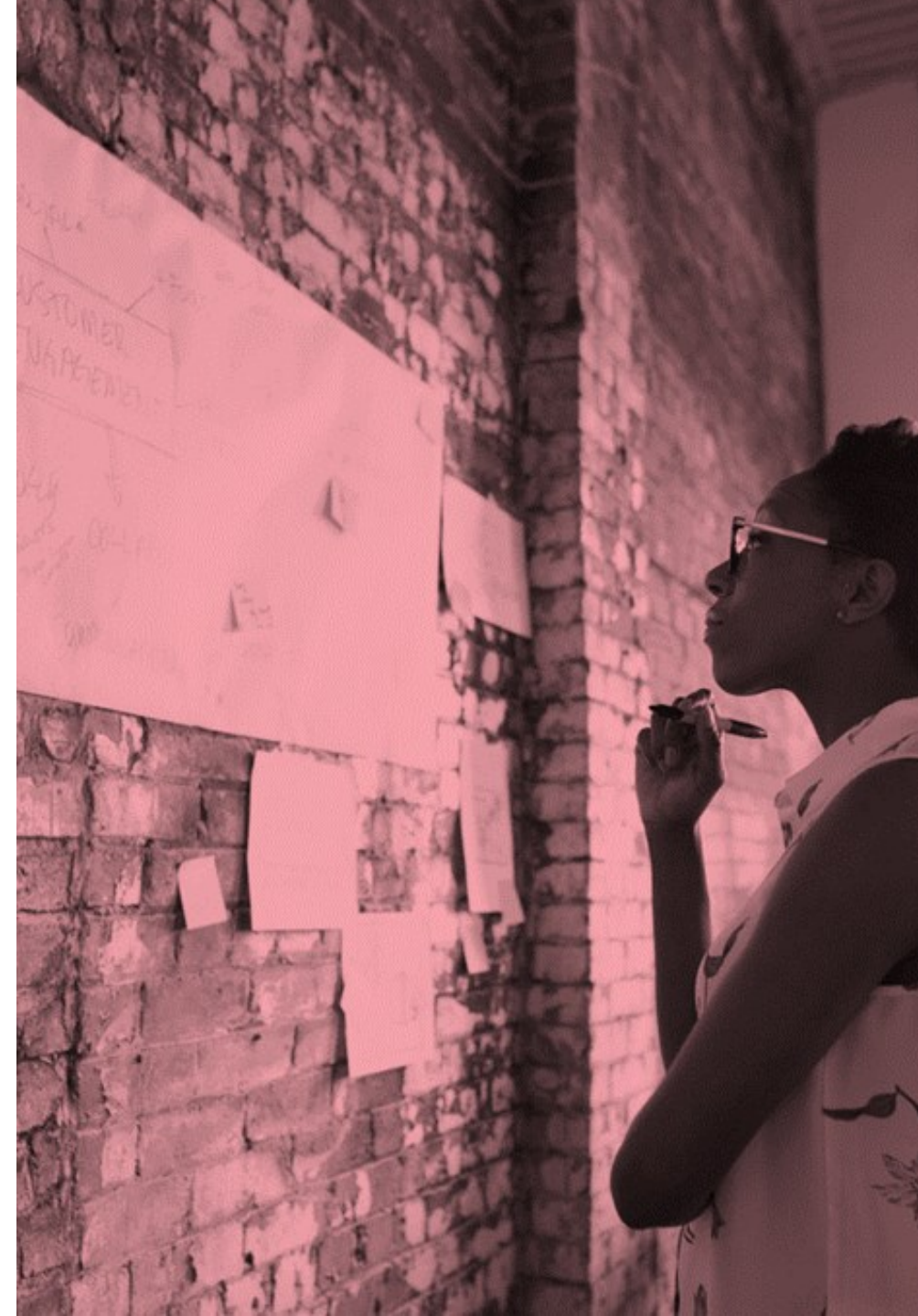


# A MISSED LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

- Too little needs analysis (or just an analysis of expectations)
- Few references to a theory of change and very rare evaluations that trace processes
- No transformative evaluations



*From Patton, 2024*



# A GROWING UNDERSTANDING?

“The principles below unite these myriad factors: the vital role of media and journalism in development and democracy, the severity of the crises facing public interest media and information integrity, emerging initiatives to improve innovation and coordination, and **growing understanding of aid and development effectiveness and the impact of assistance.**”

*OECD Development Cooperation Principles on Relevant and Effective Support  
to Media and the Information Environment, 2024*



# THANK YOU!

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